

**The first female university student:**



*Anna Maria  
van Schurman (1636)*

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Who was the first female university student in the Netherlands? Pose this question to anyone in the Netherlands and the incorrect answer *Aletta Jacobs* will probably come your way. But more than two centuries earlier, in 1636, Anna Maria van Schurman had become the first female university student in Utrecht, and thereby the first in the Netherlands and even in the whole of Europe. Anna Maria van Schurman attended not only private lectures at the University of Utrecht, but also public disputations and “listening” lectures in the fields of languages and medicine, but especially in theology. She wrote poetry in many languages and published a dissertation on women’s rights to academic study. Her book *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica* was reprinted several times and was noted internationally. Her knowledge of languages was astounding. She was proficient in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syrian, Samaritan, Arabic and Ethiopian, to name but a few. Van Schurman was well-known internationally and became a key figure within a European network of learned women which included Birgitte Thott, Christina of Sweden, Marie le Jars de Gournay, Bathsua Makin and Dorothea Moore. But in 1669 Anna Maria van Schurman, watched by many in disbelief, left the city, church and university of Utrecht to join the Labadists, a radical Protestant group. She attempted to explain the reasons for this turnabout in her Latin autobiography, the *Eukleria*.

*The first female university student: Anna Maria van Schurman (1636)* provides a detailed picture of the life and times of Anna Maria van Schurman: her position in the academic world of the seventeenth century, her role within the *Republic of Letters*, and the content and influence of her publications in the Netherlands and Europe.



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Utrecht Publishing & Archiving Services

ISBN 978-90-6701-030-6



The first female university student:  
Anna Maria van Schurman (1636)

Dedicated to my fiancé Erik Heijerman

PIETA VAN BEEK

**The first female university student:  
Anna Maria van Schurman (1636)**



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This translation has been commissioned by the Executive Board and the former Rector Magnificus, professor Willem Hendrik Gispen of the University of Utrecht.

This edition was made possible in part by the financial support of the University of Utrecht, in part by the Maatschappij der Nederlandse Letterkunde, Leiden.

Thanks to Madelon Pieper for her friendship and moral support.

Translated from *De eerste studente: Anna Maria van Schurman (1636)*. Utrecht: Matrijs, 2004 (2007)

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Translators' notes:

1. For the convenience of the reader, quotations and titles of texts have been paraphrased, and either the quotation or the relevant paraphrase have been given in square brackets.
2. Passages from the Bible were quoted from the *Authorized King James Version* (Kenneth Copeland Reference Edition).
3. In the interest of consistency regarding spelling and language usage, UK (Oxford) English reference sources were used (e.g. various Oxford English dictionaries and the *New Oxford Dictionary for Writers and Editors*, 2005).

*The first female university student: Anna Maria van Schurman (1636)* was published by Igitur, Utrecht Publishing & Archiving Services. The text was composed in the typeface Minion, book design by AlfaGrafica, Hilversum, the Netherlands.

First edition: 2010

© Igitur, Utrecht Publishing & Archiving Services  
Heidelberglaan 3, Utrecht, The Netherlands  
[www.uu.nl/igitur](http://www.uu.nl/igitur)

ISBN 978-90-6701-030-6

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# Preface

Who was the first female university student in the Netherlands? Pose this question to anyone in the Netherlands and he or she would either plead ignorance or give the incorrect answer – *Aletta Jacobs*. It is time to change this. In this book, I will show that Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678) was the first female university student, not only in Utrecht, but also in the Netherlands and probably also in the whole of Europe. She was the first woman to participate in the academic landscape and to be regarded as an absolute equal. Her erudition is the reason why she features so often when one delves into the seventeenth century. For instance, in a portrait hanging in the lounge of a Frisian house in 1680, and denoted as ‘the Pride of Europe’ [‘het Pronksel van Euroop’’]. In the poem that the Frisian poetess Titia Brongersma wrote on this painting, she praised Van Schurman as learned woman, who had been born, as it were, straight from Pallas [Athena’s] brain, who had ‘brought about a series of miracles’ [‘een Reex van wonderen geteelt’], and so surpassed so many literary heroes [‘soo menig Letterhelt’].<sup>1</sup> But not only in Leeuwarden or Leiden, London, Basel or Paris, also in the gallery of portraits of the Italian Academy of Science in Rome or in the royal palace in Stockholm, Van Schurman’s picture hung on the wall.

Van Schurman’s erudition may only be understood against the background of the humanistic *Republic of Letters* – a fraternity of scholars in Europe, who transcended the normal barriers of social class, faith, language and nationality. The language medium in this *Republic of Letters* was Latin. Very few women were admitted, but Van Schurman had been learning Latin from age eleven, and had managed to acquire such an extensive knowledge of Latin that in 1636, she was asked to write a praise poem in Latin, in honour of the establishment of the University of Utrecht. In that poem, she lamented the exclusion of women from the institution and pleaded for admission. She was then granted permission to attend lectures – not only the private lectures, but also the public lectures and disputations. Thus she became the first female university student. She attended lectures in the undergraduate Faculty of Letters and in the Faculty of Medicine, but her main goal was theology, a field of study that was regarded all over Europe as the most important. She became an expert in theology, and mastered at least fourteen languages, of which half were Semitic languages. She was the first Dutch person to compile a grammar of Ethiopian – in Latin. She also developed her artistic talents, wrote poetry in various languages, wrote a thesis (in Latin) on women’s right to study, and subsequently the book *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica, prosaica et metrica* [literally: *Minor work in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and French, in prose and poetry*] that experienced many reprints, and even landed on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* of the Roman Catholic Church.

Van Schurman engaged in the exchange of learning within the male European *Re-*

*public of Letters*, for instance, with discussions on the baptism for the dead [‘doop voor de doden’], the boundary between life and death, or on women’s learning. Time and again, her writings elicited a stream of reactions – positive or negative. She played a pivotal role in a small European network of learned women, and corresponded, for instance, with Birgitte Thott (in Denmark), Christina Queen of Sweden, Marie le Jars du Gournay (in France), Bathsua Makin (in England) and Dorothea Moore (in Ireland), among others.

But she ‘fell from grace, diverted from the right road, the strong pillar collapsed’ [‘viel van haar voetstuk, ze week van de rechte weg, de sterke zuil brak’] – in the words of Titia Brongersma in her poem on Van Schurman. What happened was that, in 1669, Van Schurman sold most of her possessions, left the city and the University of Utrecht, and then joined the Labadists, a radical Protestant group under the leadership of Jean de Labadie, who attempted living like the first Christian congregation in Jerusalem had lived. Precisely because Van Schurman had been ‘the Pride of Europe’, many voices now condemned her: ‘oh, how unfortunate that zealotry now clouded her judgement’ [‘dweepzucht schoof (wat spijt!) een wolk voor haar verstand’]. Once again, her actions led to a stream of written reactions – this time, however, not to praise but to condemn. But in an erudite manner, she defended her decision as a ‘good choice’ in her Latin autobiography *Eukleria*, and tried to distance herself from all the learning that she had accumulated in Utrecht.

From the above it will be clear that many studies of diverse nature could be undertaken on Van Schurman. In the past few years, some work in this regard has been done, for instance, a study on her artistic crafts; also an edition of her poems in Dutch; a book covering diverse aspects of Van Schurman’s erudition; a thesis with a few chapters devoted to her as literary person; a thesis researching and translating the *Opuscula*; various articles on her knowledge of languages, her *Women’s Republic of Letters* and on her poems in Neo-Latin.<sup>2</sup>

This book deals with an investigation into the relationship between Anna Maria van Schurman and the University of Utrecht. In the seventeenth century, a humanistic education was not limited to universities, academies or illustrious elite schools, but resorted under the *Republic of Letters*. Although I shall mainly be focusing on Van Schurman’s academic contacts in Utrecht, the Netherlands and Europe, I shall also turn the focus on other contacts that she had and correspondences that she maintained, through the medium of Dutch, French, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, with eminent intellectuals and writers outside the universities.

Although much research has been done on Anna Maria van Schurman in recent decades, not enough research has concentrated on the primary sources, which have been written mainly in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. I have cast the net wide, so as to include not only her own work in Dutch, French, German, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, but also many texts that were dedicated to her (the eulogies and dedications in Latin). If readers feel that my close-up focus on the sources made me lose sight of the broader picture, so be it. Paul Kristeller, an eminent Renaissancist, wrote already in 1980 that one cannot write about learned women unless some thorough groundwork has been laid. The concept of women’s erudition in the Renaissance is inextricably bound up with a knowledge of at least Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and also of the vernaculars in which these women wrote. One has to

make an effort to master those languages. By doing this, I was able to find a lot of new material and to gain better insight into how Van Schurman functioned as learned woman.

Considerable work has been done to find, research and make accessible the work of early-modern women in the vernaculars (e.g. Crawford 1983, 1985; Schenkeveld et al. 1997), but work written in Latin, Greek or Hebrew has not been explored yet. Here and there a beginning has been made (e.g. *Her Immaculate Hand: Selected Works By and About the Women Humanists of Quattrocento Italy*, 1984; recently, the three volumes of *Women Writing Latin* (2002) were published for the first time, and *Women Latin Poets* by Jane Stevenson in 2005). Van Schurman does feature in this work, but to make a meaningful comparison of her work and that of other (female) scholars of her time, much research is still needed.<sup>3</sup>

In this book I shall briefly touch upon questions such as: how did she manage to get into the university – that exclusively male bastion – as female student in 1636? Was she indeed the first female university student? What kind of relationship did she have with the professors of Utrecht, particularly with Voetius? What was her contribution to scholarly knowledge? What role did she play in the promotion of women's learning? What on earth drove her to join the Labadists? The observant reader may find the answers in the text.

### Structure of the book

*The first female university student* is structured as a triptych: a side panel on the years before Anna Maria van Schurman became a student in Utrecht (Chapter 1); a broad centre panel on Van Schurman as university student and scholar in the Utrecht, Dutch and European intellectual circles (Chapters 2, 3 and 4); a small, concluding panel on her startling departure from Utrecht (and thus from the *Republic of Letters*) to join the Labadists (Chapter 5). In each chapter, for reasons of clarity, the women are dealt with separately. Unfortunately, not all the scholars with whom Van Schurman had been in contact could be included; I had to limit myself to mainly those mentioned in her *Opuscula*.

### Rationale

This exploratory monograph on Anna Maria van Schurman was written within certain constraints of time (1 to 1½ years) and space (number of pages and footnotes). Especially the latter prevented me from giving in full the original texts in Latin, Greek and Hebrew – contrary to our usual practice as philologists. The reader will have to take my word: I translated those as accurately as possible. Seventeenth century texts in Dutch, German and French were translated. However, some new material that is not readily accessible, was given in full. I also covered Van Schurman's contact with other learned and literate women extensively, as these women have been almost totally unknown up to now.

## Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the Management Committee of the University of Utrecht, and especially the former Rector Magnificus Willem Hendrik Gispén, for the invitation to write about the first female university student: Anna Maria van Schurman. When this work met with delays during my overseas stay, they approved a *ἀποσπάρματιον*, a small foretaste, in the form of the publication of a preliminary shorter version of the study, entitled '*Poeta laureata*': *Anna Maria van Schurman, de eerste studente in 1636*. For that, I am grateful.

Thanks are also due to the K.F. Hein Foundation for financial support; my supervisors Leen Dorsman and Joost Dankers of the Research Institute for History and Culture for their meticulous and thorough critique; Otto Plassmann for his willingness to act as electronic sounding board and for his translations from Arabic and Italian; Dirkje Ebbers for critically reading the manuscript, Annemarie Krzesinski for helping with the testaments, Nana Wagner for transcribing the patent of nobility ('adelsbrief'), Stefan Kiedron for undertaking searches in the University Library in Wrocław, Conrad Lattimer for scanning the photographs and Michael Stuart for his help with the letters from Basel.

Of course this task would have been impossible without the assistance of many helpful people in libraries, archives, universities and museums, for instance, in Amsterdam, The Hague (Dirk Idzinga), Leiden (Frans Huisman), London, Copenhagen (Marianne Pade, Minna Skafte Jensen), Cologne (Herr Eschbach), Stockholm, Utrecht (Jos Meeuwissen), Franeker (Hans van der Kamp), Leeuwarden and Hamburg (Marion Sommer). Marianne Alenius of the *Museum Tusulanæum Forlag* in Copenhagen spontaneously handed me a pile of books in Danish on learned and literate women, as a gift. For accompanying me on some unforgettable photo expeditions to Franeker and Lexmond, I thank my earlier schoolmate, Diane Niemantsverdriet. Likewise I am very grateful to Margreet Oskam and Ignatia Follender, my former parents-in-law Huigen, Helma and Rienk Wiersma, Mirjam Hoijsink and Wim Weyland for putting me up, respectively, in the *Godscamerie* in Utrecht, in *De Steenkamp* in Voorthuizen, in *Schouwburg Avenue* in Gouda, and in the *Plantage* house in Amsterdam. I am also grateful to the enthusiastic and critical listeners to my lectures on Van Schurman in Lund, Bonn, Gouda, Cape Town, Ridderkerk, Utrecht, Windhoek and Stellenbosch. I mention Willem Barnard individually for his poem, Enny de Bruijn and Tjirk van der Ziel for their interviews. Finally, I wish to thank my former husband Siegfried Huigen, my twins Thomas and Brandaan, and Sweetness on the home front in the little slave house in Stellenbosch.

Alas, our close friend and my former promoter, Bert van Stekelenburg, could not share in the birth of the original Dutch version of this work, *De eerste studente*. Would he have regretted this? *It's okay, no thank you*, he would have muttered with his cynical sense of humour. Still, he had been, until his tragic and untimely death in the Antarctic (in March 2003), the learned sounding board for *De eerste studente*.

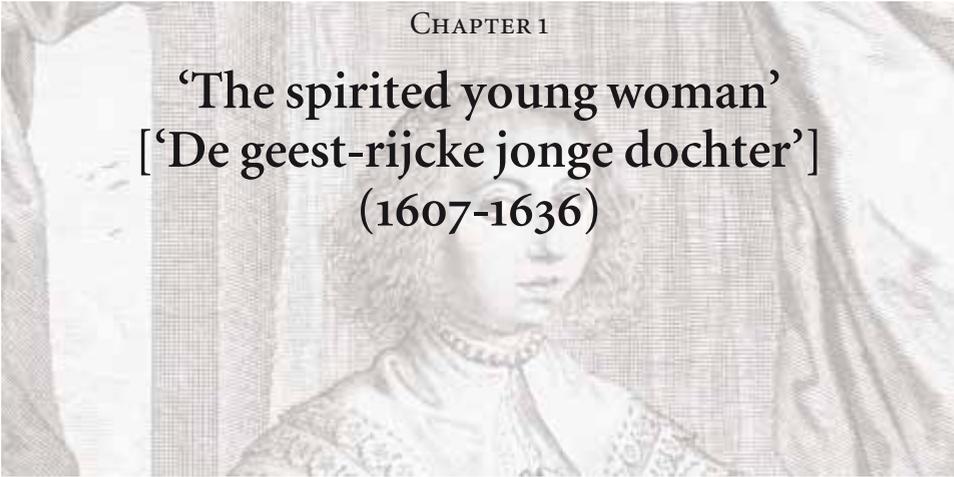
Anna Maria van Schurman often signed off her work with '*Soli deo gloria*' [*To God alone the glory*]; my motto during this work was: *Sol iustitiæ illustra nos!* [*Sun of justice, illuminate us!*]

PART I

**Anna Maria van Schurman  
before the establishment  
of the University of Utrecht**



# ‘The spirited young woman’ [‘De geest-rijcke jonge dochter’] (1607-1636)

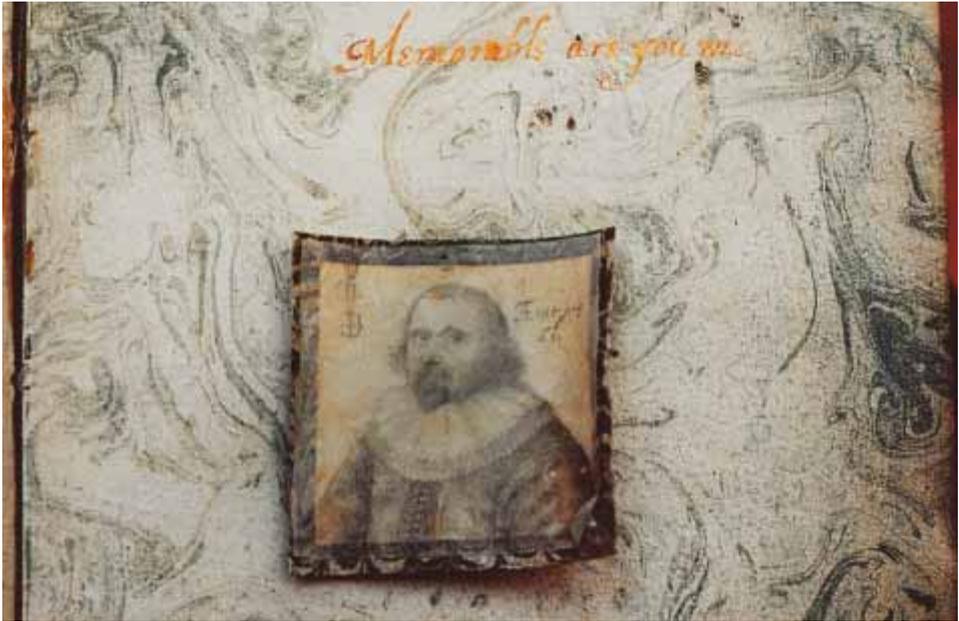


## Her life

Utrecht, Dom Square, 1618. In the Van Schurman home, father Frederik and his sons are sitting at the table, bent over Latin books. The younger little sister, who is doing French, is listening with interest. When Hendrik and Johan Godschalk are struggling with their difficult Latin, she calls out the correct answer from across the room. Frederik van Schurman is astonished; then he comes to an important decision: from now on, Anna Maria will also be learning Latin. Later, in her Latin autobiography *Eukleria* (1673), she looked back on this incident:

Once, around my eleventh year – it was 1618 A.D. – it happened that my elder brothers, who were almost two and four years older than me, were being taught Latin by Father, but I was being taught French. As luck – or rather, divine providence – would have it, at one point they could not answer something in Latin, but I could. My father then decided that I might as well join my brothers in learning Latin. He strongly encouraged me, and I in turn wished to please and obey him above all, so I put in great effort to do my best. From then on, he started introducing me to the humanities. In order that the tedious, fine distinctions of the grammar would not dishearten me in the very beginning, he decided very sensibly to introduce me to Seneca, his favourite philosopher, so that in the process of reading and unravelling Seneca, I would become acquainted with the Latin grammar in a playful manner. *Een adelaar vangt geen vliegen* [an eagle does not hawk at flies], he said. He playfully taught me the basic principles of Latin while we were taking walks through the garden and elsewhere. In this way, the boring principles of the subject were made more palatable for me. In the meantime, Father added to my enjoyment of reading this pagan writer, the holy scriptures as antidote. Otherwise, Christian piety would suffer.<sup>4</sup>

That decision on Frederik van Schurman’s part to allow his daughter to learn Latin was crucial for the development of Anna Maria. Ever since the Latin classical antiquity, the ability to read and write in Latin had been a fundamental requirement for admission to institutions of male power and authority. For more than two thousand years, Latin had been the (official) language of the state, of learning and of the church. Although, after the Reformation, Latin was no longer the language of the (whole) church and had lost its function as



'Memorable are you me' is written in gold script above a portrait of the deceased Frederik van Schurman (1623). The little portrait is covered with a kind of tissue paper; the deceased is seen through a veil, as if further removed. But ever more strongly she felt his request to go through life as a learned and celibate girl.

language of the state (the European vernaculars had come into their own), a knowledge of Latin was still essential. Throughout Europe, it was the language of instruction at universities and high schools. Only young men who had learnt Latin at home or at the Latin school, were admitted to university. Knowledge of Latin was an indispensable requirement for later achieving access to the exclusive circle of men who held the top positions in the country.<sup>5</sup>

Women were excluded from this male, Latin culture. They were not allowed to attend any form of formal education outside the home, nor to speak or preach in public. It was already an exception when Renaissance women were allowed to study at home; let alone to study classical languages. What would they do with such knowledge, in any case? For queens such as Elizabeth I of England and Christina of Sweden, studying the Classics could perhaps stand them in good stead: they could gain practical wisdom from such texts, for instance, Suetonius' biographies of the Caesars. But this did not apply to other women. The general fear was that studying the classical writers would simply put wrong, promiscuous ideas into their heads. Yet, Erasmus did have a measure of influence with his dialogue between an abbot and a learned woman, in which he mentioned examples of learned women (for instance, the daughters of Thomas More). Some daughters of professors and principals, and noble young women, were indeed educated in the Classics. But even if a young woman belonged to the upper crust of the population, she would still not automatically be educated in the Classics. It would depend on educational ideas, on the social context (for example, brothers being schooled at home), and on the aspirations of her imme-

diate family, especially those of her father.<sup>6</sup> Through this attention that Anna Maria van Schurman caught, Jonkheer Van Schurman changed his mind about women and Latin (his aristocratic wife, Eva von Harff, knew no Latin), and he admitted his daughter into the world of learning.

Anna Maria van Schurman's studying Latin was her 'ticket' into the world of learning. We do not know precisely which role Frederik van Schurman played in this world, but we do know that he was raised to the nobility in 1613. From this patent of nobility, it is evident that he was well read, had travelled extensively and also wrote poetry. He had been shaped by the humanistic culture in which studying the *bonae litterae* (holy scriptures and literature) was held in high regard. This he wished to pass on to his sons, and now, having reconsidered, also to his daughter. For him, just as for Thomas More, education was not so much about political aspirations, but about intellectual aims that were strongly bound up with pursuing and transferring *pietas*. *Pietas* was originally a classical concept that, except for a sense of duty, the love towards God and the fellow human beings, commitment, reverence, and patriotic love, also encompassed piety. In the Christian tradition, the term *pietas* is mainly used to indicate the everyday way of life of Christians, and is often translated as piousness or piety. But the classical meaning still resonated in the term. Piety was an essential part of life for the entire Van Schurman family, also for Anna Maria. We already saw in the citation above how her father added the Bible to her 'pagan' reading matter of Seneca in Latin. This will become clear if we go back to the preceding years in Cologne and in Germany.<sup>7</sup>

### *Piety*

Anna Maria van Schurman was born into desperate times, in November 1607. In the militant Catholic city of Cologne where she was born, the stakes were still smoking. She was christened in secret in the *Reformed Congregation*, the same underground church where her parents Frederik van Schurman and Eva von Harff got married in 1602, the same church where her three brothers Hendrik Frederik, Johan Godschalk and Willem were christened.

Thirty years earlier, things were different in Cologne. The city was a safe haven for religious exiles: not only for Coornhert, but also for Van Schurman's relatives on both her father's and her mother's side. They had to flee



Anna Maria van Schurman often portrays Eva von Harff as a resolute woman with friendly eyes. She always wrote about her mother with love and respect. After her mother's death in 1637, Anna Maria took over her domestic duties.

for their lives, her father Frederik van Schurman together with his well-off patrician family from Antwerp, in the same night that their friend and fellow-Christian, Christoffel Fabricius, died at the stake and Alva came to power (1568). They lost all their possessions. After living in various places in Germany (e.g. Hamburg, Frankfurt), they settled in 1593 in the then safe haven of Cologne. Also Van Schurman's grandparents, the noble Von Harff family, could barely save themselves in time from Neuß, a city that was plundered immediately after their departure by the marauders of Parma. They also came to Cologne. Grandfather Von Harff remarked about the loss of their possessions, 'These are only perishable, worldly goods [...] The flames will never be able to destroy the Word in my heart.' These words of him and these stories were handed down as part of the family heritage.<sup>8</sup>

Anna Maria van Schurman spent the first years of her life in Cologne, in the house 'De Cronenberg' at the 'Krummer Buchel'. However, the religious climate in Cologne changed from hospitality, via being merely tolerated, to plain intolerance. Anna Maria van Schurman was three years old when a terrible religious persecution broke out. She fled, together with others from the city. They found a safe haven in the castle Dreibern at Schleiden (to the south-west of Cologne) that belonged to the Von Harff family. But the Van Schurman family soon left for the Netherlands, where Protestants enjoyed religious freedom.<sup>9</sup>

In the Renaissance, it was common practice that children of the elite were educated at home. In addition to Frederik van Schurman, a 'house master' taught the children reading, writing, arithmetic and also some music. Anna Maria played the harpsichord and the lute, and could also sing well. The religious education was undertaken by Van Schurman, his wife Eva, and the domestic staff. The latter started at a very early age. When she was only three years old, Anna Maria could already read the Bible and recite parts of the Heidelberg Catechism (first question: 'What is your only comfort in life and death?'). All this made a deep impression on her. Even as an older woman she could still recall the precise feeling that she experienced as a child. She was out with a servant girl, looking for plants, and while they were resting on the bank of a quiet brook, she had to recite the Heidelberg Catechism. When she came to the answer of the first question of the HC ('That I am not my own, but

belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ'), she felt her heart 'overflow with such a huge and pleasurable joy and such a profound awareness of the love of Christ, that all the subsequent years could never erase the vivid memory of that moment'.<sup>10</sup>



Self-portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman.

### The Knight Arnold von Harff

Anna Maria van Schurman had an adventurous ancestor: the knight, Arnold von Harff of Cologne. She must have heard the tales about this adventurer often in the family, and it is quite possible that Van Schurman got hold of his manuscript. Arnold von Harff came from a prosperous, noble family and was the middle son of three. He left Cologne on 7 November 1496 and returned on 10 October 1499, after a journey that covered three global regions (Italy, Syria, Egypt, Arabia, Nubia, Palestine, Turkey, France and Spain). He wrote a book (in Low Rhenish) about his travels, which made him famous.<sup>I</sup>

However, part of his book on his travels abounds with many invented place names and reminds one of Marco Polo and other sources (Jan van Mandeville). Much of his 'travels' were fantasies. He never set foot in Arabia, nor in India, nor in Sofotora, nor in Madagascar. Neither did he climb the 'Mondgebirge' nor follow the origins of the Nile River up to Cairo. What is more, the times and distances that he claimed to have covered do not agree. But apart from these inconsistencies, he could still speak with authority about the countries he visited.

As pious pilgrim he visited holy places such as Santiago da Compostella, Mont-Saint-Michel, and even travelled to Jerusalem and Sinai. Through his interaction with experienced, well-travelled tradesmen and with Germans whom he met everywhere in Europe, Africa and Asia, he really accumulated a wide knowledge, especially about the Orient. His detailed descriptions of, for instance, Cairo, were for a long time unsurpassed. But his description of the geography of Europe also has great value because of the many place names that he mentioned on his routes. In addition to giving a lot of attention to street systems, he also collected words (especially numerals) and proverbs in foreign languages, and copied the form of the letters. Von Harff was convinced that he had visited the island of Sokotra with a ship that had lost all its nails. A magnetic rock had apparently pulled all the iron nails from the hull of the ship. He claimed to have witnessed an unbelievable battle at sea between a sea monster and a whale, and to have visited the grave of Mohammed in Medina. Furthermore, he knew the Amazons, warrior women with only one breast. Von Harff illustrated his story with attractive drawings.

It must have been in Van Schurman's genes: the piety, the thirst for knowledge and the love of language and drawing.<sup>II</sup>

I. Groote 1860.

II. Pfullmann 2001: 246-247.

The religious teachings were taken to such lengths that, already as a young girl, she knew in great detail the abstract differences between Remonstrants and Contra-Remonstrants (or Counter-Remonstrants). These differences within the Protestant faith (the Van Schurman family were Contra-Remonstrants) were related to the concepts of predestination and free will. Had God decided beforehand who would go to heaven and who would go to hell? If so, what about free will and the human being's responsibility? The Contra-Remonstrants believed in divine predestination. Once, during a church service where the sermon went against this belief, Anna Maria became very upset and wanted to leave.<sup>11</sup>

Her parents were so concerned about her religious education that they sent her to a French school with great hesitation, where she could interact with other children. But apparently, she fell under bad influences. So, after two months, she was taken from the school:

It was quite an advantage in my education, the fact that, when I was seven years old, my parents removed me from the French school after I had been there for two months only, so that I had undergone very little of the bad influences which might have made an impression on the pure mind of a young child, by the games that children play or the swear words that children might use.

[Hier by quam dit bijzonder voordeel mijner opvoeding, dat mijn Ouders, als ik zeven jaren was, my niet langer als twee maanden in de Franse school gehouden hebben, zo dat ik door het spelen der kinderen en door de besmetting van quade woorden, die op de teedere geheugenis als op een wit geschaaft blad ligt een indruk geven, weinig ben bedorven.]<sup>12</sup>

### *Martyrdom*

Except for the fact that Anna Maria van Schurman began learning Latin in her eleventh year in Utrecht, something else happened in that time that would affect her life deeply. She read the Book of Martyrs [het Martelarenboek]. That was a popular genre at the time. In these books were not only the stories and pictures of the religious persecutions of early Christianity, but also of the persecutions during and after the Reformation when many thousands of martyrs were persecuted and killed throughout Europe for their deviant faith. When people were burnt, decapitated, drowned, drawn and quartered, hanged or buried alive, crowds of people gathered to watch the spectacle. Sympathisers published pamphlets, wrote poems, sent letters, and compiled books of the life stories and last words of the martyrs. These publications, especially the Books of Martyrs, were hugely popular and were continuously reprinted and revised.<sup>13</sup> Which Book of Martyrs Anna Maria van Schurman read, we do not know, but in any case she now saw the stories that were always told within the family, in context. Did she not herself flee as three-year-old little girl? This brought on a 'burning desire' in her to die a martyr's death:

I remember, around my eleventh year, when I got caught up in reading the histories of the blood witnesses, that when reading about the example of so many faithful servants of Christ and witnesses of his truth, my heart was grabbed by a burning desire to be a blood witness myself, so that I earnestly desired to exchange even my sweet life for such a glorious death.

[Zo heugt het my dat het ontrent mijn elfste jaar voorgevallen is, als ik eerst in het lezen van de geschiedenissen der Bloetgetuigen geraakte, dat my op het beschouwen van het voorbeeld van zo veel gelovige dienstknechten Christi en Getuigen zijner waarheit, mijn gemoed van zulken brandende begeerte tot het Bloetgetuigenis is overvallen, dat ik wel hertelijk gewent heb zelfs mijn zoete leven met zulken heerlijken doot te verwisselen.]<sup>14</sup>

To understand this death wish of an eleven-year-old little girl better, one needs some background regarding the beliefs about martyrdom that were current in the early seventeenth century. In early-modern Christianity, there was agreement about many questions of faith, such as the origin, the meaning and the destiny of humankind. The Bible was the Word of God and the revelation of his will. Events on earth were seen as being determined

by his providence. After death, the same God who had created them, would welcome them in heaven or condemn them to hell. Christians also believed that the sinful human nature had contaminated the reality that God had created, but that it was redeemed by the death of Jesus, his son. Eternal salvation was possible through him alone, and that required faith as well as action: not only obeying God's commandments, but also following Jesus. Ignoring the commandments would lead to certain damnation. These insights were shared by all Christians in those times. But at the same time, the content of the divine truth was being sharply criticised. Christians agreed that the Holy Bible revealed God to humankind, but they were not in agreement over its interpretation. These differences in interpretation were so irreconcilable that they were quite willing to suffer and die for their beliefs. They believed that everything happened according to the plan of divine providence. But what did that mean? In the case of being executed for one's faith, was it a matter of God putting his children to the test, or was he in fact avenging himself on those who resisted his truth? The answer was inextricably entwined with the religious beliefs that one held.

Within Christianity, martyrdom was regarded as a special devotion. Martyrs were honoured as heroes and heroines. Everyone knew very well the various canons within Christianity. Martyrs in the Protestant Church were not recognised by the Roman Catholics, and vice versa, but the martyrs from before the Reformation were included in most of the canons. In the descriptions it was often mentioned how the martyrs – strange-

ly, also those of the 'opposition' – died with such happy, radiant faces – an image that the spectators could not easily forget. The martyrs were standing upright in the fire that was burning them up alive – driven by what? The text from Matthew 10:



Together with her brothers Hendrik Frederik and Johan Godschalk van Schurman, Anna Maria learned Latin. The only information we have on Hendrik Frederik is that he passed away in 1632 and was buried in the family crypt in Rhenen.

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. [...] Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, him shall I also deny before My Father which is in heaven.

Death was a rite of passage, a passing from the temporary life on earth to an eternal life. Roman Catholics, Protestants and Anabaptists shared this insight. So the martyrs were encouraged by their supporters, through personal contact or through letters, to persevere until death. They all saw themselves as part of the historical community of the 'innocently persecuted', with Christ, who had been innocently crucified, as the shining example. Martyrdom was the ultimate way of following Christ. It was a sublime death, despite the temporary discomfort. Thus, in all the books about martyrs the glory of martyrdom was always emphasised. And if an opportunity to die for the truth should not present itself, then suffering for the sake of truth would count as a spiritual martyrdom, because they believed: 'Blessed are they who suffer for Christ's sake'.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, since early Christianity, martyrdom was regarded as the most desirable death – also by Anna Maria van Schurman. The desire to die a martyr's death would become a strong driving force in her life, and later in her life she would again experience fleeing for the sake of her faith. But in 1618, her life still lay ahead of her and the city of Utrecht offered a safe haven for religious exiles such as the Van Schurman family.<sup>16</sup>

### *The arts*

In Utrecht, the Van Schurman family became friends with the flower painter Ambrosius Bosschaert and his artist friends, Roelant Savery, Balthasar van der Ast and the engraver Crispijn van der Passe. The latter they had known already – he was a friend and fellow believer who had also fled from Cologne in 1610. Anna Maria van Schurman started out with the arts at a very young age, not only with papercutting, but also with drawing and embroidery. In their home there were many fine paintings, some by Lucas Cranach and Joris Hoefnagel, among others. She first copied these, until she could create her own works of art, especially portraits in miniature format. She experimented with oils, gouache, pencil, pastels, wax, boxwood, ivory and the engraver's needle. She was the first artist in the Netherlands to make pastel portraits. She herself always regarded her artistic activities as merely taking a brief break from her more important studies.<sup>17</sup> She also never aspired to reach the levels of competence of professional artists or sculptors. Yet the artist Gerard Honthorst would later estimate the value of a portrait that she had carved into palm wood, at a thousand guilders – an amount far in excess of what Rembrandt received from Prince Frederik Hendrik for his great painting, the *Resurrection of Christ Our Lord* [*Verrijzenis van Onzen Heer Christus*] (he received only 700 guilders). She suggested in her autobiography that she had been an autodidact in the arts. That is only partially true, because we know that she did receive training in the studio of Magdalena van der Passe, a daughter of Crispijn van der Passe. In the early thirties of the seventeenth century, she learnt there the art of engraving.<sup>18</sup>

Now the arts, just as languages and music, formed part of the education for daughters

from affluent circles, such as Anna and Tesselschade Roemer Visscher. Except for writing poetry, they were both also competent at playing ensemble music, at calligraphy and at engraving on glass with a diamond. In 1620, a few years after Anna Maria van Schurman had started studying Latin, Anna Roemer Visscher already wrote a beautiful praise poem on Van Schurman. In this poem, she praises not only her beauty, but also her knowledge of Latin and Greek (which was so excellent that she could actually speak those languages), her artistic hands and her musical talent:

Greetings to you, oh young blossom  
of whose knowledge I speak highly  
Whom I love and hold in high regard  
as my friend:  
Who will in future be  
(if heaven should allow it)  
the pride of all those maidens  
who ever pursued knowledge.

May your white and tender hands  
disgrace all writers.  
When you paint [on] linen with your needle  
or [on] paper with charcoal  
you do it in such a way that artists are astounded  
and compare you to Pallas

[Sijt gegroet, ó Jonge Bloem  
Van wiens kennis dat ik roem  
Die ik acht and 'die ik minne,  
Die ik hou voor mijn vriendinne:  
Die in toecomende tijdt  
(Immers soo 't den Hemel lijdt)  
't Puijk sal wesen van die maechden,  
Die ooijt wetenschap bejaechden.

Dat uw' witt en' teeder handen  
Al de schrijvers maek tot schanden.  
Als gij lijnwaet, met uw naeldt;  
Of papier, met kool bemaelt;  
Dat de konstenaers staen kijken,  
En' bij Pallas u gelijken.

Dear, sweet bud  
who amply sprouts virtue  
and whose beautiful limbs  
are adorned by even more pure morals  
Let your dear little mouth,  
when it is appropriate, with reasoning and principles  
make men's arrogance disappear;  
when you can address Greeks and Romans,  
those learned foreign people,  
without an interpreter.

When you touch the harpsichord or lute with your  
fingers,  
and cleverly mix your sweet singing in with this,  
Ah, how lively that must be,  
What a charming picture that would make!  
It is my wish that God may keep you safe  
from misfortune in your lifetime.  
Your father deserves to be saluted,  
For having educated you so well.

Lieffelijke, soete spruijt,  
Schiert vrij deuchdes looten uijt:  
En' de schoonheid van uw' leden,  
Ciert die met noch schoonder zeden.  
Laet uw' lieve, kleene mondt,  
Als het past, met reen en' grondt,  
Mannen hoochmoedt doen verdwijnen;  
Als gij Grieken en' latijnen,  
Dat geleerd' uijtheemsche volk  
Toe kent spreken, zonder tolk.

Als gij met de vingers dan  
Roert de Clavecimbel an  
Of de luijt; en' daer het zingen  
Aerdich onder weet te mingen.  
Aeij! hoe geestich moet dat gaen?  
Hoe bevallich moet dat staen?  
'K wensch dat godt uw 's levensjaren  
Wil voor ongeval bewaren.  
Eer uw' Vader hebben moet,  
Die u wel heeft opgevoedt.]

The poem ends significantly with a compliment to the father who had educated her so well.<sup>19</sup>

Anna Roemer Visscher and Anna Maria van Schurman probably met each other around 1620 in or around The Hague, and became friends. Not much is known about this, but the Van Schurman family apparently also lived in or near The Hague for a few years. Frederik van Schurman had to be near the court of stadtholder Prince Maurits for a 'court case of great importance', but what that was, we do not know. Additional confirmation of Frederik's residing in The Hague can also be found in a written account on the death of his good friend, the flower painter Ambrosius Bosschaert, who 'at the home of Jonkheer Schuermans, father of Anna Maria Schuermans, ... passed away and was buried in The Hague, to the sorrow of many admirers' ['ten huise van Joncker Schuermans, vader van Anna Maria Schuermans ende aldaer gesturven ende in schravenhage begraven is, tot droefheyt van veel liefhebbers']. Anna Roemer Visscher, who mixed in circles of artists and writers, and who knew the Dutch poets Heinsius, Hooft, Huygens, Vondel and Cats well, was one of the first to recognise how gifted Anna Maria was. She gave Anna Maria some exposure and brought her in contact with the writers. In the twenties Anna Maria also met various intellectuals such as the Leiden professors Daniel Heinsius, Andreas Rivet and Adolf Vorstius, the Utrecht advocate Buchelius, and Jacobus Revius from Deventer, who was an expert on the old Testament and also a poet. These men were all members of the network of male humanistic scholars in the Netherlands and Europe. In this circle, Latin (and to a lesser extent, Greek) was the medium of communication.<sup>20</sup> As Van Schurman's brother, Johan Godschalk, was studying maths under Willebrord Snellius at the University of Leiden (he enrolled on 1 May 1623), she could have come in contact with the Leiden professors Daniel Heinsius, Andreas Rivet and Adolf Vorstius via her brother – despite the University of Leiden being out of bounds for women.<sup>21</sup> We will discuss these contacts after Franeker.

### *Franeker*

The Van Schurman family moved to Franeker in Friesland in October 1623. Already since 1585, Franeker had a university with faculties of theology, law and medicine, and a fourth faculty of letters and philosophy, which was compulsory for all students. A knowledge of languages, especially of Latin, was essential in the world of learning. The Franeker Academy went to a great deal of trouble to attract excellent professors, especially for the Faculty of Theology, which enjoyed pride of place. But sometimes mistakes were made; for instance, in 1615 the Pole Johannes Maccovius was appointed as professor of theology; he was indeed well qualified, but he led a licentious life (despite his one eye). Then the English puritan Amesius was appointed in 1622 as second professor of theology.<sup>22</sup>

Frederik van Schurman was planning to study under Professor Amesius at the time, and on 30 October 1623, he and his son Johan Godschalk entered their names in the student register [*album studiosorum*] of the University of Franeker. It was not unusual for men of more mature years to enrol for formal studies. But Frederik van Schurman was never able to attend any lectures. In the large Martena house that the Van Schurman family was renting, he unexpectedly died, at age fifty nine.<sup>23</sup> Someone wrote in the front pages

## Rhenen

From one of Cats' notes it is clear that Anna Maria van Schurman also lived in Rhenen. Already in 1625 he wrote in his *Houwelijck*: 'Oh Schuermans, you jewel, only recently discovered, of whose learned youth and outstanding penmanship the cities on the Rhine and I myself bear witness' ['O Schuermans, u juweel, eerst onlangs opgeresen, Van wiens geleerde jeucht en uitgelesen pen De steden aan de Rijn en ick, getuyge ben']. Cologne and Utrecht, as well as Rhenen, were situated on the Rhine. It was in 1623 in Rhenen that Anna Maria wrote her contribution in Latin for the collection for Gerard Thibaut, a fencing master, also from Antwerp, who was a friend of Crispijn van der Passe. These new rules for fencing, that were based on mathematical principles, made Thibaut very popular. She wrote:

To Mister Gerard Thibaut

who was the first to adapt the heroic art of fencing,  
by a wonderfully simple method, ingeniously to mathematical principles  
that art of fencing which was unknown to everyone and everywhere  
or that art that was explained blindly without rules.  
And with the highest honour should he not be recommended to the heroes of fencing or even  
be included in their ranks?

I, Anna Maria van Schurman, wrote (this) in Rhenen on 25 August 1623

The family bought a family crypt in the Cunera Church in Rhenen, and Hendrik Frederik and mother Eva von Harff were buried therein. After the large-scale restorations in the 1930s and the destruction of the Cunera church tower in the Second World War, these graves have been lost. As father Van Schurman lay buried in the Martini Church in Franeker, it would make sense that they probably bought something in Rhenen only after 1623. Perhaps they had a country house in Rhenen, like the Winter King Frederick V, Elector Palatine, who had his summer residence there.

of the Latin Vulgate Bible in which the family tree and register of the Van Schurman family was kept up to date:

In the year 1623, on 15 November, in Franeker, the said Frederik van Schurman died in the Lord about one hour after midday and lies buried there in the choir section of the Great Church.

[Anno 1623 den 15 November In Franeker is deselve in den Heere ontslapen ontrent den een uijren na de middach ende leyt alldaer begraven in het Choor in de grote kercke.]<sup>24</sup>

## *Celibacy*

What a poignant scene it must have been: the father on his deathbed. One by one, Frederik van Schurman called his wife and children to him. In great earnestness, he asked Anna



In the seventeenth century it was fashionable for students and scholars to possess and circulate an 'album amicorum' (literally: album of friends). Often it was richly decorated with drawings, poems and multilingual inscriptions. This is Van Schurman's contribution to the album of Gerald Thibaut.

Maria to promise him that she would never get married, she had to beware of 'the inextricable, extremely iniquitous worldly shackles of marriage' ['die onontwarbare, zeer verdorven wereldse boei van het huwelijk']. What else could she do but grant him his wish? At the time, the promise not to get married entailed a promise of chastity. Father Van Schurman had earlier been concerned about Anna Maria's chastity. That was when he was teaching her Latin and Greek. He knew that many classical writers wrote openly about love and adultery, and like so many fathers, he felt that daughters should rather not read of such things. Van Schurman wrote in her autobiography:

I must especially mention this as a glorious blessing of God, that my parents, who were always striving to be honourable and respectable, made me fear such writers from a tender age, and also fear other influences that might have turned my mind from chaste innocence and virginal purity, in such a way that all my life I have been totally disgusted, as from imbibing a poisonous drink, from reading this kind of book and especially these poets, Greek as well as Latin. As a result, I have scarcely read any other writers seriously and attentively, except for Homer and Virgil, who were recommended to me by my father, and who are without fear of contradiction the princes of all other poets.

[Bezonder moet ik dit voor een heerlijke weldaat Gods aanmerken, dat mijn Ouders, die zich aller eerbaarheid en betaamlijkheit benaarstigden, my van kinds op, een schrik angejaagt hebben voor zulke Schrijvers, en voor alsulke andere dingen die mijn gemoed van de kuisheit en maagdelijke suiverheit hadden mogen afwenden, zo dat ik my door al mijn leven van het leezen van die slag van boeken en bijzonderlijk van 't leezen van zulke Pöeten, zowel Griekze als Latijnse, als van een pestige drank, volstandiglijk gewaght hebbe, zo dat ik ook naulijks iemand anders als Homerus en Vergilius, die my mijn Vader had angepreezen, die ook zonder tegenzeggen de Prinsen van alle andere Poëten zijn, ernstig en naarstig heb doorgeleezen.]<sup>25</sup>

We do not know precisely why father Van Schurman exacted this promise never to get married from his only daughter. Regrets about his own marriage? Fear that Anna Maria's talents would be sidelined in a marriage? Was it an attempt to (over-)protect her from the world – just as removing her from the French school was? In her autobiography, Anna Maria did suggest this; she wrote about 'his often repeated admonishments, by which he attempted to deter me from becoming contaminated by these times and the company of worldly people' ['meermaals herhaalde vermaningen, door welke hy my van de besmetting dezer eeuwe and van 't gezelschap der wereltsche menschen afschrikte'], and that she had to take care not to get caught in the snares of this world ['niet onvoorsichtig in de strikken dezer werelt mocht inwikkelen'].

Since early Christianity, virginal purity and celibacy were viewed as the highest virtues, much more impressive than avoiding vanity or desire. John the Baptist, Jesus and the Apostle Paul were after all, according to the scriptures, celibate and unmarried. People believed that virginal purity rendered supernatural powers, and enabled one to approach the ideal kind of life of the angels. Angels were believed to be incorporeal and to 'stand' in continual laudation before God. The ideal of virginal purity found expression in, among others, hermitage, monastic and convent life and in the celibacy of priests, monks and nuns. The great advantage for a woman who decided to become a nun, was the option to receive education, also in Latin – a route that could lead to some women actually acquiring learning. An excellent example would be Hildegard von Bingen. But after 1520, convents were banned in Protestant countries, and marriage was held as an ideal. Men and women would be on a more equal footing – although calls made in religious tracts or sermons for women to be submissive and obedient were common. Father Van Schurman expected of his daughter submission and obedience, but also demanded a non-Calvinistic requirement: celibacy.<sup>26</sup>

In the traditional European culture, as in antiquity and other civilisations over the entire world, chastity was regarded as the highest quintessential virtue of women. Courage, leadership, rationality, on the other hand, were regarded as typically male virtues. If one looks at the history of educated and learned women (for instance, of Isotta Nogarola), then it strikes one how often the requirement of virginal purity features. Whether Father Van Schurman had known examples of 'wise virgins', we do not know. It seems to me that the most probable explanation for his deathbed request, would be an inclination to shun the world and a fear that in marriage his gifted daughter would not be able to flourish.<sup>27</sup>

Promising not to get married was a crucial moment in the life of Anna Maria. Words spoken at a deathbed carry a lot of weight. If we keep in mind how many books with 'last [deathbed] words' were published and read, then we may understand how binding a promise made at a deathbed was. She kept her promise and devoted herself to her thirst for knowledge. Henceforth she would hide behind the motto of the martyr Ignatius of Antioch, 'my love has been crucified', a motto that referred to both celibacy and the crucified Jesus. Van Schurman would always write this motto as a kind of personal symbol near her signature in *alba amicorum* [friendship albums] or on multilingual pages, like two halves of one and the same stone. Sometimes she also wrote poems based on her motto. In one such poem it appears that she was confused by a marriage proposal. She wrote the German poem 'Wält tobe wie du wült' on a papercutting maze of hearts and crosses. After the way through the labyrinth has been completed, a beautiful, concise poem with four stanzas appears, with the refrain: 'Although world and passion still tempt me/ my love remains crucified' ['ob mich schohn wält und wohl-lust reizet /bleibt meine libe doch gekreuzet'] – a variation on her personal motto:<sup>28</sup>

World, rage and storm as you may  
My soul yet remains unmoved  
my mind, my heart and my feelings  
are never bewitched by your guile.  
Although world and passion still tempt me  
my love remains crucified.

[Wält tobe wi du wült und wühte  
Mein zihl bleibt dännoch unverrücket,  
mein sün, mein härtz und mein gemühte  
sein nih von deiner lust entzükt.  
Ob mich schohn wält und wohl-lust reizet  
bleibt meine libe doch gekreuzet.]<sup>29</sup>

For a while after the death of her father, Anna Maria van Schurman did in fact lose her equilibrium. This is obvious from a fine poem in French that she wrote for a writer who had immortalised her in his poems, probably Jacob Cats in his 'Houwelijck' (1625). She wrote – and I am paraphrasing – that for a while after the death of her father, she felt like an empty, rudderless ship tossing at sea. Her senses were numbed. But then heaven came to her assistance: she had a dream in which Lady Philosophy [Vrouwe Filosofia] visited her and comforted her. She should stop wallowing in her sorrow, she should be reasonable and sensible, then the bitter grief would become a sweet memory. Lady Philosophy was carrying under her arm a book of poems from which she then read aloud. When the dream faded, Van Schurman saw the book that the writer had sent to her, and in which her name had been immortalised, 'you carry me to heaven on the wings of your poems'. She concluded with a compliment: 'if your beautiful writings are like a torch that illuminates my name in the tomb of oblivion, then the only duty that remains for me is to honour my late father in you as a person.'<sup>30</sup>

Little else is known about her time in Franeker. She belonged to the nobility and thus mixed in the most exclusive circles. A cousin of her father, Abraham van Schurman, lived



Until his death in 1664, Johan Godschalk van Schurman was the brother that spent a lot of time with Anna Maria. With him she competed in studying and she shared a house with him.

in Leeuwarden and would later become a representative for Friesland in the Dutch Council of State. He introduced her to the Frisian branch of the Nassau family. In Franeker, she lived near one of the early centres of learning. Although the University of Franeker did not admit

female students, she did, via her brother Johan Godschalk, who studied geometry and medicine there, come into contact with professors such as Amesius (theology), Meinardus Schotanus (theology), Johannes Hachtingius and Daniël van Dam (logic), Adrianus Metius (mathematics) and Fockema Andrea (geometry). She would later again come across the professors Meinardus and Bernhardus Schotanus in Utrecht. She became friends with Willem Staackman, mayor of Franeker and later delegate in the States General, but also a patron of 'youthful practitioners of the art of poetry'.<sup>31</sup> During her stay in Franeker, he wrote the following:

How bright will the afternoon sun of this maiden shine,  
whose morning light already sets the universe afire?  
What could maturing time add that may be lacking now  
when her tender flower is now already resplendent in its beauty?

[Hoe zal de Middagzon van deze Maagd niet blaken  
Wier Morgen het Heel-Al in ligte brand doet raken?  
Wat kan de rijpe Tijd hier voegen bij 't gebrek  
Nu hare teed're bloem prijkt op het hoogst bestek?]<sup>32</sup>

In 1626, after Johan Godschalk van Schurman's studies in Franeker, the family moved back to Utrecht. The contacts with Friesland were indeed maintained, as a beautifully calligraphed thank-you letter shows, which Anna Maria van Schurman wrote in 1627 to the widow De Vervou-Gelle de Ostheim and her daughter Sophie.<sup>33</sup>

### *The Republic of Letters*

Through her correspondence with and meeting of the various scholars in the Netherlands, Van Schurman became part of the *Respublica Litteraria*, the *Republic of Letters*. This term referred until well into the seventeenth century, to an international humanistic community of scholars, who transcended the limitations of mother tongue, religion, social status and nationality. The language of communication was mostly Latin, and sometimes Greek or Hebrew. In the *Republic of Letters*, literature (*bonae litterae*) was passionately honoured (with religious literature at the top of the list), and the humanities were studied to become a better person, in order to gain a better understanding of God, who was regarded as the highest truth. Philology (transcribing, explaining and analysing classical texts) formed the basis for every discipline. All text books were written in Latin (or Greek) and therefore a thorough knowledge of the classical languages was a vital requirement, whether one wished to study law, theology or medicine.

This European scholarly fraternity operated via correspondence and personal meetings. Every 'citizen' was obliged to participate in the *communicatio*. Distance was to be no obstacle, and neither was birth. Only nobility of mind was important. The numerous (scholarly) letters generated by this republic, were sent by mail, or given to a friend, a merchant or a diplomat to deliver by hand. Often such letters were sent by way of students doing their 'grand tour' or scholars who were on a *peregrinatio academica*. Once the letter had been delivered, it was expected that the recipient would circulate it. The aim was the distribution of information, the development and expansion of knowledge. Therefore, any books and manuscripts that were included were not to be kept to oneself. If one received a book or a portrait as a gift, one was obliged to return the favour by way of an *antidoron* [literally, a 'return-gift']. To get access to important scholars, one needed a letter of introduction. The topics in the letters covered a wide spectrum: discussions about history and theology, scientific research, education, news from the world of books, gossip, miscellaneous news snippets, political reports, poems, personal experiences, et cetera. When a letter formed a complete dissertation about a scientific topic, a review of newly published books, or a collation of handwritten writings or a copy of inscriptions, then such a letter was referred to as a scholarly letter ['een geleerdenbrief']. Usually, such letters were only recognisable as letters, when one looked at the beginning and ending of the document.<sup>34</sup> Van Schurman's correspondence in Latin from these early years complied with all the characteristics of the male *Republic of Letters*, even though few of the letters are real scholarly letters. It consists mostly of shorter letters, poems and praise writings in Latin, attesting to a Dutch network of male scholars. In those years, her network was limited to the *Republic of the Seven United Netherlands* [*Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden*].<sup>35</sup>

Young men who were studying Latin, usually found writing poetry in Latin such a difficult task, that it was only expected from them right at the end of their education. The Latin elegy for the poet and Grand Pensionary Jacob Cats was written by Van Schurman around her fourteenth year, and this praise poem proves how talented she was: it was writ-

ten in difficult Latin in a classical poetic form (elegiac distichs/couplets) and was bursting with classical idioms:

As is being told that the remaining swan [in the North] lifts her voice when the spring winds caress her white bosom,  
 And like a bird seeing the early morning sun in the heavens, would joyfully burst into continual song, [...]  
 In the same way your letter warmed my frozen poetic fountain when from it, the eloquent goddess of persuasion breathed into my heart [...]<sup>36</sup>

She ended by wishing him, as friend of the fatherland and the muses, a fond farewell [*‘Vaarwel o vriend van vaderland en muzen’*]. In 1622, she thanked him again for his attention and his willingness to grant her a measure of fame, as she had only recently started studying the humanities – thus she wrote in Latin. That was the beginning of a correspondence which would continue until Cats died in 1660. In his books he praised her as a gifted young woman full of promise. His books were bestsellers, and so Van Schurman was immediately noticed in literary circles.<sup>37</sup>

From her Latin letter to the Leiden professor and poet Daniel Heinsius, dated 18 September 1623, it is evident that this was very difficult for Anna Maria van Schurman: to transgress the societal norms. Here she was, a pure, young girl, writing to the great professor and poet. She brooded over it, until the Goddess of Religion appeared to her in a dream and said that the virginal bashfulness existed only in the imagination. She had to stop dallying. She immediately put pen to paper and wrote a letter to express the high regard and affection she felt for him. Heinsius had to keep in mind that this letter was written by a very young girl who had only recently still been a child. She ended with *‘Vale Sol et Sal nostri saeculi’*, [*‘Farewell, o sun and salt of our age, illuminate this little star ... in darkness with your brilliance.’*]<sup>38</sup>

After returning from Franeker, Van Schurman came in contact with the poet and clergyman Revius. He was revisor of the State translation of the Bible (Old Testament) in Leiden, and expert on Semitic languages. Revius was very taken with her, *‘this sweet, young maiden’* [*‘dese soete maget’*] and *‘spirited young woman Miss Maria Schuyrmans’* [*‘geest-rijcke jonge dochter juffrouw Maria Schuyrmans’*]. In the poem below, he paid Van Schurman a huge compliment by saying that she was created from a flawless and smooth diamond, while most people are made from coarse rock:

If Deucalion (as people used to believe)  
 recreated the human race from stones,  
 so, I think, he took most of the dust  
 of thick and heavy rocks, of cobbles big and coarse,  
 but sowed with it some emeralds and sapphires  
 to decorate the world with clever people;  
 like you are, Schuyrmans, in my opinion  
 you originate from a clear and smooth diamond:  
 just like a diamond surpasses in virtue all the other stones,  
 the beauty of your mind outshines us all.

[Indien Deucalion (als men te meynen plachte)  
 Van steenen heeft hermaeckct het menschelijk geslachte  
 Soo, dunckt my, heeft hy wel genomen 't meeste stof  
 Van rotsen swaer en dick, van keyen groot en grof,  
 Maer heeft al-mee gesayt smaragden en saphieren  
 Om met vernufte luy de werelt te verciereren;  
 Gelijck ghy, Schuyrmans, sijt, die hebt na mijn verstant  
 U oorspronck van een claer' en gladden diamant:  
 Want recht als die in deucht de steenen overtreffet  
 U geest in fraeyicheyt sich boven ons verheffet.]<sup>39</sup>

Revius also included these poems in his volume of poetry, *Overijsselse sangen and dichten* [Overijssels songs and poems]. He sent her a copy, to which Van Schurman immediately responded with an appropriate poem in Latin ('On the muses of Jacobus Revius'). Revius immediately copied that poem and proudly sent it to his good friend Heinsius, who was a professor in Leiden. The latter responded in turn with a little Latin poem in which he wrote that Leiden did indeed have a picture of the Goddess of Wisdom (in the coat of arms of the University of Leiden), but that the living Goddess of Wisdom sat in Utrecht – in the flesh.<sup>40</sup>

But also in Utrecht she impressed influential people. The Utrecht advocate and antiquarian Arnoldus Buchelius met her during a pastoral visit as elder in the Dutch Reformed Church in Utrecht. On 27 March 1627, he wrote in his diary that he had met three noble women from Germany (Eva von Harff and her two sisters Agnes and Sybille), who became members of his church. There he met, together with the Utrecht parson, the Reverend Busschhof, also Anna Maria van Schurman, 'a young girl, but already proficient in Latin'. Buchelius also noted in his diary that he had seen two letters from her, written in a beautiful and pure style, one to Heinsius, the other to Cats. From then on until the day he died, he would painstakingly rewrite everything he came across that had been written by Van Schurman. Thanks to him, we have quite a number of poems and letters that would otherwise have been lost. He wrote to her also in Latin, for instance, that he wished to discuss her studies with her, and to visit her, but that two things were holding him back: he was a man and, moreover, forty years older than she was. He was, however, well informed about Van Schurman's classical studies: in his letters he referred to her study of Socrates, Plato, Epictetus and the Stoics. Buchelius then discussed Seneca, who was also a great favourite with Van Schurman, at length. He ended the letter with a very warm greeting: 'Farewell, jewel of learned women, from him who admires, honours and – if I may be so bold – holds you dearly to his heart'. Buchelius also appreciated her works of art; he even wrote that he had never seen anything like it in the entire Republic. He praised, for instance, a portrait that she had made of the artistic clergyman Busschhof. Alas, that portrait has been lost, but we do have a fine, calligraphed poem that she wrote in Latin for Busschhof, in which she praised and thanked him for a small work of art that he had sent her – a young novice. It was 'so beautifully executed and so humorous, that her muse hesitated to answer', she wrote in the poem.<sup>41</sup>

Her brother Johan Godschalk also went out of his way to introduce her into the intellectual circles. In a Latin letter, he asked Professor Caspar Barlaeus of the *Athenaeum Illustre* in Amsterdam, whether he had heard of Anna Maria:

I have a very exceptional sister, for she is not intimidated by that kind of studies. Perhaps you know her name? She is quite well known already. She is totally absorbed in your work. She is also sending her kindest regards to you. I will write to you at another time about her intellect, her activities and progress in the studies.<sup>42</sup>

Apparently, Johan Godschalk did that, for Barlaeus wrote in turn to the poet and politician Constantijn Huygens that in Utrecht there were now also young women in the arena of literature, competing for honour: ‘There is a maiden in Utrecht, who is exceptionally exemplary. She knows Latin and Greek and speaks both, she paints, and is a writer and a poet.’<sup>43</sup>

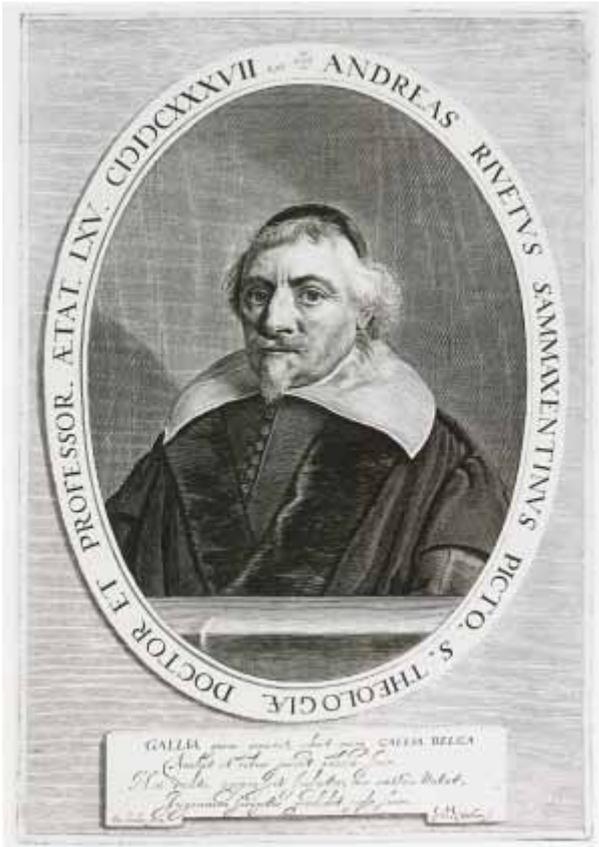
Meanwhile, the Van Schurman family had moved to another address in Utrecht. In 1629, Eva von Harff, who as widow had control over the family’s capital, bought ‘the buildings and stand, long known as the Lootse, situated on the corner of Poelenburg Lane and the church graveyard’ [‘de huysinge and erve, van outs genaemt de Lootse, staende and gelegen op de hoeck van ’t poelenburchsteeghe opt domskerckhof]. In this house, *Achter de Dom* [literally: *Behind the Cathedral*], Anna Maria van Schurman would spend forty years of her life. Here, her eldest brother Hendrik Frederik died at the age of 29. He was buried in Rhenen in the new family crypt in the Cunera church. Now only herself, her brother Johan Godschalk and her mother still remained. However, they did have the strong support and company of other relatives who had moved to the city since the increasing chaos and violence of the war in Germany: various sisters of her mother and brothers of her father who lived in Nieuwe Gracht, in Lange Nieuw Street and on the Oudkerkhof (among others, Johan van Schurman, Willem von Harff, Samuel van Schurman, Agnes and Sybille von Harff and a young cousin, Anne Margaretha van Schurman).<sup>44</sup>

Van Schurman continued with her studies in languages and literature. From time to time people sent her books, for instance, Jacob Cats sent her the *Spiegel van den Ouden ende Nieuwen Tijdt*. She did indeed have reason to be delighted with it, as the first edition of 1632 was beautifully executed. Not only were the proverbs beautifully illustrated with engravings by Adriaen van der Venne, but Cats had also added a large collection of equivalent proverbs in Dutch, Latin, Greek, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Turkish and English. Van Schurman was thrilled with this book. To say thank you, she wrote a fine poem in Dutch, ‘Aen de Musen van Mijn Heer Cats’ [‘To the muses of Mr Cats’]:

The gift that I praise, and cannot praise enough,  
takes pride of place among my possessions.  
The outer decoration, the gold that gleams on the outside,  
is only the bottom step, from which one ascends higher [...]

[De gifte die ick roem, and niet genoeg kan roemen,  
Becleet de waerdste plaats van ’t geen ick myn magh noemen  
Het wterlyck cieraet, ’t gout dat van buyten glimpt  
Is maer den laegsten trap, waer van men hooger klimpt [...]]<sup>45</sup>

From the house *Achter den Dom* she also wrote her first letters to Andreas Rivet in which she focused on an issue that she felt very strongly about: women’s learning. Rivet was a French Huguenot leader, who had been appointed in 1620 as professor in theology in Lei-



Anna Maria van Schurman had personally initiated the contact between herself and Andreas Rivet, professor in Leiden and educator of Prince William II. She wanted to have an intellectual sounding board. Rivet became her principal correspondent. Through him she befriended many other foreign scholars.

den and in 1632 would become the educator of Prince William II. Van Schurman had already in 1621 heard Andreas Rivet's preaching for the first time (in French), and – as she later wrote – was very moved by his sermons. Since then, she felt for him 'that respectful love which she had for him all her life' ['ce respectueux amour qu' elle a eu pour luy toute

sa vie']. Their letters and poems in Latin and French that are available date from 20 July 1631 only, but their actual contact dates from an earlier time. The correspondence with Rivet is particularly interesting as it contained the beginnings of her later publications on women's right to study, the scholarly letters *Amica Dissertatio* and the *Dissertatio*. Van Schurman had initiated the correspondence. She especially wished to exchange views with him regarding women's learning.<sup>46</sup>

### *Women's struggle*

Since time immemorial, 'women' have always been discussed in relation to 'men'. Was woman a failed attempt at being a man, should she be relegated to the level of animals, should she subject herself to be led by man, did she indeed have an intellect, should she be allowed to perform in public, or did she merely serve as womb, pretty dolly or support structure back at home? The philosophical and theological viewpoints about women have been conducive for centuries to keep her in her place, but every so often the battle would flare up again. This struggle that was expressed in books, poems and pamphlets since the Middle

Ages, is referred to as the 'Querelle des femmes' or women's struggle. This literature was written mostly by (anti-feminist) men, but here and there, a woman would also have her say. It was the driving force for women's writings, and had to do with the essence of their womanhood. Christine de Pisan, Marie le Jars de Gournay, Lucretia Marinella and also Anna Maria van Schurman are a few examples of women who participated in that debate.<sup>47</sup>

In 1631, Anna Maria van Schurman wrote to Rivet and told him that she was trying to write a little book in French on how young women could best spend their free time:

But as nothing has been worked out in detail yet, except for the sequence of the various parts, and the comparisons and arguments are actually nothing more than vague ideas, I think that it does not yet deserve an evaluation by you; the little book is really not ready yet for such an intense scrutiny.<sup>48</sup>

As far as we know, that little book was never published, but parts of it seem to have appeared, first in the *Amica Dissertatio*, and later in amended form in the *Dissertatio*. Rivet responded in detail. He regarded her – a woman who had acquired academic learning – as a huge exception; most women should get married and have children. According to him, they had no interest in studying in any case. Van Schurman felt, on the contrary, that every woman who was blessed with an average intellect, sufficient free time and money, should have access to studying. But that sounded much too revolutionary to Rivet.<sup>49</sup>

On 3 January 1634, she referred to Rivet as the 'Prior studiorum meorum sive vitae melioris Patronus ac Director' ['first patron and guide to my studies, that is to a better life']. He was also full of praise for her, for which she thanked him again. In the same year, he dedicated a book to her on the preparation for holy communion, *l'Instruction préparatoire à la Sainte Cène*. He wrote for instance about her modesty and her talents 'tres rares and vostre sexe et and nostre siecle' ['very rare in your sex and in our century']. According to him, she was such a wise maiden that she could even have discussions with scholars in Latin and Greek, correspond with them in these languages, and in such a fine calligraphed handwriting at that. She could express herself in her mother tongue, and also in French, she could speak with authority about religious philosophy and also about morality. In addition, she made the most of her artistic talents, not only on paper, but also with other materials and with pen, needle, paint brush and engraver's needle. 'That is a huge compliment for a woman', Rivet wrote further, 'as she had learnt all this without leaving her father's house. Also most of the knowledge that she acquired after his death, was self-taught. And with success, because of her brilliant intellect, which she could apply to anything.' Rivet found her piety her best quality. 'In her, everything is encompassed in one person.' Rivet warmly thanked her too for the holy friendship that she offered him and that she had wished from him. She had received his total commitment to friendship. Anna Maria van Schurman thanked Rivet at length (30 May 1634), also on behalf of her mother and brother. She would describe the friendship between them as 'purus amor', as the purest kind of love. She also asked him to convey her regards to Marie du Moulin. Marie du Moulin was a niece of Rivet's wife, and Anna Maria van Schurman initiated a warm and intellectually stimulating friendship with her. Marie had come to live with the Rivet

family as a young girl, as a comfort after a number of bereavements in the family. Van Schurman encouraged her later to learn Hebrew.<sup>50</sup>

Besides Rivet, she also corresponded with Adolf Vorstius, a professor in medicine in Leiden. 'Thank you very much, famous man', she wrote to him on 10 September 1633 in Latin, 'for your letters and gift, and for the accompanying poems'. She would correspond with him too about women's learning and about health. In turn, he would help her with the publishing of the *Dissertatio*.<sup>51</sup>

### *The Women's Republic of Letters*

The European network of the *Res Publica Litteraria* was mostly male, but through their knowledge of Latin, there were also a small handful of women who participated. This network of learned women was very similar to the male *Republic of Letters*, but differed in some essential aspects regarding their lives as learned women, the form and the themes of their writings, and the examples of learned women from the past who were always held as ideals. In 1633, the Utrecht scholar Buchelius sent Van Schurman some poems by another learned woman, namely Anne de Rohan, a French Protestant princess. Van Schurman would correspond with her, but as far as we know, only ten years later. On 16 September 1633, Buchelius wrote about another learned woman: 'The day before yesterday, your brother and I spoke about another learned and noble maiden, Anna van Pallant, whom I had once seen in Cologne. She was immortalised by the famous poet Posthius in his book of poems.' He was referring here to Anna Pallantia who had published a few Latin poems in the book *Parerga* by Posthius.<sup>52</sup>

Van Schurman must have heard and absorbed the names of some other learned women. As is clear from her correspondence from later times, she knew very well that she formed part of a tradition of learned and artistic women since antiquity. We shall see in the following chapters that she also consciously sought contact with other learned women of her time (inter alia Christina of Sweden, Marie le Jars de Gournay and Bathsua Makin). The women within this *Women's Republic of Letters* also corresponded with one another in Latin across the boundaries of social status, country and religion. But in these early years there was no scholarly woman that I know of who could help Van Schurman hone her skills by corresponding with her in Latin, as Van Schurman did with Buchelius, Revius, Vorstius, Cats and Rivet.<sup>53</sup>

## Education

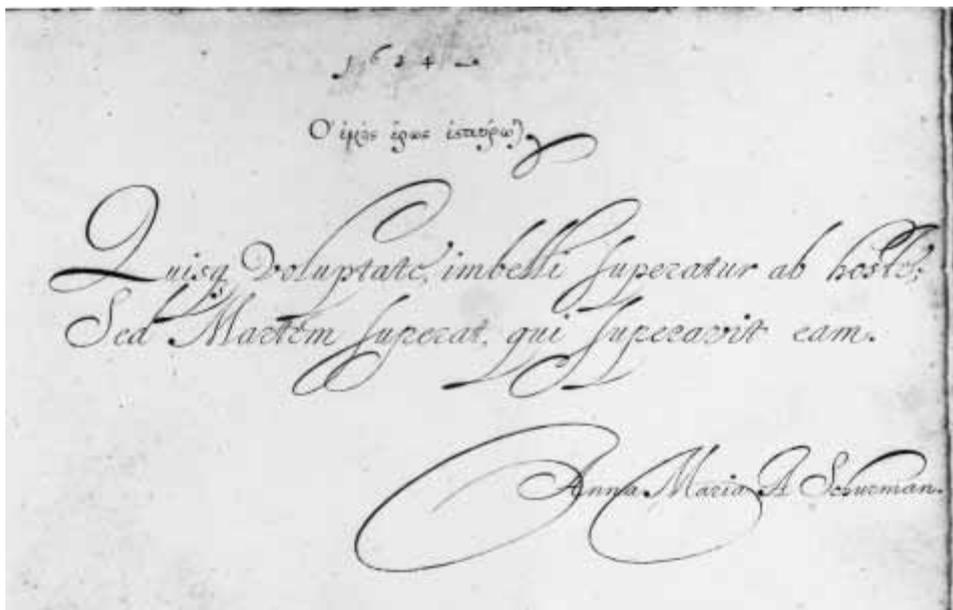
### *Classical languages*

After the death of her father, Anna Maria van Schurman continued her studies, mainly as autodidact. For her Latin studies, she studied the Bible intensively, and also the church fathers, the classical writers and history. She would later have read all the well-known Latin

authors: in addition to Seneca, her favourite writer, also Cicero, Pliny the Elder and Pliny the Younger, Virgil, Livy, Tacitus, Suetonius, Ammianus and others, as well as the Latin church fathers. All through her life, Augustine would remain her all-time favourite among the church fathers: ‘The blessed Augustine, one of the church fathers whom I had loved very much since my youth as an exceptional lover of God and his glory’. She was also quite fluent in Latin, as many hundreds of her admirers emphasised: in public she must have ‘debated like Cicero, and at home spoken like Terence’ [‘openbaar als Cicero geredeneerd hebben, huyselijk als Terentius gesproken hebben’]. She wrote much in Latin: *De Vitae Termino*, the *Amica Dissertatio*, (scholarly) letters, three quarters of the *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica* and her autobiography in two parts, the *Eukleria seu melioris partis electio* – more on this in the following chapters.<sup>54</sup>

Although Van Schurman suggests in her autobiography that, of the classical poets, she had only read Homer and Virgil, it is clear from her work that she had read much more widely. She wrote poetry in Latin (and Greek), and her poems in Neo-Latin show that she mastered the art of poetry in respect of genre, rhetoric and metre excellently. The occasional poems dominate; these were mostly written for a specific occasion or purpose, and abound with classical references for a learned public. She wrote, for instance, poems for funerals, for a wedding, for the birth of an English royal baby, poems on art works, a poem for a feminist such as Marie le Jars de Gournay, poems about the rumour that Van Schurman had translated a frivolous novel, a poem about her personal motto ‘my love has been crucified’, poems on books, on persons who returned to the Netherlands from their native countries, on Utrecht, on buildings – too many to enumerate.<sup>55</sup> Van Schurman’s Neo-Latin poems are steeped in classical literature and are full of references to figures from the Greek, Roman and biblical mythology and history. These references were required in the poetry of her time, and were simply meant to relate or to compare the subjects of the poems to earlier heroes or heroines. By her comparisons to antique models, she lent a kind of grandeur to her poems; these were powerful connotations for her public, who were familiar with antique history and literature. Now it is a fact that we generally find praise poems in honour of dignitaries a bit artificial and exaggerated, but in those times the aim was often to obtain sponsorship, prestige and patronage. Van Schurman, however, was not in need of that. She had enough money, was not allowed to work, and could count, for instance, the family of the Queen of England via Elisabeth von der Pfalz and Bathsua Makin, among her friends.<sup>56</sup>

Van Schurman often combined Latin poems with her works of art, as she did with her first engraving, a self-portrait. In that poem she said that it was neither pride nor beauty that had motivated her to make an engraving of her own face in copper; she had merely thought to start with something simple, as she was still in need of practice. She sent it to various people, among others also to Buchelius, who immediately responded with accolades of praise. Years later, Crispijn van der Passe still circulated this engraving as an example of her skill. The poem and self-portrait also elicited other reactions. Van Schurman very seldom depicted her hands, and also this engraving did not show her hands. The learned gentlemen, Constantijn Huygens and Caspar Barlaeus, then wrote a series of po-



Contribution to the album of Carel Martens.

ems in Latin and Dutch on the question why the 'virgin' was hiding her hands. There was a clear facetiousness regarding her virginity in their poems, which was unusual in the Protestant Republic. She subtly defended herself by way of a Latin distich (or couplet), that she wrote in 1634 in the poetry volume of Utrecht resident Carel Martens:

Whoever is conquered by lust, is conquered by a weak enemy. Everyone that conquers  
lust, triumphs over Mars.<sup>57</sup>

After Anna Maria van Schurman had learnt sufficient Latin, she started learning Greek, initially with the help of her father. During the Middle Ages, Greek was almost unknown in Western Europe, but this changed after the fall of Constantinople (1453), when Greek scholars brought handwritten manuscripts by Homer, Herodotos, Plato and Aristotle to Italy. After the discovery of the art of printing, Greek texts were also printed, albeit with much effort. There were so many letters with different accents and abbreviations in Greek (1200 different characters and 1016 ligatures). Unfortunately, the Venetian printer Aldus Manutius chose italics for his Greek letter type, which made the Greek typography more attractive but also more difficult to read. Claude Garamond later took over his principles with his type design of the *grecs du roi*, which set the trend for centuries. That is why the printed Greek letters of Van Schurman are beautiful to look at, but quite difficult to decipher.<sup>58</sup>

Only after 1634 did Voetius become her teacher in Greek, especially in the Greek of the New Testament (Koine Greek) and of the Greek church fathers. Homer became her favourite poet and she knew his work off by heart. It is clear from her work that she valued



Van Schurman often portrayed herself, as she did in this first engraving. She found it difficult to depict hands and thus she hid them here behind a scroll on which she wrote a beautiful Latin poem.

the work of Pythagoras, Anaxagoras, Plato, Aristotle (especially his *Ethica* and *Metaphysica*), Demosthenes, Aeschines and Isocrates. Greek historians that she mentioned are Xenophon and Plutarch (*Bioi parallēloi*), but she also read Herodotus, Hesiod, Thucydides and Polybius. She read more than the poet Homer; she also knew the Greek poets Pindar and Simonides, and also the tragedian Euripides. She also often quoted from Epictetus and referred to Herodian – a historian from the third century – and Nicephorus. Together with the New Testament, Anna Maria van Schurman read the Greek church fathers: Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil, Chrysostomus, Origen, Theodoret, Cyril, Irenaeus and



On this papercutting labyrinth Anna Maria wrote a lovely German poem on her personal motto 'my love has been crucified'. It is possible that she was distraught about having received a marriage proposal and that she attempted to voice her confusion in this way.

Clemens of Alexandria. She knew these works off by heart, and often recited long passages from them.<sup>59</sup>

She did not only absorb this knowledge, but processed it in her academic work. She compiled a Greek dictionary, annotated many classical texts and wrote commentaries on the New Testament, among others, on the Apostle Paul's Letter to the Romans. She wrote hymns in Greek and translated Homer, Simonides and Pindar as well as tragedies from Greek into Dutch (now lost). The following translation has been ascribed to her:

Everything we do on earth, is directed by the Lord  
 who can even turn evil to a good end.  
 We are not the masters of our own destiny, and when we act,  
 God ends time, and cuts life's thread.

[Al wat wy menschen doen, staet in de handt des Heeren,  
 Die kan de boosheydt selfs ten goeden eynde keeren.  
 Wy hebben geen wil. En daar een ander gaet,  
 Daer eyndigt Godt den tijdt, and snyt des levensdraet.]<sup>60</sup>

She had an excellent command of Greek, as is also clear from her well-written letter to Meletios Pantogalus, who was bishop of the Greek-Orthodox Church in Ephesus. During the visit of the Queen of Poland, she was interviewed by the court physician in Greek, and from his report it was clear that she could speak Greek as well as she did Latin.<sup>61</sup>

### *Modern languages*

Regarding her knowledge of modern languages, Cats wrote in 1637 that she ‘was so well-versed in Dutch, German, French and Latin that she could admirably speak as well as write letters and poetry in these languages’ [‘in de Nederlandsche, Hooghduytsche, Fransche, Latijnsche talen soo wel ervaren is geweest dat sy daer in loffelick spreken, brieven schrijven, and dichten konde’]. Now, Dutch and German were her home languages. But almost nothing of her prose and poetry in German has survived, in contrast to her work in Dutch. We have only two papercuttings with German texts: in 1640, one line from Psalm 90: ‘Lord, teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom’ [‘Herr, lehre uns bedencken dasz wir sterben müssen/auf daz wir klug werden’]. The other was the German poem mentioned above, with the refrain line: ‘Ob mich schon wält und wollust reizet/ bleibt meine libe doch gekreuzet’, a poem on her personal motto. The text is written in Gothic lettering around a zig-zagged paper motif, which leads the reader through a maze of hearts and crosses. In the labyrinth, a beautiful poem in four stanzas is written. That poem was included in a volume of her early work. The relatively simple calligraphy and the zig-zag motif in the papercutting also point to an early date. The topic of the poem would fit in with the writings of a young woman who had made a promise of chastity.<sup>62</sup>

Why is the date so important? It appears that years later, precisely this poem was taken over by the well-known German poet Philipp von Zesen and published under his name. Von Zesen had met Van Schurman during his sojourn in the Netherlands. He wrote two praise poems on a portrait of her, and was inspired by her to name a volume of religious poems – *Gekreutzigter Liebsflammen oder Geistlicher Gedichte Vorschmack* (1653) – after her personal motto ‘my love has been crucified’. The first poem in the volume he dedicated to her, ‘Spruchlied auf den Wahlspruch der wohl-ädelgebohrnen hochgelehrten Jungfrauen Annen Marien von Schürman’. That poem had been published earlier in his collection of poems, *Helicon* (1649), according to Von Ingen, who was an expert on Von Zesen’s work. But that poem corresponds almost literally with Van Schurman’s papercutting poem [described above]. Now, in those times, one’s originality was not so much a measure of one’s creativity. One’s poems had to show how well one knew one’s predecessors, and how well one executed the imitation and emulation. The creativity then lay in the way that one ‘tailor-made’ poems for a specific audience. But in this case, except for the differences in spelling, there is almost no discernible difference, certainly not in the first version in his *Hochdeutscher Helikon!*<sup>63</sup>

Van Schurman’s poetry in Dutch is religious in the main, and was mostly written as occasional poem or didactic poem. Her poem, ‘On the sad decline of Christianity’ [‘Over het droevig verval der Christenen’], beginning with the gloomy lines, is a good example:

Corrupted Christianity! where is your former lustre?  
Of love and hope and faith? Why does your light shine so darkly?

[Verbastert Christendom! waer is u eerster luijster?  
Van liefde, hoop, geloof? hoe schijnt u licht so diijster?]<sup>64</sup>

The Dutch poems were not published separately in her lifetime; the poems and letters which circulated remained in manuscript form or were included into other (male) writers' work. But that seemed to be the normal course of events for women who wrote in the first half of the seventeenth century in their mother tongue. Only in the second half of that century, women would be published in increasing numbers, also about topics other than religion. Van Schurman's letters in Dutch were mostly about domestic and religious matters.<sup>65</sup> She wrote, for instance, to Mrs Van Soulekercken, a friend from Utrecht:

Because the thought of your sweet presence often gives a sweet undertone to my thoughts, it was no small joy to learn from your pleasant letter that you share my affection, which should bring our persons together, but for the opportunity of time and luck to effect this. Now we have to expect our coming together from God's fatherly governance, and for now be satisfied with the embrace of our souls.

[Gelijk de gedachtenisse van U.Ed. soete tegenwoordicheit my seer dickwijls geeft een soet onderhout aen myne gedachten; so is het my geen kleine vreughde geweest uyt U.Ed. seer aengenamen brief te vernemen de overeenkominge van U.Ed. genegentheden met de myne; dewelcke onse personen wel haest souden te samen brengen, indien den tydt en het geluck, so wel overeen quamen, om deselve daerin te dienen. Nu moeten wy het selve van Godes vaderlycke regeeringe verwachten; en met de omhelsinge onser Zielen ons laeten vergenoegen.]<sup>66</sup>

Whenever she had something important to say to the world of scholars, she wrote it in Latin. In many of her Dutch poems, we see that Van Schurman addressed the more general public of readers, and then she adapted her style. If the public found the (pagan) classical references too heavy-going, and would rather read and understand everything in their 'Tale Kanaäns' (i.e. the familiar turns of phrase of their religious teachings), then she wrote pious poems without classical references. One example was 'The song about the spiritual marriage between Christ and the faithful soul' ['Het Gezang over het geestelyk huwelyk van Christus met de gelovige ziele'], a song consisting of 70 stanzas:

Such is Godly love:  
To conquer hate with love  
and to give the highest gift  
to the one who causes one sorrow.

[Dat is Goddelyk te minnen!  
Met zyn min den haat verwinnen,  
En te schenken 't hoogste goed  
Ene die hem spyt aandoed:]<sup>67</sup>

### Maze poem *Wält tobe wi du wült*

Wält tobe wi du wült und wühte  
 Mein zihl bleibt dännoch unverrücket,  
 mein sün, mein härtz und mein gemühte  
 sein nih von deiner lust entzükt.  
 ob mich schohn wält und wohl-lust reizet  
 bleibt meine libe doch gekreuzet.

Di libe di vergänglich bleibet,  
 ist schohn aus meinen sinnen hin:  
 ich bin derselben einverleibet  
 di jesu, dich führt zum gewin.  
 ob mich schohn wält und wollust reizet  
 bleibt meine libe doch gekreuzet.

[English translation by Erik Heijerman]:

World, however you may storm and rage  
 My goal will remain steadfast  
 My sentiment, my heart and my mind  
 Are never delighted with your pleasures.  
 Though world and delights may excite me  
 Still my love will remain crucified.

Love, which remains transitory  
 Is already banned from my senses.  
 I am incorporated in the same passion  
 Jesus, that leads you to victory.  
 Though world and delights may excite me  
 Still my love will remain crucified.

Mein härz ist himlisch mehr gesünnet  
 was wältlich ist bleibt unberühret  
 Di libe, di den preis gewünnet  
 Ist dise di zum himmel führet.  
 ob mich schohn wält und wollust reizet  
 bleibt meine libe doch gekreuzet.

Ob ich der wält leichthin verhasset  
 weil mihr verhasst ist was si libht  
 So bin ich doch mit libh ümfasset  
 Von dehnm, dehnm sich mein härz ergihbt.  
 ob mich schohn wält und wohl-lust reizet  
 bleibt meine libe doch gekreuzet.

My heart is directed only to heaven  
 What is mundane remains untouched.  
 The Love that wins the prize  
 Is the one which leads to heaven.  
 Though world and delights may excite me  
 Still my love will remain crucified.

Although I easily hate the world  
 Because I abhor what she loves  
 Stil I am enfolded with love  
 From him, to whom I yield my heart.  
 Though world and delights may excite me  
 Still my love will remain crucified.]

Gedicht Philipp von Zesen in zijn *Hochdeutsche Helicon*<sup>1</sup>

- I. Von Ingen 1985: 73, 75; in the poem that he included in *Gekreutzigter Liebsflammen* (Von Ingen 1993: 9-10) Von Zesen changed the refrain as follows: Dan ob mich welt und lust schohn triebe/ bleibt doch gekreutzigt meine liebe.

But if her targeted readers were learned and scholarly, then her writings were full of classical references, especially in Latin and French. This kind of work in Latin and French was indeed published.<sup>68</sup>

French was widely spoken during the Renaissance in the Netherlands, especially at the court of the stadtholder, in the civil service and in the higher circles. As a seven-year-old little girl, Anna Maria van Schurman once attended the French school for two months, but later her father taught her himself, and she acquired sufficient knowledge through her

**Spruch- lied auf den wahl spruch der wohl- ädelen/ hochgelehrten Jungfrau  
J. Annen Marien von Schürman, i.e. meine Liebe ist gekreuziget worden**

Welt tobe/wie du wilst/und wühte/  
mein Ziel bleibt dännoch unverükt/  
mein sin/ mein hertz und mein gemühte  
seind nie von deiner lust entzükt;  
dan ob mich welt und lust schon reizet/  
bleibt meine Liebe doch gekreuzet.

Die Liebe/ die vergänglich bleibet/  
ist schon aus meinen sinnen hin/  
ich bin derselben einverleibet/  
die/ JEsu/ dich führt zum gewin.  
dan ob mich welt und lust schon reizet/  
bleibt meine liebe doch gekreuzet

Mein hertz ist himlisch nuhr gesinnet/  
was weltlich ist / bleibt unberührt.  
die liebe / die den preis gewinnet/  
ist diese / die zum himmel führt.  
dan ob mich welt und lust schon reizet/  
bleibt meine liebe doch gekreuzet.

Ob ich der Welt gleich hin verhasset/  
weil mier verhasst ist / was sie liebt/  
so leb' ich doch mit lieb' umfasst  
von dem / dem sich mein hertz ergibt;  
dan ob mich welt und lust schon reizet/  
bleibt meine Liebe doch gekreuzet.

self-studies that she could correspond with many famous scholars of literature and other academics in France. Andreas Rivet commended the purity of her language and her style. Yet he did write to her in 1632 that she could always ask him for assistance, as French was after all his mother tongue, whereas for her it was an acquired language. Her knowledge of French was rated so highly that an excellent translation of the French pastoral novel *l' Astrée* of Honoré D'Urfez was ascribed to Anna Maria van Schurman. She declined this frivolous honour, as she angrily wrote in two Latin poems. She wrote poetry also in French, and it was Andreas Rivet who brought some of these poems to the attention of Princess Elisabeth von der Pfalz in The Hague, but we do not know which poems.<sup>69</sup>

Cats wrote about her knowledge of Italian and English that she 'was so well-versed in Italian and English, that she could read and use books on politics or similar works written by Italians, and also the excellent theological books published by the English' ['in de Italiensche ende Engelsche talen soo verre is gevordert geweest dat sy boecken op saken van State, of diergelijcke bij den Italianen geschreven and daer benefens de uyt-nemende Theologische boecken by den Engelschen uyt-gegeven, lesen ende gebruycken konde'].<sup>70</sup> Unfortunately, none of her writing in Italian or English has been preserved; references to Italian and English writers occur very rarely in her work. According to the historian Le Laboureur, Van Schurman did speak Italian with a bishop who was in the retinue of the Queen of Poland, Maria Louisa de Gonzaga, when the latter came to visit her on Christmas Eve in 1645. As far as English is concerned, we found only *one* line that she had written, above the portrait of her deceased father: '*Memorable are you me*'.<sup>71</sup>

### *The liberal arts ['De vrije konsten']*

The so-called seven liberal arts formed part of the all-round education of young men. These liberal arts were divided into two major fields, namely firstly the Trivium (grammar, dialectic/logic and rhetoric), then the Quadrivium (astronomy, music, mathematics and geometry). Van Schurman had studied these as young girl, according to Cats. Her scholarly letters and poems that are available to us clearly show that she was indeed au fait with grammar and rhetoric. We saw how cleverly her father approached the teaching of Latin grammar to the eleven-year-old little girl (postponing the 'thorny parts' until later). To her, dialectics (the art of scientific arguing/debating) was extremely important; she compared someone practising science without discussing or debating it, to a 'fire burning unknowingly' ['vuur dat brandt zonder het te weten']. It was especially useful to address contentious issues from the Holy Bible. For that reason, she studied the works of Augustine, Damascenus, Polanus, Sturmius, Strigelius, Danaeus and Amesius on dialectics.<sup>72</sup>

As for the Quadrivium (astronomy, music, mathematics and geometry): she played musical instruments and knew the most complex theory of music – as is clear from a detailed Latin letter from the priest Jan Albert Ban of Haarlem in which he asked her for advice. He had devised a system of composition that he referred to as *musica flexanima* (soul-stirring song ['ziel-roerende zang']). Here the accent on the words was important, as was the emotional effect of in-

tervals, especially of micro-intervals. Ban even entered into a contest with the French court composer Antoine Boësset. Ban composed a song in French that was compared to an 'air du cour' by Boësset, based on the same text. But according to Huygens, Descartes and Mersenne, it was a failure. What Van Schurman answered, alas, we do not know; what we do know, is that today Ban's music is regarded as a curiosity. Schotel wrote that



The German baroque poet Philipp van Zesen was a friend of Anna Maria. However, we do not know why he published her German paper-cutting poem as his own some decades later.

she had studied mathematics and geometry under Colvius from Dordrecht and Metius and Andree in Franeker, but nothing further is known about this.<sup>73</sup> On astronomy Van Schurman wrote that it was 'a noble science and very worthy of our contemplation' ['une science noble et tres-digne de nostre contemplation']. In a poem, she wrote about astronomy as follows:

Oh that a clear eye may always look up high  
and take notice of the heaven's circuit, of how the stars soar,  
what position each one holds, what duties each one has  
and how this great firmament moves so quickly?  
What would break these rules and confuse these laws  
so that sun and moon would suffer darkness?

[Iae dat een helder oogh altijd om hoogh verheven  
Let op des Hemels loop, let hoe de sterren sweven,  
Wat streeck een yeder houd, wat ampten yeder pleegt,  
En hoe dit groot ghewelff al even snel beweegt?  
Wat hier den regel breeckt en doet de Wetten strijden  
Soo dat de Son en Maen haer duysternisse lijden?]<sup>74</sup>

### *Process of learning*

Van Schurman's education commenced when she was a child. Within the family she learnt to read and experience the religious literature (the Bible, the catechism, the Book of Martyrs). A house master taught the Van Schurman children 'writing and arithmetic, and also the art of singing/music, vocal as well as on instruments' ['de Schrijf and Telkonst, ook de Singkonst zo wel door Stem als op Instrumenten']. Her father taught her French, later Latin and Greek. Via these languages, she came in contact with other fields of knowledge and she also read the classical writers (Seneca, Virgil and Homer) – admittedly in censored versions. Van Schurman's nature preferred variation, and that was also true for the artistic crafts (embroidery, drawing and papercutting) which she initially learnt from her mother and aunts; later she learnt the art of engraving from Magdalena van der Passe. She would experiment with many different materials in making miniatures. After the death of her father she continued studying as autodidact, and explored other fields of knowledge, such as the liberal arts and classical as well as modern languages. Books she had in abundance at home, and Jacob Cats, among others, also sent her books. It was of course to her advantage that she had brothers with whom she could compete in her studies, especially Johan Godschalk. Via his studies, she came in contact with professors in Leiden and in Franeker. But writing to Professor Andreas Rivet in Leiden to ask whether he would like to act as a sounding board for her, was her own initiative.

According to fellow-citizen Buchelius, Anna Maria van Schurman was already in 1633 known in the Netherlands as the 'virginum eruditarum decus' ('the jewel of learned women'). She was well prepared when the Utrecht Illustre Gymnasium was established in 1634, and two years later the University of Utrecht. After 1636, her scholarly publications would be published, and she would become the most learned woman in Europe.

PART II

**Anna Maria van Schurman  
and the University of Utrecht  
1634-1669**



# ‘Sun of justice, illuminate us’ [‘Sol iustitiae illustra nos’]: the Utrecht *Republic of Letters*

## The establishment of the University of Utrecht

Lastinea Mantinea and Axiothea Phlissia were taught by Plato, and to hear him without hindrance, they came to his lessons dressed in men’s clothing. It is better when a special place is created for the ladies, where they can sit on their own without being seen, as is done in Utrecht for the aforementioned Miss Anna Maria van Schurman.

[Lastinea Mantinea ende Axiothea Phlissia zijn van Plato geleert geweest ende quamen om hem onverhindert te hooren, in mans kleederen in sijn lessen. Beter is ’t datter een bijzondere plaets voor de joffrouwen gemaect wert, daer sy alleen ende sonder gesien te worden, sitten: gelijk t’ Utrecht voor de meer-wel-gemelte Joffrouw Anna Maria van Schurman.]<sup>75</sup>

On 16 March 1636, the time had come. The ‘Illustre Gymnasium’ [‘Illustrious Gymnasium’] of the city of Utrecht that had been established two years previously, was now granted the status of university by the city fathers. It was a festive occasion. In all the churches, services were held to pray that the new university be blessed. In the Cathedral, Gisbertus Voetius, professor in Theology and also a minister, held a sermon on the Bible story about the twelve-year-old Jesus in the temple (Luke 2:46), a ‘Sermon about the usefulness of the Academies and Schools, and of the Sciences and the Arts that are taught therein’ [‘*Sermoen over de Nutticheyt der Academiën ende Scholen, mitsgaders der Wetenschappen ende Consten die in deselve gheleert werden*’]. He invited his smart fellow resident of the city and maiden from his neighbourhood, Anna Maria van Schurman, to write a poem on his sermon. That she did: ‘On the Sermon that was delivered at the Inauguration of the Academy of Utrecht’ [‘Op het Sermoen ghedaen voor de Inleydinghe van de Academie van Vtrecht’]. In her poem, she addressed the people as if they were visiting Utrecht as tourists:<sup>76</sup>

You who are coming from far,  
to hear and see countries and cities,  
or a beautiful building and other astounding sights,  
attracted by their fame,  
seek in this city that which adorns its citizens the most:



Dutch poem by Anna Maria van Schurman entitled 'Op het Sermoen' [On the sermon], referring to the sermon Voetius delivered in honour of the establishment of the University of Utrecht.

do not let your senses dwell extensively on mortar and stone, but look somewhat deeper, to where her best parts are hidden. Neither silver, gold nor pearls, nor precious stones will be as valuable as what I here refer to. Because here PALLAS is seated on her throne, as you can deduct from this work.

[Ghy die van verren koomt, om Landen ende Steden, Of om een schoon ghebouw, en ander wonderheden Te hooren en te sien, en door de Faem gestiert, Soeck wat in dese Stad d' Inwoonders meest verciert: Laet niet op kalck of steen u sinnen lange speelen; Maer siet wat dieper in, daer zijn haer beste deelen. Geen Silver, Goudt of Peerl, of kostelijck ghesteen, En quam oyt by den prijs, van 't geene dat ick meen. Want PALLAS is alhier op haeren throon geseten; Ghelijck ghy uyt dit werck kunt lichtelijck afmeten;...]

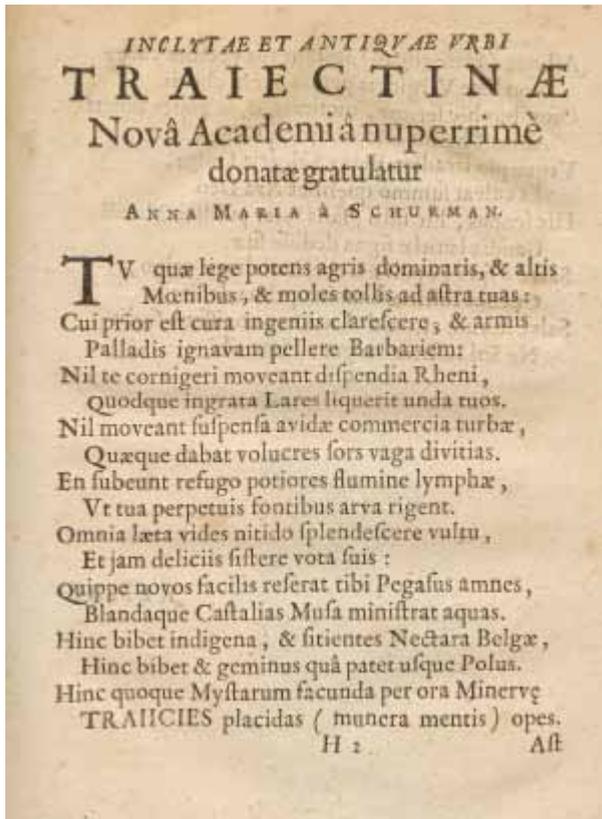
Voetius also asked her to write a Latin praise poem in honour of the new university. She was after all the best female Latinist in the city. That poem 'Inclytæ et antiquæ urbi Tra-

jectinae Nova Academia nuperrime donatae gratulatur Anna Maria a Schurman' ['Anna Maria van Schurman congratulates the honourable and famous city of Utrecht with its recently established university'] may be translated as follows:

Anna Maria van Schurman congratulates the honourable and famous city of Utrecht with its recently established university.  
 You who powerfully dominate the city and its surroundings according to law  
 and extend your mighty towers to the stars:  
 your highest goal is to shine with the luminance of intellect  
 and to banish slowness and stupidity with Pallas' weapons.  
 Do not let the damage caused to you by the horn-bearing river god Rhine dismay you,  
 nor the fact that unpleasant waves have washed away your homes.  
 Do not let the unstable commerce of the greedy masses dismay you,  
 nor fickle destiny that only bestowed fleeting fortune.  
 Look, the stream of spiritual knowledge replaces the receding river;  
 consequently your fields will be irrigated by eternal springs.  
 You see everything starting to radiate with a sparkling exterior  
 and with much joy you see prayers being answered.  
 Certainly friendly Pegasus will open up new springs for you  
 and the lovely muse will provide the Castalian springs  
 from which the Dutch inhabitants, thirsty for indigenous nectar, will drink.  
 Yes, everyone living between the poles of the earth will drink from it.  
 From it, you too Utrecht, will pass on the peaceful wealth (spiritual gifts)  
 via the eloquent mouths of Minerva's priests.  
 But, you may ask, what is bothering you?  
 Well, these sacred halls are inaccessible to women!  
 For everyone, they sow and harvest here  
 so that the peace-loving and nourishing Themis  
 may exclude the discordant Chaos from the world,  
 and divine knowledge may radiate with suitable adoration  
 and an altar for the highest God may burn everywhere.  
 This is my goal, here I conclude;  
 it is sufficient that I gave signs of joy  
 in the midst of the world's celebrations.  
 Greetings to you, hope of the nation, commencement of a better human race,  
 that as the first recipient has been illuminated by the Sun of Justice.  
 Greetings to you again, Light that has risen so recently  
 over the century that appears to have been struck by thunder.  
 May the Sun of Justice never set over you!<sup>77</sup>

### *The Latin praise poem 'Inclyta et antiqua urbs Trajectina'*

In her Latin praise poem, Anna Maria van Schurman congratulated the city of Utrecht with the new university. She closely followed the rules of rhetoric that applied to the traditional praise poems in honour of cities. That classical genre flourished again with the rise of Humanism and the advent of the Renaissance, in Neo-Latin as well as in the vernacular. As many cities were university cities, it was almost automatic that praise for universities would often mean praise for the cities as well. The three most important aspects or *loci* in



Together with some male scholars, Van Schurman was invited to honour the new university with a Latin praise poem. In her poem, she complained about the exclusion of women. Her complaint was successful, for it was one of the reasons why she received permission to attend university lectures.

praising a city – according to the influential book on the theory and practice of praising a city in the Renaissance (the *Poetices libri septem* of Scaliger) – were the location of the city, its origin or history, and the actions of the citizens. I shall briefly touch upon these *loci* in the poem, but will not elaborate further on elements that appear after all in every such poem in praise of a city (the personification of the city, for instance). I would rather let us focus on the striking statement about women.<sup>78</sup>

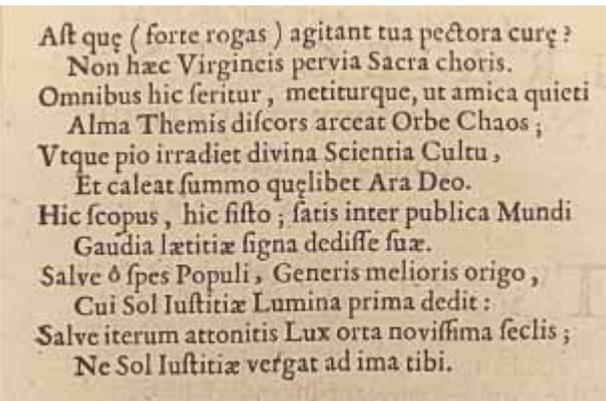
In the title and in the first two lines, Van Schurman referred to the mighty city Utrecht that dominated over the surrounding regions. The city had high walls and many churches, with their spires pointing to heaven (for instance, the Jacobi church, the Buurkerk, Janskerk, Domkerk and Pieterskerk). Indirectly, she thus praised the power and the religiousness of the citizens. She referred to the earlier location of Utrecht on the Rhine, and connected the present with the past by means of emphatic wordplay in capital letters on the name of the city: TRAJICIES [traicere = to cross]. The origin of Utrecht dates back to 47 A.D. when the Romans established a permanent fort named ‘Trajectum’ in the range of fortresses that were built all along the Rhine under Emperor Claudius by General Corbulo, and which functioned as the border of the Roman empire. Utrecht flourished as a city on a river into the Middle Ages, and was the most important city of the Northern Netherlands.

But when the Rhine changed its course, the city lost its income from the shipping trade and fisheries. This establishment of a new university would hopefully help the city to overcome the period of decline (TRAJICIES).<sup>79</sup> As Utrecht was no longer situated along a profitable river and wealth had ‘flown away’, Van Schurman comforted the residents of Utrecht with the intellectual riches that the new university was going to open up. Everyone could drink at this fountain of wisdom: the Dutch people, anybody in the world as well as the residents of Utrecht. She could have concluded her poem here quite appropriately with the required blessing. But after having mentioned everybody who could drink from this fountain of wisdom, she asked a rhetorical question, and gave a striking answer:

But, you may ask, what is what is bothering you?  
Well, these sacred halls are inaccessible to women!

These lines regarding the exclusion of women appear at precisely the correct point in the poem, namely after summarising everybody that would be allowed. The solution is obvious: ‘The sowing and reaping that will be done here, should be for each and everyone’ [‘Omnibus hic seritur, metiturque’]. Otherwise barbarism would return to Utrecht. She wished therefore to open the doors of the University not only to all nationalities, but especially also to women. After all, women suffered exclusion everywhere – as also now in Utrecht. She ended the poem very aptly by alluding to the motto of the University: *Sol iustitiae illustra nos* [‘Sun of Justice, illuminate us’]. She did not explain this any further, as its meaning was generally known: may God, who is also referred to as the Sun of Justice, illuminate our spirit, not only in a religious sense, but also in a rational sense. It is clear from the poem that she took the meaning of *Sol iustitiae* also as follows: the sun of justice should shine on everyone, thus also on women.<sup>80</sup>

The celebrations evoked great interest. It was attended by many dignitaries and important visitors such as the Princes of the Palatinate Maurice, Edward and Philip of Bohemia, who were seated in the front row. The streets were filled with crowds, all straining to catch a glimpse. Van Schurman would have recited her poem herself, if the celebrations had not been disrupted. While the town clerk (‘stadssecretaris’) Van der Nypoort was opening the



Ast quæ ( forte rogas ) agitant tua pectora curæ ?  
Non hæc Virgineis pervia Sacra choris.  
Omnibus hic seritur , metiturque , ut amica quieti  
Alma Themis discors arceat Orbe Chaos ;  
Vtque pio irradiet divina Scientia Cultu ,  
Et caleat summo quelibet Ara Deo.  
Hic scopus , hic fïsto ; satis inter publica Mundi  
Gaudia lætitiæ signa dedisse suæ.  
Salve ô spes Populi , Generis melioris origo ,  
Cui Sol Iustitiæ Lumina prima dedit :  
Salve iterum attonitis Lux orta novissima seclis ;  
Ne Sol Iustitiæ vœgat ad ima tibi.

Latin poem on the establishment  
of the University of Utrecht.



ceremony (in Latin, of course), a few late arrivals entered the Cathedral (Domkerk). With these guests, some inquisitive children, women and other members of the crowd outside managed to slip into the church, fighting for space, and caused a loud tumult. The town clerk later wrote to a professor in Leiden, who was a friend, that he had to continue in spite of the noise, and also the following speaker, the erudite professor Aemilius, tried very hard to make himself heard above the noise when he delivered his inaugural speech. Halfway through, he gave up, deciding to save the remainder for publication, as the other professors and poets did.<sup>81</sup> Only when the music played, did the crowd calm down:

After that, music was again played on wind instruments and finally also on the organ, which was joined by pleasant singing. In the meantime the beadle (master of ceremonies) distributed songs and poems in honour of the inauguration of the university, written in several different languages.

[Daernaer werde weder met blasende instrumenten gespeelt ende lestelick oock op den orgel, waeronder met stemmen aerdich gesongen wierde, de Pedel ondertusschen distribuerende Carmina ende gedichten ter eeren van de inauguratie van de Universiteyt, in verscheyden talen gemaect.]<sup>82</sup>

Van Schurman's poem was also handed out on the day of the celebrations. She did not pass up this opportunity to advocate women's cause. Especially her readers who were familiar with Latin, would immediately have understood her complaint about the exclusion of women. In addition to this Latin poem, she also improvised a beautiful French poem on that day of celebrations. As it happened, the day started with a downpour of pelting rain, and it looked as if the celebrations would be literally washed away. But how symbolic! The sun came out just in time. Also in the French poem a little sun of justice was shining, an 'Astre de Justice' – but no word was mentioned about women.<sup>83</sup> That she did in the Dutch poem mentioned earlier, 'Op het Sermoen' ['On the Sermon'], which followed the sermon of Voetius more or less closely, except that he does not mention women in his sermon. She suggested that women should not spend their time in front of mirrors, but rather in acquiring knowledge:



In the seventeenth century Utrecht was the religious centre of the northern Netherlands. This can also be seen from the many churches appearing on this 1642 picture. With the establishment of the university, the city also attained an important intellectual function.

You who still have a little spark of a higher courage,  
 I say of our sex, like a slave might do:  
 do not be so busy with adornment and splendour  
 or with your transitory hairstyle, or with your beautiful clothes;  
 if heaven grants you the luxury of time,  
 do not give it to the mirror, which does not diminish shortcomings.  
 Here is available the beauty which adorns the inner self  
 and which can win all favours with more power.  
 You will find here what you are looking for, an uncommon find,  
 namely how you can become more beautiful every passing day.

[Ghy die een voncxken hebt noch van een hooger moet,  
 Ick segh van ons geslacht, als wel een slave doet:  
 En sijt soo besigh niet in 't cieren en pareren,  
 Of aen u vluchtigh haer, of aen u schoone kleeren;  
 Soo u den Hemel geeft de ruymte van den tijd,  
 Geeft die den spiegel niet die geen gebreecken slijt.  
 Hier is de schoonheyd veyl die cieren kan van binnen,  
 En die met meerder kracht kan aller gunste winnen.  
 Ghy vind hier, wat ghy soeckt, een ongemeenen vondt,  
 Hoe dat ghy alle daegh noch schoonder worden kondt.]<sup>84</sup>

After the celebrations in the Cathedral and in the City Hall, there was a lavish dinner in the Agnietenklooster for over a hundred guests, among whom the professors with their wives. Music underpinned the celebrations. Along the route that the procession followed stood tar drums decorated with ivy wreaths, and which were lit up in the evening. The bells were ringing, musketeers shot a ceremonial salute, and as a final extravaganza, 'some magnificent fireworks were let off on the Neude Square' ['eenige fraeye vuurwercken op de Neude gemaect ende in de lucht geschoten']. A week later, in addition to the principal Bernardus Schotanus, three professors were appointed to assist him as assessors: Voetius (Theology), Stratenus (Medicine) and Liraeus (Arts & Humanities). At the same meeting, a deci-

sion was taken to have the inaugural speeches, the praise poems and the sermon of Voetius printed without delay. Van Schurman's poems were included in the publication. But she also featured in the European newspapers of those days. The opening of the University of Utrecht was the beginning of her European fame.<sup>85</sup>

### *Reactions*

Her poems elicited a stream of reactions, within the country and also across its borders. According to Schotel (1853), 'Parnasus came into motion. Anyone who could sing, grasped for their lyre, and the Dutch, French, Italian, Latin, Greek, Hebrew and Arabic poems that flooded Utrecht could have filled a volume'. Many of these will be discussed in the following chapters under the heading *Elogia*; suffice it to mention here a few examples: the well-known Dutch and Neo-Latin poet Caspar Barlaeus, professor at the Atheneum Illustre in Amsterdam, wrote a Latin poem as response to her poem for the University of Utrecht, 'On the masculine verses of Anna Maria van Schurman with which she congratulates the new jewel of the Utrecht University'. In that poem he begged Jupiter to change her into a man or into the goddess Pallas Athena (goddess of wisdom). Such a learned *woman* was something he could not stand, and that is why he referred to her poem as *masculine*. The poet and diplomat Constantijn Huygens responded immediately and asked Barlaeus in a Latin poetic dialogue whether it was his intention to take away the weaker sex from Van Schurman? 'No, he merely wished to strengthen her with the stronger sex,' answered Barlaeus.<sup>86</sup>

As soon as the volume of inaugural addresses and poems was published, the town clerk Johannes van der Nypoort sent a copy to his friend in Leiden, professor Petrus Cunaenus, in which he wrote that 'our very noble and highly learned female citizen' had also lent much splendour to the celebrations. He did not even have to spell out that he was referring to Anna Maria van Schurman; she was already well-known. The scholarly physician Van Beverwijck from Dordrecht responded by including her Latin and French poems in 1639 in his book, *On the Excellence of the Female Sex* [*Van de Wtnementheyt des Vrouwelijcken Geslachts*]. In addition, he dedicated the entire second part of the book, in which he discussed women's learning and wisdom, to her. She was the greatest source of inspiration to Van Beverwijck.<sup>87</sup>

These are some reactions of male contemporaries to the phenomenon of a learned woman. According to Sneller and others, Van Schurman was so revered, and regarded as someone so exceptional, that no woman could follow in her footsteps. And those who praised her, did so more because she was a woman, and not so much for her achievement per se. These statements will become clearer in more nuances, when we discuss Van Schurman's studies and books.<sup>88</sup>

The situation of woman writers at the time was such that their work was circulated in manuscript form, and was hardly ever published, unless it was done posthumously or perhaps included in someone else's (men's) work. But apparently Van Schurman had taken the initiative for the publication of her poems. She wrote for instance, some weeks after the opening of the University of Utrecht, on 31 March 1636, in a Latin letter to Jacobus Revius:



Since medieval times, praise writings on women were published, and were mostly written by men. In this book by Johan van Beverwijk, dating from 1643 (first edition in 1639), Anna Maria van Schurman is the woman of the hour.

Now that I can catch my breath again, I have to greet you first of all, and must make sure that the poems that I have recently published in honour of our new Academy, reach you.<sup>89</sup>

She is referring to those poems that were handed out on loose pamphlets at the opening ceremony. The Dutch poem appeared at the end of the separately printed sermon of Voetius. The Latin poem and the French poem were published in the European newspapers, included in the collection of inaugural addresses, and reprinted each time in the editions of her *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica, prosaica et metrica*. At the occasion of many anniversaries of the University of Utrecht, these poems were again reprinted.<sup>90</sup>

### The first female university student

All the professors, lecturers and students were men. But soon after the publication of her poems, Anna Maria van Schurman was granted permission to attend lectures. Unfortunately, we have no letter in which this was explicitly stated. However, we have

### French poem for the opening of the University of Utrecht 1636

COMMENT FROM ANNE MARIE  
de SCHURMANI

And then, after a rather dark appearance and followed by thick rain (which continued on the day of the inauguration of the Utrecht Academy until 9 a.m.), the sun pierced the clouds and burst unexpectedly on the face of this solemn procession, precisely at the moment it was leaving the town house.

What expression of mourning, what sad look  
Has obscured Nature with a dark veil,  
And on this day of Triumph, has removed from our  
eyes  
The most beautiful of beauties, the light from the Heavens?  
There, everybody expects Dawn to consider  
The wishes of the universe with a cute wink,  
And that Heaven, closing the door upon displeasure,  
Will favour its rightful wishes.  
But at first, its inopportune sadness  
Disturbs, through its moods, the widespread joy.  
Is it not that Nature, darkening our eyes,  
Works towards the effect of a miraculous happening?  
And yet, Pallas, in her magnificent Court,  
Adorns her apparel, and applies her charms  
To make an entrance, and with her royal retinue  
Sets up in this place her triumphant seat.  
But as she leaves the court of Justice,  
Here is Phoebus, favourable to her intentions,  
Parting these piles and breaking up this watery curtain,  
Which goes and bursts upon the front of her procession.  
He wishes to let us know that he shines for her only,  
And to permit such a beautiful action;  
That is, to preside over the solemnity  
Of a golden century awakening to posterity.  
Wonderful omen and very happy portent!  
Upon which Heaven imposes this opening,  
That the Star of Justice, friend of his destiny,  
Will conduct the progress of such a shining morning.  
And what need have we of another interpreter,  
Since Apollo himself thus interprets for us?

[REMARQUE D'ANNE MARIE  
de SCHURMAN

Sur ce qu'après un air sombre et suivi d'une  
pluie épaisse (qui continua le jour de l'Inauguration de l'Académie d'Utrecht environ  
jusqu'à 9 heures du matin) le Soleil perça les  
nues, et s'esclatta inopinément sur le front de  
ceste pompe solennelle, justement au point  
qu'elle fit sa sortie de la maison de ville.

Quelle mine de deuil, quelle triste parure  
A d'un voile ombrageux obscurcy la Nature,  
Et au jour du Triomphe esloigné de nos yeux  
La beauté des beautez, la lumière des Cieux?  
La tout le monde attend que l'Aurore regarde  
Les voeux de l'univers d'une oeillade mignarde,  
Et que le Ciel, fermant la porte au desplaisir,  
Se monstre favorable à son juste desir.  
Et toutesfois d'abord sa tristesse importune  
Trouble pas ses humeurs l'allegresse commune.  
N'est-ce pas que Nature eclipsant à nos yeux,  
Travaille pour l'effect d'un coup miraculeux?  
Or cependant Pallas dans sa Cour magnifique  
Orne son appareil, et ses charmes applique  
Pour faire son entrée, et par un train royal  
Eriger dans ce lieu son siege triomphal.  
Mais au point qu'elle sort du palais de Justice,  
Voicy comme Phoebus, à ses desseins propice,  
Escarte ces amas, rompt ce rideau flottant,  
Et va dessus le front de sa pompe esclattant.  
Il nous veut tesmoigner qu'il ne luit que pour  
elle,  
Et pour autoriser une action si belle;  
Voire pour presider à la solemnité  
D'un siecle d'or naissant à la posterité.  
Presage merveilleux et tres-heureux augure!  
Sur qui le Ciel nous fait prendre ceste ouverture,  
Que l'Astre de Justice, amy de son destin,  
Conduira les progresz d'un si luisant matin.  
Et qu'avons nous besoin d'aucun autre inter-  
prete,  
Puis que mesme Apollon ainsi nous l'inter-  
prete?]

enough statements made by contemporaries that mention a connection between her and the University of Utrecht (or ‘Hooge School’ or ‘Academy’, as it was also referred to). Jacob Cats says for instance in his eulogy of 1637, after having enumerated all her achievements in languages, arts and science, that ‘not only the University of Utrecht, but also many learned men in Holland would be able to vouch for that’ [‘niet alleen de Hooge Schole van het Sticht van Utrecht, maer oock menigh geleert man in Hollant met volle reden van wetenschap daarvan kan getuygen’]. Constantijn Huygens wrote in a poem about Voetius and other ‘shining lights at the University in this learned City’ [‘Hoogschool-fackelen in die geleerde Stadt’], who had shaped her into a learned woman.<sup>91</sup> The scholarly physician Van Beverwijck is more precise. In his book, *Van de Wtneementheyt des Vrouwelijcken Geslachts* [*On the Excellence of the Female Sex*] (1639), he compared Van Schurman’s situation with that of two women from antiquity who were attending Plato’s lectures:

Lastinea Mantinea and Axiothea Phlissia were taught by Plato, and to hear him without hindrance, they came to his lessons dressed in men’s clothing. It is better when a special place is created for the ladies, where they can sit on their own without being seen, as is done in Utrecht for the aforementioned Miss Anna Maria van Schurman.



[Lastinea Mantinea ende Axiothea Phlissia zijn van Plato geleert geweest ende quamen om hem onverschindert te hooren, in mans kleederen in zijn lessen. Beter is 't datter een bijzondere plaets voor de joffrouwen gemaect wert, daer sy alleen ende sonder gesien te worden, sitten: gelijk t' Utrecht voor de meer-wel-gemelte Joffrouw Anna Maria van Schurman.]<sup>92</sup>

The artist Crispijn van der Passe, a friend of Van Schurman, drew her portrait in the 1630s where she is sitting near a curtain. It is often said that she attended lectures seated behind a curtain. In actual fact, she was seated in a separate cubicle, a booth with two openings that had been covered with curtain material.

However, Van Beverwijck frowned upon the behaviour of these women from the classical times, because they had worn men's clothing and had mixed with the men. According to him, it would be better if women were to sit separately (that is to say, not among the men) and were preferably invisible, just as Anna Maria van Schurman did in Utrecht.<sup>93</sup>

Someone may now say, 'So, it seems, she was actually only a listener, and not really a student.' What was the distinctive characteristic in the seventeenth century that would define a student? Enrolment? Attending lectures? Payment of the fees? Writing exams? The travelling from one university to the next, the so-called *peregrinatio academica*? Let us take each one of these points in turn.

As far as enrolment is concerned: as it happened, during its first years, actual registering was not compulsory at the University of Utrecht. From time to time, someone would enter his name in the student register [*album studiosorum*]. Only when the relevant statutes were introduced and privileges such as duty-free liquor were connected to registration, the numbers of registered students peaked, as in 1643. In that year, her brother Johan Godschalk van Schurman also enrolled at age forty. But then there were some years again when scarcely any students had apparently enrolled. Jamin even wrote in his book *Kennis als opdracht: de Universiteit Utrecht 1636-2001* [*Knowledge as calling: the University of Utrecht 1636-2001*]:

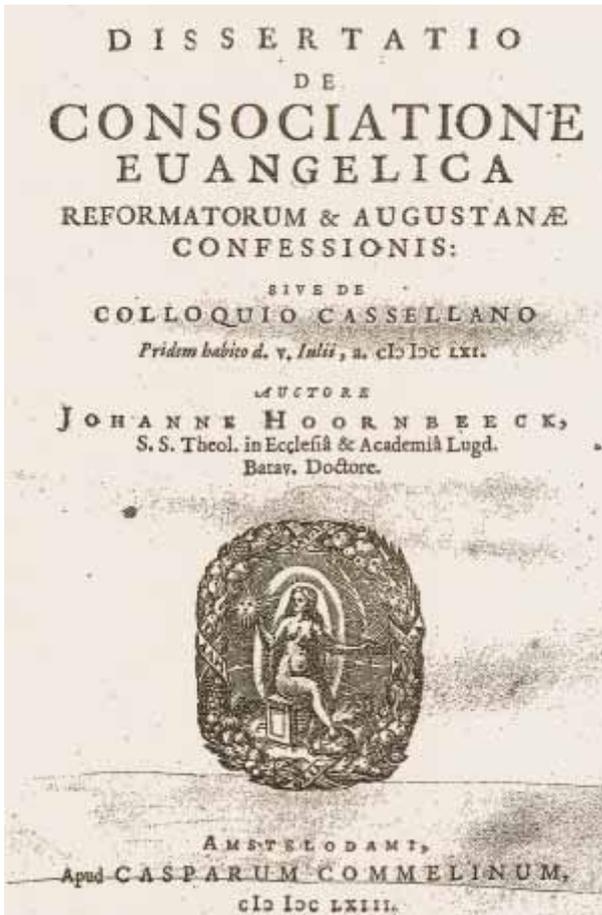
We may never be able to determine the number of students that actually studied at Utrecht in the period before 1815.

[Hoeveel studenten werkelijk in Utrecht gestudeerd hebben in de periode vóór 1815 zal wel nooit achterhaald kunnen worden.]<sup>94</sup>

So, one cannot hold it against Van Schurman that her name does not appear in the student register.

Did merely attending lectures make one a student? At that time, yes. There were three kinds of lectures, namely two kinds of public lectures (the disputations or debating sessions, and the public 'listening' lectures, the *lectiones publicae*), and the private lectures (*privé-colleges*) at the home of the professor. All the lectures were in Latin. The public disputations and the private lectures attracted the most interest. Disputations were held in public, as exercise or as final exam, on Wednesdays and Saturdays. They entailed that students debated certain issues under the guidance of a professor (for instance, whether comets were an omen of something bad, whether humans could extend their lives through medicine, how to exorcise the devil, or whether men should be allowed to wear their hair long and to wear wigs). Under the guidance of professors, the students then took turns to debate statements which had often previously been printed or put up on notice boards. The disputations attracted much public interest, and the issues debated were topical at the time. The respondent (defendant) stood behind the lower lectern, and the professor stood at the upper lectern. Even though everything was spoken in Latin, people sometimes got so hot under the collar that they came to blows. In 1661, the Senate of the University duly had railings put around the lower lectern.<sup>95</sup>

Van Schurman attended these disputations for many years. This is not only mentioned by herself, but also by Voetius and others. According to Lehms (1715), she also par-



Johannes Hoornbeeck was professor of theology in Utrecht and subsequently in Leiden. Van Schurman attended his lectures as well, as becomes clear from the dedication of this book to her.

icipated in these disputations – but would that have been possible from her separate seat? In any case, she learnt a lot from these disputations. Her *Dissertatio* [*Logical Argumentation*] on women's aptitude for learning was structured in this disputational style. And, did Buchelius not make a note that Van Schurman had buried herself in the academic *disputationes*? In 1654 Voetius dedicated the second part of his collection of disputations that took place under his su-

per vision, to her and her brother Johan Godschalk. He referred to her carefully considered judgement which followed on the 'academic discussions' that she so often listened to. Later, after she had severed all ties with Utrecht, she scornfully referred in her autobiography to these disputations, 'these disputing and difference-enhancing exercises, that often put on an agreeable show for the devil, while he often officiated as chairman in such altercations' ['deze reden-kavelende en verschil-handelende oefeningen, die menichmael den duivel een aangenaam schouspel oprichten, dewijl hij niet zelden voorzitter is in die twistredeneringen']. She even referred to the disputations as a 'farce, a mouth-stopping and tongue-holding of her opponent' ['klucht, een mont-stopping en een tong-snoering van haar tegenvechter']. She spoke from her own experience.<sup>96</sup>

The other public lectures, the *lectiones publicae*, were not well attended. The lecture halls had no heating, and the professor received no extra payment for these lectures. Yet Van Schurman attended these too. Professor Hoornbeeck (from 1644 at Utrecht, later at Leiden) dedicated a book on the reconciliation between the Lutheran and the Reformed

churches to her. He wrote therein that he had come across Van Schurman during his lectures, and that she had inspired him by her example. He had learnt more from her than she had from him. At these public lectures and disputations, Van Schurman sat in a special booth ['Ecoute'/'Tribune'], according to the philosopher Descartes and others. Once Descartes wanted to hide in the booth where Van Schurman usually sat to follow the lectures. In the wall of one of the auditoria a few holes had been drilled and covered with a plastered fabric (a kind of curtaining material). Behind that, she sat and listened in a separate cubicle. In short, she was sitting behind a partition or curtain.<sup>97</sup>

During the public lectures, she therefore sat apart, separated from the men. Of course, she was a woman who had entered a public space. In those times it was customary for men and women to sit separately in public spaces such as the church – a custom that is still practised in fundamentalist circles of Christianity, Jewry and of Islam. The reason for separating the sexes in church, synagogue and mosque was that one would then not be distracted by the attraction of the opposite sex. One would then be able to concentrate fully on the teachings or the prayers. Van Schurman entered, as the first woman, a new public space, namely the university, and it was probably reasoned that she had to sit separately, just as she would have in church.

In addition to Van Schurman attending these lectures, she also received private lectures, among others, from professor Voetius.<sup>98</sup> He wrote that he had instructed her in theology for ten years; not only in his public lectures, but also in the private lectures at his home. Van Schurman lived *Achter den Dom* [literally: behind the cathedral]. She only needed to go outside her home and cross the street, then she was already at the lecture halls. Or she closed the door behind her, and walked around the corner, crossed over Poelenburch Lane, and knocked at the door of Voetius' house. She went to lectures daily, because – as she put it in a poem about Utrecht:

There is the academy of many theologians  
with whom we interact every day in a fruitful way.

[Daer is de hoge school van veele Gods geleerden  
Waer met wij alle daghs met groote vrught verkeerden.]<sup>99</sup>

Was payment of the fees a criterion in those early-modern times? Yes and no: no registration fee was charged, the public lectures were free, the private lectures not, except those in theology. She attended the private lectures; thus we may assume that she had paid for that privilege. Being so rich, money would have posed no problem for her.<sup>100</sup>

As far as exams were concerned, in the early years of the university, no exams were set or written. Just a note stating that one had attended the lectures was sufficient to complete one's studies with success. Such a note Van Schurman could easily have gotten. A few students continued, after their basic undergraduate studies of four years, with a doctorate, at least in the faculties of medicine and law. In theology, however, almost no one obtained a doctorate; the students of theology had to pass ecclesiastical exams. However, Van Schurman was not allowed to participate in those, because of the prevailing views within the church on the role of women in the church ['de vrouw in de gemeente']. According to the

Apostle Paul, women had to be silent, and therefore a woman could never in those times become a minister, an elder or a deacon in the church, and could absolutely not participate in the ecclesiastical exams.<sup>101</sup> Yet, professor Spanheim of Leiden did refer to Van Schurman in the preface to her *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica* (first impression in 1648) as ‘a doctor clothed in women’s robes’ [‘een in vrouwengewaad gehulde doctor’]. This title she also earned with her scholarly letters.<sup>102</sup>

The *peregrinatio academica* – which was also referred to as the academic journey – was part of the university life too. A student very seldom attended only one university. Students moved from one university to others, where they then also attended lectures or obtained a doctorate. Sometimes years passed between attendances at different universities. For instance, Johan Godschalk van Schurman studied at the University of Leiden (1623), Franeker (1623), Utrecht (1643), Duisburg (1663) and obtained a doctorate in Basel in 1663. That his sister Anna could not do. No other university was so enlightened that they admitted her as student. Moreover, she had domestic tasks which would not have bothered male students:

...that I, after the death of my very dear mother [...], that then, I say, I was transposed from a much too contemplative and studious life to a more real existence, since taking care of the family and of household matters became mostly my responsibility.

[...dat ik na het overlijden van mijn zeer lieve Moeder, [...] dat ik doen zeg ik, van een alteer beschouwend en studierend leven tot het gene meer werkelijk was, ben overgebracht, als my de zorgen van het huisgezin en van de huiszaken ten meestendeel op den hals quam.]<sup>103</sup>

Her mother passed away in 1637 and was buried in the family crypt in Rhenen. Anna Maria van Schurman took over the responsibility of running the household, and a few years later also the care of two elderly aunts, Agnes and Sybille von Harff. It was for them that she went to Cologne in 1653, and she stayed there with them for over a year to solve a problem with an inheritance. She was immediately noticed, and had a few disputations with academics of the (Catholic) University of Cologne, which took place in the *Aula Theologica* behind the Cathedral.<sup>104</sup> She wrote on 3 February 1654 to a friend in Utrecht, Lady Van Soulekercken, about this:

About the disputes that have taken place, of which you wish to hear the particulars, they have not been of great importance. But there is an abbot, being a man of intellect and discretion, who has conferred with us about religion, as well as two Franciscan monks, one of whom is a professor of Philosophy and lecturer in Theology, who was so accommodating in our first discussion that I hoped he would renounce his vows and make his way to Utrecht. But he was more reticent in our second discussion, and seems not to be able to go without his [monk’s] cap in winter.

[Aengaende de voorgevallene disputen, waer van U.Ed. de particulariteiten wenst te vernemen, syn tot noch toe van geen groote consideratie geweest; Alleen ister een Overste, synde een man van verstant en discretie, die met ons van de religie heeft geconferereert; als mede twee Franciscaner Monicken, waer van den eenen is een professor in de Philosophie, en Lector in de Theologie, die in onse eerste conferentie so toegevende was, dat ick verhoopte hy soude haest de kap op den tuyn hebben gehangen, en hem naer Utrecht hebben begeben. doch was in de tweede meer vervreemt, en schijnt deselve in den winter niet wel sal kunnen missen.]<sup>105</sup>

From all of the above it is clear that Van Schurman may be referred to as the first female student at the University of Utrecht. She must have caused quite a stir – this attractive, bright young woman, sitting there in isolation and invisibly in that cubicle, behind a partition.<sup>106</sup> This isolation placed her in a totally different situation to that of her male co-students. But until well into the nineteenth century, she was held up as an example to students and lecturers:

The lectures of the University of Utrecht were held in the Old Cathedral. Every morning a young, beautiful maiden left her house on the corner of Voetius Lane as soon as the students had entered the Academy and followed them to the auditorium with measured steps, accompanied by her servant girl. There she entered a little room, next to the wall where the stairs of the orchestra nowadays are. Seated in front of a wooden panel with large holes, which was attached to the wall and plastered from the outside just like the wall, she here listened to the lessons of her dear Voetius and the other professors, and what is more, understood those as well as the most eminent student, while her hidden presence inspired professors and students alike.

[De collegies van de Hoogeschool te Utrecht werden gehouden in den ouden Dom. Een jonge, schoone maagd, verliet iederen morgen, zoodra de studenten de Academie waren binnengegaan, haar woning op den hoek der Voetiussteeg en volgde hen met zedigen tred, vergezeld van haar dienstmeisje, naar het auditorium. Daar ging zij dan in een kamertje, belendende aan den muur, waar zich nu de trap van het orkest bevindt. Gezeten voor eene plank, welk met gaten voorzien in de muur bevestigd en gelijk deze van buiten bepleisterd was, hoorde zij hier de lessen van haar geliefden Voetius en der overige Professoren en wat meer zegt, verstond dezelve zoo goed als de beste student, terwijl zij door hare verborgen tegenwoordigheid Hoogleraars en Studenten bezielde.]<sup>107</sup>

## Studies

Van Schurman was a student. But what exactly did she study? The eulogy that Jacob Cats wrote in 1637 on her, contains a lot of information. He praised her thorough linguistic knowledge of Dutch, German, French, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, English, Chaldeic, Syrian and Arabic. He wrote that she would soon start with Samaritan, Persian and Ethiopian. Then he praised her extensive knowledge of history, poetry, the liberal arts, philosophy, medicine, and especially theology. After that, he spoke highly of Van Schurman's artistic side: she could make music, do calligraphy, engrave, also on glass, draw, paint, do woodcarving and model in wax. We know that she was trained in the arts and crafts not only at home, but also in the studio of Magdalena van der Passe. Modern and classical languages and the liberal arts she had already mastered before the establishment of the University of Utrecht. What else was there in Utrecht that she could still study?<sup>108</sup>

Van Schurman studied languages, medicine and theology in Utrecht. There were, just as elsewhere, four faculties: the compulsory undergraduate Faculty of Letters, and the Faculties of Law, Medicine, and Theology. Subjects such as philosophy, languages, history, logic and eloquence resorted under the Faculty of Letters. Theology was then regarded as the most important discipline, and this faculty also attracted the most students. That was

the case not only in Utrecht, but in the entire European academic world. Theology (literally: the study/knowledge of God) was based on the Bible, the Word or the revelation of God, and the Bible had in those times an all-encompassing authority. The Bible was the ultimate authority to which one had to bow, it was the sovereign text, the revelation of the will of God, the Word of the Creator of heaven and earth. It could lead human beings to eternal salvation. Therefore, that book was studied from cover to cover. The Bible was further seen as the source of reference for law, politics, ethics, economy, geography, history and the origin of languages. Theology was the 'queen of all disciplines' ['koningin van alle wetenschap'], and had the 'final say'.<sup>109</sup>

Besides the Bible, knowledge was also based on classical authorities such as Aristotle, Plato and Hippocrates. Studying at a university was based on books, and philology was extremely important in all the curricula. Rational thought was indeed applied, but one always had to make it subject to the final authority of the Bible. That was why the philosophy of Descartes was so strongly resisted, because he put reason above tradition or holy texts. Later in the seventeenth century, this all too theoretical subject was changed to a more practical and empirical one.<sup>110</sup>

Voetius was professor of theology in Utrecht. Although he was known to be a rigid Calvinist, the fact that it was he who gave Van Schurman permission to study at the University, makes one think. Her powers of persuasion might also have tipped the scales. Voetius was in general a follower of the Aristotelian school of thought, but he did not agree with

Aristotle's views on the essence of woman: that she was a mistake of nature, an imperfect man, a monster who had come into being by chance. These viewpoints were quite common in the seventeenth century. Voetius wrote extensively about women, and refuted Aristotle and his followers



Gisbertus Voetius was the first theologian employed by the Utrecht Academy. Following his appointment in 1634, this principled theologian attracted many students. He was sufficiently enlightened to admit Anna Maria van Schurman to his lectures. She drew this portrait of Voetius.

on the basis of the scriptures, ecclesiastical authorities and logical thinking. Yet, in general, one cannot refer to Voetius as an advocate for women's rights – he was after all not going to give up the superiority of men in the domains of politics and the church. Still, he did feel that women should be allowed to study, provided God gave them the free time, the intellect and the physical inclination. And provided they practised celibacy. It was probably after he had met Van Schurman in person that he took this view. In his dissertation on women's studying, he brought no further arguments, but referred the reader directly to Van Schurman's (*Amica*) *Dissertatio* and to her later work, *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca, Latina et Gallica*, in which these scholarly letters on the right of women to study were included.<sup>111</sup>

Van Schurman studied mainly Semitic languages and theology, but also subjects in the humanities, such as logic, history and philosophy. She also took a few medical subjects. We know nothing about her studying law. Before I discuss these studies, I will first relate her own views on women's studying. Van Schurman thus thought that women should be allowed to study, and pleaded for admission to a university. In her correspondence with professor Rivet she elaborated on her views. As prerequisite, she felt that women had to have at least an average intellect. They had to have an interest in studying, and sufficient money to pay for teachers and textbooks. Having domestic staff would be indispensable in order to have one's hands free for studying. It was also highly recommended that the woman be celibate. Furthermore, the aim of the studies should not be vanity or useless curiosity. The salvation of the soul, the well-being of the family, and especially the glory of God had to be paramount in such an endeavour. As far as possible, a woman had to apply her studies for the benefit of her sex. Van Schurman further felt that women could study any honourable subject. She recommended subjects that were associated with the holy theology and the moral virtues, and also subjects that supported these. Grammar, logic and rhetoric were very important, especially logic. Physics, metaphysics and history were also important, as was a knowledge of languages, especially of Hebrew and Greek, which would improve and deepen one's understanding of the Bible. Other subjects such as mathematics (which also included music), poetry, painting and related liberal arts had to fulfil the role of a kind of adornment and agreeable pastime. More practical subjects such as law, the art of warfare and the art of public speaking could be studied, but these were not quite so useful, as women had to be silent in public, she wrote. According to our modern norms, she did indeed limit the options for women who wished to study (only rich, intelligent, preferably celibate women who had a desire to study), and she was also not so enlightened at the time that she would grant a leading role in public to a woman. That was all that a woman could achieve within the limitations of society and the church. Later Van Schurman would herself fulfil a leading role, also within the established church.<sup>112</sup>

### *The Faculty of Letters*

Who has been so well-read and experienced in history, poets, orators and other eminent writers, as well as the liberal arts, philosophy and other disciplines, that she could enter into debate on them, and could dictate and write about the most difficult topics and questions.

[Die in de Historien, Poëten, Orateuren, ende andere goede schrijvers, mitsgaders de liberale konsten, neffens de Philosophische, ende andere wetenschappen, soo wel belesen ende ervaren is ghevveest, datse daer van discoureren, ende over de swaerste stucken ende questien der selver dicteren ende in 't schrift stellen konde.]<sup>113</sup>

Just as in the Middle Ages, undergraduate students in early-modern times had to first complete the Faculty of Letters to bring their general knowledge in the liberal arts up to standard. These liberal arts Van Schurman had already more or less mastered before the opening of the University of Utrecht. She studied at the Utrecht Faculty of Letters, especially philosophy, history and Semitic languages. She took several subjects concurrently. At the end of April 1636 Voetius told Buchelius that she had started with Syrian and Arabic and was concentrating on philosophy, especially logic. Her study of Hebrew had commenced the previous year with him.<sup>114</sup>

Just like Aristotle and every scholar of her time, Van Schurman regarded logic as the key to all knowledge. She had immediately started with that in April 1636, Buchelius wrote in his diary. One may infer, from the logical argumentation in her *Dissertatio* (not a dissertation in the modern meaning of the term), that by that time she had thoroughly mastered logic. It was an exposition that was included in the correspondence with Rivet on women's right to study. She wrote her arguments for women studying in the form of a syllogism, for example:

Anyone who leads a placid and free life is suited for studying Letters.  
Precisely women often lead such a life.  
Therefore, women are often suited for studying Letters.<sup>115</sup>

The method of the traditional logic consisted of the formal analysis of correct argumentations. Statements and arguments were translated into symbols, so that mistakes and obscurities could easily be identified. Since the scholastics of the Middle Ages, a practical application had also been developed: the custom to discuss topical issues in a formal disputation. In such a disputation, the formulation of the issue, all the arguments for and against, and their refutation or structure, and also the conclusion, had to take place in accordance with the rules of logic.<sup>116</sup>

Van Schurman's *Dissertatio* met all these requirements. The proposition that she argued was: is a (Christian) woman capable of studying Letters? She delineated the subject and the predicate, explicated what she understood under Letters as discipline, and what the prerequisites were for women to study (at least an average intellect, an inclination towards studying, being well off, having free time – see above). She subsequently gave the arguments *for* studying, in the form of syllogisms with their proof. Then the arguments *against* studying followed, with their refutations.<sup>117</sup>

Finally she came to the conclusion (a confirmation of the proposition): women are capable of studying. What made Van Schurman's argumentation important was not that she brought new or revolutionary knowledge regarding women's participation in academic endeavours. She did however put an end to the exclusion of women in discussions of such topics, and placed woman squarely in the midst of the discourse. Each time she stated in the minor premise that women also had the qualities which studying required (women

have a longing for art and knowledge, they need a thorough and valuable pastime such as studying, and often lead quite a tranquil life).<sup>118</sup>

Van Schurman would have been able to write a logical argument (*dissertatio logica*) on many issues. This *dissertatio logica* about women's talent for academic endeavour is the only one available to us. The topic was very near to her heart, as was also clear from her Latin and Dutch celebratory poems for the University. But according to Bathsua Makin, a British scholarly woman with whom Van Schurman corresponded in Greek, she had written several [such texts]. In her *Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen*, Makin wrote for instance in the paragraph on logic:

Women have understood Logick: Those who read Schurmans Decertations, will conclude she understood the Principles and Practice of Logick very well.<sup>119</sup>

**Philosophy** | In 1640 Buchelius wrote in his diary that Van Schurman was now burying herself in disputations, but complained that, in his opinion, the other doctors, with the exception of Thomas of Aquino and Durandus, were so obscure, that one would be wasting one's time and tormenting one's mind in vain. He thus suggested that Van Schurman had been led astray. She disagreed, and studied not only the scholastic philosophy, but also the philosophy of Plato, Aristotle and even Duns Scotus. Seneca was always her favourite philosopher; not only because she had learnt Latin through studying his work and had studied all his writings, but also because he was seen as the pagan philosopher who came closest to Christianity. Moreover, Seneca was also her father's favourite philosopher. Numerous philosophers feature in her work, showing that she had critically analysed and processed their works.<sup>120</sup>

Cats stated that she was 'so well-read and experienced in philosophy that she could debate the most difficult issues and could write them down' ['zo wel belezen en ervaren was dat ze daarvan discoureren ende over de swaerste stucken ende questien derselver dicteren ende in 't schrift stellen konde']. We know of only one scholarly letter of Van Schurman, *De motibus primo primis* (on the first movements from the beginning), that dealt with an important theme in metaphysics: God who put the *Primum Mobile* [Prime/First Mover] in motion, as First Cause, and thus continues to drive and animate the spheres, the heavens and the earth, by his divine power. This letter would be included in her *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica* as 'the most important of all', wrote her brother Johan Godschalk van Schurman to the church minister Smetius in Nijmegen. But the letter has disappeared, so we do not know how Van Schurman had structured her argument on this issue.<sup>121</sup>

During her studies she also came in contact with Descartes. He had become acquainted with her in 1634, and was very enthusiastic about her poetry and painting. She went to see him at her own initiative. She wrote the following to Rivet about that visit, in Latin:

I also do not want to hide from you that I recently visited Mr Descartes – a man, people say, of great, even incredible erudition, who does not seem to have a high regard for the development of science in the usual, generally accepted sense. He says that nothing of that could contribute anything to true Science; that he has however found another way to be able to achieve this much quicker and with more certainty.<sup>122</sup>

She referred here to the new philosophy of Descartes that was not based on tradition or holy texts. The cornerstone of his epistemology was the aspect of systematic doubt.

Since the Middle Ages, most scholars thought like Aristotle, that nature was only comprehensible through sensory experience. It was thought that only by careful analysis of the observation could one determine the structure of reality. The philosophy of Descartes had a huge attraction for his contemporaries, but raised great concern among theologians and philosophers. Voetius attempted to stem the tide by fervently defending the philosophy of Aristotle. In his view, doubt could never form an acceptable foundation for certainty; that would corrode the orthodox dogmas and would lead to atheism.<sup>123</sup>

Voetius opened the attack on Descartes by organising four disputations on atheism. Descartes defended his views as vehemently as ever. He referred to Voetius as 'le plus franc pedant de la terre' ['the most outspoken pedant in the world']. He also blamed Voetius for Anna Maria van Schurman's occupying herself with theological splitting of hairs instead of with poetry and painting. Van Schurman did not openly choose sides; we also do not know whether she sat next to Descartes when he was sitting in her booth, listening to the disputations of professor Regius, one of Descartes' supporters.<sup>124</sup>

In her autobiography *Eukleria*, Van Schurman gave her opinion on the different philosophical disciplines such as metaphysics, physics and ethics. It was an independent perspective on that which she valued and that which she found obsolete in these 'human' sciences. Metaphysics investigates what lies hidden behind the natural, finite phenomena (physics); all things are seen for their most distinctive characteristic, their true *being*. According to her, this abstraction had to lead to only God being studied, for everything in existence was totally dependent on God:

...because, dear me, what else are the finite and created beings than mere shadows of the true Being? They have nothing in or of themselves, they do not exist through their own power, and if they have something that is true and fundamental, it is derived from God.

[...] want ey-lieve, wat zijn doch de eindige en de geschapen Wezens, als maar enige schaduwen van het waarachtige Wezen? zy hebben niet van haar zelve; zy bestaan niet door haar eigene kracht, en indien ze iets hebben, 't gene waar en grondig is, dat ontlene ze van God.]<sup>125</sup>

Later, as a Labadist, she would develop her own philosophy in which she rejected the views of Descartes as well as some of Voetius. She accepted no purely mechanical explanation of things that would lead to a break between knowledge and faith, but pleaded in favour of an unorthodox Christian philosophy. Her concept of God, namely that he was innately present in all things ['inwendig tegenwoordig is in alle dingen'], reminds one of Spinoza. But, in contrast to Spinoza's technical-philosophical language usage, she formulated her views entirely in Christian, religious terms.<sup>126</sup>

Philosophy also included politics, and that is understandable: after all, philosophers such as Plato had spoken out about the State. Van Schurman did not leave any political works, but she did study the books. Cats said that she could read Italian so well that she 'could read books on political matters and similar topics, written by Italians' ['boecken op

saken van State, of diergelijcke, by den Italianen geschreven']. He was referring here to writers such as Guicciardini. She did write a political poem in Latin in which she commented on the State, the *Respublica*. 'The Republic will flourish spectacularly if courageous soldiers were not dismissed after many sieges, and if the Republic did not keep on shifting the existing borders. If virtue became paramount, the empire would prosper and the arts would dominate'. She said only in general terms at whom the poem was targeted ('verses for a relative with the advice to think it over'). Did she wish with this poem to become involved in politics, a field from which women were excluded?<sup>2127</sup>

The political philosopher James Harrington visited Van Schurman in Utrecht. He had written the *Commonwealth of Oceana* (1656), a book about a Utopian society in which the aristocracy of the country had the political power. She was always interested in the politics of other countries, for instance of France and England. Her angle was also the many repercussions that politics could possibly have for the Church, for example, persecution and people being burnt at stakes. When the report of the decapitation of Charles I of England reached her in 1649, she was so upset and suffered such headaches that she was unable to write, thus wrote her brother Johan Godschalk to Constantijn Huygens.<sup>128</sup>

**History** | During her study of history, Van Schurman became well read on the antique historians such as Xenophon, Thucydides, Curtius, Plutarch, Suetonius and Tacitus, but also on more modern ones, such as Lipsius. That is indicated for instance in a letter dated 7 September 1639 that she wrote to her friend Princess Elisabeth von der Pfalz, who had asked her for advice on the historians that she should study. Van Schurman was already so far advanced that she had a masterly overview of the field. In the letter she gave specific advice on kings and rulers and a critical discussion of the historians. She felt for instance that Xenophon had described the life of Cyrus, the first king of Persia, quite well, but that he was sometimes more concerned about elegance and beauty than about truth. Curtius, on the other hand, had written an excellent biography of Alexander the Great, but he often wove fire, weaponry and bloody sieges into the story. She waxed lyrical about Plutarch, who in his parallel life descriptions drew interesting comparisons between famous Greek and Latin rulers, although according to her, Suetonius and Tacitus were also quite good. Van Schurman found studying history through the above-mentioned historians 'of almost infinite value, because such examples leave a much more vivid impression on the senses and the imagination than the doctrines of philosophy. Moreover, the knowledge about the past that we thus acquire is more objective (being more impersonal) and is more removed, in contrast to personal experience', she wrote. 'Studying history enables us to see the by-gone ages as it were in a clear mirror, and based on what we see, we could reach more accurate projections about the future. In the long run, we should achieve the ideal situation where nothing on earth would amaze us, just as it was with Solomon'.<sup>129</sup>

The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.<sup>130</sup>

Yet she did realise that, although things remained in essence always the same, still, forms and circumstances did change. By studying the spirit of the age as it had been then and as it was now, we could easily show how relative everything is, she continued. As an example, she then mentioned the book of Justus Lipsius, who had also used this method in his book, *Vermaningen (antieke en moderne voorbeelden)* [*Admonishments (antique and modern examples)*]. He showed through public and private persons what value one could derive from the classical and modern examples. ‘Modern historians are not inferior to the classical historians,’ she wrote, ‘if we do not allow ourselves to be so much led by the historians’ powers of persuasion as by the contents’. That is why she contrasted ‘a single Elizabeth, in her lifetime Queen of England, and a certain Jane Grey with all the famous women of Ancient Rome and Greece’. Her assumption was implicit that these learned Protestant English queens – of whom Jane Grey had even died a martyr’s death, which was so much desired by Van Schurman – surpassed the classical women of antiquity, because the former ‘had the light of truth’. To get a picture of the period before and after the Reformation, she advised Princess Elisabeth to get hold of the books of Guicciardini, Sleidanus and Auguste de Thou, which were ‘unsophisticated and true to life’.<sup>131</sup>

From other letters and poems it seems clear that Van Schurman was also well-informed about the history of her country and the history of the church. She also knew the works of the Catholic church historian Baronius. But she reacted enthusiastically in a Latin poem when she heard that the Protestant Professor Salmasius of Leiden was going to write a book against Baronius’ views:

There is now also a rumour that you are writing an important religious work to defend our faith. The most depraved interpreter of olden times, Baronius, must already have felt the threat of the vengeance awaiting him. And even if he blew himself up to gigantic proportions, believe me, soon he will be felled by your pen.<sup>132</sup>

As far as the Neo-Latin historiography of the Netherlands is concerned: she studied the works of historians such as Pontanus and Buchelius very thoroughly, and wrote praise poems in Latin on their books. For instance, the epigram on the history of Gelderland written by Pontanus, professor at the University of Harderwijk:

A very long time ago, the Sicambri already practised Athen’s arts (science and arts) and their society flourished in times of war and peace. But the glory of this old nation had almost completely been eroded by time and disappeared into the waters of Lethe. The patriotic Pontanus has now resurrected this glory and returned to his fatherland this lustrous past [...]<sup>133</sup>

One of the themes that Pontanus touched on in his book and that Van Schurman dealt with in her poem, was the history of the Sicambrians, the inhabitants of the former Batavia. In the eyes of the humanists these Batavians were the first inhabitants of the riverine region in the Netherlands. In the first century after Christ, these illustrious ancestors, under the leadership of Claudius Civilis, dared to revolt (successfully) against the Roman rulers. The Dutch people were direct descendants of these brave and independent people. According to legend, the Batavians had a republic full of cities, resembling the states of the Netherlands.<sup>134</sup>

**Semitic languages** | Cats first praised Van Schurman's knowledge of the modern and classical languages, and then her knowledge of Semitic languages:

Who is so well-practised in the Biblical Hebrew language, that she could read and understand the writers in that language, could evaluate them and also write in it.

Who has learned so much of Rabbinical Hebrew and the Chaldeic, Syrian and Arabic languages that she can read and understand them as well as compare them with the holy Hebrew language, in order to open up the Holy Scriptures in a more pure and learned way.

[Die in de [...] Bibels-Hebreusche talen soo wel geoeffent was, datse daer in de Auteursen lesen, verstaen, daer van oordeelen, oock in schrijven konde.

Die in de Rabbijnsche-Hebreusche, Chaldeusche, Syrische, Arabische talen soo veel geleert hadde, datse die konde lesen, verstaen, en met de heylige Hebreusche tale confereren (= vergelijken), tot reynder ende geleerder openinge van de H. Schrifture.]

Then she went on to learn the Samaritan, Ethiopian and Persian languages, waiting only for books to study from, according to Cats:

Who further intended to proceed with this in future, with God's help, and to add the Samaritan, Ethiopian and Persian languages, waiting only for the necessary books to carry out her laudable intentions.

[Die vorder van sin en voornemen is geweest in toe komende, met Godes hulpe, daer in voort te gaen, en daer noch bij te voegen het Samaritaens, Aethiopisch, ende Persisch, verwachten- de alleen maer noodige boecken tot uyt-werckinge van haer loffelick voor-nemen.]<sup>135</sup>

From the diaries of Buchelius, we know that she indeed studied Hebrew, Arabic and Syrian. Before we focus on each of the languages that Cats mentioned, first a bit of background on the study of Semitic languages. Why did Anna Maria van Schurman study *seven* Semitic languages: Hebrew, Chaldeic (= Aramaic), Syrian, Arabic, Samaritan, Ethiopian and Persian?

In the Renaissance people began to study not only the Classics again, but also Hebrew and other Semitic languages, because of the fascination for texts, foreign languages and unknown alphabets that was in vogue at the time. Extensive scientific discussions took place about the development, the age and relatedness of languages. But the point of departure was always the literal truth of the Bible – giving rise to the theory that Hebrew was the protolanguage which, after the Babylonian confusion of tongues, led to other languages originating (Genesis 11 had to be true, after all).

In the seventeenth century, those languages that were related to Hebrew resorted under Semitic languages. In those times Semitic languages were referred to as 'oriental languages'; currently they are known as Semitic or Ancient Oriental languages. Hebrew was regarded as the mother language, and the other Semitic languages such as Aramaic, Syrian, Samaritan, Arabic and also Persian – which is currently regarded as an Indo-Germanic language – were all regarded as daughter languages. Since the beginning of the sixteenth century, Hebrew (and the Semitic languages), as well as classical languages, were taught at all the universities and at many colleges in Europe. In Leuven, a course in Hebrew was already started in 1518 at the famous Collegium Trilingue, not least at the insistence of Erasmus. From 1568 to 1572 the eight-volume *Biblia Regia* was published by Plantijn in

Antwerp. This multilingual edition of the Bible contained passages in Hebrew, Chaldeic (Aramaic), Syrian, Greek and Latin, with grammars and dictionaries of those languages. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Hebrew studies were flourishing, at first in Leuven, later in Leiden, and thereafter at all the other Dutch universities in Franeker, Harderwijk, Groningen and Utrecht. Semitic languages were also studied with the purpose of creating new translations of the Bible from the original languages. This became a reality in 1637, when the so-called *Statenvertaling* [literally: State translation] was published, and in 1619, when the English *King James Version* was published. These are both language monuments that are still standing today.<sup>136</sup>

**Teacher Voetius (1589-1676)** | In Utrecht, Voetius was professor in theology and Semitic languages (Biblical and Rabbinical Hebrew, Syrian, Aramaic). In the learned ‘*Sermon on the Usefulness of Academies and Schools*’ [‘*Sermoen Van de Nutticheydt der Academien ende Scholen*’] that Voetius had delivered in honour of the opening of the University of Utrecht, he also explained why he thought studying Semitic languages was so important. The arguments that he brought were not revolutionary but were generally accepted viewpoints within the academic world. Hebrew was regarded as the most important language, because God himself spoke in that language to the patriarchs and prophets. It was also extremely important for comparing the original text with translations. Only with a knowledge of Hebrew would one have a thorough answer for dissentients. Hebrew is also necessary for an understanding of the New Testament, because Hebrew expressions abound in the New Testament, and one can never properly understand everything with a knowledge of Greek alone. The Rabbinical Hebrew (Hebrew that the rabbis wrote since the early Middle Ages in their annotations on the Old Testament) hardly differs grammatically from the Biblical Hebrew, but from a chronological and ideological perspective it is different. Rabbinical Hebrew was extremely important in the opinion of Voetius (and the other scholars in this field) for the interpretation of the Old Testament, and also for dialogue with the Jews.<sup>137</sup>

The arguments that Voetius advanced here, were in many respects the same as the arguments for learning Aramaic, Syrian and Arabic. By identifying linguistic similarities or looking at the word use, one could attain a better understanding of the language and the background to the Old Testament (for example, the book Daniel that had been written mainly in Aramaic; Syrian words such as ‘Mammon’ in the New Testament; Arabic words in the Book of Job, et cetera). Some early translations of the Bible have been found in Aramaic, Syrian and Arabic, the ‘early witnesses of the Old Testament’, and they do shed some light on obscure passages. But they could also be useful in studying the New Testament. There was also a strong apologetic benefit for Voetius in acquiring these Semitic languages: Christianity had to be rationally defended, not only against dissidents within Christianity, or against the Jews, but also against the Muslims. Studying their Holy Scriptures in the original text was therefore essential (the Jewish Old Testament plus the interpretations of the rabbis; the Koran). Not only to study their interpretations of similar texts, but also to get to know their arguments against the Christian religion. Only then could one begin to think of missionary work. An additional ecumenical use of Syrian (but also of

*Hier siet ghy, goet-gunstige Leser, een af-beeldinge van  
Jonck-vrou Anna Maria Schurmans, naer het leven gedaen: onder  
het wvelcke wy gesels hebben het veers dat ghy daer lesen meught.*



*Wie oyl die aerdis beelt' sult' komen aen te schouwen,  
Hou' vast, dat ghy hier siet een roem voor alle vrouwen,  
Van dat lewerelts stont, tot heden op ten dach  
Niet een die haer gelock of na bereyken magh.*

**M**Aer niemant dencke dat wy hier (ghe- hebben gesproken, neen niet alsoo; maer  
lijck wel somwijlen in lof-dichtē plagh ghy selts wort hier rechter gemaect om te  
te geschieden) te ruym ende wijdt-mondigh oordeelen of dit mijn eer-dicht erdicht is,  
\* \* \* \* \*

This eulogy by Jacob Cats on Anna Maria van Schurman gives an accurate overview of her studies and also emphasises her relationship with the University of Utrecht.



Continuation of eulogy by Jacob  
Cats on Anna Maria van Schur-  
man. In the background, the Dom  
[Cathedral] of Utrecht is visible.

Greek) was, according to Voetius, the ability to conduct the correspondence with the Christian churches in the East (the Syrian-Orthodox and Greek-Orthodox churches).<sup>138</sup>

Voetius had an extensive library; at the time of his death it ran to 4777 books. Voetius was first and foremost theologian, and many of the books resorted under this category. But he also had almost all the standard works in the field of Semitic languages on his shelves. Not only of European scholars from the sixteenth century, such as Schindlerus and Sebastiaan Münster, but also of seventeenth century colleagues such as Erpenius, Amama, Golius, l'Empereur, Drusius, Buxtorf senior and junior, Pocock, Ravius and Leusden. They wrote grammars, lexicons, dictionaries and linguistic philological comments in the field of Semitic languages, and created translations. They also made accessible the work of the Medieval rabbis such as Maimonides, David Kimchi, Sel Jarchi and Abarbanel, through translations into Latin. Right up to the end of his life, Voetius kept abreast of the latest publications in the field of Semitic languages in the widest sense of the word, except for Samaritan, Persian and Ethiopian. It is also remarkable that, while the mystical

cabbalistics flourished in the seventeenth century, he had only one book on that subject, namely the *Ars Cabbalistica Ricii Leonis Hebraei Reuchlini, Archangeli*. Some examples from the 300 books, mostly bulky volumes in folio format, dealing with the Semitic languages, are nine volumes of the Talmud; Drusius' comments on the many Hebrew words in the New Testament; the conversion of the Jews; the Mishnah; all the existing grammars for the Semitic languages, such as a grammar for Arabic by Erpenius; books on controversial issues such as the vocalising of Hebrew or the (un)reliability of the Greek in the New Testament; books on the legal history of the Jews, or handy little books with proverbs from the Koran. Van Schurman used the books from Voetius' library.<sup>139</sup>

Voetius' work shows that he was very well read. But theology was his passion, and he published much in this field. He did, however, not write any standard works in the field of Semitics, such as the professors in Leiden and Franeker, and later his colleague in Utrecht, Johannes Leusden, had done. Or such as his female student Anna Maria van Schurman had done.

**Hebrew** | After all, in these exercises my intention was not to adorn myself: but because I had my eye on the Greek and Hebrew languages and valued them as the original languages of the Bible, and because I regarded the other Oriental languages as daughter languages of Hebrew, or as branches thereof, and therefore as precious and worthy of the praise of learned men, I came to realise that I had to acquire these languages by untiring effort, in particular Syrian, Arabic and the Moorish language, because these have more word roots of which the derivatives are found only in the Bible, and therefore these would enable me to fathom their deepest meaning.

[Ik heb immers mijn voornaamste vercierzel in deze oeffeninge niet voorged: maar om dat ik de Griekse en de Hebreuse taal in 't oog had en in waarde hiel, als de grond-talen van de H. Schrift; en dat ik de andere Oostersche talen als dochters van de Hebreuse, of als takken der zelve, en daarom beminlijk, en de aanprijzing der geleerde mannen waardig, my liet voorstaan dat ik die door een onuitputlijken arbeid verkrijgen moest: maar byzonder de Syrische, de Arabische, en de Moorsche taal, om dat die meer wortelwoorden hadden, van welke de afgevloeide alleenlijk in de H. Schrift gevonden wierden, en daarom zouden de zelve my licht geven om der zelver in wendigsten zin uit te halen.]<sup>140</sup>

If we now compare Voetius' view on studying languages with Van Schurman's views, then we see that she had put into practice what he had advocated. She studied (Biblical and Rabbinical) Hebrew, Aramaic, Syrian and Arabic under him. In a letter to the Leiden professor Vorstius, Van Schurman wrote that Voetius had been her teacher, especially in Hebrew. But that was just after he had come to Utrecht. She later learnt many other Semitic languages as well. She even surpassed him in her studies and knowledge of Samaritan, Ethiopian and Persian. She wrote a grammar for Ethiopian.<sup>141</sup>

In her *Dissertatio* on women's right to study she wrote that studying languages is important for a woman, especially studying Greek and Hebrew. Especially Hebrew would give one a deeper insight into the Holy Bible. She spent much time on that. In the eyes of the French scholarly woman, Marie le Jars de Gournay, this was a waste of time. Van Schurman replied that she generally reserved only her leisure time for studying languages, and only at intervals that were few and far between, but that she made an exception in the



Multilingual sheet with quotations from successively Hebrew, Aramaic, Syrian, Rabbinical Hebrew, Arabic and Greek.

case of the holy language [Hebrew]. For Hebrew had the word of God as subject, and she felt that the word of God should be the main topic in our thoughts [at all times].<sup>142</sup>

The tone of the letter was one of slight annoyance. She could not stand it when people denigrated something that she regarded as sacred. For instance, Descartes once visited her while she was sitting studying from a Hebrew Bible. He started speaking disdainfully about studying Hebrew. A woman with so much talent, busying herself with such unimportant matters? He had for instance found nothing in Genesis 1 that could be referred to as 'claire et distincte' [clear and explicit]. So, such reading matter was superfluous. She was very angry about his arrogance.<sup>143</sup>

After having studied Hebrew, she used Hebrew as argument or citation in her theological-linguistic dissertations. She also wrote letters and poems in Hebrew. Alas, her commentary on the Psalms was lost. In the Hebrew letter to her teacher Voetius she complained that she would miss out on his lectures for a while, and that she envied those who could continue 'from strength to strength':

For the man whose lips feed many people<sup>144</sup>, the candle of the Lord<sup>145</sup>, the chief shepherd<sup>146</sup>, Mr Gijbert Voetius.

I have waited patiently for you,<sup>147</sup> my friend and pastor who illuminates my darkness and who makes my feet like those of children, because truly your words are like gold to me and your mouth a source of life.<sup>148</sup> Verily, you have hidden your face from me and I find myself in deferred hope.<sup>149</sup> I am jealous of the happiness of people who live in your home and of everyone who goes from strength to strength because they drink the water flowing from the wellspring of your wisdom,<sup>150</sup> while I resemble withered grass in the fields, or a horse that like a mule has no understanding.<sup>151</sup> Oh, would that I once again, as in months past,

could experience how your tuition restores my soul, like olive plants at rivers of water.<sup>152</sup> Oh, would that I could only glean ears of corn after your pupils.<sup>153</sup> Live and be prosperous, you and your house.<sup>154</sup> From her who desires your wisdom more than silver and your favour more than precious gold.<sup>155</sup>

We do not know precisely when the lectures were interrupted, as no date was given; perhaps it was after the death of her mother in 1637. She must have resumed the lectures quite soon again. Her letters in Hebrew that are available to us do look a bit 'grandiloquent and the contents not very significant' ['zeer gezwollen en de inhoud onbeduidend'], as Schotel remarked. But there is more to this than meets the eye. After translating and reading these letters in Hebrew it becomes clear that the letters consist of one scriptural passage after another. Van Schurman knew the Bible almost off by heart. It is a fact that learning a foreign language is easier if one ties it in with something familiar, such as the Bible. She also learnt Latin through the writings of Seneca and the Bible. In South Africa, Latin (and Greek) were in 1991 still being taught with the aid of the Bible. Van Schurman probably learnt the other languages also in this way. But the difference between her letters in Dutch, French, Latin, Greek on the one hand, and her letters in Hebrew on the other, is that the first group lacks the literal agreement with passages from the scriptures. The strangeness of Hebrew as Semitic language may be a factor here. With such a foreign language one tends to hold on to whatever is familiar.<sup>156</sup>

But that was not the only factor. Let us read again exactly what Buchelius wrote in Latin in his diary about her study of Hebrew:

I saw a letter at Van Schurman written by herself to Voetius in Hebrew, and with passages taken from the Bible, according to the custom of the Jews [...]<sup>157</sup>

He was referring to 'passages taken from the Bible according to the custom of the Jews'. The Torah was so sacred to the Jews, that nobody dared change one iota, not even a single letter. If one followed this custom, it would mean that the sacred text would be given as precisely as possible, and that one would not deviate from it. Now the authority of the Hebrew text also carried a lot of weight among the Protestants; Hebrew was regarded as the holy language in which God himself spoke, yet one had more freedom [as Protestant]. There was no question of such 'letter-worship', and therefore not every sentence had to come straight from the holy text.

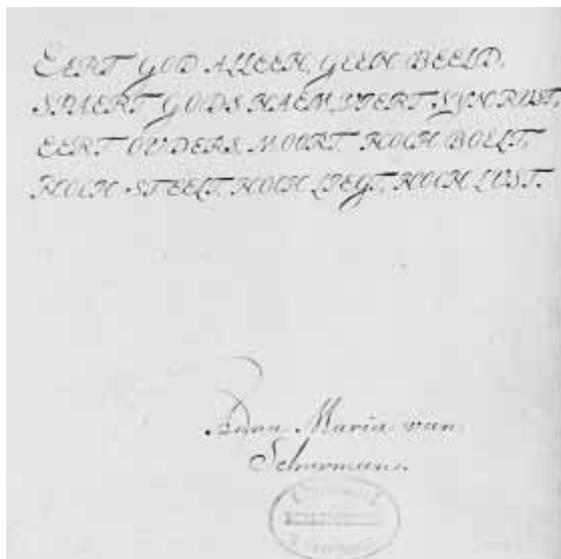
Another element that also played a role here was the intellectual skill that was held in high repute among humanistic scholars. For instance, a *cento* (literally: a patchwork quilt) was a poem that consisted of verses from Horatio, for example. The Homeric and Virgilian *centones* are also well known. It is the skill of the reader to recognise and trace the texts. The same now holds true for the letters that Van Schurman wrote in Hebrew, which were full of passages from the Bible. They were written specifically with a dual purpose: the extreme respect for Hebrew, but also as intellectual exercise. Very little research has been done into letters written in Hebrew by humanists in the Renaissance, but the few letters that Jacobus Crucius and Marie du Moulin had written in Hebrew to Van Schurman were done in the same vein: a series of passages from the Bible, strung together.<sup>158</sup>

One theme that often occurs in the Hebrew letters of Van Schurman is ‘wisdom’. Van Schurman yearned for wisdom, she wished to drink from lips from where wisdom flowed, because ‘the mouth of the just bringeth forth wisdom’. It comes as no surprise that many of her quotes from the Bible were taken from the Book of Proverbs, the jewel of all the Wisdom literature. It is also appropriate for someone who wished to go through life as a learned and pious woman.<sup>159</sup>

**Poetry in Hebrew** | In the seventeenth century, Hebrew poetry was hotly debated. Gomarum (the teacher of Voetius) attempted to show in his book, *Lyra Davidis*, that Greek poetry originated from Hebrew poetry. Louis Cappel from Saumur argued against this in his book *Critica Sacra* according to the theory that the vowel signs were later additions. Precisely because in the original Hebrew the writing consisted of consonants alone, the original form of the Hebrew words was not certain. That is why the metre of this poetry could also not be reconstructed and so the inference of the Greek origin would fall through. Professor l’Empereur of Leiden prevented the publication of the book by withholding permission. He felt that the book was dangerous because this method of text critique would lead to nothing in the Bible being certain any more. The age of the vocalisation was even elevated to religious truth and Cappel’s viewpoint was made out as heresy.<sup>160</sup>

Van Schurman wrote a poem in Hebrew, but stayed out of the discussion by writing the poem in pure iambic (Western) metre. *Ex puris Jambis*, she wrote at the top. She created a Dutch translation with exactly the same metre and wrote her name under both poems:<sup>161</sup>

Honour only God, no likeness  
 Respect God’s name, celebrate his rest  
 Honour parents, commit neither murder nor adultery,  
 Nor steal, nor lie, nor desire.



This Dutch poem on the Ten Commandments is a direct translation of her poem in Hebrew.

[Eert god alleen, geen beeld,  
 Spaert gods naem, viert syn rust  
 Eert ouders, moort, noch boelt,  
 Noch steelt, noch liegt, noch lust.]

This poem in Hebrew and in Dutch is a summary of the Ten Commandments that are written in Exodus 20 in Hebrew prose. Writing poems based on the Ten Commandments was quite common in the seventeenth century. The poet Revius, for instance, wrote a number of separate poems on each commandment. Dirck Pietersz. Pers, Huygens and Lescailje also wrote poems on the Ten Commandments, but they show such a degree of similarity to one another and to the poem of Van Schurman, that there must have been a measure of interdependence. Van Schurman signed the little Hebrew poem as well as the epigram in Dutch with her own name, and wrote the date underneath (Feb. 1651). She was also the only one in this group who knew Hebrew. The metre of both the Hebrew and the Dutch poem is the same; the translation is also literally the same. It therefore appears to me that Van Schurman had probably first conceived both poems and that her lead was afterwards followed, via Huygens.<sup>162</sup>



The opening prayer of the Koran,  
 written in Arabic.

**Other Semitic languages** | After having studied Hebrew, Van Schurman studied Rabbinical Hebrew, Aramaic, Syrian and Arabic under Voetius. Voetius had all the handbooks for these languages at home. As far as I can see, she used these languages mainly in quotations in her theological-philological dissertations or on her multilingual little calligraphic works of art. She quoted for instance in her *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica* the rabbi Aben Esra from the twelfth century, who was in her opinion the most erudite among the rabbis. But in most cases the passages from the Bible appear on multilingual pages. She quoted twice in Syrian from a book on the liturgy in the Syrian Orthodox Church, written by Severus of Alexandria, and partially published by Fabricius Bodeianus in 1572. It may indicate her interest across the various churches, an interest that is also reflected in her correspondence with bishop Meletios Pantogalus, the bishop of the Greek-Orthodox Church in Ephesus.<sup>163</sup>

In the Coopmanshûs Museum in Franeker, two miniature art works made by Van Schurman are on display. In the centre of each an arch shape had been left open. In one, a Greek text was written, in the other one an Arabic text. Both texts are ancient prayers, namely the Lord's Prayer in Greek<sup>164</sup> and the Lord's Prayer – for the beginning of the Koran is regarded as such – in Arabic:

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate,  
Praise belongs to God, the Lord of all Being,  
The All-Merciful, All-Compassionate,  
The Master of the Day of Doom, Thee only we serve,  
to Thee alone we pray for help.  
Guide us unto the straight path, the path of those  
Whom Thou has blessed  
Not of those against whom Thou art wrathful  
Nor of those who are astray.<sup>165</sup>

Van Schurman also learnt Arabic from Voetius and put handbooks by Petrus Kirstenius, the grammar handbook of Erpenius, the Thesaurus of Gigeus and the Lexicon of Jacobus Golius to good use. But there were still so many more books in the library of Voetius: in Latin on the history of the Muslims, the *Historia Arabica* of Rodericus Ximenez, the Arabic translations of the *Tabula Cebetis* and of the *Aurea Carmina* of Pythagoras, the *Compendium Historicum* of Levinus Warnerus, the fables of Locman and a number of other works in Arabic. To practise, she read the different books of the Bible that had been translated into Arabic, such as Erpenius' edition of the Pentateuch, the New Testament, the Psalms and the Acts of the Apostles. Sometimes she approached the Leiden physician Elichman for assistance, and after his death, professor Jacobus Golius sometimes helped her.<sup>166</sup>

For her studies, she also read the Koran, not only for comparing the corresponding texts in Hebrew, but also with a view to converting the Muslims. She copied the Koran by hand, and had it bound separately. It is a codex with gold and coloured capital letters and medial letters, and bound beautifully in leather. The book came into the hands of the learned church minister Abraham Hinckelmann from Hamburg. In 1694, he then published an edition of the text, which was based on, among others, Van Schurman's Koran. Precisely this edition would form the basis for Islamic studies in centuries to come.<sup>167</sup>



Anna Maria van Schurman copied the Koran by hand. In the 17th century, Calvinists believed that one had to study meticulously the holy books of opponents (e.g. Jews or Muslims) in order to be able to debate with them.

Anna Maria van Schurman also wrote various dissertations in Arabic, with exegetic content, but these have disappeared, as have her letters in Arabic. Various Arabic citations were included as proof in discussions in her works and letters. We have one example in the *Opuscula* in the letter *De Vitae Termino* that she wrote to Van Beverwijck. Therein she quoted in Arabic from the Koran, but translated it at the same time in Latin, adding that the ‘Turkish’ Koran [...] did have an excellent proverb: ‘God triumphs in his cause, even if the people do not understand it’ [‘God triomfeert in zijn zaak, al is het dat de mensen het niet begrijpen’]. There are also quotes in Arabic in the *alba amicorum* and on the multilingual pages. She often chose the proverb ‘One day in the life of a wise person is worth more than a thousand days in the life of a fool’.<sup>168</sup>

According to Douma (1924), there is not a single shred of evidence that Van Schurman had studied Samaritan and Persian, even if Jacob Cats did announce it. Also, in Voetius’ library there were not many books on Samaritan, Persian or Ethiopian: there was [in any case] hardly anything published on these languages. The differences between the Samaritans and the Jews were well known, e.g. on the authenticity of the high priests (the real descendants of Aaron were in Sichem and not in Jerusalem), on the location of the



Her handwritten Koran formed the foundation for the first edition of the Koran that would be published by Abraham Hinckelmann in 1694 in Hamburg.

temple (not in Jerusalem, but on Mount Gerizim at Sichem), the canon of the Pentateuch in contrast to the Torah, and on revering Moses as the only prophet. The Samaritan Pentateuch (from the fourth to the first century before Christ) had been known since 1616, when Pietro delle Valle brought a handwritten manuscript to Europe. Immediately there were strife and discord: Protestant scholars did not hold the text in high regard because they accepted the Masoretical form (that is, with vowels) of the Old Testament as the true *Textus Receptus*. Roman Catholic scholars, on the other hand, held the text in high regard precisely because this text was pre-Masoretic. It is therefore not surprising that Voetius had so few [of such books] in his home. Still, Van Schurman did study Samaritan, as a few quotations in Samaritan on multilingual pages indicate, for instance, on the little art work that is kept in the Royal Library ('Koninklijke Bibliotheek', The Hague), and where she quoted a line from the Samaritan Pentateuch, Genesis 49.<sup>169</sup>

After the Leiden scholar Louis de Dieu in 1639 had published his *Rudimenta linguae persicae* [*Basic principles of the Persian language*], Van Schurman began studying as autodidact. Voetius did not know Persian, but had a few Persian books in his bookcase: some of the Psalms, the four Gospels, the history of Christ, various grammars, something on as-

tronomy and some anthologies with proverbs in Persian. We know only indirectly about Van Schurman's knowledge of Persian. She sent a transcription of an epigram that Johannes Elichmannus had written in 1638 on her own multi-faceted knowledge of languages. The tetrastich, written in Latin and Persian, is a eulogy on her polyglottism. Colvius sent to Van Schurman a sheet full of Persian, Japanese and Siamese characters (November 1637).<sup>170</sup> It could be that she did actually publish something in Persian, because Bathsua Makin wrote in her *Essay* in the section 'Women have been good linguists':

Anna Maria Schurman of Utrecht (called by Spanhemius, 'ultimum Naturae in hoc sexum conatum et decimam Musam', Nature's masterpiece amongst Women, excelling the very Muses) hath printed divers works in Latin, Greek, French and the Persian Tongue; she understood the Arabick also.<sup>171</sup>

However, no work of Van Schurman in Persian is known to us.

**Ethiopian** | When the poet and diplomat Constantijn Huygens found Van Schurman in Utrecht on New Year's Day 1649, busy studying Ethiopian, he was dumbfounded. He immediately wrote a Latin poem:

Although she already knew everything, Anna wanted to create the impression that she knew nothing, unless she got to know the remote Ethiopians. We saw her among black muses – new goddesses – and we could hardly believe our eyes! The new face of Janus saw it too, and the god was astounded and said: Where will this end? if every time I renew my face, this woman has acquired another language, and every time there is a new year (*annus*) is, there is also a new Anna?<sup>172</sup>

Van Schurman replied by way of a poem that she wrote in Latin, and simply continued with her studies. Jacobus Crucius also mentioned in his praise poem *De Virgine Batava* that 'our heroine' studied Samaritan, Persian and Ethiopian. As is clear from the alphabet, studying this language entails many more problems than the other Semitic languages, because in Ethiopian every *syllable* is represented by a different character. Why would a woman from the Netherlands in the seventeenth century learn an African language and even write a grammar for it? That could be related to the fascination for languages in general and the belief that the daughter languages of Hebrew could shed more light on the Holy Bible. Ethiopian ('the Moorish language') is a Southern-Semitic language that itself had, according to Van Schurman, many 'word roots, of which the derivatives were found only in the Bible, and therefore they should lead me in my quest to find the inner/deepest meaning' ['wortelwoorden had, van welke de afgevoelde alleenlijk in de H. Schrift gevonden wierden, en daarom zouden de zelve my licht geven om der zelve inwendigsten zin uit te halen'].<sup>173</sup>

In the first century AD, an empire was founded (Axum) in Ethiopia, which was Christianised in the fourth century. A few translations of the Bible in Old Ethiopian (Ge'ez) are still available. There were all kinds of stories about Ethiopia; it was supposedly the empire of Prester John ('Pape Jan'), a legendary priest who ruled over a Christian empire. According to the Old Testament story in I Kings 10 (repeated in II Chronicles 9), the attractive and wise queen of Sheba came to visit King Solomon to put his wisdom to the

test. In the seventeenth century, people thought that Sheba was the country of the Moors, later Ethiopia. That story must have captured Anna Maria van Schurman's imagination: a wise woman from Africa travelling approximately 1000 years before Christ, at her own initiative to Jerusalem. The queen did not believe in rumours, but wished to investigate things for herself. Being so wise herself, she wished to see what the truth was regarding the wisdom of Solomon. She thought up some riddles to put him to the test. She soon realised that she was not told half about his wisdom and wealth. According to non-biblical sources, Solomon even fathered a child with her, [who became] the founder of the empire of the Solomonic dynasty in Ethiopia.<sup>174</sup>

Knowledge of Ethiopian was however still in its infancy when Van Schurman began studying it. Whereas she had had Voetius for the other Semitic languages, and via the handbooks, especially the Leiden and Franeker professors such as Drusius, Golius, L' Empereur, Elichmann, De Dieu and Erpenius as teachers, with the Ethiopian language, she had to find her own way. Although the book of Psalms in Ethiopian by Johannes Potken had been published in 1513, and in 1548 Victorinus had added a grammar to his edition of the New Testament, these were, according to experts, a 'string of nonsense and folly' ['aan-eenschakeling van onzin en dwaasheid']. In 1638 Jacobus Wemmers published a limited Ethiopian dictionary, and in 1647 professor Johannes Gerhard from Jena published a review of the Semitic languages, only briefly touching upon Ethiopian, although in the multilingual Bibles from 1645 onward Ethiopian was included. It says a lot that in the library of Voetius, there stood only one single book in Ethiopian, namely an edition of the Book of Jonah and a part of Genesis, by the Leiden scholar Theodorus Petreus, and even that book was only published in 1660. Although other editions of single books of the Bible in Ethiopian had been published by Petreus and Nisselius (the Letters of John, James and Peter in the New Testament) since 1654, together with Arabic or Latin, Van Schurman was already waiting for books to start studying Ethiopian in 1637, according to Jacob Cats.<sup>175</sup>

Because none was available, Van Schurman wrote a grammar in Latin for Ethiopian that consisted of two parts, *De Lectione* (about reading aloud, that is, pronunciation, with the complete alphabet given in this section with the pronunciation [of each letter]), and *De Nomine* (on the nouns). However, this cannot be the complete description, but deals with only a section of the grammar. Even in the extremely concise Ethiopian grammar of Hartmannus and Joh. Henr. Maji (24 pages (1707)), there were already more chapters, with topics that belonged in every basic grammar, for example: I. *De Lectione* (On pronunciation and the alphabet); II *De nomine* (On nouns); III *De Pronomine* (On pronouns); IV *De Verbo Perfecto Regulari* (On regular verbs); V *De Verbo Imperfecti sive Irregulari* (On irregular verbs); VI *De Mutatione Vocalium* (On vowel shifts); VII *Notae In Radicum Investigatione* (Notes on the investigation of roots); and finally, VII *De Syntaxis* (On syntax).<sup>176</sup>

Alas, her grammar could not be traced yet. Van Schurman completed this handbook in 1648 – when Job Ludolf visited her as a young student, as he had heard of her studies in Semitic languages, and specifically of her Ethiopian studies. He would later (in 1661) publish a world-renowned description of Ethiopia and a grammar for Ethiopian. She showed him everything, even nursed him in her house when he became seriously ill and made a

portrait of him, which he got as farewell gift. How much of her work had been assimilated into his, no one would be able to determine, unless Van Schurman's grammar is found. Up to now, Ludolf has been honoured as the 'father of Ethiopian studies'. But we can assume that Van Schurman was the 'mother' of Ethiopian studies, as she had already completed hers before he had anything down on paper.<sup>177</sup>

Her other works in Ethiopian have also been lost or may still be lying somewhere in archives and libraries, waiting to be identified. According to Schotel (1853), her Ethiopian handwritten manuscripts fell into the hands of Johannes Mayer from Greifswald, who also owned other writings that she had written in Ethiopian. The printed catalogue of his books bears this out.<sup>178</sup> But the only tangible proof we now have are the quotations in Ethiopian on multilingual pages, for instance:



Self-portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman: the first pastel portrait in the Netherlands.

### The Queen of Sheba<sup>1</sup>

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hysop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

And when the Queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the King, which he told her not. And when the Queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the King, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgement and justice. And she gave the King a hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the Queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon. And the navy also of Hiram, that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of almug trees, and precious stones. And the King made of the almug trees pillars for the house of the Lord, and for the King's house, harps also and psalteries for singers: there came no such almug trees, nor were seen unto this day. And King Solomon gave unto the Queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned and went to her own country, she and her servants.

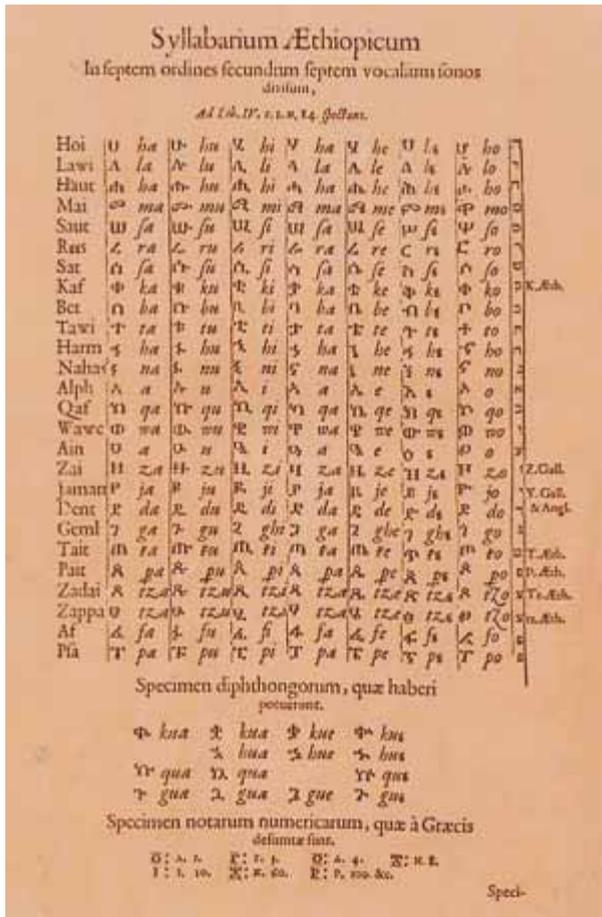
I. I Kings 10.

The commands of the Lord are righteous, gladdening the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, lighting up the eyes.<sup>179</sup>

Although at this stage we have only fragments to go by, we do know that she had achieved something unique with her grammar for the Ethiopian language.<sup>180</sup>

Van Schurman's fascination for unknown, foreign languages was not limited to the modern, classical and Semitic languages. Andreas Colvius, for instance, sent a letter from Dordrecht in 1637 to Van Schurman with Persian, Japanese, and Siamese characters. Perhaps she had never seen these? If she made him a copy, she could keep the original, thus he

The Ethiopian language has an intricate alphabet, for it has a different sign for every syllable.



Whoever mentions Schurman, mentions at the same time  
everything that represents learning in every city, every place.  
There has never been a language in the world,  
That she does not know, or speak, or read.

[Wie Schurman noemt, noemt in dit woord,  
Al wat geleerdheid is in elke stad, elk oord  
Er is geen taal ter wereld oyt geweest,  
Die zij niet kent, niet spreekt, niet leest.]<sup>182</sup>

Van Schurman's multilingual pages always started with Hebrew. That occupied pride of place. Below the Hebrew text, she wrote the related languages such as Rabbinical Hebrew, Aramaic, Syrian, Samaritan, Arabic and Ethiopian. If Greek and Latin were also present, it only came at the bottom of the page. The *album amicorum* pages reflected exactly the view that Voetius had voiced in his *Sermo*. Hebrew is the most important language; after Hebrew, the daughter languages follow. Van Schurman worked so hard at her linguistic studies that she later admitted becoming ill. Tirelessly she devoted her time to learning these languages – not as an objective in its own right, but as a means to an end, namely to obtain a better understanding of the Bible.

### *Theology*

From the handbook *Exercitia et bibliotheca studiosi theologiae* [*Exercises and library for theology students*] that Voetius wrote for the students we can infer what studying theology in Utrecht entailed. The training that was given was described therein and the most important literature was listed. The duration of the study was seven years: the first three years were to be spent on the compulsory subjects from the Faculty of Letters, such as logic, Hebrew and Greek, history, philosophy et cetera; then for four years biblical subjects, the history of the Church, dogmatics, philology, ethics, elenctics (theory of disputation) and Church law. The students had to acquire a solid knowledge of the Bible. Van Schurman studied theology, not only under Voetius but also with Hoornbeeck (polemics), De Maets (New Testament), and Schotanus (Old Testament). Van Schurman knew the church history and the biblical histories well, and had read the Greek and Latin church fathers with insight.<sup>183</sup>

Regarding the lectures that she attended: Voetius gave eight hours of lectures per week, on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons he gave an hour long lecture on the exegesis of the Psalms, the Aramaic chapters in Daniel, the exegesis of Hosea and other smaller sections of the Old Testament. The hour on Thursday and Friday mornings was intended for the exegesis of the letter to the Romans, while on Monday and Tuesday mornings he dealt with the fundamentals of dogmatics (*loci communes*) according to the Belgic Confession ['Nederlandse Geloofsbelijdenis'] and the Heidelberg Catechism. In addition to the public lectures, there were the disputations on Wednesdays and Saturdays. It is not known when he gave the private lectures.<sup>184</sup>

Van Schurman must have taken subjects from both the Faculties of Letters and Theology at the same time, because already in 1637 Cats wrote:

Who had excellent knowledge and deep insight in Theologia Textualiâ, Dogmaticâ, Practicâ, Elencticâ, even to the point of the most difficult and subtle scholastic issues. Who daily practised diligently in all subdivisions and methods of theology ...

[Die voortreffelijcke kennisse hadde, ende een diep-sinnigh oordeel, in Theologiâ Textuali, Dogmaticâ, Practicâ, Elencticâ ; selfs tot de swaerste ende subtijlste Scholastique questien toe. Die haer dagelicx noch neerstelick oeffende in alle deelen ende methoden der Theologie ...]<sup>185</sup>

She conceded that she already knew 'the truths of the *Dutch Reformed theology and the practising of piety*' ['de waarheden van de *Gereformeerde Godgeleertheit en de oeffeningen in de Godzaligheid*'], so well that she no longer needed 'to progress linearly, but only had to walk in circles and continually revisit all the general and specific things' ['recht uit, en met meerder voortgank, maar alleen in 't ronde had te loopen, en maar van noden had om alle algemene en bijzondere dingen, geduurig weêr te doen'].<sup>186</sup> After four years in theology, she was regarded as an equal, as is clear from the following example.

Professor Meinardus Schotanus organised a disputation to be held at the University of Utrecht on the baptism for the dead ['doop voor de doden'], 1 Cor. 15:29,<sup>187</sup> a *locus vexatissimum* [a most vexating question] which had already perplexed many scholars (at the present moment there are more than 200 different explanations of this passage). Anna Maria van Schurman made her viewpoint known in a conversation *ex tempore*. She subsequently received a flowery letter in Latin from the Dordrecht theologian Jacobus Lydius in which he invited her to put her interpretation down in writing. That she did. Her essay first appeared separately as *Epistola Theologica* and was included in the *Dissertatio* (1641) and in all the reprints of her *Opuscula* from 1648 onwards. Lydius included a partial translation thereof in his *Vrolicke uuren des doodts* [*Merry hours of death*] (1640). Her interpretation immediately became part of the academic discourse, because on 6 January 1642 Professor Johannes Cloppenburgh also had this text debated in Latin at the University of Harderwijk. At that occasion he gave a very clear analysis of the text in Greek, of the problems and solutions that were suggested by, for instance, the church father Chrysostomos, by Bertramus and Luther, and, last but not least, by Anna Maria van Schurman. Cloppenburgh agreed only partially with their and her allegoric explanations, and ended with his own interpretation. That meant that he took Van Schurman seriously. All too often it was claimed that Van Schurman was praised mainly because she was a woman, and that her work was only regarded as theological once she had left Utrecht and published work as Labadist (after 1669). But here we find that Van Schurman was regarded as equal already at a much earlier stage.<sup>188</sup>

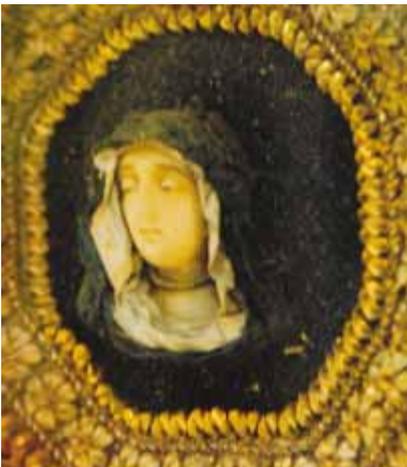
Her opinion was also sought on other troublesome theological issues, such as millennialism ['het duizendjarig vrederijk op aarde'], the hyssop and the cross, and transubstantiation. In these scholarly letters, it is clear that she used her knowledge of theology, linguistics and languages to solve crucial points in the text, and not *per se* in service of dogmatics. Both parts of her autobiography *Eukleria* are also proof of her great knowledge of theology.<sup>189</sup>

Sometimes she put her theological insights into poetic form, as she did for instance

with *Bedenckingen over de toekomst van Christi koninkrijk* [*Concerns over the future of the kingdom of Christ*]. This didactic poem was often reprinted, translated and included in other writers' work. Shortly before she left Utrecht to move to Amsterdam, she wrote poems and writings in Dutch, French and Latin on the decline of Christianity, of which some were published. Her theological didactic poems on the first three chapters of Genesis and about the spiritual marriage between Christ and the soul, remained in manuscript form, and were only published after her death. In manuscript form, her *Tabulae Theologi*, an outline of theology with all its divisions and subdivisions, was also circulated. Her linguistic comment on the letter of Paul to the Romans has not survived; neither has her explanation of the Psalms.<sup>190</sup> Van Schurman was taken seriously. According to many scholars of her time, she was so good that she could have been awarded a professorship in theology, *si vir esset*, if she had been a man.<sup>191</sup>

Just like Voetius, Van Schurman felt that theology should not be a theoretical discipline, but mainly existential, a discipline that was experienced, that had to be expressed in one's daily life. Already in his opening lecture in 1634, *Oratio de pietate cum scientia conjungenda* [*Oration on piety to combine with science*], Voetius spoke about this, and later in his career he also emphasised its importance. It is clear too in his disputations on the *Excelsa mundi*, 'de hoogten der wereld' [the heights of the world]. He wrote therein what was allowed and what not: everything that contributed to the glory of God and benefited humans, was allowed, and the opposite was not. According to Voetius's interpretation, this last category would have been dancing, acting, excess in eating and drinking, and vanity in dress and hairstyle. In his *TA ASKETIKA SIVE Exercitia pietatis* [*On ascetics, or Exercises in piety*], he discussed at length the practical living of one's faith, also in a positive sense.<sup>192</sup>

Van Schurman put piety into practice – the so-called 'praktijk der godzaligheid', as the 'praxis pietatis' is also referred to – from an early age. It consisted of observing the religious obligations, for instance in fasting and prayer. At home she led the others in prayer and tried, just like the prophet Daniel, to withdraw and pray three times per day, at fixed



Self-portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman, modelled in wax, 'meditating on Christ', as Buchelius wrote in a Latin praise poem.

times. She was very strict about observing the Sabbath. Deeply moved by the example of the theologian Theodorus à Brakel, at whose home she once stayed over, together with her brother, she wrote that he condemned

... all menial work on the first day of the week so that he would rather go without food for the whole day, than to have tasted any crumb of any bread or dish that was bought or cooked after eight o'clock the previous day, (when his Sabbath started).

[...alle dienstbare werken op den eersten dag der weeke zo dat hy liever den geheelen dag geen spijs zou genuttigt, als dat hy van eenig broot of gerecht 't gene daags te voren na acht uren (als wanneer zijn ruste aanging) gekocht of gekookt was, ook eenige kruim zou geproeft hebben.]

So on Sundays she was not served a freshly prepared meal. Although she herself was not quite so strict, she found 'his excessive piousness less of a fault than forsaking God would have been' ['zijn overgelovigheid een minder quaat als de Godverloochening'].<sup>193</sup> After the death of her mother her life, which had been focused on her studies, changed to a large extent, but not as much as she tried to make out – making it seem as if she was kept for almost twenty years from 'continuing her studies and practising her arts' ['voortgank der studien en van het oefenen der konsten']; there are too many of her publications and art works from that time available to us. But the responsibility of running the household did now fall on her shoulders, also as far as charity work was concerned. That entailed visiting people who were ill, 'comforting those who were sad, teaching the ignorant, helping the poor with alms, or also admonishing those who neglect their duty and jointly urging them to piety and virtue' ['de treurige te troosten, de onwetende te onderwijzen, de armen met aalmoesen te helpen, of ook die haar plicht niet deden aftemanen, en met haar tot de godvruchtigheid en deugt te vermanen']. She tried it in all sincerity and honesty, but later had to admit that she had been rash and ignorant, for she had been deceived numerous times.<sup>194</sup>

As a little girl, Van Schurman was deeply moved by learning the Heidelberg Catechism and by reading the Book of Martyrs. She wished to rather die a martyr's death than lead a pleasant life. Only the life of Jesus seemed to her a worthy example to follow. She expressed that thought in a portrait in wax in which she portrays herself, 'meditating on Christ' (not available to us). Buchelius wrote a fine Latin poem on that portrait:

This is the image of Van Schurman meditating on Christ  
The most pious maiden has modelled it with her own hands.<sup>195</sup>

She wanted to write a better book about following Christ than Thomas à Kempis' world-famous *De Imitatione Christi*, but she stopped halfway. As Labadist, it was for her as if she 'tried to portray the sun by means of a burnt-out piece of coal' ['de Zonne door een dove [= niet meer gloeiende] kole wilde afschilderen']. To her a Christian's life was the best portrayal of the life of Christ.<sup>196</sup>

### *Medical studies*

Lusitanus, a Sefardic Jew in Amsterdam, who had come from the Iberian peninsula, wrote an excellent overview of the history of medical science in more than a thousand folio pages, *De medicorum principum historia* [*On the history of important physicians*]. In that work, he referred to Van Schurman as an expert. According to him, she acquired this status through her contribution to the question on the end of life (*De Vitae Termino*). He wrote:

And today, in our time, in our Netherlands, in Utrecht there lives and thrives the very noble young woman, Anna Maria van Schurman, with a capable and sharp intellect, who has been blessed with so many rare talents in all disciplines that, very exceptionally, she knows twelve languages, and who recently delivered incredible proof of her intelligence with her contribution on the fateful end of life [written] for the highly competent physician Johan van Beverwijck.<sup>197</sup>

This scholarly letter was her contribution to the national discussion on *De vitae termino* that the physician Van Beverwijck had provoked. Was the end of a human being's life predetermined by God's will, or could one extend a person's life through medical science? Her contribution (more about this in the following chapter) was included in the various volumes with the most divergent answers that Van Beverwijck had collected, but were also printed separately, and then reprinted and translated. It is not her only contribution in the medical-theological field that we know of. She also corresponded with Van Beverwijck about the question implicit in John 9: 'Why did Christ the Lord spread saliva and mud onto the eyes of the blind man, if he could heal incurable diseases by speaking just one word or simply by touching?' ['Waarom de Heere Christus, daer hij ongeneselicke Sieckten soo met een Woordt, so met Aenraecken genas, des blinden Oogen met slick ende Speecksel gestreecken heeft?']. We would find such a question of a more theological character than a medical one, but for the seventeenth century it was precisely the other way around. Saliva has been used as medicine since time immemorial. Her answer in Latin shows how well-read she was, not only regarding the Bible, but also regarding the writings of the most famous physicians. She was convinced that it was a miraculous healing, and that the mud and saliva played no part at all. Van Beverwijck included her reply in an addendum at the back of his standard work, *Schat der gesontheit en ongesontheit* [*Compendium of health and illness*], a book that numerous families used when illness or disease struck.

Yet we know very little about the content of Van Schurman's education and training. Contemporaries wrote that she knew 'the fundamentals of anatomy' and the theory of medicine, and that she could confer about such matters with the most experienced physicians. In her poem on Voetius' *Sermoen* she had written these lines on the art of healing:

It is no less an art to match the power of many herbs  
To the suffering of numerous people  
To determine which poison causes a virulent fever  
where the root of it lies, and what an antidote would be.

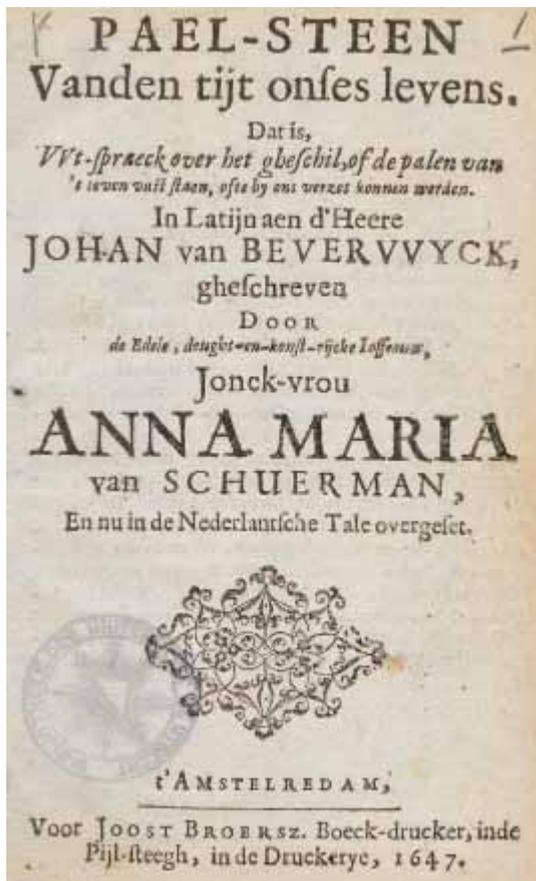
[Het is geen minder kunst de kracht van vele kruyden  
Te passen op de sucht van veelderhande luyden

Te vinden, uyt wat gift een felle koorts ontstaet  
 Waer dat de wortel leyd, en wat haer tegen gaet...]

She was here especially full of praise for the medicinal properties of herbs, which formed an important component of the practice of medicine in those times. She also had a large collection of herbs in her garden. She wrote to Van Beverwijck on 4 October 1644:

You ask what I am doing nowadays. I will be frank. The garden has kept me busy this summer. But, you might say, did that also contribute to the glory of [God's] name? Truly, I do not know: however, what I have found is that the work did not only delight me, but was also fruitful, for I could appreciate, work with and explore God's wonderful handiwork.

[U.E. vraeght wat ick nu doe. Ick sal recht uyt spreecken. Den Hof is dese Somer mijn meeste sorge geweest. Maer sal UE. seggen, is dat den roem van den naem opgebouwt? Voorwaer ick en weet het niet: dat hebbe evenwel bevonden sulcks my niet alleen tot vermaeck, maer ook tot vrucht gestreckt te hebben, zoo treffelicke wercken Gods nader in te sien, te handelen en te ondersoeken.]<sup>198</sup>



Translation of 'De Vitae Termino', 1647.

The lessons in anatomy were given in the *Theatrum Anatomicum*. Pharmacists, visitors and the medical students all sat together on the benches in the lecture halls. Johan Godschalk van Schurman had been one of these students since 1643. It seems quite possible to me that Anna Maria might also have taken a peek, together with her brother and professor Regius. Perhaps she joined her brother in dissecting a cow's eye, just like the English student John Muddyclift who had especially come to Utrecht for his medical studies. But medical science was not her main objective; her focus was theology. All her studies of languages – especially of Semitic languages – were aimed at this goal. She probably attended introductory lectures in medicine, since this was recommended for theology students.<sup>199</sup>

### *Student life*

In the charming little book, *Academia, sive speculum vitae scholasticae* [*The Academe, or mirror of student life*] of 1612 there are sixteen pictures portraying life at a university and the leisure activities of a student in the beginning of the seventeenth century. Van Schurman was of course an exceptional student if we compare her to an average student. As far as her life at the University was concerned: attending lectures, the University library, the anatomy theatre and visiting the botanical gardens – that she did. But she had no part in the initiation rituals, nor the promotion rituals, and as far as the pleasures were concerned: instead of spending time in pubs, she went to church. Dancing was forbidden. Music played an important role in her life, she was very experienced in music and skilled in playing the lute ['in Musijcqe loffelick ervaren en van gelijk mede in het slaen van de Luyt']. There are poems available to us in which we can read about the musical parties that she had with Utricia Ogle, Voetius, her brother and Constantijn Huygens. Whether she ever participated in sports, skating, ball games or visited the *paille-maille* alley ['maliebaan'] – who can tell? Although she did not practise fencing herself, she wrote a lovely poem on the famous fencing master, Gerard Thibaut. Reading and writing poetry were also popular pastimes for many students.<sup>200</sup> That she did with dedication, and not always too piously, as the following little 'riddle' poem shows:

It comes from the forest, it is fragile by nature,  
and it should be shielded from harm,  
The art of extending the miracle  
makes it speak sweetly with many tongues.  
It has a long neck and ample body,  
It openly carries its own bowels,  
and is usually without life,  
unless such is given to it.

[T] komt uyt den bosch, 't is teer van aert,  
En 't dient voor onval nau bewaert,  
De kunst die leert het wonder strecken,  
En soet met vele tongen spreekken,  
T' is lang van hals en ruym van schoot,

En 't draeght syn eygen dermen bloot.  
 En efter is het sonder leven,  
 Jndien dieselve het hem niet geven.]<sup>201</sup>

Students of course enthusiastically participated in love affairs. In this department, she was conspicuous in her absence. Her love was on a higher plane; instead of an earthly love, she had a heavenly love. She had after all promised her father never to get married, her love was crucified, she had 'shackled Venus' ['Venus geboeyt']. Yet she did report in her autobiography that there were indeed many young men who were seeking her company. Her papercutting poem with the German text 'Wält tobe, wie du wült' which could be read as a confirmation of her choice for celibacy, could also be read as a rejection of a lover. And Jean de Labadie later wrote that Voetius had also not been blind to her beauty.<sup>202</sup>

Painting was another favourite pastime for students. She had been painting since her youth. In 1643 she even became a member of the Lucas Guild as *Painter, Sculptor and Engraver* ['*Kunstschilderesse, Beeldhouwster en Graveerster*']. In her art works we also see many of the Utrecht academics portrayed, for instance, Voetius, De Maets and Schotanus.<sup>203</sup>

### The Utrecht 'Republic of Letters'

[...] this beautiful family sanctuary, that school workshop and treasury of all kinds of learning, yes indeed, a private university within our famous university and a *Republic of Letters* within the *Republic of Letters*, but then without fraud, or crime or warring enemies.<sup>204</sup>

This was how Voetius regarded Van Schurman's study [in the house] *Behind the Cathedral* [*Achter den Dom*]. He referred to it as a '*Republic of Letters* within the *Republic of Letters*'. As was mentioned earlier, ideally, the *Republic of Letters*, the extended network of humanistic scholars, was meant to transcend the limitations of city and national boundaries, and the limitations of mother tongue, religion and social status. It was a European network, but to achieve that level, it had to be organised locally as well as nationally. A personal room for studying was the starting point. In this section we will see how this *Republic* manifested itself at the level of the city. Latin was the medium of communication within the *Republic* and the users of Latin in Utrecht were mainly at the university or among the alumni (city fathers, advocates, church ministers). Much was being published and the assignments made the networks visible also at the level of cities.

Van Schurman became a member of the *Republic of Letters* through her knowledge of Latin, but especially through her studies at the University of Utrecht. This was also clear from her publications that appeared after 1636. Although an important part of the scholarly life took place in exchanges on paper between scholars in various disciplines, in the entire *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica* of Van Schurman (written in Utrecht, third edition in 1652 in Utrecht), there are only a handful of Utrecht documents: a few letters in Hebrew from and to professors Voetius and Leusden, and a few Latin poems for Utrecht scholars.<sup>205</sup> Also outside the scholarly circles there are very few letters to and from Utrecht people

– probably because of the short distances. The city was small, and communication was mostly done orally.

Via the University, church and city (her brother Johan Godschalk was involved in the management of the city of Utrecht), Van Schurman came in contact with other scholars. She wrote, for instance, beneath a portrait of Voetius that she had engraved, a Latin poem and translated it as follows:

See here, life-like, the sweet face of Voetius,  
And his high spirits visible in each of his features  
and moreover, the virtue displayed there  
which is apparent from his writings and permeates his life.

[Siet hier het soet gelaet van Voetius na 't leven,  
En in een yeder treck sijn hooge geesten sweven.  
En wilt ghij nog wat meer: de deught is daer verthoont,  
Die uyt sijn schriften blijckt, en in sijn leven woont.]<sup>206</sup>

In addition to being her teacher, Voetius was also a personal friend and adviser. She was almost like one of his family, as becomes apparent from the portrait that she made of Voetius' wife Deliana van Diest, the poems that she wrote for him and his children, and from what she wrote in 1660 about the Voetius family to her friend Mrs Van Soulekercken in Zierikzee:

Mr Voetius thanks you for your greetings and offers his regards to you. His wife has gone to Friesland after the death of her eldest daughter, who was buried here eight days ago, to be of assistance to her youngest daughter with the delivery of her baby.

[D. Voetius bedanckt U.Ed. van U.Ed. groetenissen en presenteert de syne mede aen U.Ed. Syn huysvrouw is nae de doot van haer oudste doghter, welcke voor acht dagen hier begraven is, nae Vriesland vertrocken om de jongste in haer kraemen by te staen.]<sup>207</sup>

As far as the other Utrecht scholars are concerned, her contact with Buchelius continued until his death in 1643. In his diary he continued to report on her as learned woman; for instance, on 16 and 17 April 1641 he mentioned their conversations about numismatics (study of coins and medals). She told him of a coin that Smetius, the church minister cum archeologist from Nijmegen, had found. What was remarkable was the fact that the coin had a serrated and not a grooved edge. Van Schurman had also sent him a fine gold coin with the image of Emperor Augustus.<sup>208</sup> In Buchelius' posthumously published standard work on history, in the front, there is a fine Latin poem from her pen: 'To the memory of the highly famous historian and jurist Arnoldus Buchelius, who has ended the erudite annotations of the history of Utrecht, together with his life' ['Op de herinnering aan de zeer beroemde historicus en rechtskundige Arnoldus Buchelius die de zeer geleerde aantekeningen op de Utrechtse geschiedenis samen met zijn leven heeft beëindigd']. In that poem she writes that he would continue to live in her memory. During his life, he was an epitome of virtue; now the word *virtue* evokes his image. Through his work he will always remain alive. The poem is a *memoria*, that is, a remembrance poem for Arnoldus Buchelius, but the word *memoria* also means tombstone. In this poem, she combined a praise poem on the posthumously published book with the precious memories she had of him.<sup>209</sup>

Van Schurman made an attractive pastel portrait of Meinardus Schotanus, professor in theology, and when he died (on 6 April 1644) she wrote a beautiful Latin elegy:

Who would not lament your passing, o Schotanus,  
and who would not sing a swan song on your death? [...]  
No yearning for money, nor worldly activities,  
nor the languid lounging at grand banquets,  
but a heavenly fieriness devouring your innards  
has prevented a long life.<sup>210</sup>

A few years later, at the death of Carolus de Maets, the other professor in theology, she also wrote an elegy:

What is the reason that the Lyceum of Utrecht is in mourning?  
And that the lecterns are swathed in black cloth?<sup>211</sup>

Johannes Leusden, professor in Semitic languages, wrote in 1652 a recommendation in Hebrew of the third impression of her *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica*: 'Gentlemen, buy this book that she had written. Read it; you will find words of truth. Read it; be quiet and ponder; you will be filled with wonder. An eternal miracle, the Wise Virgin. Compete with her, or flee.' ['Mannen, koopt dit boek dat zij geschreven heeft. Leest er in, jullie zullen woorden van waarheid vinden. Leest erin, wordt stil, des te meer zullen jullie je verwonderen. Een wonder voor altijd, die Wijze Maagd. Wedijver met de maagd of vlucht'].<sup>212</sup>

Arnoldus Buchelius wrote in his diary on 2 Januarie 1636: 'The young Mister Dirck van der Does wishes to have his father's poems as well as the Echo poem reprinted; demands from Miss Anna Maria a poem as recommendation' ['Jonkheer Dirck van der Does wil sijns vaders poemata, also den Echo laten herdrucken; eyscht van Joffr. Anna Maria een veers van recommandatie']. That lovely Echo poem was then published in 1638, together with her other Echo poems, in the book by the mayor and poet Theodorus Dousa, *Lusus imaginis iocosae sive Echus a variis poetis, variis linguis* [*Games of jokes and playful images, or Echoes by various poets, in various languages*].<sup>212</sup> Those poems were later also included in the *Opuscula*, as was the distich that the professor of history, Antonius Aemilius, wrote underneath Van Schurman's self-portrait:

Here only half of the gifted young woman is portrayed  
for no frame can completely contain her.<sup>213</sup>

She had known the first professor of law and mathematics, Bernardus Schotanus, already since Franeker. In 1641 he went to Leiden. Van Schurman lamented his departure in a Latin poem in which she compared him to Phoebus Apollo, the sun god. The young University of Utrecht, over which he had cast his light, so to speak, would now be plunged into darkness, according to her.<sup>214</sup>

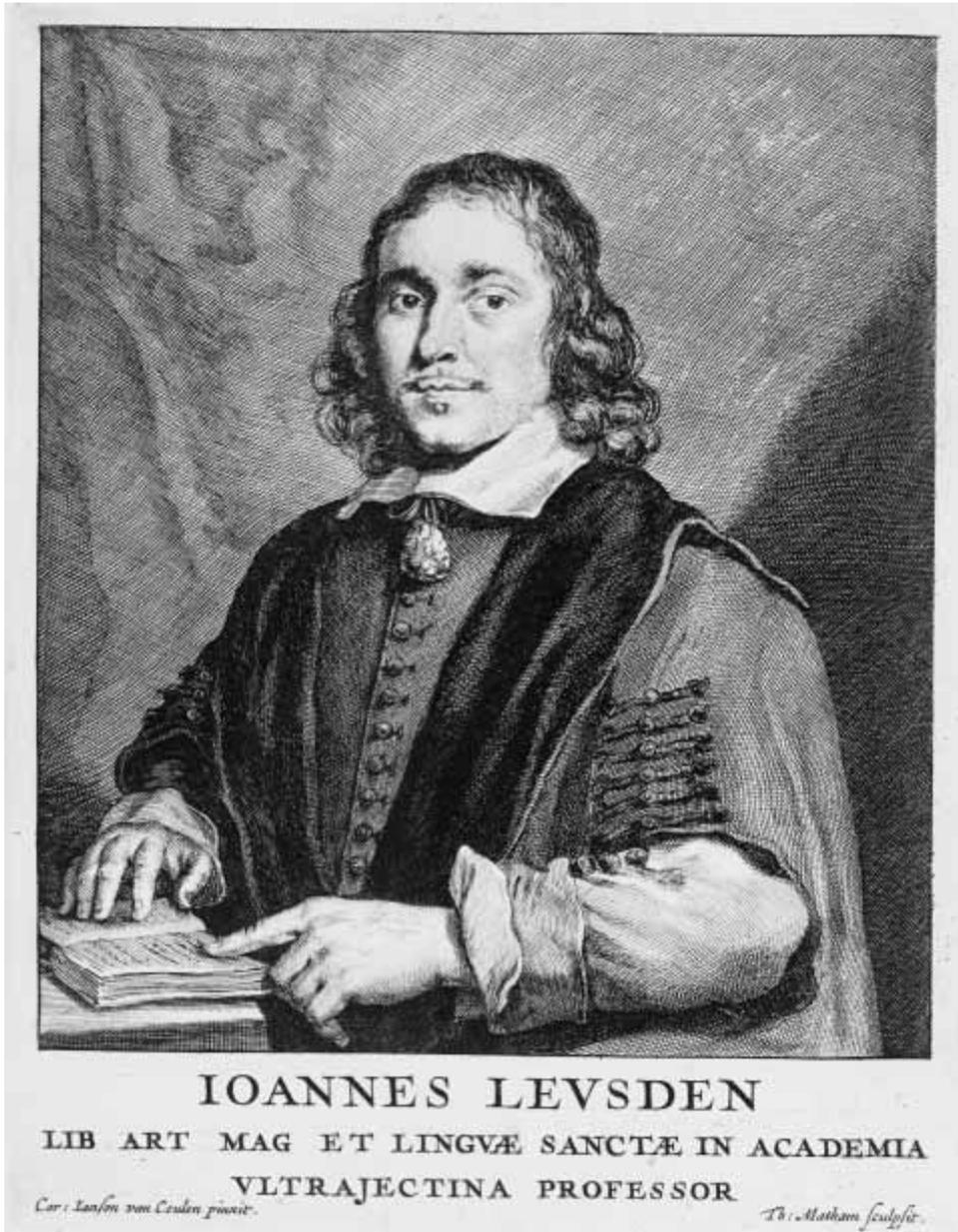
One distinctive ideal within the *Republic of Letters* was to transcend boundaries between churches and religions. Strangely enough, one sees very little of that with Van Schurman in Utrecht. She interacted there mostly with people of her own religious background. I cannot list one example of contacts that she had with Lutherans (e.g. the minis-

ter Hoenerfanger) or Remonstrants, not to mention with Catholics. One can understand that. Her roots in her own home ran deep, the customs and beliefs were more or less fixed, and she was bound in weal and woe to the family. And as far as academic life was concerned: she was studying at a university where the lecturers and professors all belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church. Yet we read that she rode in her carriage to Descartes, to discuss philosophy with him. That was clearly an expression of her innate thirst for knowledge. But Descartes should rather be regarded as a visitor, like those from all the remote corners of Europe who came to Van Schurman, hundreds of them. They were not only students, academics and writers who were on their *peregrinatio academica*, but also politicians, queens and princes from various religions (more about this in chapters 3 and 4). Also residents of Utrecht, such as Buchelius, brought many friends and other scholars to her and they were not always members of the Dutch Reformed Church either.<sup>215</sup>

Many professors at Utrecht dedicated books to her. Besides Voetius' second part of his *Selectarum Disputationes* [*Selected Disputations*], there were also Matthias Nethenus (*Examen arminianismi Samuelis Rhetorforti* [*Investigation into Arminianism by Samuel Rutherford*]) and Johannes Hoornbeeck (*Diatriba de consociatione ecclesiarum evangelicarum* [*Critical discours on the reconciliation of the Protestant churches*]). She wrote many inscriptions in the *alba amicorum* of theologians (inter alia, Johannes and Otho Zaunschliffer, Abraham de Zadeler, Johannes Honing, Friedrich Seiler). In Utrecht, she was good friends with the church minister, Jodocus van Lodenstein, a former student of Utrecht University, who was also a poet, and who copied her Dutch poems into his diary. They visited each other, having only to walk down the street *Achter den Dom*, cross the Pausdam, then walk a little way down the Nieuwe Gracht, and then turn left via Birgitten Street. At the end, across the canal, lay the estate of Lodenstein, The Park [Het Park] (now Park Street). She experienced him differently to the image projected in the satirical lines: 'the loveless Lodenstein/ so cold and loveless as lead and stone' ['de liefdeloze Lodenstein/ zo koud van liefd, als lood en stein']. She empathised with him: 'the Rev. Lodenstein who had recently lost his father, has now gone to Delft because of his mother's illness' ['D. Lodenstein die onlangs syn vader begraven heeft, is nu van wegen de zieckte syner moeder nae Delft']. For another Utrecht church minister, Arnoldus Teeckmannus, she wrote and calligraphed a beautiful poem in Latin in which she praised him for his charming poems, and after the death of her friend, the church minister Justus van de Bogaart, she wrote an appropriate elegy in Dutch, in complete accordance with the classical prescriptions of *luctus* (grief), *laus* (praise), *demonstratio iacturiae* (showing the loss) and the *consolatio* (comfort):<sup>216</sup>

What sad flood of tears Zion weeps on this day  
Because Heaven has brought forth a new thunderbolt  
God has plucked the beautiful fruit from our Bogaart [literally: *orchard*]  
And our church's time of bloom is suddenly over.

[Wat droeve Tranenvloet stort Sion deze dag  
Omdat de Hemel baart een nieuwen donderslag [...]  
God breekt de schone vrugt van onze Bogaart af  
En t' bloeyen van ons kerk helt schielyk na het graf.]



Johannes Leusden, professor of Semitic languages in Utrecht. At the insistence of Anna Maria van Schurman, he published a textbook for learning Hebrew in Dutch, in order to enable women to study Hebrew.

### *The 'Women's Republic of Letters' in Utrecht*

In 1668, at the insistence of Van Schurman, a textbook for learning Hebrew via Latin and Dutch was published, *Een Woorden-boek, van Alle de Hebreusche en Chaldeusche woorden des Ouden Testaments, in de Latijnsche en Nederduytsche tale over-geset* [A dictionary of all the Hebrew and Chaldeic words of the Old Testament, translated into Latin and Dutch]. She suggested that to Professor Leusden because she had heard women say that Latin was a major obstacle for them. In the seventeenth century, people thought that Hebrew was not too difficult – students could learn it in three months. Even women could learn it, it was that easy, wrote Professor Amama of Franeker; take for example the Roman matron Paula, who had followed Hieronymus to the Holy Land and had also learnt Hebrew. Of course, most textbooks were in Latin, also those for learning Hebrew. Only a few grammars for Hebrew had been written and published in Dutch, but they would not be of any help to women, as all the vocabulary lists were in Latin-Hebrew and Hebrew-Latin. At least, in this publication, a Dutch translation had been added.<sup>217</sup>

We could infer from the fact that Van Schurman urged Leusden to publish this work, that there were very few women in Utrecht or the Netherlands who knew Latin (not to mention Greek or Hebrew). That is also what I found. According to the strict criterion that only women who knew at least Latin, belonged to the *Republic of Letters*, then, as far as I know, Anna Maria van Schurman was the only woman in Utrecht to qualify. Learned women had their own network internationally, but it was on a smaller scale than and dependent upon the more extensive male network. Some learned women did come to visit her, such as the much younger Marie Du Moulin, Elisabeth von der Pfalz, Christina of Sweden en Dorothea Moore, but in Utrecht itself, Van Schurman had no female scholarly company – as far as I can ascertain.

That may be concluded from another book from Utrecht. In 1643, under the auspices of the Faculty of Theology in Utrecht, the book, *Absaloms-hayr of Discovrs, Daerinnen ondersocht wordt/ wat daer te houden zy van de wilde vliegende Hayr-trossen/ off af-hangende Hayr-locken [...]* [Absalom's hair, or Discourse in which is investigated what is to be retained of the wild, untamed hair tresses or dangling hair locks [...]] was published. It spoke against the 'vain' hairstyles of men (wigs) and women (with their hair all 'tarted up'). The author was a former student of Utrecht, Godefridus Udemans. In the book, he let a woman complain about an adversary who quoted from Hebrew and Greek. The man then immediately referred to Anna Maria van Schurman:

Regarding the words of the original text [...] I do not quote these to teach you Greek or Hebrew, for there are very few young women who are as desirous to study as the famous Miss Anna Maria Schuurmans, [...]

[Aengaende de woorden vanden grondt-text [...] Die en verhale ick niet om u Griecx of Hebreusch te leeren/ want daer zijn seer weynich Juffrouwen die lust hebben in die studien/ghelijck die vermaerde Juffrouwe Anna Maria Schuurmans, [...]]<sup>218</sup>



Van Schurman interacted with many women in Utrecht. In addition to the women in her direct family (aunt Agnes and aunt Sybille, and her servant girls), and women from the circle of professors (wives of professors, the wife and daughters of Voetius), she knew many educated Utrecht women who belonged to the nobility, and who also mixed in church circles, such as her 'beloved' Margaretha Borre van Amerongen and Constantia Coymans. She corresponded with Margaretha and wrote the poem 'Remarks on the difference between Utrecht and Cologne' ['Aenmerkinghe over 't onderschijt tussen UITRECHT en CEULEN'] for her when she was in Cologne and 'suffered in exile' ['in ballingschap zuchtte']:

I had previously written some verses about my emotional turmoil and have sent them over to my beloved Miss Van Amrongen.

[Ik hebbe voor desen een deel van de bewegingen mynes gemoets in eenige verskens vervat; en aen mijne beminde Juffrou van Amrongen overgesonden.]<sup>219</sup>

She also drew for her the portrait of Margaretha Homma, the wife of Theodorus à Brakel. Constantia Coymans, the sister-in-law of Margaretha Borre van Amerongen gave Van Schurman 'certain small cabinets made from teak wood and ebony with some curiosities of beautiful little horns, [...] a painting of Martinus Luyten painted on glass and a flower still life painted by Roelant Saverij' ['seeckere Cabinetjes [...] gemaectt van sacredayen hout ende ebbenhout met eenige rarieteyten van fraye hoorntgens, [...] een schilderij van Martinus Luyten op glas geschildert ende een blompotghen van Roelant Saverij'].<sup>220</sup> Mrs Van Soulekercken from Zierikzee, who often stayed over in Utrecht, was also a good friend of hers. Van Schurman drew her portrait and gave it to her before she herself left for Amsterdam in 1669.<sup>221</sup> She wrote to her in Dutch about domestic and church matters, for instance, about a servant girl:

Concerning the young girl that I sent to you with my greetings, she has lived with us for half a year and has served us very faithfully and devoutly. But she was too weak to lift or carry my dear aunts, who at present cannot move a foot without help. Furthermore, because of her youth, she lacked something, a certain caring and commitment, which are required in our household, especially since our other maid suffers somewhat from the same shortcoming. Otherwise I found in her an unusual willingness and tender conscientiousness in serving, an understanding above her years, and also zeal in religion. And a heartfelt love towards those that she served. This according to your request.

[Aengaende het meisken waerdoor ick de vryheit genomen hebbe, U.Ed. te begroeten, heeft een half jaer by ons gewoont, en ons seer trou en godvruchtig gedient doch was te swack om myn L. Moeyen, die nu niet eenen voet sonder hulpe kunnen versetten, te heffen en te beuren. daer en boven ontbrack hem yets, van wegen syne jongheit, aen die besorchheit en besetheit, welke in ons huys vereyst wierd temeer om dat onse andere meyt van dat selve gebreck niet geheel vry is. anders hebbe ick, een bysondere gewillicheit en teerheit van conscientie in het dienen, en boven syn jaren verstant en yver in de Religie daerby bevonden. en een hertelycke liefde, so veel ick heb kunnen bespeuren, tot de geene waerby het heeft gedient. Dit volgens U.Ed. begeren.]

Another Utrecht female friend was the singer Utricia Swann-Ogle, who visited Utrecht, the city where she was born, in 1647. In a sweet French poem, Van Schurman extended a warm welcome to her, Utricia who was named after Utrecht and who could sing as beautifully as a 'black swan'. Although Van Schurman had no equal female intellectual partners in Utrecht, she did urge other women to use their talents, for instance, Sara Nevius, who had moved to Utrecht as young widow and became acquainted with Van Schurman there. Van Schurman saw that Sara had a strong desire to write poetry, but that she lacked the skills, and she taught her various different kinds of verse, and how to work with short and long syllables, in order to achieve the correct metre [*'ziende dat zij grote lust hadde tot de dichtkunst, maar dat het haar aan de kunst ontbrak, leerde haar allerlei trant van verzen en het stellen van korte en lange syllaben ieder op zijn plaats'*].<sup>222</sup>

**In conclusion** | Anna Maria van Schurman was the first female student at the University of Utrecht, and the first in the Netherlands. For that she could partially thank professor Voetius, who had invited her to write the celebratory poems and who subsequently gave her permission to attend lectures. She could give herself a pat on the back too. She had the courage to complain about the exclusion of women and to plead for admission. Through her studies at the University she could gather knowledge in a structured way. She was very driven, curious, and filled with a thirst for knowledge. Discipline was second nature to her; she was automatically drawn to her study. She was busy until deep into the night. Sometimes it made her ill, but as soon as she was well again, she resumed her studies.<sup>223</sup>

In her *Dissertatio* she wrote that women had to apply their studies for the benefit of their sex. That requirement she fulfilled by devoting her *Dissertatio logica* to the ability of women to study, by teaching to a certain Sara Nevius the principles of poetry, and by insisting on a Hebrew textbook in Dutch. The University of Utrecht also made an important contribution to her education. She became a master in theology and in a number of Semitic languages. Based on this knowledge, she studied Ethiopian on her own. She could be counted among the pioneers as far as knowledge of non-Western languages was concerned. Universities in the Netherlands, such as the University of Leiden, occupied a prominent place in Europe, but Anna Maria van Schurman had elevated the University of Utrecht to a higher position than Leiden, through her knowledge of Ethiopian.<sup>224</sup>

Van Schurman also contributed towards the visibility of the University of Utrecht on the map of the international world of scholars. For in many Latin praise writings her name was mentioned in the same breath as that of the University of Utrecht: 'the miracle of Utrecht's university' [*'het wonderstuk van Utrechts hogeschool'*], 'The academy of the Bishopric of Utrecht and Anna Maria Schurmans' [*'De hoogeschoole van het Sticht van Utrecht en Anna Maria Schurmans'*] and 'the sparkling crown jewel of the city and the University of Utrecht' [*'het schitterende kroonjuweel van de stad en universiteit van Utrecht'*].<sup>225</sup>

## ‘O blossom of the country’ [‘O bloeme van het land’]: the Dutch *Republic of Letters*

Now it is indeed the case that not only the Academy of the Bishopric of Utrecht, but also many a learned scholar in Holland can bear witness with full conviction that everything which has been told so far can equally be found in the person of Lady Anna Maria Schurmans.<sup>226</sup>

### *The Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica*

In 1648 the famous Dutch publisher Elzeviers in Leiden published a remarkable book. It was the first edition of the *Nobilissimae Virginis Annae Mariae à Schurman Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica, prosaica et metrica* (‘Minor work written in prose and poetry in Hebrew, Greek, Latin and French by the noble maiden Anna Maria van Schurman’). It was the first publication by a Dutch woman in these languages. The edition had been compiled by Frederik Spanheim, professor of theology and rector of the University of Leiden. In his preface he wrote that some good friends had urged him to publish the book. The writer, a young woman, had apparently been too modest to approach a publisher herself. Spanheim recommended the book and its writer as follows in Latin:

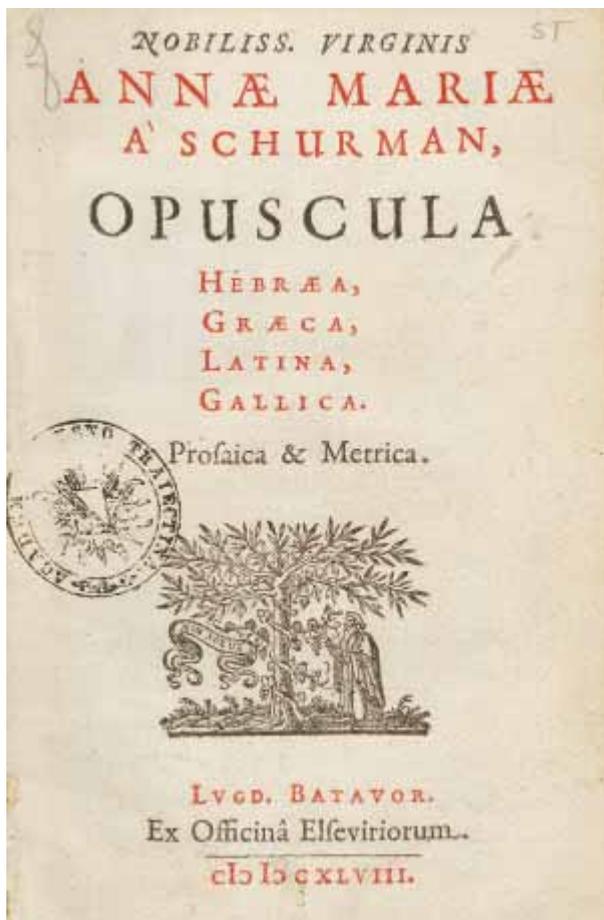
Reader, you are now holding a book in your hands that is like no other you have ever held before. Just as it now contributes to the well-being and glory of our time, it will one day be admired by future generations. Unique in the world, the Netherlands show you a young woman who is not only proficient in languages that belong to the domain of scholars, but who is also experienced in almost all disciplines of learning; a young woman whose mind and comprehensive spirit in all matters are so admirable that one can rightly name her the best attempt of nature within this sex. [...] God’s grace has manifested itself so abundantly in one head. [...] But reader, do not think that this very noble maiden has come forward of her own accord. She has not done so spontaneously, but has been compelled to go public by people who were of the opinion that it would be in the public interest that such virtue should not go totally unnoticed. Take note: what is in front of your eyes now, has rather been drawn from her than forced upon us on her part [...]<sup>227</sup>

Indeed, a few years earlier Frederik Spanheim had already tried to convince Van Schurman to give permission for an edition. Her answer was:

In connection with the publication of my scribblings on which you continuously insist, I am still in doubt. However, because you seem to think it such a good idea, I do no longer want to go against your advice, which is after all coming from your sincere and friendly heart. Since there are many letters among them that contain almost nothing more than empty words, I will take care, insofar as it might be possible, to select the best and send them to you. However, please correct, order and reorder these letters according to your own insight.<sup>228</sup>

She yielded to his pressure and gave him *carte blanche* to publish the texts and to act at his own discretion. A short while later she was again in doubt whether this was such a good idea after all. In May 1647, she wrote:

If Tullius [Cicero], the best speaker of all times, according to Plutarch, still climbed the speaker's dais with trembling knees, then do not be surprised, sir, that I am reluctant and



Frederik Spanheim, professor of theology in Leiden, edited the first impression of Van Schurman's 'Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica' in 1648. Within four years it was reprinted twice.

have doubts about publication of this type of letter. Those letters have been joyfully and gratefully received by friends because of the intimacy of a personal conversation or as confirmation of my affection and respect for them. But to unfamiliar eyes they will offer little use and joy.<sup>229</sup>

But Spanheim persevered and edited the book. He himself asked friends to send him their correspondence with Van Schurman. For instance, he wrote to Smetius, church minister and archaeologist in Nijmegen:<sup>230</sup>

The manuscripts of the revered Pallas of Utrecht are in print with Elzeviers. I have added a letter which she has written to you and which you copied by hand and sent to me. If you have at your disposal any other documents in prose or poetry form which she has given to you and if you want me to edit them, I will take care to place them in the correct position.

Smetius honoured this request because the 1652 edition contained two extra letters written to him. However, he could not find her scholarly letter *De motibus primo primis* [On the first movements from the beginning], a letter about which Johan Godschalk van Schurman had also written to him.<sup>231</sup>

The *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica* appeared in the summer of 1648, and on 15 August Anna Maria van Schurman wrote to Spanheim in a grateful and pleased tone:

Sir, the copies of my book of letters that you sent me, show how much I owe you for your affection and courtesy that allowed them to have such a festive birthday. I am glad that you have no regrets in respect of your effort. That is the first fortunate circumstance. But to continue to be fortunate, they also need the goodwill of the reader, otherwise they are of no use to the common interest.

In the same letter she wrote that she regarded his introduction as a beautiful statue that he had erected in her honour and also that it gave a very positive impression of her studies to the reading public. She thanked him wholeheartedly for this.<sup>232</sup>

In addition to the fact that Spanheim retrieved letters for publication, he also acted as intermediary with Elzeviers. He sometimes shortened letters, explained abbreviations and left out all forms of address and postscripts. He also left out the prologue and epilogue of the previously published scholarly letters *De Vitae Termino* (1639) and the *Dissertatio* (1641). Sometimes he placed asterisks in the text instead of mentioning people or countries by name. He also asked her to send back a letter of Jolivet with her comments. On June 29, 1645 she wrote to him that she could not find that letter:

I have looked through all my papers in order to find the letter from Monsieur Jolivet; but this was in vain, and as I do not remember the name, I believe that it was not given back to me. Be that as it may, I rely on his civility, that he will forgive me on this point, since my condition does not allow me to stretch too far the limits of informality by the trading of letters, particularly after I have been abused by this person called \*\*\*\*\* of whom Monsieur Rivet, I believe, has told you the story.

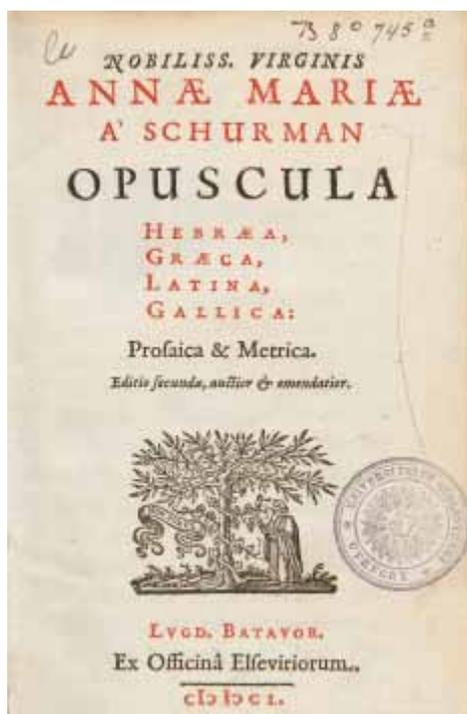
[J'ay feuilleté tous mes papiers pour trouver la lettre de Monsieur Jolivet; mais ç'a esté en vain, et d' autant qu' il ne me souvient pas de ce nom, j' ay opinion qu' elle ne m' a pas esté rendüe. Quoy qu' il en soit, je me promets de sa civilité, qu' il m' excusera en ce point, puis que ma condition ne souffre point que j' estende trop les bornes de ma familiarité par le commerce des lettre, principalement apres que j' ay este abusée en la personne de \*\*\*\*\* dont Monsieur Rivet, comme je croy, vous aura recité l' Histoire.]<sup>233</sup>

Frederik Spanheim died in 1649. He still prepared the second edition, which was published by Elzeviers in Leiden in 1650, but did not live to see it. He probably could not foresee how popular the book would prove to be. According to Schotel, who based his assumptions on the Latin biography of Mollerus, there were eight impressions of the *Opuscula* between 1648 and 1794: Leiden 1648, Leiden 1650, Utrecht 1652, Leiden and Herford 1672, Wesel 1700, Dresden 1723, Leipzig 1749 and 1794. He even alluded to a German translation. But extensive research has yielded the same four editions every time: those of 1648, 1650, 1652 and 1794. Mollerus claimed that the edition of 1794 would have been made by Dorothea Loeberia, but her edition was published in 1749. It is possible that the other editions of 1672, 1700 and 1723 were published in shortened or translated form; they might have been included in collective manuscripts [Dutch 'convoluten': books that are bound together by the owner in one cover '], but are still waiting to be rediscovered.<sup>234</sup>

What is also remarkable is the wide distribution of the book. Even today it is present in nearly every university library in Europe and the United States of America, and it can even be found in the university library of Stellenbosch, South Africa. It is clear from correspondence that scholars took a lively interest in the publication of the book. Has the *Opuscula* been published yet? was asked in Paris. Salmاسius answered in 1648 to Jacques Dupuy that Elzeviers had printed the *Opuscula* of Van Schurman as well as the one by Sallustius.<sup>235</sup>

The wide distribution and the great many copies that have survived might be astounding to us, for a book written in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and French. Taking into account that Latin was the international language of scholars, it also had to do with Van Schurman's name and fame as a learned woman. That reputation was already established on publication of the *Opuscula*. But the polyglottism displayed in the book made her visibly learned. Add to this that she was not only learned, but also artistic, pious, rich, celibate and of noble descent. Furthermore, she had already published works in her own right and had attracted a lot of attention in books written by famous men such as Jacob Cats and Johan van Beverwijck. She was the main attraction of the city of Utrecht.<sup>236</sup>

A second reason for the popularity of the *Opuscula* was that the first two editions had been published by Elzeviers. Publications by Elzeviers [affectionately referred to as 'Elzeviers' by collectors], were and are still collected because of their exquisite design. Their editions of classical authors in *duodecimo* format were internationally renowned. Elzeviers also specialised in the printing of texts in classical and Oriental languages. Jean-Louis Guez de Balzac, the 17<sup>th</sup> century French writer, excitedly told how he felt about being published by Elzeviers:



Left: Second impression of the 'Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica', 1650.

Right: Third impression of the 'Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica', 1652.

To be printed by Elseviers was to take rank among consuls and senators of Rome and to mingle with the Ciceros and Sallusts [...] I have been made part of the immortal republic, I have been received in the society of demi-gods. In effect, we all live together at Leiden under the same roof. Thanks to you sometimes I am a neighbor of Pliny, sometimes I find myself beside Seneca, sometimes above Tacitus and Livy.<sup>237</sup>

Moreover, Elzeviers had networks all over Europe to sell their editions, for instance on the *Frankfurter Buchmesse* [Frankfurt Book Fair].<sup>238</sup>

Burn a book or ban it – the result will be that the book will spread like wildfire. A ban on a book serves to attract readers. This also applied to the *Opuscula*. On February 6, 1658 a decree was issued from the Holy See in Rome: the *Opuscula* was placed on the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, the list of prohibited books of the Roman Catholic Church. It was repeated on September 27, 1678. Such a ban implied that members of the Catholic Church were not allowed to publish, read, buy, or sell the book, nor have it in their possession or give the book to someone else. The *Index* was abolished only in 1966. The reasons of the commission who placed books on the *Index* were kept secret and the archives are closed to this day. Thus we can only guess at the reasons why the *Opuscula* landed on the *Index*. According to the general rules preceding the list of forbidden books, books landed on the list if they had been written by heretics such as Calvin, Luther or Zwingli, and when they ran

counter to the Catholic faith, were promiscuous or immoral, or dealt with forbidden cults or practices. It is indeed the case that Van Schurman wrote openly about matters of faith in her *Opuscula*. In all probability her letters to Spanheim and Salmasius tipped the scales and the book was listed on the *Index*. In these letters she wrote about the terrible darkness of Catholicism into which the light of the Reformation had penetrated. She also rejected the doctrine of the Catholic mass. However, the Roman Catholic Church did not have any political power in the Dutch Republic, and the book was freely available in that country. But on an international level it is possible that the *Index* contributed to the fact that the book was so widely read and distributed.<sup>239</sup>

### *The Republic of Letters*

An important reason for the distribution of the book was the multilingual nature of the reading public, who had to be proficient in Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic and Syrian in order to read the book from cover to cover. But with knowledge of Latin alone one could read three quarters of it. And especially Latin was the medium of communication in the *Republic of Letters*, the extensive network of humanist scholars that transcended barriers of native language, nationality, religion and social status. Sometimes Greek and every now and then even Hebrew was also used as medium of communication. The letters and poems in the *Opuscula* crossed local and national borders to England, Ireland, France and Turkey. Van Schurman, staunchly Calvinist herself, crossed barriers of faith in writing to Meletios Pantogalus, bishop of the Greek Orthodox Church in Ephesus, and also to Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Remonstrants and Huguenots. Social status was transcended: she wrote to princesses and professors, but she herself – being of noble birth – also wrote to ordinary people, as long as they had learning.<sup>240</sup>

The correspondence in Van Schurman's *Opuscula* with other scholars, writers and theologians in the Netherlands and Europe gives us a glimpse into one of many subnetworks within the *Republic of Letters*. In this chapter I confine myself to the Dutch Republic, the *Republiek der Zeven Verenigde Nederlanden*. Scholarly exchanges of letters were an important part of the *Republic of Letters*. But poems written in Latin also formed part of the network, because they were often occasional poems, written in reaction to important occasions in the life of scholars (birth, marriage, funeral, publication of a book, etc.). Another important part of the academic network were the *elogia*, expressions of praise in the form of prose or poetry, most often written in Latin, but sometimes also in French, Hebrew or Greek. Scholars often undertook a *peregrinatio academica* [literally: academic pilgrimage]. This entailed attending lectures at foreign universities, but also visiting professors, teachers and other famous scholars. Travellers subsequently wrote about these journeys in Latin.

In the remainder of this chapter I will successively discuss these learned exchanges of letters and some of the many *poemata* written by and *elogia* on Van Schurman that appear in the *Opuscula*. I will include some texts that do not form part of the *Opuscula*. As part of

the discussion about the *peregrinatio academica* I will focus on some of the learned visitors that found their way to her as well as on some journeys that she herself undertook. In conclusion I will discuss in what respect these types of exchanges in the male *Res Publica Litteraria* differed from those in its female counterpart, the *Women's Republic of Letters*.

### *Scholarly correspondence*

Even though the *Opuscula* contains a lot of new work, the first part does contain previously published work such as the (*Amica*) *Dissertatio, De Vitae Termino*, the *Epistola Theologica a Virgine Nobiliss. Anna Schurmann ad Jac. Lydium*, as well as scholarly letters to Spanheim (*De ligatione Sathanae* – on the shackling of Satan) and to Salmasius (*De Transsubstantiatione; De Cruce et de Hyssopo* [On transubstantiation; on the cross and the hyssop]). I will discuss these scholarly letters in the given order.

‘(*Amica*) *Dissertatio*’ | The evolution of the *Amica Dissertatio* (Paris, 1638) and the *Dissertatio* (Leiden, 1641) is intricate and both books are often mistaken for each other, not least because the titles resemble each other so much. Claims still do the rounds that the Paris edition has never been published or that it was a clandestine print run. Because the *Amica Dissertatio* is so very rare – I ultimately found a copy in *Det Kongelige Bibliotek* in Copenhagen – and no one has compared this with the other versions, this confusion persists. A synopsis of its contents is thus necessary. But before we start: a seventeenth century *dissertatio* is not the equivalent of our concept of a dissertation or thesis. In the seventeenth century it was a general term for academic writings which could be presented in several different forms. For instance, Rivet praised Van Schurman's long and clear letter on women's studies as her ‘tua *dissertatio* elegantissima’, and here he did not refer to her ‘*dissertatio logica*’, the *Logisch Betoog* [Logical Exercise]. She herself referred to her autobiography *Eukleria* as a ‘*dissertatio*’.<sup>241</sup>

The *Amica Dissertatio inter nobilissimam virginem Annam Mariam a Schvrman, et Andræam Rivetvm, De ingenij muliebris ad scientias, & meliores literas capacitate* was published in Paris in 1638 and printed at an unknown printer, but with the permission of the French king.<sup>242</sup> The unsightly little book opens with a letter from Rivet in which he praised Van Schurman and urged her to go public with her exceptional talents. After all, it was rare indeed that a wise and modest girl could converse with scholars in Latin and Greek, not only orally, but also in learned letters; a girl that knew French as if it were her native tongue, and who was, moreover, very artistic. Rivet also praised her studies as an autodidact, therefore she did not even need to leave home. The letter is undated, but on closer inspection proves to be the same as the dedication that Rivet wrote in honour of Van Schurman in his work *l'Instruction préparatoire à la Sainte Cène*. But Rivet had not given permission for a new edition of his letters to the compiler of the *Amica Dissertatio*, the French court physician Du Chesne. The latter obviously wanted to use Rivet's fame to give wider recognition to Van Schurman. She, although the miracle of her sex because of her knowledge of languages, eloquence and scholarly interests, was a star only recently discov-



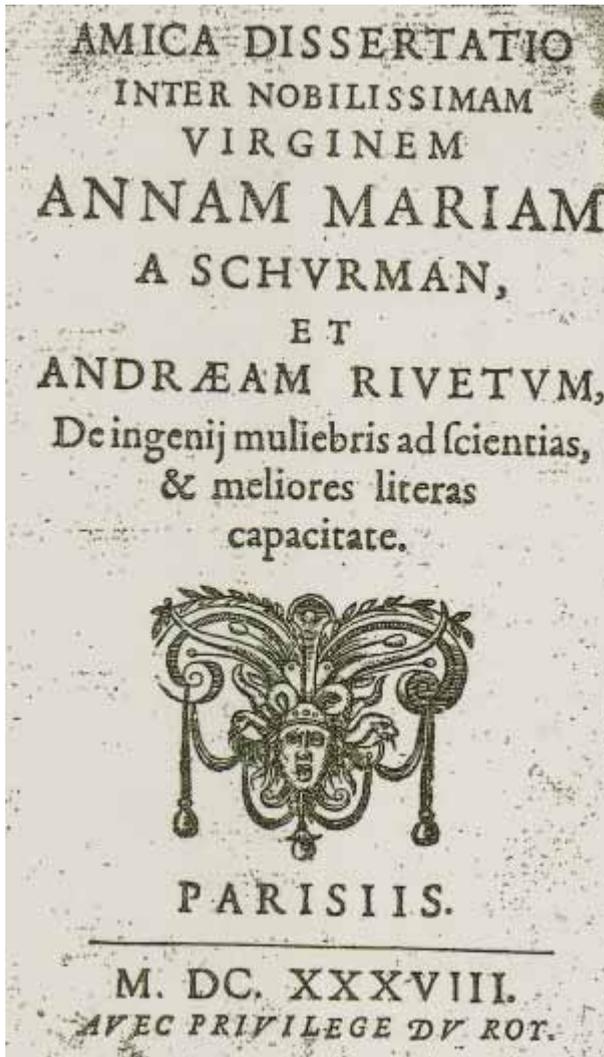
Anna Maria van Schurman.

ered – thus he wrote in his address to the reader. Following these letters he printed an extract from the king’s privilege in which was set out that Van Schurman was permitted to print her discourse for six years, but with a threatening warning to others who endeavoured to publish the work as well. Offenders would be fined 500 pounds and all copies would be confiscated. Two copies of the *Amica Dissertatio* should be sent to the depot of the royal library and one copy to the chancellor. The praise poems following this extract were not signed. After this introduction the real content follows: three scholarly letters exchanged between Van Schurman and Rivet on the topic of women’s learning.<sup>243</sup> The little book ends with a postscript in which Van Schurman begged Rivet to make his own work available as well:

I understand from friends that some of my scribblings are being prepared for publication. I urgently request you to make your work available for this. [...] whether it be for the general good or for the lustre of my fame.<sup>244</sup>

However, in an (unpublished) letter of February 18, 1640, to the Parisian court physician Du Chesne, she expressed her dissatisfaction because he has published her private scholarly letters, but again toned this down courteously by saying that she would interpret the matter as an expression of his generous benevolence in that he did not object to something so trivial. Moreover, his cardinal seemed to be very pleased with it.<sup>245</sup> Yet it is clear that she was not pleased with the Paris edition, and very soon afterwards a new edition was published by Elzeviers in Leiden in 1641 under the title *Nobiliss. Virginis Annae Mariae Schvrman Dissertatio, De Ingenii Muliebris ad Doctrinam et meliores Litteras aptitudine. Accedunt Qvaedam Epistolae, ejusdem Argumenti*. This work is known in literature as the *Dissertatio*.<sup>246</sup> Van Beverwijck wrote in his introduction that ‘some people had published her work elsewhere, without waiting for her permission or the permission of those who had put it at their disposal’. Only now had it been purged from all errors. As discussed previously, Van Schurman did approach Rivet for permission to make his work available. She thus seemed to have been in favour of a Paris edition. However, she was very disappointed with the resulting booklet; we can only guess why.<sup>247</sup> Was the poor design a thorn in her artistic flesh? Or the incorrect dates of some letters? Was it her sense of perfectionism (she was annoyed by the handful of printing errors)?<sup>248</sup> A feeling of shame because Du Chesne had taken an old letter of Rivet that now bent the truth? After all, for some years now she had been attending lectures at the University of Utrecht and thus she was not solely studying at home? Or should we go back to what she wrote to Spanheim while preparing the *Opuscula*, that she no longer wanted to correspond with everyone, especially not since she ‘was taken advantage of by mister X’? Spanheim could hear the whole story from Rivet. Maybe mister X was mister Du Chesne?<sup>249</sup> Anyway, she subsequently wanted a say in each and every edition. On July 18, 1640 she corresponded with Rivet about the content of a following edition on women’s learning, and whether or not this should be published by Elzeviers in Leiden:

But now that I have understood from the letter of a certain friend that Elzeviers is plan-



The 'Amico Dissertatio', dealing with a woman's right to study, was published in Paris in 1638. It is not clear whether Van Schurman completely approved of the publication. The booklet is very rare.

ning soon to print not only our letters that have been already published in France, but also some letters sent to you, I cannot but request you urgently not to give your permission for this. On the advice of friends I added some or other letter because of the similarity of the topic. However, if they go any further, I will give permission for the collective publication of the remaining letters to someone else. As motivation for this I refer to the famous Van Beverwijck, of whom I have heard that he, supported by the authority of your example, is interested in this matter too.<sup>250</sup>

Obviously her objections were noted and her wishes met, because in 1641 the new edition was in fact published by Elzeviers in Leiden. The three scholarly letters published in the *Amica Dissertatio* from 1638 were now included in a much more extensive correspondence between Rivet, Van Schurman, Andreas Colvius (theologian in Dordrecht)

and Adolf Vorstius (Leiden professor in medicine and botany) on women's learning. This book also contains the correspondence between Lydius and Van Schurman concerning 1 Corinthians 15 (on the 'baptism for the dead'). Many praise poems (including those published in the *Amica Dissertatio*) conclude the work. But not a single word about Du Chesne.<sup>251</sup>

Only now, for the first time, the *Logisch Betoog* had been added to this *Dissertatio*. In this exposition it was proved by way of a syllogism that a woman had the ability to study.<sup>252</sup> It takes pride of position in the book, as Van Beverwijck wrote in his letters to Van Schurman and to the reader. Nowadays this 'logica dissertatio' is often erroneously indicated as being the complete *Dissertatio*, although Van Beverwijck was quite clear on the matter:

I have preceded the work with the 'Logisch Betoog' that you once discussed with me and which deals with the same subject matter.<sup>253</sup>

Thus, the *Amica Dissertatio* did not contain the 'Logisch Betoog'; the *Dissertatio* did. Van Schurman could be well-pleased with the Elzeviers edition of 1641; the book was a feast for the eyes, not only because of the classical title page, but also the lay-out and the chapter decorations. It must have cost a lot of money. From Van Beverwijck's introduction it is clear that the learned church ministers Lydius and Colvius sourced the money for the edition. Why she did not contribute to these costs herself, is unclear. Maybe it is related to prevailing moral convictions with regard to publications by women? In England it was even regarded as improper for a woman to publish a book, let alone to pay for it herself. Almost nothing is known about the price of the book or the numbers that were sold or distributed. In Van Schurman's letters around this time she regularly referred to a recently published book of which she was the author. This must in all probability have been the *Dissertatio*.<sup>254</sup>

The publication of this *Dissertatio* was followed by subsequent editions and translations in which parts of the (*Amica*) *Dissertatio* were included in an often far more extensive correspondence on women's aptitude for learning. Original letters were often copied, as can be seen from a letter from the British Library.<sup>255</sup> The *Amica Dissertatio* was translated loosely into French as *Question Célèbre*; the *Logisch Betoog* and some letters from the *Dissertatio* were translated into English and entitled *The Learned Maid or whether a maid may be a scholar? A logick exercise; written in Latine by that incomparable virgin Anna Maria à Schurman of Utrecht. With some epistles to the famous Gassendus and others* (1659). It was the second English translation of the *Dissertatio*, but it is also incomplete. This incompleteness also applies to all editions of the *Opuscula* in which letters from the *Amica Dissertatio* and from the *Dissertatio* appeared. But not all of the letters concerning women's learning were included in the third edition; even until today a number of letters from Van Schurman to Rivet remain unpublished. Van Schurman dedicated this portion of the *Opuscula* to Andreas Rivet, but left out this dedication in the third impression. Douma has claimed that, in addition to the translations in English and French, there also existed Swedish, German and Italian translations, but up till now I have not been able to find those.<sup>256</sup>

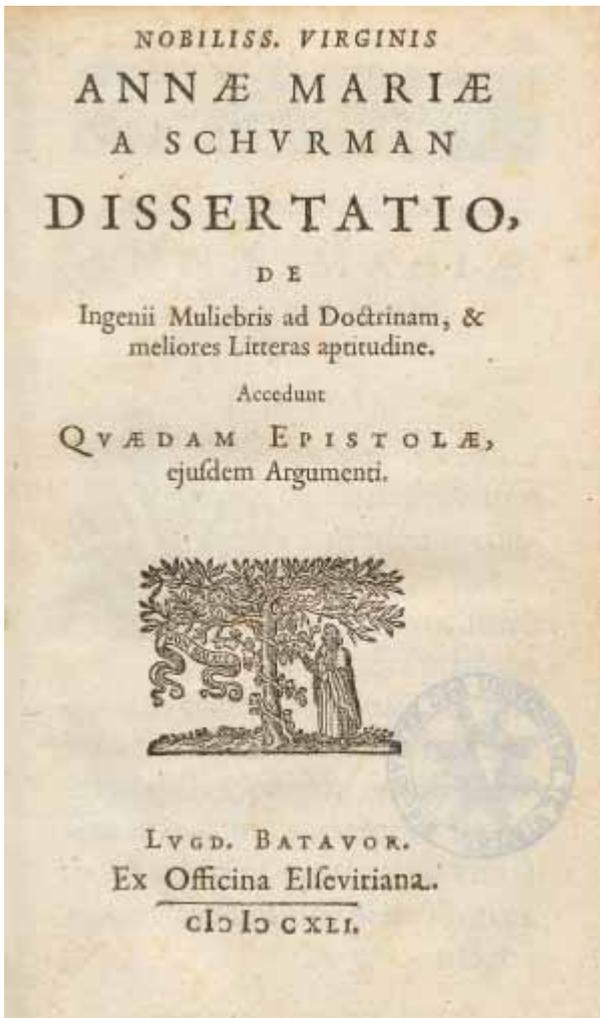
**Content (*Amica*) *Dissertatio*** | Van Schurman herself took the initiative to exchange thoughts with Rivet. She wanted a sounding board and a mentor in her thinking about topics, especially on the topic of women and studying. That topic impacted directly on her own life. Rivet gave his permission. Sometimes she criticised his thoughts, sometimes she accepted them as her own. Take, for example, the statement that needle and thread were good enough for a woman. Why, asked Van Schurman, according to which law? She did not want to be relegated to that basic level. The core question in the discussion with Rivet was whether the pursuit of knowledge and the arts was suitable for a woman. Van Schurman would enthusiastically endorse this; not so Rivet. He did not think it useful for many women to choose a life of study; only some women who had a calling should be allowed to devote themselves to it. After all, women were bound to their domestic duties. On this Van Schurman replied that learning and knowledge were an honourable asset for everyone, and therefore women should develop themselves. Legally, women were not allowed to hold public office or be employed in the civil service. For that very reason women had ample free time at their disposal, especially when they did not have to perform domestic duties due to their material wealth. But if their time slipped by without purpose and was not used positively, then opportunities arose for all kinds of wrongdoing. Studying would be the ideal antidote for this.<sup>257</sup>

To make their reasoning more convincing, Rivet as well as Van Schurman drew from the huge arsenal of arguments and examples which had been accumulated by way of antique (classical as well as biblical) tradition. Rivet was of the opinion that a learned woman should remain an exception; Van Schurman felt that all women in principle had the right to devote themselves to learning. It would improve their spiritual life, she said. They could not be expected to sit around all day with hands folded. Should it not rather be the duty of women who are not allowed to work outside the house to make studying their daily occupation? Van Schurman also defended the intellectual equality of man and woman from the day of creation. Both had been created in God's image and therefore the woman should have access to learning too. Rivet again came up with a traditional argument: the Creator of heaven and earth must have had reasons to create two different sexes, and therefore women's duties differed from those of men. Both Rivet and Van Schurman were aware of the defenders of female learning, such as Marie le Jars de Gournay and Lucretia Marinella and the whole procession of learned women from history that preceded Van Schurman. Van Schurman used them as examples to prove a general human talent for studying; Rivet saw them as exceptions to the rule.<sup>258</sup>

Rivet not only wanted to restrict studying to a few women, he also wanted to restrict their fields of study. Only subjects from the Faculty of Letters were to be allowed, hence no studying of law, medicine or theology. Van Schurman argued that in principle women should be allowed to study in all disciplines. Then Van Schurman suddenly appeared to make a turnabout. Rivet had reproached her that she had put the woman before the man in her letter of November 1637. She was clearly upset over his reaction and checked their correspondence on this point once again. It seems that she retracted her point of view at this stage when she said that actually they did not differ that much in their respective opinions. She had expressed herself poorly, because she never meant to put the woman before

the man, even though she had cited from the work of Lucretia Marinella writing on that topic. The book of Marie le Jars de Gournay on the equality of men and women she could only praise in respect of the style and charm, but although she appealed to the testimony of the scholars that De Gournay mentioned, she did not have the courage to approve the book as a whole. She wanted to leave it to men to praise women; women would just have to be satisfied to have their conscience as witness, so she wrote at the time.<sup>259</sup>

Although van Schurman started out pleading for women in general to be admitted to universities (as can be seen from her Latin poem on the inauguration of the university and from the initial correspondence with Rivet), she adapted the question in her *Dissertatio*: whether the study of *Letters* was suitable for a *Christian* woman? Clearly her arguments had been adapted to suit Rivet's conservative views. She now claimed that her views were



The 'Dissertatio' was published in 1641 in Leiden by the prestigious publishers Elseviers. The work deals extensively with the theme of women's learning. Anna Maria was very pleased with the book and often sent it to friends and scholars.

close to those of Rivet, her earlier thoughts had been mere loose strands, *nugae* [trivia] on which she had wanted to reflect. She would follow Rivet's advice and reread Vives' book on the education of a Christian woman, even though Vives was known to be conservative and was advocating a very limited education for women. Of the two chapters of Vives that Rivet recommended, the first emphasised the point that all women had to learn to expertly cook and sew, the second supplied a long list of names of learned women through the ages, but ended with the Apostle Paul's warning that women should learn from Eve's transgression in paradise (1 Timothy 2:11-14). Had not she, foremother of every living soul, picked the wry fruit of the tree of knowledge, of good and evil?<sup>260</sup>

In my opinion this desire for approval cannot be explained in the way Rang does, when she claims that Van Schurman, unlike other highly learned women during that time, got the attention and even approval of the male intellectual public by mitigating her points of view.<sup>261</sup> The turnabout was mainly rhetorical; she adapted. As it happened, Voetius was more enlightened in his views on women than Rivet was. He allowed a woman to study at a university; and moreover, in more subjects than those from the Faculty of Letters. Rivet was of the opinion that Van Schurman was one of very few women who had this 'calling from above', as he still claimed on his deathbed about her. Between Voetius and Rivet there existed a measure of rivalry. For a certain time, Van Schurman did not answer letters from Rivet. Huygens, who was accorded the same treatment, speculated with Rivet about a possible cause for this. 'Could it be because I became a widower recently?' Huygens wondered. 'No, she does not write to me either,' was the answer Rivet, a near octogenarian, gave him, 'and that is not her fault, but that of Voetius, who claims her completely for himself.'<sup>262</sup>

Even though Van Schurman and Voetius shared the same point of view, she did not want to affront Rivet, her spiritual father, and that is why she adapted her views. After all, in practical terms, she was continuing her studies, and on a much wider front than only arts and letters; also medicine and theology. She often persuaded women, orally and in writing, to take up studying, as we shall see subsequently, for example in the case of Marie du Moulin. She also encouraged professors to write textbooks in Dutch for learning Hebrew, in order for women to be able to learn that language.

### *De Vitae Termino* |

To Utrecht with my poem, where a maiden lives  
 who is floating with her high spirit far up in heaven.  
 Goddess, greetings to you, from far I am able to speak,  
 but when I stood in front of you, my spirit deserted me.  
 Your language astonished me; such a being, such a language  
 I never saw nor heard in any prince's hall. [...]

[Na 't Sticht met mijn gedicht; alvvaer een Iuffer leeft  
 Die met haer hoogen geest diep in den hemel svveeft.  
 Godinne, zijt gegroet: van verre kan ick spreken;  
 Mae doe ick voor u stont vvas my de geest ontvveken,  
 V spraeck verstomde my; dat vvesen, soo een tael  
 En sag en hoord' ick noyt in eenigh Princen sael. [...]]<sup>263</sup>

Thus far a poem by councillor Boy from Dordrecht in reference to Van Schurman's publication *De Vitae Termino*. The physician Johan van Beverwijck had been involved in various books by Van Schurman, not only the *Dissertatio* and the *Vraaghbrief* [Question letter] about the healing of the blind-born man, but especially this contribution. The scientific discussion that was started by him in 1632, had as topic the value of medical science. The main question here was whether human beings should attempt to prolong their life, whereas the duration of life had been determined by God. He had asked some scholars in the Netherlands and Europe to give their opinion on this difficult issue. In 1634 Van Beverwijck published the first part of this discussion under the title *Epistolica quaestio de vitae termino, fatali an mobili?* However, he did not regard this book as the last word on this issue and subsequently asked another group of scholars for their opinion. In 1636 an extended edition was published in two parts. In 1639 a completely new part was published. It is often found bound together with the 1636 edition, or with another edition of the 1636 two-part version published in 1651. In total, 24 scholars participated, of whom twelve were theologians. The participants came from the Netherlands, France and Italy. The book not only contained the Calvinistic perspective as accepted by Andreas Rivet or Voetius, but also the point of view of Remonstrants or Roman Catholics such as Caspar Barlaeus, Simon Episcopius, Mersenne, Naudé, Liceti and the Jewish scholar Menasseh Ben Israel. Van Beverwijck was an open-minded person who wanted to see a controversial issue discussed from different points of view. Unfortunately these different stances do not come clearly to the fore in the book, as the editor had smoothed them out. For example, Hugo de Groot had been invited to contribute, but his contribution was not accepted for the book. Like Menasseh Ben Israel, he published his vision on the matter separately.<sup>264</sup>

Van Schurman was the only woman who was allowed to participate in the discussion with these high-ranking scholars. She received the honour to conclude the discussion with her contribution which 'would place a marble top on this excellent and from all sides perfect edifice' ['een marmeren top op dit treffelijk en van alle kanten volmaect gebouw zou plaatsens']. Van Beverwijck asked her in a letter written in January 1639 (written partly in Latin, partly in Greek) whether she wished to comment on the issue from 'the depth of her incomparable mind and marvellous learning'. After all, she was occupying herself at the time mainly with theology and divine matters. Most of the scholars took the stance that the boundary between life and death was unchangeable as far as God was concerned, but from the perspective of humans it was changeable. How could that be, Van Beverwijck asked, when it concerned the same boundary? Did she, 'in whose mind the divine and human wisdom have chosen their dwelling', wish to conquer these doubts?<sup>265</sup>

Van Schurman wrote down her vision like 'beams, not as some others from decayed wood, but made of oak, sturdy piles rammed down in the earth of truth' ['palen, niet als sommigen van vermolmt hout maer van eycke ende vaste balcken diep in den grondt der waerheydt geheydt'] – thus Van Beverwijck. She substantiated her view with logical arguments and by quoting earlier and later authorities such as Cicero, Thomas Aquinas, Scaliger, Aben Ezra, Seneca, the Koran, Pindar, Euripides, Simonides, Nikephoros, Gregoras, Livy, Herodian, the Holy Scriptures (among them King Solomon and the Apostle

Paul), Augustine, Homer, Plato, Hilary, Gregory of Nazianzus and Epictetus. Although our lifetime was precisely determined in advance by God, this could not, according to Van Schurman, be seen as fatalistic. God's plan for humanity had been laid down, to the smallest detail, and this meant that medical science had an essential role to fulfil on a lower level. Doctors were enlisted in God's plan and though the future had been determined in advance, man had the duty to live to the end the life that God had given.<sup>266</sup>

Van Beverwijck added her response, written in graceful Latin, to the writings of the other scholars and had it printed and distributed; separately, but also as part of his works. *De Vitae Termino* was first published in Latin, then in Dutch (*Paelsteen van den tijd onses levens*); it had two impressions within a year and another one in 1647, and later it was included in all the editions of the *Opuscula* as well as in the collected works of Van Beverwijck. It was omitted from the reprint of the *Opuscula* in 1749, because the female publisher Dorothea Loeberia objected to the Calvinistic vision radiating from it. In France and Germany the booklet was published as well, accompanied by praise poems. In total, Van Schurman's contribution has appeared at least fifteen times, separately or as part of another work, in Latin, Dutch, German and French. The Portuguese Jewish physician Zacutius Lusitanus, who lived in Amsterdam and was a friend of Van Beverwijck, wrote an extensive standard work on the history of medicine, in which he praised this contribution of Van Schurman as the height of female achievement in the field of medicine. How hazy the boundaries between theology and medicine were at the time is illustrated by the fact that exactly the same contribution *De Vitae Termino* was included as point of reference in a standard work on theology, in the chapter on providence.<sup>267</sup> Lydius wrote a beautiful praise poem on her contribution, in which he portrayed her as follows:

The sun for whom the stars have to dim their light,  
such is the clear light of your famous mind,  
in such a way your high spirit shows up men.  
But look, famous maiden, your light will not allow  
me to spend more time on it, starry-eyed.  
Every particle of science in such an array of languages  
is in our tender view a new ray of sunshine.  
Why then award you this praise with a pen?  
Why describe the bright sun with black ink?

[De zon voor wie de sterren moeten doven  
Soo drijft het helder licht van u beroemt verstandt,  
Soo wijst u hoogen geest de mannen van der handt.  
Maer siet, vermaerde Maeght, u licht wil niet gedoogen,  
Dat ick noch langer tijt daer op soo sterre-oogen  
Een yder wetenschap in soo verscheyde tael.  
Is in ons teer gesicht een nieuwe sonne-strael.  
Waer toe dan met de pen u desen lof gegeven?  
Waer toe de klare Son met swarten inct beschreven?]<sup>268</sup>

On Van Beverwijck's death Van Schurman wrote a fitting memorial poem in Latin, rich in wordplay on the notion of the end of his life and his publications on the topic of the end of life:

On the death of the very famous man, Mr Johan van Beverwijck, senator and city physician of Dordrecht and on the controversy on the end of life, which had been introduced to us by him.

Put on your mourning clothes, Castalian Muses  
and change your springs into streams of tears.  
Ah! the short life light of Van Beverwijck,  
the highest glory of the Muses, has been snuffed out in black waves.  
He in particular understood the art to create pleasant light for others  
and to cheat the avenging Moirae with his (medical) art [...] <sup>269</sup>

*Epistolae Theologicae* | The Franeker professor Cloppenburg wrote about Van Schurman's contribution to the debate about the interpretation of 1 Corinthians 15:29 ('the baptism for the dead') and referred to a work named the *Epistola Theologica a Virginae Nobiliss. Annae Schurmannae*. The separate publication he referred to remains untraceable, but the scholarly letter was for a large part translated by Lydius and included in his work, and was subsequently included in full at the back of the 1641 edition of the *Dissertatio* and also in all editions of the *Opuscula* as from 1648. Already in 1643 this scholarly letter was separately referred to in Valerius Andreas' *Bibliotheca Belgica*, although he, being of the



Claudius Salmasius, a Frenchman, was a famous scholar in Leiden with whom Van Schurman corresponded. In Greek and Latin they debated on paper, on theological and philological issues.

Catholic faith, took pains to mention that she belonged to the *deformata Religio* (deformed religion, that is the *reformata* or reformed religion). Little else is known about Van Schurman's friendship with Cloppenburg, but he also reacted with a letter on the baptism for the dead and he dedicated one of his *Dissertationes selectae theologicae* to her. Subsequently he included her interpretation of the biblical verse in the book containing all the disputations held under his supervision. Her reaction to Lydius' request to participate in the debate on 1 Cor. 15 seems to have been well received, since other theologians also asked her opinion on controversial issues – for example the Leiden professor Frederik Spanheim who wanted her opinion on a difficult passage in the biblical book of Revelations that deals with the shackling of Satan and millennialism (the thousand year reign of peace) (*De ligatione satanae*). Professor Salmasius asked her twice about other thorny issues such as those discussed in *De cruce et de hyssoppo* [On the cross and the hyssop] and in *De transsubstantiatione* (On transubstantiation). The first question dealt with the hyssop that was used to give vinegar to the crucified Jesus. What kind of medicinal plant would this hyssop have been? Was it the same plant as the reed the other evangelists referred to?<sup>270</sup>

**Matthew 27:48**

And straightway one of them ran,  
and took a sponge,  
and filled it with vinegar,  
and put it on a reed,  
and gave him to drink.

**Luke 23:36**

And the soldiers also mocked him,  
coming to him,  
and offering him vinegar...

**Mark 15:36**

And one ran  
and filled a sponge full of vinegar,  
and put it on a reed,  
and gave him to drink...

**John 19:29**

Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar;  
and they filled a sponge with vinegar,  
and put it upon hyssop,  
and put it to his mouth.

With regard to transubstantiation, the conversion of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, the question was whether this actually happened or whether it should be interpreted symbolically. Van Schurman's contributions were included in her *Opuscula* and in the work of professors Spanheim and Salmasius.<sup>271</sup>

**Other scholarly letters** | Latin was the ultimate scholarly language in the *Republic of Letters*; nevertheless, Greek and Hebrew were also used from time to time. The *Opuscula* contains an extended section of Latin letters, but also a section of Greek and Hebrew letters that Van Schurman wrote to a variety of persons in the *Republic of Letters*: in Greek to Meletios Pantogalus, Bathsua Makin, Van Beverwijck and Salmasius, and in Hebrew to Rivet, Voetius and Dorothea Moore. The letters to Rivet and Voetius have already been discussed in the section on studying Hebrew; the letters to Bathsua Makin and Dorothea Moore will come up for discussion in the next chapter. In this section I will discuss the letters in Latin to Smetius, the letters to Salmasius in Latin and Greek and finally the letters in Greek to Meletios Pantogalus.

In 1647 Johan Godschalk van Schurman sent the following letter at his sister's request to his friend, the church minister and archaeologist Smetius in Nijmegen:

Sir,

This only serves to request that you – because of our friendship – please send us the copy of a certain letter *De motibus primo primis* written to you by my dear sister. We are of the opinion that this letter is the first of many. Mr Spanheim has insisted for a long time to be allowed to publish some of these, to which my sister has at last agreed. I herewith commend you, together with everyone who is dear and precious to you, to the protection of our God. Very heartfelt greetings from all of us.

[Mijn Heer,

Desen sal alleen dienen om V.E. te versoucken ons de vriendschap gelieven te doen om eens de Copie van seeckeren brief van mijne L. Suster de motibus primo primis aen V.E. geschreven ouer te willen senden; den welken, so wij meenen den eersten is van allen. Mons. Spanheim heeft langh aengehouden om eenige van dezeluen int licht te mogen geuen; het welck mijne Suster Sijn Ed. ten laetsten heeft toegestaen. Hier mee wil ik V. Eerw. met alle die V.E. lief en weerd sij in de bescherminge onses Godts bevelen: blyuende van ons allen seer hertelick gegroet.]<sup>272</sup>

The essay had been sent to him and now Johan Godschalk asked Smetius to please return this important letter, 'the first of all' that she wrote on the topic. This would enable the letter to be published in the *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica*. But when the book was published in 1648, for reasons not clear, the letter was not included, neither did it appear in subsequent editions. As already discussed in a previous chapter, this letter must have dealt with a central problem in philosophy: who had set the universe in motion?<sup>273</sup> In addition to the fact that Van Schurman shared her thoughts on God as the *Primum Mobile*, as the First Cause, with Smetius, she also corresponded with him on art and archaeology. Smetius was not only a church minister but also an archaeologist and had built up an internationally renowned scientific collection of Roman antiquities. According to him and as set out in his book *Oppidum Batavorum, seu Noviomagum*, published in 1644, Nijmegen had been the oldest and most important city of the Netherlands during the times of the Batavians and Romans. The archaeological artefacts from the rich archive of the Roman soil were displayed by Smetius in his home: from a milestone and altar stones to small and beautiful items such as coins and ornaments, but also glass and pot shards. He even presented a few coins to Van Schurman, which she then showed to Buchelius in Utrecht.<sup>274</sup>

A number of Latin letters to and from Smetius are included in the *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica*. We can deduce from them that Van Schurman presented him with gifts three times in five years and that he dedicated a few *Elogia* to her in 1638. In these, he praised her artistic versatility and placed her in the tradition of learned Dutch women. Van Schurman sent him a 1641 edition of the *Dissertatio* together with a self-portrait. Two years later she gave him a glass goblet as token of their 'eternal' friendship. In the same letter Van Schurman let him know that she would like to see Smetius' collection with her own eyes, but because one could never be sure of a future excursion taking place, she asked for his portrait. At the end of the letter she gave a description of the goblet she

wanted to present to him. On the lid would be an inscription: 'Hilaris cupis esse sodalis?' [Friend, do you want to be merry?]. The reply would be engraved in the glass itself: 'Pal-lade cum Baccho si bene jungis, eris' [You will be if you moderate Bacchus by Pallas]. Van Schurman did indeed visit Smetius to admire his famous collection of Roman artefacts and it is highly likely that they raised their glasses together.<sup>275</sup>

The letters on transubstantiation and on hyssop referred to earlier were written by Van Schurman in discussion with one of the most famous Leiden scholars, the erudite French philologist Claudius Salmasius, who had been named successor to Scaliger in 1632. As a result of his study of classical and Semitic languages and especially his research into the historical relatedness of languages, he was regarded as one of the greatest philologists of his time. Salmasius could participate in discussions on many topics and in oral discussion he could tolerate objections, but in his books he took extreme polemic positions. Of the many books he wrote, about 80 were published. They dealt with a variety of topics such as the authenticity of the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, whether Peter ever visited Rome, the hierarchy within the church, men having long hair and women dressed-up hair; on transubstantiation, the demise of the Greek language and on extortion. With Van Schurman he corresponded on theological-philological topics and on the Greek language. He sent her many of his books as *antidoron*, as gifts, for example the work *De Annis Climactericis* and the book on the Greek language.<sup>276</sup>

Van Schurman was introduced to Salmasius by Andreas Rivet, both of them being Huguenots. Salmasius visited his home country France where he was offered bribes: if he reverted to the Catholic faith, he would be awarded the highest fame in his native country and would be offered a top position. But he returned to the Netherlands, for which Van Schurman commended him in 1644 in a Latin praise poem:

Anna Maria van Schurman congratulates the most noble and learned amongst the heroes,  
Mr Claudius Salmasius, with his fortunate return from France.

Greetings to you, foreigner, now finally restored to the Batavian land, or rather let the  
world resound with: Batavian foreigner, greetings to you!

You who could not be persuaded to stay in your own fatherland, regardless of so many at-  
tractive offers from kings, so many promises from the powerful of the earth.

And for this reason, Salmasius, does there exist any form of homage not obliged to you;  
you who have chosen us above your grateful countrymen who have heaped honour upon  
you? [...] <sup>277</sup>

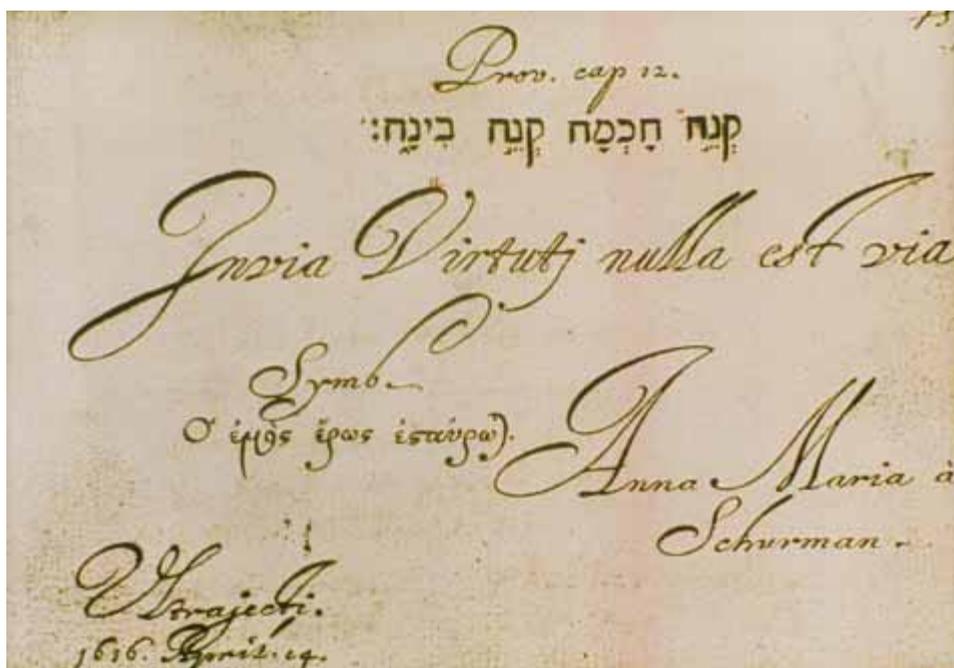
Van Schurman also wrote a fine letter in Greek to Salmasius to thank him for a study book. He presented her with the book when she and her brother visited him and they were warmly received. They were even allowed to view his 'goddess of the library'. This precious book – on the origin of the Greek language – inspired her to write back to him in Greek. In conclusion, she invited him to visit them in Utrecht. Salmasius wrote such a beautiful *elogium* on Van Schurman that it was taken over by many writers: 'Habemus in urbe unius diei itinere hinc dissita, Virginem Nobilem,' etc. [In a city a day's journey from here lives a

young woman, etc.]. He praised her versatile artistic talents, her learning, her knowledge of European and Oriental languages. ‘She is even able to correspond with Jews in Hebrew and with Muslims in Arabic. Her knowledge of philosophy and theology is unparalleled. And no one competes with her because no one can imitate her, and nobody is even jealous of her, for she herself is above all jealousy.’<sup>278</sup>

**Meletios Pantogalus** | One day Van Schurman received a letter written in Greek:

Meletios, bishop of Ephesus, to the noble-born and highly learned lady Anna Maria van Schurman. From all sides I have heard about your high-principled moral life and also about your philosophical attitude and your education in the Greek language. I found it inspiring to hear about your studies in theology. But the fullest admiration was directed at your virginity, Anna Maria, blessed and very wise virgin. Honourable words accompany your acts [...] Thank God there still are daughters who set an example with regard to the virtue of virginity and sparkle [...] oh virginity, angelic matter [...] virginity [...] virgin [...] (etc)

She would probably have heard about the patriarch Meletios Pantogalus of the Greek Orthodox Church in Ephesus, but would probably not have expected a letter filled with such innuendos about her virginity. On December 23, 1644, Meletios, fifty years old, had been festively enrolled in the *Album Studiosorum* of Leiden University. He was born in 1595 in Crete, just like his great and much wider-known master Cyrillus Lukaris 25 years before him. This Cyrillus Lukaris had been murdered in 1638 because of his pursuit of ecumenicalism with the Western churches (Lutherans, Catholics, but especially Calvinists). Lukaris became well-known in the Netherlands and due to his influence the Belgic Confession [‘Nederlandse Geloofsbelijdenis’] was translated by Revius into Latin and Greek, and also the Heidelberg Catechism into Greek (Leiden, 1623). Meletios Pantogalus was one of the few supporters of Cyrillus Lukaris in his pursuit of ecumenicalism and later Calvinism. For this reason he was relieved of his position as bishop and had to flee his country. Together with another follower of Lukaris, Hierotheos Abbathios, he finally arrived in the Netherlands to ask for help. The national parliament (States-General) decided that both Greek theologians were to be allowed to live and study in Leiden during the winter of 1644-45 at the expense of the state. That shows how much sympathy was present at the time for friends of Cyrillus Lukaris and for the Greek Orthodox Church. In Leiden, Meletios Pantogalus and Hierotheos Abbathios held discussions with politicians, church leaders and professors in theology.<sup>279</sup> In these discussions Meletios learned about Van Schurman from professor Vorstius. He became so excited that he wrote her a long letter in Greek, in which he untiringly praised her learnedness, piousness, knowledge of Greek, and especially her virginity. According to him she was like a ‘wise virgin [...], like a rose among thorns’. In 1645 Meletios returned to Ephesus, carrying letters of recommendation from the church synod as well as parliament. Unfortunately he died before seeing his fatherland again.<sup>280</sup> The letters that Meletios and Van Schurman wrote to each other have unfortunately not been preserved in the original handwritten form. For unknown reasons the letter of Meletios was only published in the third edition of the *Opuscula* (was



Album contribution for Ph. De Glarges showing her personal motto in Greek: 'my love has been crucified'.

Van Schurman embarrassed about the exaggerated praise in the letter?); her letter to him had already appeared in the first edition. They used Greek as medium of correspondence, which was to be expected from a bishop of the Greek Orthodox Church, but which was not such a matter of course for a woman in the seventeenth century. The letters differ in many respects; the bishop's letter is tedious, repetitive and contains ioticisms such as *παρθενεῖα* instead of *παρθενία* (= virginity); Van Schurman's letter is concise and inclines towards Attic Greek usage. She also used an Attic month reference, while the bishop, probably as a matter of courtesy, used the West European customary reference.<sup>281</sup> Van Schurman wrote to him in Greek because he had complimented her on her *paideia hellenika*, her Greek studies. And of course he was a representative of the Greek Orthodox Church. The exotic and strange elements in this church must have appealed to her. After all, she also read books on the liturgy of the Syrian Orthodox Church. But the fact that his predecessor, Cyrillus Lukaris, had been murdered because of his pursuit of ecumenicalism and that Meletios Pantogalus had been forced to flee, made her reflect once again with melancholy on the issue of martyrdom.

The similarity between Meletios Pantogalus and Anna Maria van Schurman, in addition to their knowledge of Greek and their religious interests, was their preference for *παρθενία*, virginity. Meletios' high praise for Van Schurman's virginity had to do with his own unmarried state – only unmarried monks could become bishops in the Greek Orthodox Church – but was also related to views on *παρθενία*, which were glorified since early

Christianity. Virginité was supposed to bestow supernatural powers; one could approximate the ideal incorporeal existence of angels. Meletios specifically referred to *παρθενία*, *πραγμα ἀγγελικόν* (virginité, characteristic of angels). He also borrowed the words of the archangel Gabriel when, just like the angel did to Mary, he sent Anna Maria Schurman the 'Hail' (greetings to you) and proclaimed the peace of the Lord to her.<sup>282</sup> Mary, the Mother of God, is characterised in the New Testament (Matthew 1:18, Luke 1:26-38) as *ἀει παρθενοῦς*: virgin forever; before, during and after the birth of Jesus.

Meletios also referred to that good part Van Schurman had chosen, implicitly referring to her good choice with regard to celibacy. He therefore referred to her as the 'wise virgin', who, according to the parable of the five foolish and five wise virgins, went out to meet the bridegroom (Matthew 25:1-13). She should keep her lamp (her heart) burning, not let it go out, and be on her way to meet the bridegroom. Then she could go in with him to the marriage feast and would receive the pearl of eternal life ('de zoete Jezus' [sweet Jesus]). The references in Meletios' letter were without any carnal innuendos, for according to him Van Schurman already lived 'outside the physical realm' ['buiten het vlees'].<sup>283</sup>

In reply to his gushing letter, Van Schurmans wrote him a courteous but somewhat reticent letter in Greek with the following tenor: 'Praise is welcome when it coincides with the truth, so please refrain from exaggerated praise. But with respect to the matter of virginité I do agree with you.' Meletios singing the praises of Van Schurman's virginité was not customary in seventeenth century Dutch society. Together with Voetius he was a noted exception to seventeenth century Dutch men such as Constantijn Huygens or Caspar Barlaeus. When they praised Anna Maria van Schurman, they referred to her female learnedness or artistic talents. On the topic of her virginité only denigrating remarks or jokes were made; it was never a reason for praising her. Barlaeus wrote that she was a woman who, 'because she only had knowledge of the divine and the elevated, did not want to marry a mortal man but expected gods to be her lovers'. And he added that her oracles would be better than her kisses.<sup>284</sup> When in 1639 the theologian André Rivet published a booklet on Mary's virginité (*Apologia pro sanctissima virgine Maria matre Domini*), Constantijn Huygens wrote to him:

I doubt whether all women will read the booklet with pleasure. The insolence of the monks has forced you to write explicitly on many matters. Miss Schurman will probably skip some parts.<sup>285</sup>

However, Van Schurman had received the booklet from Rivet as a gift and had written a beautiful Latin praise poem on it 'On the struggle against the worship of Mary'. But it remains true that she took herself seriously as a celibate woman. Thus she wrote Latin poems on her motto and against rumours that she had translated a frivolous French novel. The next section deals with these *Poemata*.<sup>286</sup>

### Johannes Fredericus Gronovius

Johannes Fredericus Gronovius was a classical philologist and professor in Deventer, later in Leiden. In 1638 Van Schurman wrote an inscription in Arabic in his album amicorum: 'One day in the life of a wise person is worth more than a thousand days in the life of a fool.'<sup>1</sup> In the Amsterdam university library some poems ascribed to Anna Maria van Schurman form part of the collection; among others one for Gronovius, entitled *Virgines viduis preferenda esse*, or '[why] virgins are to be preferred to widows'.<sup>2</sup> In translation the poem reads as follows:

In a widow who has known husbands before, there is nothing left to love; that first love has already harvested all joy. She will not give you such sincere nor shy kisses, Gronovius, nor with such great naivety. Often to her it is mere repetition, and she easily goes too far. Only a woman who bestows her favours in a shy manner, does so in the right way. When you consider marriage, look for a woman who has never been married before. Do not waste your love on widows. [...] Someone who undertakes a journey early in the morning, plucks the roses that are still wet from the dew, and passes the withered ones by [...] That bed of hers shows the traces of the old fire and will never regain the warmth of a first love. When she kisses you: in the past she has bestowed more passionate ones; when she snuggles her soft body against you: she has done that with someone else before. Someone else has touched that neck and those hands, and that white little neck may still be carrying the marks of another person. Her breasts have already learned to allow a hand to touch them ... whatever you do, someone else has played that sweet game already! [...] True rapture you will bring about in a young girl; the things that she feared at first she will gradually learn to love with eager anxiousness. Initially you will see her tremble at the mere mention of the delights of Venus. But soon afterwards, when she has yielded to your pleas, and it is inevitable that she will give in, then her feelings of shame will wet her face with sweet tears. The lover sees this and with joy he will taste this precious fluid which will be to him the pledge of her surrender. The mind recedes to the background, and becomes less and less prominent as passion gradually increases, and she herself takes the lead with her embraces. She is neither small-minded, nor domineering, nor bold. It is sufficient for her to submit to her lover. And when he receives a child from her, being a pure and chaste mother, he will see a reflection of himself in the child.

Since Van Schurman defended her virginal state throughout her life, this poem seems to be a 'strange bedfellow' in her oeuvre; just like the other poem *Ad Janum Meierum nuptias Danica spectantem Amatorem Regi similem esse* [to Janus Meier attending the [Royal] wedding in Denmark: argument that a lover is equal to a king]. Recent research shows Vincent Fabricius to be the author of both poems.<sup>3</sup>

I. KB 130 E 32.

II. Douma 1924:84.

III. Fabricius 1638:25, 44. Van Beek 2009a.

### Poemata

Another way in which scholars kept in contact was by writing Latin poems for each other. Only a handful of women reached that high level of proficiency. In the Netherlands Johanna Otto, Anna van Pallandt, Anna Suys and Anna van Utenhove had preceded Van Schurman, but Johanna Otto published only one volume of poetry with limited distribution; the other women published a few poems in the works of others. According to Voetius, Maria Landsberg had also written beautiful poems, but these had been lost in the Eighty Years' War. Margaretha Godewijck, a contemporary of Van Schurman, also wrote beautiful Neo-Latin poems, but except for a few, these have remained unpublished. On the other hand, more than 60 Latin poems of Van Schurman are known; yet she must have written several hundreds. When one was proficient in writing poetry in Latin, then one reacted to important happenings in the life of others with a Latin poem in the same way as we do nowadays with a letter or an e-mail. All Van Schurman's writing in Latin shows how learned she was, the poems even more so. In this section I will discuss some poems that relate to her celibacy and her learning.<sup>287</sup>

'**Amor meus crucifixus est**' | Next to her signature Van Schurman nearly always wrote her *Symbolum*; her motto 'my love has been crucified'. She did so on purpose. The Greek word Συμβολον originally meant 'the missing half of a pendant'. Often people would take a stone and break it into two parts. Thus there only existed one specific other half that would fit the first half. Later on, *symbolon* came to mean a pact, a contract, a sign or a symbol. In the same way, her motto fitted her name just like the other half of a stone, and was deeply linked to her identity. After promising her father never to marry, she adopted this motto and attached it to herself. The motto had a double meaning: her physical love had been crucified, but also: her love was the crucified Jesus. The notion of martyrdom also played a role in her adoption of the motto, because it originated from bishop Ignatius of Antioch, who in 120 AD had been thrown to the wild animals as a martyr in Rome.<sup>288</sup>

Van Schurman wrote an Echo poem on her motto. That poem, *Mijn liefde is gekruisigd*, was published in 1638, together with other Echo poems, in a Utrecht book; a year later in Van Beverwijck's book, and it was finally included in her *Opuscula*. It was also circulated in manuscript form:

On her motto 'My love has been crucified'

Who does not worship Christ with intense love?  
 He who calls all witnesses as an echo: he loves.  
 He only loves us; he who feeds the beloved with his blood,  
 and who by dying tamed Tartarus, and by resurrecting.  
 Seek him, wise maiden with a virginal spirit  
 and sparkle for this bridegroom. Do not place your trust in yourself,  
 have faith!

The echo effect is unfortunately lost in translation (in Latin: *clamat/amat; moriens/oriens; fide/fide*). In this Latin poem *In symbolum suum* Van Schurman gave an explicit interpre-



Van Schurman wrote many multilingual sheets in calligraphy containing the Semitic languages in which she was proficient; shown here are lines in Hebrew, Aramaic, Samaritan, Arabic and Syrian. She was often begged for such a multilingual sheet in her handwriting and she sent them as gifts accompanying her letters.

tation of her motto. It referred to the love of Christ, who fed his beloved by his blood, and through his death and resurrection tamed hell ('Tartarus'). She incited herself to seek this bridegroom like a wise virgin. She started out with a rhetorical question which she then answered herself. The last echo (*fide/fide*) is a so-called *repetitio*; a repetition that has a reinforcing effect: faith through and through.

We have already seen that the German poet Philipp van Zesen named his book of verse after her motto, and that he even took over the German poem that she had written earlier on her motto ('Wält tobe wi du wült') and renamed it *Spruchlied auf der Wahlspruch*. Dutch scholars such as Robertus Keuchenius and Johannes de Laet also wrote Latin and French epigrams on the motto, for example De Laet:

This maiden, burns [...] in learned love for the Love  
because her love was once crucified.<sup>289</sup>

The Frenchman Des Hayons even published a whole booklet with epigrams in honour of Van Schurman in Utrecht: *Epigrammes, Consacrez à la vertu de Mademoiselle Anne Marie de Schurman*. In it, an epigram has been devoted to her *Devise*, to *Amor meus crucifixus est*.<sup>290</sup>

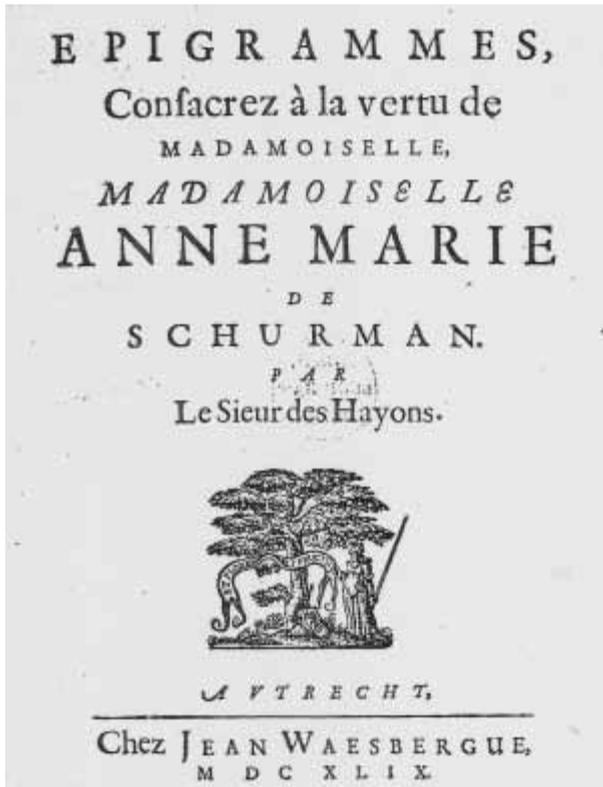
### *Apologia*

As a chaste woman Van Schurman had a reputation to defend. When the rumour was circulated that she had translated a highly-praised, highly-read French pastoral novel, *l'Astrée*, into Dutch, she immediately took up the pen to deny this. This voluminous and popular book by

Honoré d'Urfé had as its main theme the love adventures between shepherds and shepherdesses, especially the love between Céladon and Astrée. All nuances of love and friendship were discussed in this book.<sup>291</sup> But in two Latin poems Van Schurman denied expressly that she had translated this work; she wanted nothing to do with this, in her eyes, frivolous book:

Defence by Anna Maria van Schurman against some misleading rumours, where it is believed on the grounds of a similar name of Van Schurman, that she would have translated the *l'Astrée* of d'Urfez from the French into Dutch.

Why is this rumour rife about frivolous writing appearing under my name?  
 Why do people believe this wicked rumour?  
 Can the confusion of names lead to so much doubt that people believe I have lost my mind?  
 It is impossible for all those people to have the same female writer in mind.  
 Such labour merits laurel wreaths that I have never earned.  
 I am not envious of the writer; just let her bear the distinctions of her lovely labour for herself.  
 Love for another form of art keeps me busy.  
 I enjoy saying this openly;  
 Venus might reproach me for not putting the invincible Muses under her sceptre,  
 but I do not think that I have broken the laws of Astraea.<sup>292</sup>  
 After all, you command us to give honour to whom honour is due.



This volume of French praise poems on Anna Maria van Schurman was published in Utrecht. Des Hayons probably delivered it to her in person.

Firstly, in this poem she addressed the people who were just too happy to believe the rumour. Then, in a very ironic register, she directed her words at the female translator and the translation itself. People believing this rumour so easily, should have known better. After all, she was occupied with a different kind of love, namely with *My love has been crucified*. Even though she might have invoked the anger of Venus because she was dodging her, she had not broken the laws of the goddess Astraea, the goddess of justice. This goddess fled to heaven because of increasing evil on earth. Van Schurman was following her example, for not only did she transcend earthly love for heavenly love, but she also showed a sense of justice, because she gave honour (however dubious this honour might be) to the real translator.

Van Schurman did not specify which translation she had in mind. Portions of *l'Astrée* were translated into Dutch by Johan van Heemskerck and J. Heerman under the title *De ghedenckweerdighe historye van Chryseide en Arimant* or *De historie van Silviane en Andri-mart* (1638). But according to the only surviving manuscript of this poem, the female translator was Johanna de la Cava, widow Van Schurman; a woman about whom we know nothing, and even less about her translation. She probably belonged to the branch of the Van Schurman family in La Rochelle, France.<sup>293</sup>

Anna Maria van Schurman went as far as to publish this poem separately, *in plano*, in The Hague. It was written in the first instance for Andreas Rivet (*Ad Andream Rivetum*). Why did she dedicate the poem to him and even had it published in his home town? Maybe she felt that especially he, as her spiritual father, should know that she had absolutely nothing to do with that translator and such a book? She wrote another poem on the matter (which is now lost) and both poems circulated in manuscript form. The 'apologia' was included in Van Beverwijck's book on the praise of women in 1639, and later in all editions of the *Opuscula*.<sup>294</sup>

**'Opus Diurnium'** | The secretary of the Prince of Orange, Constantijn Huygens, often called on Van Schurman when passing through Utrecht. On such occasions they would exchange poems and ideas, make music together or exchange opinions on art. Even when Van Schurman lived in Cologne for over a year, he tried to fit in a visit to her. However, he failed to meet her in Cologne, wrote a Latin poem about the failed meeting and once again visited her in Utrecht. Huygens put in a lot of effort to keep contact with her; Van Schurman seemed to be somewhat more reserved, not least because Huygens did not hate the 'people with the long dresses' [*volk met lange rokken*]; referring to the dress of women].<sup>295</sup>

Constantijn Huygens sent her all his books as gifts: *Dagh-werk*, *Korenbloemen*, *Pathodia sacra et profana* en *Ghebruyck en onghebruyck van 't orgel*. Van Schurman wrote a Latin epigram on the first book, 'Opus Diurnium' (*Dagh-werk*) that Huygens published shortly after the tragic death of his wife 'Sterre', in which she praised him as the god of poetry, Apollo Phoebus. It is as if the sun of his poem would revive the extinguished star:

[...] *Dagh-werk* that he has written in honour of his very lovely deceased wife, Lady Susanna van Baerle.

You are asking whether your poems can bear the clear light of day?

Who would dare to deny it? The noble ghost of your wife asks for it.

Even if you were trying you could not hide your Dagh-werck;  
that would be contrary to your nature, Phoebus!<sup>296</sup>

The topics in the poems they exchanged included art, the creation of little works of art, her erudition, the books they sent each other, music, but also her study of Ethiopian. Her reaction dated 18 February 1649 on his poem praising her Ethiopian grammar reads as follows:

**‘Ad nobilissimum virum Sulechemii Dominum pro Musis aethiopici responsio’**

In answer to the most noble Lord of Zuilichem on his (poem on the) Ethiopian Muses

You have insulted Apollo’s Muses, Huygens, and severely so, when you named them black goddesses in your poem.

Surely nobody would believe that Apollo would have a choir consisting of the ugly brood of darkness and sisters of the night?

But wait, now I understand: of course the companions who are burned by Apollo’s proximity, cannot be white goddesses!

**‘In Obitum Summi Viri D. Andreae Riveti’** | Andreas Rivet was one of the most important male figures in Van Schurman’s life. Up to his death in 1652 she corresponded with him. A glimpse of their relationship becomes visible in the book that Marie du Moulin wrote on the occasion of Andreas Rivet’s deathbed. He still would have liked to write personally about the high regard he held Van Schurman in, but had become too weak to do so:

In the evening around dinner time, he remembered Miss Schurman; she is, he said, a person for whom I have always felt love and true affection, and she has honoured me with her sacred friendship and with the name of father, and as a small token of my fatherly affection I am giving her a small unvocalised Bible, printed by Plantijn, that you will find in a specific place in my study. If I had any strength left, I would write to her with my dying hand some testimony of the respect and high regard which I have for the miraculous gift of God present in her. But, he added, my son, you will accomplish the task which I now have to neglect, and you will make her understand my eternal salvation, and that I have beseeched God to strengthen her in her calling, which comes from above, to lengthen her days in his blessing and to grant her the grace to end her days in peace.<sup>297</sup>

He left her a beautiful Hebrew Bible in unvocalised script as keepsake. It is a poor representation of the many gifts, letters, works of art, books and ideas that were exchanged between her and Rivet. In the Latin memorial poem she wrote for him in 1652, she praised him as the person who took over her father’s role:

Say, Muses, why are you pummelling your chest for sorrow and why are sad melodies flowing from your mouth?

She went on and wrote that the church, the university and the court were in mourning because such a great man had passed away. After all, Rivet had been professor of theology in Leiden, church minister and educator of the Prince of Orange. He defended Calvinism

against Rome, because he was not a 'wandering planet, but an upright person who walked the path of righteousness'. And he had been a helper and protector, not only to her:<sup>298</sup>

This was how Rivet was, whom we mourn in a lamenting voice; Rivet whose light is extinguished in death's waters. No, he has not drowned in the black waters, he has been resurrected and his light shines clearly in the world. The footsteps of his sacred life light up and everywhere the author shines through his works.

Yet she ends the poem on a sad note: '[...] she fell silent at the mournful cypresses, the blessings bestowed by heaven were taken away by death's darkness [...]. Joy ends in sorrow and nothing is continuously beautiful.' She had been lucky to have had two fathers (Fredrik van Schurman and Andreas Rivet), but it was her destiny to lose the second father also before her own final hour had dawned, causing her to languish:

As a girl I have been happy twice, but the Fates decided that I must suffer twice, before my own last hour is born.<sup>299</sup>

### *Elogia*

'*Virgo Batava*' | It was in the year 1637 when professor Voetius received a strange letter:

Highly learned Voetius. Heartfelt greetings to you from your Crucius. I am writing to you because I have some letters for Anna Maria van Schurman. Forgive me my boldness – if not recklessness – which flows from friendship, to send these letters directly to you. Via you they will reach her hands all the more certainly and safely. [...]

You, very learned man, grant me my request; I who highly appreciate whatever you do, let me win the favour of the Utrecht maiden. She is now considered to be the favourite of the female sex. I send greetings to you once again and ask you to please give a kiss from me to that very dear maiden; but a kiss such as the Vestal Virgins would have wanted or such as men like Cato would have given. [...]<sup>300</sup>

Voetius granted the request of his colleague church minister from Delft, Jacobus van der Cruysse (Crucius) and handed the Latin letters to Van Schurman (with or without a chaste kiss, history does not tell us). Crucius wrote as follows:

Do not be surprised, excellent maiden, that letters are going from me to you. Your erudition which has been known for such a long time, even to foreigners, has led to my love and respect. That is also why I hope that you will permit me to correspond with you. Because then the great talents of your intellect will not stay hidden, will not be locked up behind the lock and key of the heart, but will be shown off in the theatre of fame.

Even though I do not know you face to face, I do know your virtue and erudition. You have combined learning with piety; you are no less brilliant than you are pious. These two belong together, and that is why the Muses do not mean anything to us; nor the antique Sibyls, nor Pythia, nor the Greek Diotima, Aspasia, the Roman girls Hortensia and Laelia, nor Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi. [...] The fact is, all of them were without the virtue of the true knowledge of God.<sup>301</sup>



Anna Maria van Schurman, Rembrandt and De Backer; three seventeenth century artists. The symbol of wisdom, the owl, is added to her picture.

In a return letter written in intricate Latin – after all, she was writing to the principal of the Latin school in Delft – Van Schurman remarked that Voetius had painted Crucius with such words of praise that she did not have the courage to refuse to write back. However, she objected vehemently to his gushing letters. She did not want to accept the ‘palm leaf of victory’ that he offered her in comparison with so many other famous people. Could he please stop this exaggerated praise? But Crucius could not stop. He wrote to her in Latin, French and Hebrew, or he wrote about her to other scholars such as Schrevelius in Haarlem or to Van Beverwijck in connection with her contribution *De Vitae Termino*:

I have seen and read the recently published opinions of scholars on the topic of the end of human life, among others the contribution of the noble virgin Van Schurman. He who cannot appreciate such a learned and elevated piece of writing coming from her, closes his eyes to the afternoon light or his ears to the voice of truth. I cannot admire more fully the charm, the elegant style, the persuasive arguments.<sup>302</sup>

Moreover, he wrote a long and pompous praise poem in Latin, entitled *Virgo Batava*, and dedicated this to Jacob Cats:

Dear Cats

I recently read your book *Trou-Ringh* [literally: wedding ring] with interest. In this work I have seen a picture of the Utrecht virgin, beautifully decorated by your praise. I have written a poem about her and dedicate it to you. You, great man, if only you could find some time in between your many activities, please read it. If the verses please you, I will be delighted; but if you think they are rubbish, please give them to Vulcanus or Thetis (= burn them or throw them into the sea). In the poem you can read my warm feelings towards the virgin, but especially towards you as well.

However, it was not really his love for Jacob Cats that drove him, but rather his love for the *Virgo Batava*, the Batavian Virgin. He published the praise poem separately and later included it in his collected works.<sup>303</sup> Even Anna Maria included a part of the *Virgo Batava* in her *Opuscula*. Why would she include such an exaggerated piece?

**Praise writings** | It was customary in the *Republic of Letters* to write forms of praise for each other, especially in Latin. Van Schurman participated in this custom, albeit with some hesitation. She wrote to Meletios Pantogalus that praise was welcome if it coincided with the truth, but that he could keep his overblown praise. She had enough self-assurance to realise that she merited praise for the work she did and was able to do. Thus she included the exaggerated praise, all the while making her protest known, because just like Voetius and others, she believed that it was necessary in order to be able to defend and to make known one’s own points of view, one’s own truth.

Furthermore, praise poems written in Neo-Latin were held in high esteem. The forms used varied from hymns and *encomia* to occasional verses in the form of epigrams, wedding poems, captions and elegies. But praise letters were also very popular and, just like the poems, were written according to the rules of rhetoric. Celebratory addresses or praise po-

ems on emperors, kings and other persons were known as *panegyrica* and were recited in public. For instance, nearly a hundred *panegyrica* were written on Queen Christina of Sweden, many of them recited and published. A number of *panegyrica* were also written and published on Van Schurman, such as *La Fama Trionfante* in Rome (1643), *Virgo Batava* in Amsterdam (1642), the *Epigrammes Consacrez à la vertu de Mademoiselle Anne Marie de Schurman* in Utrecht (1649), and in 1643 in Breslau (present-day Wrocław), Augustinus Wisaeus published *De literaris virginibus tribus nostri saeculi* [On the three learned virgins of our age], now lost. But these were never publicly recited, as far as I know.<sup>304</sup>

Crucius was not the only one heaping praise on Van Schurman. From an early age she had been used to glowing praise. According to Schotel, a huge book could be filled with all the writings of praise on Van Schurman. From the most remote corners of Europe writings of praise were pouring in: from Spain, England, France, Germany, Italy, Denmark and present-day Poland. In comparison with other learned women in Europe the amount of praise she received was conspicuously high. In this chapter we will limit our attention to the last section of the *Opuscula*, more specifically to the Dutch praise writings. The *Elogia* were written by a number of high-ranking scholars from the *Republic of Letters*, including Barlaeus, Salmasius, Huygens, Heinsius, Staackmans, Cats, Van Beverwijck, Jean de Laboureur, De Laet, Smetius, Gruterus, Balzac and Jacob. As is evident from the emphatic note from the printer to the reader, contributions were placed in alphabetical order according to the Christian names of the authors, presumably to prevent someone being offended. By way of exception the work in this section contains two poems from the hand of Jacob Cats written in Dutch – the only Dutch to be found in the *Opuscula*. She cleverly concluded the book with a eulogy by Louis Jacob, which is in itself a catalogue of other *Elogia* on her (it mentions among others those by Colletet, Naudé, Crucius and Martin.)<sup>305</sup>

*Elogia* on learned women can be found in manuscript form, in their collected works, in the catalogues of learned women that were compiled by men such as Van Beverwijck and others, and sometimes as epitaphs. However, since knowledge of Latin was particularly part of the male domain, it is not to be expected to find Latin writings on Van Schurman written by other women, especially not in the Netherlands, where very few women knew Latin. However, some *elogia* on Van Schurman were written in Dutch by Anna Roemer Visscher, Charlotte de Huybert and Johanna Hoobius.<sup>306</sup>

The central position in the *elogia* is taken by the *exemplificatio*, a form of rhetorical adornment where a person is praised and compared to famous mythological or historical figures. According to Quintillianus, these exemplifications are divided into two types of comparison: they are either based on resemblance or on contrast. In most of the comparisons Van Schurman was likened to similar figures from antiquity (for example, as a poet she is compared to Sappho), but often the comparison ends by highlighting a contrast: Van Schurman was not only blessed with the light of nature, like Sappho, but also with the light of truth shining from within her. *Topoi* in the *elogia* for learned women are chastity, piousness and erudition. Learned women had to meet these three requirements, and their chastity and piousness should preferably outshine their learning. This requirement did not apply to learned men. Learned women were nearly always compared to fa-

mous women from mythology and history, not to men. An exception is Queen Christina of Sweden, who was compared to Alexander the Great. Van Schurman was always compared to women; only in one instance to classical male artists such as Lysippos, Apelles and Parrhasius.<sup>307</sup>

Although she was compared to antique gods and goddesses such as Apollo or Pallas Athena, such comparisons were purely allegorical; they represented or were symbols of (natural) forces, virtues and moral decisions. Even though Calvinistic circles were opposed to the indiscriminate use of pagan gods, Van Schurman was not as strict. In her non-Dutch works she followed the international trend and accepted the comparisons to mythological figures others made in these *elogia* written for her. She herself used them in her work. In her Dutch poems she did take her pious readers into account and avoided this contentious issue as far as possible.<sup>308</sup>

The *elogia* on learned women show striking similarities. In the *elogia* on Van Schurman, on the Seymour sisters in England, the Morel daughters in France, Queen Christina of Sweden and Elizabeth Weston from Prague, they are all called the tenth Muse, the fourth Grace, the new Sappho. However, in *elogia* on learned men, not much variety exists either, although the comparisons are to different figures as those used for learned women. During the Renaissance the focus was not on originality; it was about variations on a well-known theme; about writing poetry that was just slightly different in word order, metre or vocabulary, even though in Latin that often meant a difference of only a few letters. A good example of this is the praise poem that Smetius wrote on Van Schurman. He took her own distich and changed it as follows:

You see my face here in a painted image  
when art denies beauty, your benevolence will add it.

We see Van Schurman's face in a painted image  
art has contributed to beauty, the benevolence will touch hearts.

[Cernitis hic picta nostros in imagin vultus:  
Si negat ars formam, gratia vestra dabit.

Cernimus picta Schurmannae in imagine vultus:  
Contulit ars formam, gratia corda rapit.]<sup>309</sup>

What aspects of Anna Maria van Schurman's person received praise? In short, her aristocratic descent, her learning, modesty, virginity and/or celibacy and her country. Praise for her noble birth is scant in comparison with the learned Elizabeth Weston. The reason for this is probably the fact that Weston wanted to emphasise her descent in order to find a sponsor. Van Schurman did not need this. It is only in the headings of poems and letters that Van Schurman is indicated as *Nobilissima Domina* (most noble lady), or in Dutch as 'Jonckvrouwe'. In addition to the meaning 'of aristocratic birth', the word 'nobilis' can also mean 'famous' or 'excellent'. In her case, her aristocratic descent as well as her fame and excellence were praised. Huygens referred to her as Phoenix, the mythical firebird that arises from the ashes every five hundred years. This bird served as symbol for the divine

right of kings and aristocracy. But in this case the use of the symbol can be read as praise on the rarity of such a learned woman, only appearing once in five hundred years.<sup>310</sup>

Because of her learning, Van Schurman was often referred to as the ‘glory of her sex’, or, as Jacob described her, ‘the miracle of the female sex, a monster of nature’ [‘het wonder van het vrouwelijk geslacht, een monster der natuur’]. She was superior as far as her learning was concerned. In his *Virgo Batava*, Crucius praised her knowledge of languages, of philosophy, astronomy, and of ‘the researching of the bowels of the earth and of the tame and wild animals, of the plants, birds, the inhabitants of the sea and the monsters swimming in it’. He exclaimed at last:

What better and more valuable things can be flowing from a female bosom?<sup>311</sup>

The most important wise woman to whom she was continually compared, was the goddess Pallas Athena or Minerva, the goddess of wisdom and arts. Crucius specifically mentioned the divine Muses dealing with music, such as Urania and Polyhymnia, who taught her to sing as well as to play the lyre and cither. In the line-up of wise women we also find Aspasia, Cleopatra and the Queen of Sheba. But not only did Van Schurman surpass these women, she even united the wise Sibyls within herself. Cats took this to a further level of exaggeration when he stated that no woman was or would be equal to her, not in the past, present or future.<sup>312</sup>

As a poet she was highly acclaimed. There was an abundance of comparisons to the Muses: she was the Muses’ favourite; the tenth Muse who had united the other nine Muses in her, et cetera. She was also compared to Phoebus Apollo, the poetic sun god, but as far as I could ascertain, never to male poets from antiquity such as Homer or Virgil, but often to the classical female poets Sappho, Praxilla, Telesilla, Cornelia and Sulpitia.<sup>313</sup>

In his foreword to the *Opuscula*, the editor Spanheim praised her modesty:

However praiseworthy she might be, she prefers everything else above being praised. And also in this she excels all praise. But reader, do not think that this very noble maiden has come forward of her own accord. She does not do so spontaneously, but has been compelled to go public by people who were of the opinion that it would be in the public interest that such virtue should not go totally unnoticed. Take note: what is in front of your eyes now, has rather been drawn from her than forced upon us on her part.<sup>314</sup>

He was not the only one praising her modesty. Although one must keep in mind that praising modesty was a *topos* in seventeenth century writing, it is remarkable that modesty was praised especially in women. Van Schurman lived the cliché by always presenting herself as less important than she really was. But sometimes we can see through this assumed position when we look at how liberally she distributed her self-portraits, pictured herself with a laurel wreath and initiated contact with important scholars such as Rivet.

We already discussed praise for her virginity when dealing with the lyrical letter of Meletios Pantogalus. His position can be understood because he was a monk himself. But a multitude of men who could not be described as chaste or celibate themselves, regarded virginity as a praiseworthy virtue in a woman, especially in a learned woman. It already started with women’s education, where those classical writers who threatened chastity were omitted. Father Van Schurman certainly did so. In his dissertation on women,



Anna Maria van Schurman as portrayed in the fourth edition of her 'Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica', 1749.

Voetius also stated that only celibate women could aspire to learning. Van Schurman was often compared to chaste women from classical antiquity, such as Penelope and Lucretia, although these women were married. Crucius wrote her another separate letter in Greek:

You do not indulge in licentiousness, you are living a virginal life and feed your soul by God's word. Fare thee well, and I hope that your goddess' head will always love me.<sup>315</sup>

Thus he combines his praise for her virginity with praise for her pioussness.

The praise for the virgin Anna Maria van Schurman was gender-specific, as is evident from the fact that Crucius or other scholars in the Netherlands would never have dreamt of delivering a letter or poem to a promising young man emphasising his chastity or unmarried status. Or sending him kisses, Vestal or otherwise. His learning and pioussness would have been praised, but never his unmarried and chaste status.

Her pioussness was often praised in comparison with the judge and poet Deborah of Old Testament fame and with the wise Queen of Sheba. Crucius furthermore admires her study of devotion:

What love for religion is innate in her, how she worships the Supreme Being, how piouss is her virginal mouth. What knowledge she has about the difficult oracles of God's word and how she searches the heavenly ways. How she reads the respectable books of the church fathers, the learned writings of the rabbis, the subtle books on Church doctrine by the shrewd Thomas Aquinas!

But the emphasis is on the combination of learning and pioussness. According to Crucius, women from classical antiquity only honoured their native language; Van Schurman on the other hand admired exotic languages as well. They honoured their native country; Van Schurman the whole world; they were wise, but were led only by the light of human nature; Anna, however, was guided by divine light.<sup>316</sup>

Praise for her native country was emphasised by Smetius ('Belgica Batava') and Crucius ('Virgo Batava'). Such patriotic praise was also accorded to Anna Memorata ('Virgo Polona') and Elizabeth Weston ('Virgo Angla'). Van Schurman is the jewel of the homeland ('decus patriae'). Utrecht, as place of residence of this learned woman, received praise as well; she was the 'shining crown jewel of the city and the University of Utrecht'.

Sometimes Van Schurman was called a male heroine (heroína) or virago (warrior-like young woman). Only once she was compared to the independent, war-like Amazons, more often to her contemporary Queen Christina of Sweden. Both women were indeed learned, unmarried and would later in life drastically change course by making a radical religious choice. Van Schurman wrote a praise poem on Queen Christina, but on the part of Christina we know of no poem that she wrote for Van Schurman. Differences in social status had to be adhered to. But Queen Christina made the effort to pay Van Schurman a visit.<sup>317</sup>

Of the many *elogia* on Van Schurman I will only discuss those by Cats, Smetius and Van Beverwijck as examples. Jacob Cats, whom she had already befriended in her youth, kept on writing to her and sent her poems and books until his death in 1660. He presented his monumental collected works, *Alle de wercken*, published in 1655, to her as a gift, including not only all the previous praise poems, but also a beautiful new poem by himself titled



Album page for J. Alting, with the Arabian proverb often cited by Van Schurman: 'One day in the life of a wise person is worth more than a whole life to a fool.'

'Noble lady, I am nowadays living the life of a hermit' ['Jonckvrouw ik leef op desen tijt / een leven als een heremiet']. She responded with a laudatory Latin poem. In the subsequent editions these poems were again included and distributed. Thus Van Schurman shared in the enormous success of *Cats*, who stayed popular for a very long time. Of his works *Houwelijck* and *Trouwingh* at least 50 000 copies were sold in a few decades. In both works Van Schurman is mentioned, but especially in the *Trouwingh*, where two pages were devoted to her. It constituted a catalogue of her learning and artistic talents; to *Cats* she is the 'glory of all women'. It is remarkable that *Cats* dedicates his *Trouwingh* to her, since she was unmarried. But as a widower he saw himself as related to her ('You are of the same nature as I, since through art you keep your bed single, [...] since you bear paper children alongside me') ['ghy zijt van mijner aert, vermids ghy door de kunst uw bed alleen bewaert, [...] Vermitsje nevens my papiere-kindere baert']:

This a spinster is allowed to do; this a virgin can accomplish  
and nevertheless stay a virgin and spinster.  
Therefore you can rest assured, even if this happens to you:  
a child conceived in this way does not harm virginity.

[Dit mach een Vryster doen, dit kan een Maagd bedryven,  
En des al niet te min een Maagd en Vryster blyven.  
Ghy daarom wees gerust; ook als u dit geschiet,  
Een Kind aldus geteeld en kwetst den maagdom niet.]<sup>318</sup>

The church minister and archaeologist Smetius from Nijmegen sent Van Schurman a letter as well as a beautiful praise poem in 1637, in which he compared her to three other illustrious Dutch predecessors, all learned women who also went by the name Anna: Anna van Pallandt, Anna van Utenhove and Anna Suys. These sixteenth century women wrote a few Latin epigrams that are available to us, published in the works of others. Furthermore Smetius compared her to a variety of Annas from antiquity. But Anna Maria van Schurman was the equivalent of all the Annas past and present, because she carried the name Anna twice in her name: Anna Schurmannna. She was the eternal jewel of all Annas and of her sex. 'There is no one equal to your tongue, your hand and your intellect.' She was the 'Anna Perenna', the eternal Anna. In his last praise poem he glorified her learning and artistic talents; she could 'not be painted enough, nor praised sufficiently'.<sup>319</sup>

*Elogia* on learned women can also be found in the catalogues of learned and famous women that were published since the times of Boccaccio and Christine de Pisan. Van Beverwijck followed this tradition with his famous book *On the excellence of the female sex* [*Van de Wtnementheyt des vrouwelicken geslachts*]. In this book the physician Van Beverwijck opposed the current notion that women were not to be regarded as human beings, and indicated that learning and virtue were valuable for all people, also for women. Van Schurman was the main inspiration for Van Beverwijck; he continually used her learning, her celibate lifestyle and her virtue as example. He wanted to dedicate the work to Van Schurman, but she did not assent to this and suggested another woman, Augusta Maria van Nassau. However, she could not prevent him from dedicating the second (largest) section of the book, 'On the erudition and wisdom of women' ['Van de Geleertheyt, en Vvijsheyt der Vrouvven'] to her. Throughout the book she was portrayed as the ultimate example of learning. He cited from the 'poetry of Anna Maria van Schurman who excels in everything' ['poësy van de in alles uytmytende Anna Maria van Schurman'] the praise poem in Latin and French on the establishment of the Utrecht University. With every reprint of Van Beverwijck's book, these were brought to the attention once again.<sup>320</sup> Finally: virtually no epitaphs on Van Schurman are available to us, but seen in the light of her radical departure from the world of learning, this is not surprising.

### *Peregrinatio academica*

Van Schurman did not occupy herself exclusively with her study books or with writing with a quill. She also attended classes and managed the household. In her limited free time (her breathing spaces) she made little art works. She often spoke about her work that was done by candle light and stated that no part of the day was going by unused, while the night was not idle either ['geen deel van de dag ongebruikt is en de nacht niet ledig']. She received many visitors and she herself visited people. Her own *album amicorum* dating from 1638 would give us a perfect picture of these scholarly visits and counter visits; however, it was unfortunately lost and is not available to us today. We have to be satisfied with the *alba amicorum*, travel journals or diary entries of others who visited her, or with her own texts. For instance, one of many students visiting her was Johannes Smetius jr from

Nijmegen who studied theology in Utrecht. At that time, in addition to her Greek personal motto, she also wrote down her favourite Arabic proverb: 'One day in the life of a wise person is worth more than a thousand days in the life of a fool.'<sup>321</sup>

In her autobiography *Eukleria* she mentioned an important visitor in the person of 'a very sensible Duchess of Nassau' ['een zeer verstandig gravinne van Nassouw'] who came to see her most recent work of art. Van Schurman had made a self-portrait in front of the mirror which had taken her more than thirty days to complete: she had modelled herself in wax. The eyes were true to life, even the eyelashes had come out beautifully. She had even made a necklace with little diamonds which looked so real that one had to prick a pin in the art work to distinguish art from nature:

[...] a wax bust of myself, which I had modelled in front of a mirror, on which [...] I had spent at least thirty days, since I had to find out lots of things about this art that I could not learn from anybody. The eyes not only looked like mine in miniature, but because of the lively sparkle of the iris and the roundness thereof, it seemed as if they turned around by themselves when one turned around the box in which it was kept. The hairs were attached with very fine ends to the head, so that they adorned it, as it were, in loose-flying wisps. And, what was the most difficult part, I had lined the eyelids with very fine little lashes like a little ridge and [...] the little diamonds around the neck imitated nature so well (because of my new invention) that people scarcely believed me when I told them they were fake; and I made them see that art could not be distinguished from nature in any other way but by pricking it with a pin (as a very sensible Duchess of Nassau had suggested).

[[...] een wassen beelt van my zelfs, 't geen ik voor een spiegel had gebootseert, aan welke [...] ik ten minste dertig dagen had toegebracht, nadien ik in die konst veel dingen moest uitvinden die ik van niemant kon leeren. De ooggen vertoonden niet alleen in 't klein de mijne, maar om den levendigen glans van den oogappel, en om de rondigheid der zelve, zo scheen 't of ze zig alleen omdraiden, wanneer men de doos daar het in was quam om te drajen. De hayren hingen alleen met haar zeer dunne uiteintjes aan 't hooft, zo datse 't zelve als met losvliegende kransjes zo het scheen opcierden. En 't geen allerzwaarst om doen was, ik had de oogleden meet zeer tedere hayrkens als met een opgeworpen wal, door omvermoeide arbeit omgeven en [...] de diamantjes die om den hals waren, aapten (door mijn nieuwe uitvinding) de natuur zodanig na, datmen my naulijks geloofde wanneer ik het tegendeel zeide: en ik deed haar zien dat men de konst van de natuur niet anders kon onderscheiden (doen my dit een zeer verstandige Gravinne van Nassouw aangerde) als dat men een derzelve met een speld doorstak.]<sup>322</sup>

Unfortunately, shortly afterwards one of the aunts living with Anna Maria dropped the art work from her hands; it shattered to pieces. Even in her autobiography, which she wrote at the end of her life, one can still sense the dismay between the lines, although she pretended to have found solace in the small Latin poem that she had applied beforehand to the side of the art work:

It is not my intention to mock human fate  
or to engrave my face in eternal copper.  
See here my face modelled in wax!  
In this way I, who have to perish shortly  
hand myself over to fragile material.<sup>323</sup>

In Leiden, Van Schurman not only visited the Salmasius and Heinsius families, but she also strolled through the *hortus botanicus* and spoke with its curator, Adolf Vorstius, who was professor of medicine and botany. He had been rector of Leiden University several times. They also wrote to each other on women's learning, of which Vorstius was a strong proponent, but he warned her to take care that her health did not suffer from all the studying she did. He lectured the not unsuccessful poet ('poetria non infelix') with strong comments. 'Good God,' Vorstius exclaimed, 'that unblemished virgin leaves no subject untouched and wants to enter the world of science. Lady, please leave something for us men as well. In everything, moderation is best. You, Anna, should be held back, not spurred on.' He then went on ecstatically about Jacob Cats' book which contained a long praise section on her as well as her portrait (the work *Trou-ringh*). Unfortunately no trace has remained of their discussions on botany or medicine.<sup>324</sup>

When Prince William II died on 6 November 1650 and was to be interred in the Nieuwe Kerk [New Church], Van Schurman travelled to Delft. She had met the Prince several times via her 'father' Andreas Rivet, since he had been the educator of the Prince (the sun of our country) ['de zon van ons vaderland']. Through the influence of Constantijn Huygens she had been able to secure a seat in the Nieuwe Kerk in Delft. The funeral had already been postponed once because of a hurricane raging over the Netherlands, but when the funeral took place eventually the weather was not much better: storm, thunder and lightning. It became so dark that it seemed as if the sun was hiding for sorrow. The funeral procession looked like a procession of ghosts, so little was she able to see. At her request, Huygens described the proceedings to her. Then it appeared to her as if the sun began to shine and the ghosts became clear to the view, so she wrote to him in flattering Latin:

For the famous Constantijn Huygens

Duty brought us to Delft some time ago to see the public ceremonies with which it is usual to bring the required homage to our deceased sovereigns. But the sad mood of Apollo withdrew from us his glowing rays, so as not to see the funeral of him who was the sun of our country. In this way the magnificent procession was veiled as if by a mournful haze and shadow, seen by us, and the human shapes that we saw, looked like ghosts to us.

Now Huygens comes to my aid, and fulfils the glorious duty of Phoebus, so that such a remarkable occasion should not stay hidden from me as if buried at night. He has made me relive the lying in state and shown me the funeral procession and thus makes the ghosts reappear to me, illuminated by a clear light. And it is no wonder that the ghosts outlive the bodies, since when physical life has been extinguished and the body buried, the spirit continues to exist. It is thus sufficient for me to accept the ghost of such an important person (or rather the picture of it that you painted for me), and such a ghost, illuminated by your light, will appear like sunshine to me.<sup>325</sup>

As a last example I mention her visit to the town of Dreischor, near Zierikzee in Zeeland, where her friends, the church minister and former Utrecht student Daniel Meyer and his wife Cornelia d' Herde, lived. On the occasion of the christening of their son Daniel on 17 October 1660, she travelled to Zeeland to be a witness at the christening. Two years earlier she had accompanied her brother Johan Godschalk because he was a witness at the chris-

tening of their daughter Maria Meyer. While near Zierikzee, she would then also use the opportunity to visit her aristocratic friend Mrs Van Soulekercken at her house [the 'hooghedele gebooren Vrouwe Mevrouw van Soulekercken op haar Edele's huys'].<sup>326</sup>

### The Women's Republic of Letters in the Netherlands

Every day Van Schurman received mail. However, a letter written in Hebrew was exceptional, especially a letter starting as follows:

I think of earlier days, when I was in your house and laid against your bosom and you instructed me and said: 'Acquire wisdom, acquire understanding, for this will be a lifelong joy to you.' But I said: 'That is not possible for me, because, like all young girls in the country of my birth, I have been trained from an early age to prepare tasty food, to do needlework with linen, wool and purple cloth, and to embroider all kinds of throws.'<sup>327</sup>

The letter described how the young woman did not heed Van Schurman's advice until she came to her senses in her home country at the sickbed of her father. At that stage she finally started to study Hebrew, and this letter was the first she sent to Van Schurman from Breda, having returned to the Netherlands. She signed the Hebrew letter as 'your humble sister and servant' ['uw nederige zuster en dienares'].<sup>328</sup>

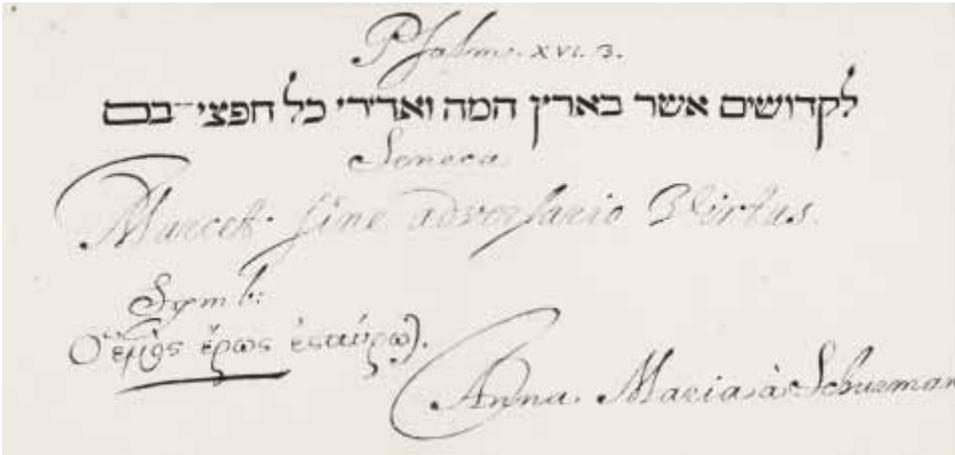
The writer was Marie du Moulin, born in Sedan, France, a niece of Rivet, since his second wife was her aunt and namesake Marie du Moulin. The younger Marie was the daughter of the prominent Huguenot leader Pierre du Moulin and his second wife Sara de Geltray, but since 1633 she had lived in the Netherlands as part of the family of Andreas Rivet. After the death of three adult sons from previous marriages, Rivet and his wife asked Marie to come and live with them as consolation and diversion. She could then also take care of one of the grandchildren. Some years later one of the surviving sons, Claude Rivet, wanted to marry her, but she refused. In late 1646 the family moved from The Hague to Breda and Marie went with them.<sup>329</sup>

She continued her study of Hebrew and Van Schurman often enquired after her in letters to Rivet or sent her regards: 'Greetings to your wife and your niece, from whom I am expecting a letter. But maybe the letter is delayed because of her study of the holy language. I hear that she has committed herself in full to studying Hebrew!' In a French letter to Marie:

I have been much gratified to hear of the continuation of your good health and of your happy progress toward a solid knowledge of the holy language.

[J'ay este fort rejouis d'entendre la continuation de vostre bonne santé et celle de vos heureux progresz dans une cognoissance solide de la langue saintte.]<sup>330</sup>

Marie du Moulin not only became well-versed in Hebrew (Greek and Latin she already knew), but also in logic, ethics and physics. Only a few letters from the correspondence between Van Schurman and Du Moulin remain, but from these we can deduce that they were very close friends indeed. They called each other 'my very dear sister' ['ma très chère soeur'], visited each other and exchanged presents.<sup>331</sup>



Album page for J. Honig, with, among others, a proverb from Seneca: 'virtue without adversity grows weak'.

Anna Maria van Schurman became acquainted with Marie du Moulin via the latter's uncle Andreas Rivet and father Pierre du Moulin. A mutual friend was Utricia Swann-Ogle, who later also lived in Breda and who delivered the letters from both sides. Marie du Moulin went to France for a short time to look after her father, who was ill, but the correspondence with Van Schurman continued as usual. In a letter written by Van Schurman to Marie in France, and which has been included in the *Opuscula*, Anna Maria van Schurman showed an unprecedented tender disposition towards Marie du Moulin, who was nearly twenty years her junior:<sup>332</sup>

To Marie du Moulin, my very dear sister

Since we share the same interest in joy and sorrow, I was very happy to see in your letter the real features of a serene face, not only a smiling face, but one smiling in such a way that she would make sorrow herself laugh. And indeed, the cheerfulness that awakens in your heart and makes you laugh after great sorrow, can only invite pleasant and relaxing thoughts in us. Putting it even more strongly: if you find me in a more cheerful and exuberant mood than is normally the case, know that it is you who have accomplished such a change. Thus you will forgive me that I am going to distract you a little from the serious education of your esteemed father and from the company of philosophy in which you have granted me a position as I understand it. And however much you try to prevent me from becoming jealous of this rival by persuading me that you only receive the outer appearance of her good favour, I cannot believe that she has not caressed you. Since you are determined not to reveal any of her secrets and mysteries to me, I am of the opinion that she only wanted to reveal herself to you under a vow of silence and a secret confession. I do not want to deny that, just like most wise persons, you knew how to mix in some silliness with wisdom, especially in misleading the world and showing yourself as less capable than you are.

When I look at your favourable description of me, I have yet more reason to believe that the picture I sent to you recently, flatters me too much and that the imprint of the origi-

### Hebrew letter of Marie du Moulin

To the young lady, exalted is her glory,  
a crown of wisdom, a crown of intellect,  
to my mistress, my friend Anna Maria van Schurman in Utrecht

My honoured sister,

I remember earlier days, when I was in your house and laid against you bosom and you instructed me and said: 'Acquire wisdom, acquire a sound mind, for this will be a lifelong joy to you'.<sup>I</sup> But I said: 'That is not possible for me, because, like all young girls in the country of my birth, I have been trained from an early age to prepare tasty food, to do needlework with linen, wool and purple cloth, and to embroider all kinds of throws.' I did not heed your words, until I was in my home country in my father's house, where he lay ill. And at that stage the hand of Jehovah, the Eternal one, was heavy upon him,<sup>II</sup> and he said to me: My daughter, take the Book and read words of comfort to me.' I answered: See, I do not understand the Book. I did not learn wisdom.<sup>III</sup> Then I was overwhelmed by grief and the sorrows of my heart were multiplied,<sup>IV</sup> for I said: How I departed from sound advice<sup>V</sup> and did not listen to the voice of my sister, because I could have been the joy of my father.'

My father replied: 'Do not be disconsolate, my daughter, I will teach you and be your tutor.'<sup>VI</sup> I laughed within myself, and thought: 'After I have become old shall I acquire knowledge?'<sup>VII</sup> But as I attended to my studies from time to time, my eyes were opened to see the beauty of the holy language as if in twilight, and now I have risked speaking to my sister, though she is an adornment of wisdom and I but an inexperienced person.<sup>VIII</sup> My mistakes will not stay hidden from you, but I pray and beseech you, do not turn me away, teach me and instruct me from your humble wisdom and my mouth shall sing your praises.<sup>IX</sup> I will pay my vows unto the Lord for you well-being and the well-being of your family.<sup>X</sup>

Your sister and humble servant, Marie du Moulin

Written at Breda, the fifth day of the month Sivan.<sup>XI</sup>

- I. Proverbs 4: 4, 5, 7: He taught me also, and said unto me, [...] get wisdom, get understanding [...].
- II. Psalm 32:4: For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me.
- III. Proverbs 30:3: I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy.
- IV. Genesis 3:16: [...] I will greatly multiply thy sorrow.
- V. Proverbs 1:25: But ye have set at nought all my counsel.
- VI. See Proverbs 4.
- VII. Genesis 18:12: Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure [...]?
- VIII. See Proverbs 7:4: Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister.
- IX. Psalm 51:15 [...] my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.
- X. Psalm 116:14: I will pay my vows unto the Lord.
- XI. Since Rivet moved to Breda in 1646 and Marie went with the family, the letter must date from 1646 or later. The letter, together with a nineteenth century translation, is kept in the library of the University of Amsterdam, Collection Diedericks.

nal has been almost wiped out by your spirit. Thus it is not surprising that your Dutch (as you say yourself) has nearly eluded you. Regarding myself: I realise full well that my French is nearly ready to embark, looking for a better reception than I can give her. And if you really want me to write long letters in Dutch to you and to do away with the need

for interpreters when we want to listen to each other, you have to start thinking about your return.

Well then, to end on a more serious note: I fervently wish to hear more good news from you, about the recuperation of your father and about the state of our faith in France at the moment, which is (as it is said) brought into turmoil by changes that can be very dangerous because of their consequences in a country where there are so many opponents. I am and will remain for all my life, my dear sister, your deeply loving sister and humble servant. A.M. van Schurman, 8 December 1646.<sup>333</sup>

It is Van Schurman's only letter in the complete *Opuscula*, even in her whole corpus of letters, that is so personal and cheerful. According to Ammerman, personal letters were not published, only those meant for a more general public. But here we see a delightful exception where Van Schurman is shown to be a light-hearted, sincere friend. Marie du Moulin also acted as an intermediary between French scholars, her uncle Andreas Rivet and Van Schurman. In the years 1646-1647 the correspondence between Rivet and Van Schurman became well-known in France as a result of the publication of the *Question Célèbre*. In this work the French heroine Joan of Arc had been mentioned. Mademoiselle de Scudery, who had received a portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman via Marie du Moulin, wanted to know more about their possibly negative interpretation of the virginal Joan of Arc.<sup>334</sup>

After her father's recovery Marie du Moulin returned to the Netherlands and stayed on until after Rivet's death in 1651. While on his deathbed, he asked her to write down everything that happened. She wrote *The last hours of Mr Rivet* [*Les dernières heures de M. Rivet*], a booklet that was translated into Dutch and Latin, was reprinted several times and on which Constantijn Huygens wrote a poem. Van Schurman also praised her in a letter written in French for 'that most excellent piece [...] a gift for which the whole of Christianity is in your debt' [ceste tres-excellente piece [...] un present dont toute la Chrestienté vous est redevable']. In the same letter Van Schurman mentioned the Hebrew Bible that Rivet left her. When Van Schurman passed away years later, Marie inherited this Bible. After Rivet's death Marie returned to France. Her father passed away in Sedan at an advanced age in 1658. It was in Sedan, several years later, that she started a discussion on a controversial issue with a famous Catholic priest called Adam. Unexpectedly she took out her Hebrew psalm book and quoted relevant verses in such a way that her opponent gave up the dispute and retired in dismay.<sup>335</sup>

We do not know how the friendship between Marie du Moulin and Anna Maria van Schurman evolved further, for after Rivet's death we hear only about Marie du Moulin in an indirect and sporadic way. In a review of French scholars who occupied themselves with Hebrew and Semitic languages, Marie du Moulin from Sedan is acclaimed especially for her correspondence in Hebrew with Van Schurman (1665). Furthermore, a letter from Constantijn Huygens is available to us in which he tells Marie du Moulin about 'our illustrious friend' ['nostre illustre amie'] Van Schurman and about Jean de Labadie who had to appear before the synod (1669). Marie du Moulin was arrested in France in 1686 because she was a Protestant, was jailed in Coulommiers and taken to a convent for Catholics. But she managed to escape and fled to the Netherlands. In The Hague she was appointed as principal of a boarding school which was founded by the Princess of Orange for the benefit

of French Protestant women refugees ['gerefugeerde Franse juffers']. Because of her earlier contacts with the Dutch court via her father and Andreas Rivet, she felt comfortable in asking Princess Sophie von der Pfalz, a sister of Princess Elisabeth, for financial support for her society. Marie du Moulin passed away in February 1699.<sup>336</sup>

The letters exchanged between Van Schurman and Du Moulin are a fitting example of what the women's variant of the *Republic of Letters* entailed. Van Schurman corresponded with a handful of learned women in the Netherlands; as far as we know not in Latin, but in Hebrew or French, even though Marie du Moulin, Margaretha Godewijck and Elisabeth von der Pfalz were proficient in Latin. To educated women such as Anne de Merveil she wrote mainly in French.

Although Van Schurman herself adhered to the Calvinist faith, she corresponded in the Netherlands beyond boundaries of faith with the Lutheran Elisabeth von der Pfalz and the Huguenot Marie du Moulin. Margaretha Godewijck probably belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, just like Van Schurman. The letters and poems were sent in the usual way: by postal service or handed over to her friend Utricia Ogle or her brother Johan Godschalk. The topics that were discussed were wide-ranging: political news, religion, philosophy, the study of the Classics and of Hebrew. In a similar fashion as with her male colleagues, Van Schurman exchanged gifts: self-portraits, books and little works of art such as papercuttings [Scherenschnitte].

However, there are significant differences which become all the more clear when we consider the international *Republic of Letters*. Van Schurman served as *patrona* of other women; the great paragon. She encouraged women to study, whether it be Hebrew or the Classics. It is as if we hear Anna Maria's voice in the quotation from the Hebrew letter of Marie du Moulin, telling her and all women: 'Acquire wisdom, acquire understanding, for this will be a lifelong joy to you.' Studying in itself was sufficient, even though women could not find appropriate employment and could not make an academic journey. Marie du Moulin, Elisabeth von der Pfalz and Margaretha Godewijck all visited Van Schurman, and she returned these visits. And apparently they were not the only ones. We hear of a young woman, indicated only by the letters N.N., who was the daughter of Anne de Merveil and who had engaging conversations with Van Schurman for hours on end. In the Dutch *Women's Republic* we do not find any scholarly letters in the sense that they contain complete expositions on a specific issue. There is no evidence of Latin *elogia* by Dutch women or Latin poems written by Van Schurman for other women in the Netherlands. Van Schurman had no equal or discussion partner in Utrecht, neither did she have one in the whole of the Netherlands. However, for years on end she acted as mentor, not only for Marie du Moulin, but also for Elisabeth von der Pfalz and Margaretha Godewijck.

Princess Elisabeth von der Pfalz [also known as Elisabeth of Bohemia (like her mother) or Elisabeth of the Palatine] was the eldest daughter of Frederick V, Elector Palatine, nicknamed the Winter King, and of Elizabeth Stuart, the sister of the English king Charles I. Unfortunately only two letters by Van Schurman to Elisabeth, written in French, are available to us and have been included in the *Opuscula*, but both women also knew German, Greek and Latin. The contact between these two women was also initiated by Rivet:

in a letter to Van Schurman he told her that he had given her French poems to Elisabeth and that she would respond to them herself. These poems and Elisabeth's reaction have been lost. Van Schurman and Elisabeth visited each other often, especially in Rhenen where the princely family had their summer residence on the Rhine River. Elisabeth took drawing and painting classes with Gerard van Honthorst. She took a keen interest in philosophy and became a friend and student of Descartes, who dedicated his *Principia Philosophiae* to her. Just like Van Schurman, Elisabeth never married, although she did receive a marriage proposal from the Polish king Wladislav. She refused his proposal because he was a Catholic. Van Schurman advised Elisabeth, among other things, on which classical historians she should study: Xenophon, Curtius, Plutarch, Suetonius and Tacitus. From their work one would be able to get to know the character of persons of royal blood and of course that would be useful for a princess. Elisabeth became abbess of a Lutheran abbey in Herford, Germany. Many years later Van Schurman would seek refuge there.<sup>337</sup>

In the Netherlands, recent publications such as *Met en zonder lauwerkrans* [With and without laurel wreath] and *'t Spoor der dichtersessen* [The trail of poetesses] have highlighted the existence of many fascinating literate women such as Anna and Tesselschade Roemer Visscher, Sybille van Griethuysen and Titia Brongersma; however, there is no indication whatsoever that these women knew Latin, even though Huygens and Hooft sometimes wrote a liminary poem in Latin for their publications. Very little research has been done on learned women, with the exception of Van Schurman. We have already discussed how Smetius in his praise poem on Anna Maria van Schurman also praised three other sixteenth century Annas and that Voetius knew a competent female poet, Maria Landsberg. But their work has been lost or has survived only sporadically, published as part of the works of others. An educated woman in the Netherlands other than Marie du Moulin and Elisabeth von der Pfalz whom Van Schurman knew was Margaretha Godewijck.<sup>338</sup>

It seems that Van Schurman visited Dordrecht often, where she spent her days 'under the enjoyment of the cream of all learning and arts, lovely discussions and sweet conversation'<sup>339</sup> ['onder het genot van den room van alle geleerdheid en konsten, lieffelycke samenspreekingh en soet verkeer']. Van Schurman had met Margaretha Godewijck via Van Beverwijck. She was the daughter of the vice-principal of the Latin School, who had given her a proper education. She knew Latin, Greek, Italian, French and English, she wrote poetry, could sing, embroider, paint and engrave. She was often compared to Van Schurman, but by her own admission she was like 'a sparrow compared



Postage stamp commemorating Anna Maria van Schurman, 1978.

to an eagle' ['een mus tegenover een adelaar']. Her knowledge of Hebrew was limited to the characters of Hebrew writing. Godewijck was in contact with the local intelligentsia, but hardly with national and not at all with international scholars. But it is a shame that her beautiful Latin poems and emblemata have never been published, not at the time and not today. Van Schurman visited her and also drew her portrait.<sup>340</sup>

### Educated women in the Netherlands

Strictly speaking these women do not form part of the *Women's Republic of Letters*, but to encourage further research, I will discuss some educated women who moved in Anna Maria van Schurman's orbit. The contact that must have existed between the fascinating Anna Roemer Visscher and Van Schurman has unfortunately been lost in the mists of time. After Anna Roemer's praise poem for the young Anna, only silence ensued. However, they probably did remain in contact with each other because they had so much in common: their interest in artistic work, their learning and acquaintances like Cats, Heinsius, Huygens and Barlaeus as well as the fencing master Gerard Thibaut, for whom Anna Roemer Visscher also wrote a poem. The same would apply to Anna Roemer Visscher's sister, the talented Tesselschade Roemer Visscher, with whom Van Schurman did not have any contact, to the best of my knowledge. But Van Schurman must have heard and read the denigrating remarks made by P.C. Hooft that he wrote on the authority of Barlaeus, who was infatuated with Tesselschade: Van Schurman's work was reeking of a schoolmistress's instruction ('schoolmeesterije'), but the work of Tesselschade showed 'an exalted intelligence, abounding in unusual ideas' ['een verheven vernuft, swanger met buytenwereldsche invallen']. It probably had to do with Van Schurman's extraordinary knowledge of languages in combination with her celibacy that scholarly men preferred the company of less erudite women.<sup>341</sup>

On Christmas day 1639, Anna Maria van Schurman sent a letter written in French to a Mrs Coutel, about whom we do not know much else. The letter was accompanied by a gift of a self-portrait of Anna Maria, as *antidoron* for a gift received from Mrs Coutel. However, Mrs Coutel had written such an ostentatious praise letter that Van Schurman felt she had to admonish her. The only further information on Mrs Coutel that we have, is that she was also a friend of Salmasius from Leiden and that he had even been asked once to act as a judge of art between Van Schurman and Coutel.<sup>342</sup>

Anne de Merveil, dowager lady Prosting, belonged to the highest circles, but was severely depressed because of numerous setbacks. At the time she wrote to Van Schurman to request a visit so that Van Schurman could commiserate with her on her deep-felt loss. Van Schurman could not attend, but comforted her with a lovely letter in which she encouraged her to come and live in Utrecht. But then she would have to curtail her huge and busy court, and Van Schurman would be able to comfort her to a greater degree by her presence. From the letter it becomes clear that Van Schurman had also befriended Anne de Merveil's daughter, indicated in the letter as Mrs N.N. In her sweet company Van Schurman and the latter could entertain each other for hours with agreeable conversations:

**Mrs Coutel**

From this miniature, which I send to you in recognition of your beautiful present, you can discern that you have wholly succeeded in winning my friendship (which you sought from pure and unselfish kindness). For I think I cannot find a better way to ensure you of this than by giving myself as a present to you. It is true that it is only in painted form, but I know full well that your spirit will engage not so much in looking at this portrait, but in thinking of the original who presented it to you. I must admit that nothing motivates me more to place myself once again into the favourable disposition of these art forms and this agreeable pastime than the wish to follow in your footsteps.

Far be it from me to accept without hesitation the exaggerated praises with which you endeavoured to honour me, showing me far too much courtesy. Even though you are misapprehended on this point, you will not be misapprehended with regard to the warm affection in which I hold you, bearing witness that I am,

my lady,  
 your very humble and very loyal servant  
 Anna Maria van Schurman  
 Utrecht, 25 December 1639

My Lady,

I do not know whether I should have more pity on your misfortune or more joy on your victory. For the letter you honoured me with, shows signs of both. It is true that you have endured exceptionally grave adversity and I would wish you a more pure and perfect happiness if it were the case that our condition in this world would be susceptible to it [...].<sup>343</sup>

Another educated woman with whom Van Schurman exchanged some letters in French and whom she presented with little works of art was Anne de Mercier, wife of the scholar Salmasius, mother of numerous children. After Van Schurman and her brother had visited them again in Leiden in 1648, she sent Anne de Mercier a self-portrait as well as a paper-cutting for the hospitality enjoyed.<sup>344</sup>

Even though there were quite a number of women who kept an *album amicorum* in the seventeenth century, there were virtually none that could pride themselves to be on an equal level with those of men, with their standard inscriptions in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, their illustrations and coats of arms. The *album amicorum* of Van Schurman herself, which was still in existence in 1853, has been lost. In her own hand she wrote many inscriptions in the male *alba* of learned friends and visitors, but the only female *album amicorum* to which she contributed was that of the papercutting artist Johanna Koerten-Blok. She painted a beautiful still life with fruit ['fruitagie'].<sup>345</sup>

When Van Schurman visited her learned male friends in the Netherlands, she always attempted to encourage the women and young girls she met there to study, for example Elisabeth Heinsius and Van Beverwijck's daughters. The latter knew classical languages, but even so Van Beverwijck instructed his own daughters that, however well they performed in languages, music and history, they should not forget their most important task: their household duties. Van Schurman often enquired after them, and was overjoyed when Van Beverwijck brought one of his young daughters along when visiting her.<sup>346</sup>

## A MADAME ANNE DE MERVEIL Douïairiere de Prosting

MADAME,

Je ne scay si je dois avoir plus de compassion de vostre adversité, ou plus de joye de vostre victoire. Car la lettre, qu' il vous a plû me faire l'honneur de m' escrire, m' assure aussi bien de l'une, que de l'autre. Il est vray que vous avez eu à surmonter des difficultez tres grandes et que je vous souhaiterois une felicité plus pure et plus parfaite, si nostre condition en pourroit estre susceptible dans ce monde: mais d' autant que les maux de ceste vie sont la matiere des triomphes, qui nous attendent dans le ciel; et que Dieu veut faire esclatter l'excellence des dons, qu' il a mis dans l'esprit des fideles, par des preuves et exercices proportionnez à leurs forces; ce seroit mal prendre ses mesures, que de mettre vostre combat Chrestien au rang des miseres, ou des infortunes. Or vous me direz que j' ay des pensées trop abstractes de vos sensibles ennuis, et que le plus sage des Roys en a mieux connu les efforts, quand il dit, comme par exclamation, en ses Proverbes: *L'esprit abbatu qui le relevera?*

Je vous concede, Madame, que je juge plus librement de vos afflictions, quand je les regarde comme des choses passées, qui ont bien esté contraires, mais point superieures à vos vertus; et qui les ont pû combattre, sans toutes-fois les pouvoir vaincre. Autrement je sçay fort bien que la contemplation, et la jouïssance des privileges celestes, que nous obtenons par la foy Chrestienne, ne sont pas tousjours si vives et si constantes, qu' elle puissent de tourner tous les coups de nos adversitez, ou en oster le sentiment. L' experience mesme nous apprend bien le contraire. Lors que l' Espoux de nos ames se tiens derriere la muraille et qu' il luy plaist de retenir pour quelque temps l' influence de ses graces et consolations divines. Car à la verité, comme dit le Psalmiste Royal, *sa gratuité est meilleure que la vie*. De la vient que la foy et la vertu des plus chers amis de Dieu, comme de David, Job, Jeremie et d' autres, ont eu quelque-fois des grandes eclipses; et que la violence de leurs tentations leur a fait jeter des plaintes approchantes de peu pres de celles des gens desespererez; lesquelles ont esté marquées par l' Ecriture sainte à nostre commune consolation. De forte que souvent nos victoires sont aussi sanglantes qu' elles sont trescertaines, et les couronnes du Paradis celeste ne sont données qu' à ceux qui auront combattu vaillamment. Quant à ce que vous avez opinion que j' eusse pû contribuer quelque chose à la tranquillité de vostre esprit par ma presence, cela me donne sujet de me rejouir extremement, comme d' une preuve infallible de vostre affection. Or de ma part, je ne vous puis pas celer que l' ardeur, et la force du desir, que j' ay de vous pouvoir presenter un jour mon tres-humble service, me fait esperer, voire m' assure par fois, que vous choisirez icy dans nostre Ville le lieu de vostre residence, à sçavoir apres vous estre desveloppée des inquietudes de vostre trop grand mesnage: Et ayant eu le bon heur de jouïr quelque temps de la douce compagnie de Madame de N.N. vostre Fille, nous nous sommes entretenu bien souvant de ces tres-agreables discours, desquels nous attendrons la confirmation de vos bonnes resolutions, et de la providence Divine. A la protection de laquelle je vous recommande, demeurant a tout jamais

MADAME, vostre tres-humble et tres-affectionnée servante A.M. de Schurman.  
Ce 13. d' Aoust 1642.

Van Schurman was presented as a role model in the Netherlands and became a source of inspiration for many women. The Frisian Franske van Doyen, to whom the translator of *De Vitae Termino* dedicated the work, wrote in an admiring tone about Van Schurman, as being 'the miracle of our country and age because of her exalted spirit and indescribable learnedness' ['het mirakel van ons landt ende eeuvve om haer Ed.



Van Schurman drew this still life with fruit in black crayon in the 'album amicorum' of Johanna Koerten-Blok.

hoog-verheven Geest, ende on-uytsprekelicke geleertheyt']. Charlotte de Huybert, daughter of the Zeelandic lawyer and literary Anthonie de Huybert, regarded Van Schurman as her role model. In a praise poem on Van Beverwijck's book about the excellence of women, she complained about the limited legal capacity of women, but praised Van Schurman:

To you, Miss, we are grateful, for your talented spirit  
 was the motive for this praiseworthy work.  
 Your virtue remains women's virtue, your wisdom women's wisdom:  
 so that through your name all women are praised,  
 your glory is glory to us.

[U Juffrouw dancken wy, dat u begaefde geest  
 Van dit lofwaerdigh Werck de oorsaek is geweest.  
 U deught blijft 's Vrouwen deugt, u wijshey't 's Vrouwen wijshey't:  
 Soo dat in uwen naem ock aller Vrouwen prijs ley't.  
 U lof is ons tot lof:]<sup>347</sup>

Besides these women, the poets Sybille van Griethuisen, Maria Margaretha van Akerlaacken and Johanna Hoobius also praised Van Schurman. She became a *topos* in women's praise. For instance, Hoobius wrote a lengthy praise poem on famous women past and present, called *Lof der vrouwen* [Praise of women], in a genre most often practised by men. Her text differed little

### Letter to Mrs Anne de Merveil, Dowager Lady Prosting

My Lady,

I do not know whether I should have more pity on your misfortune or more joy on your victory. For the letter you honoured me with, shows signs of both. It is true that you have endured exceptionally grave adversity and I would wish you a more pure and perfect happiness if it were the case that our condition in this world would be susceptible to it. But since the wickedness of this world is the substance for the victories waiting for us in heaven, God made the excellence of the talents he placed in the spirit of his faithful sparkle by way of afflictions and trials that befit their strength. It would be like applying a poor standard to place your Christian strife on the level of everyday misfortune or adversity. It would be possible for you to reproach me for having thoughts belittling your intense sorrow and you could be of the opinion that the most wise of kings had a better knowledge of this when he exclaims in his Proverbs:

But a wounded spirit who can bear?!<sup>I</sup>

I admit, madam, that I judge your sorrows with a less heavy heart when I look at them as matters that have gone past and though they have been difficult, they are not superior to your virtues and your virtues could deal with them without being conquered by them. On the other hand I know full well that the contemplation of the joy which will befall us in heaven as promised to us by our Christian faith, is not always so vivid and steadfast that it can fend off all blows inflicted by adversity or make our feelings about it disappear. Experience itself teaches us the opposite, when the bridegroom of our souls conceals himself behind a wall and it pleases him to withhold the influence of his grace and divine solace for a while.<sup>II</sup> For indeed, like the royal psalmist says, his lovingkindness is better than life.<sup>III</sup> That is why, in the life of the dearest friends of God, like David, Job, Jeremiah and others, they sometimes experienced a dwindling of their faith and the gravity of their trials made them lament in such a way that their words resembled lamentations of people in despair. These lamentations have been chronicled in the Holy Scriptures for our common solace, for our victories are often as bloody as they are certain. The crowns of heavenly paradise are only given to those who have battled courageously. With regard to your opinion that through my presence I could contribute to the tranquillity of your spirit, such gives me joy because it is irrefutable evidence of your affection. But for my part I cannot hide the fact that the ardent and powerful desire I experience to offer you my humble service, makes me hope, and sometimes be sure of it, that you will choose your residence here in our city, and such after you have relinquished the turbulence of your too busy household. I had the good fortune to enjoy for a while the decisions made by you as well as by divine providence. To his protection I commend you, while remaining who I am,

My lady, your humble and affectionate servant,  
A.M. van Schurman 13 August 1642.

I. Proverbs 18:14.

II. See Songs of Solomon 5; Van de Ketterij 1972:296.

III. Psalm 63:3.

### Visit of Anna Maria van Schurman to her relatives

Visit of Anna Maria van Schurman to her relatives at Abbingastate near Leeuwarden on 16 July 1663. Whom did she meet there? Her learned cousin Abraham van Schurman, his second wife Amelia van der Haer and their four children, including her little namesake Anna Maria van Schurman. In her most beautiful handwriting she wrote a page full of Hebrew, Latin, Greek and Dutch.<sup>1</sup>

- I. Psalm 111:10: The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; Romans 8:1: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; Ephesians 5:15: See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise; When you are your own worst enemy (who would believe that?) Then learn above all to keep vigil over your own heart (source unknown); My love has been crucified.

from similar male texts, even though she praised Johanna Coomans and Anna Roemer Visscher, but especially Anna Maria van Schurman whom she regarded as the crown on her work:<sup>348</sup>

Who would not be bewildered, who would not be astonished?  
 When Utrecht very famously blazons forth the praise of women,  
 when Fame flies hither, and praises all over the country  
 the widely spread glory of Schuurman's noble pledge.  
 O blossom of the country, o adornment of women,  
 you let your great name endure for us forever.  
 You are illuminating all of us by your lustre.  
 Yes, you are our highest honour in the midst of the men.



Contribution to the family album by Anna Maria van Schurman.

[Wie zal niet staan versteld, wie zal niet zijn verwonderd?  
 Als Utrecht zeer vermaard der vrouwen lof uitdonderdt,  
 Daar Fama hene vliegt, en roemt door 't ganse land.  
 Den wijdvermaarde lof van Schuurmans edel pand.  
 O bloeme van het land, o siersel van de vrouwen  
 Gij doet een groten naam voor eeuwig ons behouwen.  
 Gij komt ons altemaal verlichten door uw glans.  
 Ja, zijt ons hoogste eer in 't midden van de mans.]<sup>349</sup>

But the poem has a double voice: although Van Schurman had risen above all other women, the praise for a woman ultimately translated into praise for the housewife serving her husband.<sup>350</sup>

We have now seen marching past in our mind's eye a number of learned celebrities from the Dutch *Republic of Letters* with whom Van Schurman had contact. Not everyone, for I leave out contacts not yet mentioned with Leiden (Polyander, Scaliger, De Laet, Elichmann), Groningen (Maresius and Alting), Amsterdam (Vossius, Keuchenius), Harderwijk (Brinck), Nijmegen (Goris, Coerman), Deventer (Gronovius) and Rotterdam (Gruterus). Scholarship in the seventeenth century was heavily influenced by humanism, and this is clear not only from the evidence of classical influence, but also from a broad, expansive view on the world. Van Schurman crossed her own Calvinist boundary of faith and in the Netherlands had contact with, among others, Remonstrants (Van Beverwijck), Jews (Menasseh Ben Israel) and the Greek Orthodox bishop Meletios Pantogalus.<sup>351</sup>

Because she was the only woman with a university background she could participate in scientific activities, albeit not in a public profession. As a result of her publications in Latin, Greek, Hebrew and French she became a public figure, nationally as well as internationally. The wide distribution of her scientific work is remarkable: it was printed not only in Utrecht, but also in Leiden, Rotterdam, The Hague, Dordrecht, Amsterdam and Altona; translations and reprints were published nationally and internationally (Paris, London, Wesel-Duisburg-Frankfurt, Leipzig, Dessau), and praise texts were published all over Europe. Whatever she did or published, it immediately elicited reactions. The Leiden professor of physics, Johannes Bodecher Banningh, wrote the following to the Neo-Latin poet Petrus Stratenus after Van Schurman's admission to the Utrecht University: 'Sister Anna, of whom you have often told me, Stratenus, surpasses the Muses in learning. The Rhine supplies the Castalian springs of the Muses and Voetius lets her drink that liquid.'<sup>352</sup>

She was a role model for other women and networked with learned women in the *Women's Republic of Letters*. But this exchange of knowledge operated on a lower level, for it was always Van Schurman who was in a position of superiority; the other woman was never her equal discussion partner, although she did encourage women to study. Johannes Heyblocq, principal of an Amsterdam Latin school, christened her the Dutch Minerva; and it was owing to her that the University of Utrecht was known as the *Summa Schola*. Hugo de Groot regarded Van Schurman as the only female intellectual discussion partner in the Netherlands. But I will discuss in the next chapter whether she could hold her own with other European scholarly women.<sup>353</sup>

## ‘The pride of Europe’ [‘Het pronksel van Euroop’]: the European *Republic of Letters*

**B**e silent, men, listen to a virgin, who, from the Utrecht school writes about things that no Greek ever knew, and that were not revealed to Rome: Who shows to her Netherlands, and to all the world, that God has crowned a woman with a higher spirit than a man.

[Swygt, Mannen, hoort een Maegt, die, uyt de Stichtsche scholen,  
Schrijft dat noyt Griek en wist, en Roomen was verholen:  
Die aen haer Nederlandt, en al de Vverelt toont,  
Dat God met hooger geest een Vrouvv als Man bekroont.]<sup>354</sup>

### ‘Drottning Kristina’

On an autumnal day in 1654 a group of men knocked on the door of Van Schurman’s house. One of them asked in Dutch whether Lady Anna Maria van Schurman happened to be home? It was Queen Christina of Sweden, in men’s clothing, in disguise. She had just visited the learned Gronovius in Deventer and was passing through on her way to the south. An animated discussion was the result. Van Schurman had corresponded with Christina and had sent her a praise poem and a little work of art. Christina, the daughter of Gustav Adolf, had founded a new ‘Athens’ in Stockholm and had invited foreign scholars to that city. She was well-versed in classical and modern languages (Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German, Dutch, French, Italian and Spanish), philosophy and theology, but also in arts and military matters. With the help of, among others, Nicolaas Heinsius and Isaac Vossius, she built up a comprehensive library, including the most important work of Van Schurman: the *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica*.<sup>355</sup>

Van Schurman showed Christina her cabinet where her own works of art were displayed, next to art and some curiosities of others that she used to collect. Cabinets of curiosities were very popular in the seventeenth century. In such a cabinet collections of indigenous and exotic *naturalia* (seashells, flowers, seeds) and *arteficalia* (coins, books, manuscripts, works of art) were displayed. It was regarded as very special when nature and



Christina of Sweden visited Van Schurman *incognito* in 1654. She wore male clothes and was surrounded by learned gentlemen.

art could be combined in one object. There were several motives for collecting these artefacts: esthetic considerations, social status, investment or religious purposes, but the most important was scientific curiosity. The cabinets of curiosities gave rise to the modern classification of knowledge.<sup>356</sup>

According to a seventeenth century account of the meeting, after discussing the curiosities, the conversation hopped from mutual acquaintance to acquaintance: from Gronovius to Salmasius, Descartes and Samuel Bochart – scholars who had also been employed at Christina's court. This was followed by a hot debate on scholarly and theological topics. The learned Christina and the Jesuits accompanying her tried to outwit Van Schurman, but they could not succeed. Astonished about how extremely well-read she was and about her precise judgement, they suggested that maybe everything did not happen 'naturally', but that Van Schurman might have a spirit assisting her. Van Schurman did not show her indignation, but replied quick-wittedly that it was the same spirit that made her live and breathe.<sup>357</sup> During the visit, Christina posed for Van Schurman to draw her portrait. Underneath it she wrote the following: *IN EFFIGIEM CHRISTINAE SERENISSIMAE POTENTISSIMAEQUE SUECORUM REGINAE INCOMPARABILIS:*

On the portrait of Christina, the most serene, powerful and incomparable Queen of Sweden

As the glass captures the vast world in a tiny image,  
 So the small picture captures a great goddess.  
 My hand has dared to depict not only an exterior visage like Pallas,  
 But the brilliance of her elevated heart.  
 In this way it is allowed to approach the Northern Sun more closely,  
 In this way it gleams resplendent in copper, welcome to the Batavian people.<sup>358</sup>

Van Schurman compared Christina to the mighty goddess Pallas Athena, who symbolised wisdom. Christina was the sun from the north who was now illuminating the ‘Utrecht sun’. It is not known whether Van Schurman received a gold chain for her efforts, like the one Christina presented to Vondel. Neither do we know whether these two learned, unmarried women, who were compared to each other in many eulogies, kept in contact. Christina departed for Rome in a roundabout way, and on arrival, confessed her Catholic faith publicly, to the dismay of many. A stream of pamphlets and books followed the life of Christina until her death. She held her own court in Rome, interfered in Roman (church) politics and became a patron of the arts, music and literature. She wrote countless letters, a book containing aphorisms, and left an incomplete autobiography. From recent research it has become clear that she had a secret love affair with cardinal Azzolino for years. Obviously this was not general knowledge when she was buried in 1689 in Rome’s St Peter’s Basilica with ample pomp and circumstance.<sup>359</sup>

### The European *Republic of Letters*

This example of erudite visitors to Van Schurman can be expanded with hundreds of visitors from foreign countries: in addition to the visitors from Utrecht and the Netherlands already discussed in previous chapters, it was an impressive procession: a varied parade with, among others, the Queen of Poland, the Duchess Anne Geneviève de Bourbon, German baroque poets, French writers and members of the Académie Française, English members of parliament, scholars from Eastern Europe and Scandinavian professors and writers. In this chapter there is only enough space for some of the passers-by on their *peregrinatio academica* and for those who found a place in her international correspondence, Latin poems and *elogia*. We will limit ourselves here specifically to the *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica*. Unfortunately these represent only fragments of the very extensive correspondence that Van Schurman engaged in with scholars from different nationalities within the European *Republic of Letters*. Much has been lost or was burned by Van Schurman after she joined the Labadists.<sup>360</sup> As in previous chapters, we will follow the pattern of discussing her correspondence, *poemata*, *elogia* and finally the visitors on their *peregrinatio academica*, but now within the European context, where the ideal and true character of the *Republic of Letters* was most evident. The boundaries of nationality, social status and religion were transcended for scholarly reasons. Van Schurman corresponded in Greek, Latin and French with foreign scholars, but as far as could be ascertained, she did not write scholarly letters (integral treatises on specific topics) to foreigners. It is possible that these have been lost from sight, just like her scholarly letter on the First Mover (*De motibus primo primis*) that she lent to Smetius. Or she might have needed ‘father figures’ such as Rivet, Voetius and Van Beverwijck as sounding boards, since they were so much closer and she knew them well. However, some of her scholarly letters such as *De Vitae Termino* and the (*Amica*) *Dissertatio* were translated and published abroad and elicited widespread reaction.<sup>361</sup>

**The *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica*** | Van Schurman herself was active in the distribution of her publications and works of art. This was also the case with the *Opuscula*. For instance, when she discovered that Valentin Conrart, secretary of the French king and founder of the *Académie Française*, had been promised a copy of the *Opuscula*, but had not received it nearly a year after publication, she went to a lot of trouble to ascertain that he would receive one:

I cannot imagine why the Elzeviers [publishers] have not sent my letter with my small present to Mr Conrart, seeing that our late friend Mr Spanheim has given them instructions to do so a long time ago.

[Je ne puis m' imaginer pourquoy les Elzeviriens n'ont pas rendu ma lettre avec mon petit-present à Monseigneur Conrart veu que nostre feu ami Mons. Spanheim leur en a donné la charge il y a long temps.]<sup>362</sup>

Conrart was the secretary of the *Académie Française*. She had been introduced to him by Rivet and entered into extensive correspondence with him. He also mediated in a discussion that developed when Madame de Scudéry, a literate French woman, posed anxious questions to Rivet and Van Schurman, via Marie du Moulin, on the topic of her heroine Joan of Arc. Conrart managed to reassure Madame de Scudéry.<sup>363</sup> After the publication of the *Opuscula*, Salmasius wrote in a letter to the scholar Jacques Dupuy in Paris that on 7 September 1648 the publisher Elzeviers had printed Van Schurman's *Opuscula* as well as the one by Sallustius, a famous Roman historian. The scholar Pierre Daniel Huet from Paris received a complimentary copy of the *Opuscula*. On the first page of his copy he later wrote: 'Ne extra hanc bibliothecam efferatur. Ex obedientia.' (Do not take this book outside the library. For reasons of obedience.) After all, the book appeared on the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* and in this way, being Catholic, he could circumvent the book's censored status. Furthermore he praised her for *De Vitae Termino*. After he had visited her, he wrote the following in Latin in his travel journal:

From there we hurried to Utrecht,  
 where Anna Schurmann,  
 the glory of the female sex,  
 welcomed us.  
 I was amazed by the variety of her works of art  
 which the more than ingenious maiden made  
 by way of a sagacious spirit and skilled hands.

But when he passed through Utrecht again on his second journey, he could not visit Anna Maria van Schurman. She had left for Friesland and had married that clergyman De Labadie from the French Calvinistic sectarian group, so he wrote, having been misinformed.<sup>364</sup>

### *Scholarly correspondence*

Pierre Gassendi, professor of philosophy at the Collège Royal in Paris, had made Van Schurman's acquaintance when he received a copy of the 1641 edition of her *Dissertatio* from Charles du Chesne. He thanked her profusely and showed his admiration for the book and its writer in a rather gushing Latin letter: 'You exceed the artists, scholars in your knowledge of languages, yes, in your knowledge of divine and human learning. There is nothing that you do not understand, nothing that you cannot create, you are the miracle of this age.' She replied courteously in Latin, which was translated into English in 1659 as follows:

I perceive you have so kindly interpreted our short Dissertation of the more polite studies of the Female Sexe, that from thence hath proceeded no small affection to your esteem of me. [...] But it is an illustrious Argument of your Love to true Wisdom, that you are so far from contemning the least spark of it, even in our Sex; that you are pleased to cherish it and raise it up into a Flame.

Even though she admonished him for his exaggerated praise, she did want to continue her correspondence with him, despite her decision not to write to foreigners any more. For him, so she wrote, she would make an exception since he was such a leading figure in the *Republic of Letters*. How impressed he was with this reply becomes clear from a letter to Rivet in which he proudly quotes this feat<sup>365</sup>. Gassendi, being celibate himself, also approved of her way of life as a celibate learned woman:

[...] how much cause of joy I have, from the Approbation you have vouchsafed to my course of Life, My ambition is to please the Few and Good (for to please the Many is to displace (*sic*) the wise) and you especially, whom I behold furnished with such Arms and Forces, that as of late you have excellently vindicated the Reputation of ancient Philosophy; so if need be, you can easily defend the common Cause of Good Arts and Learning, against the professed Enemies thereof, or at least the contemnners of the Female Glory<sup>366</sup>

Gassendi paid her a visit in 1644. What would they have discussed? Definitely some philosophical topics; after all, Gassendi had written extensively about the philosophers of antiquity, especially about the Epicureans; and probably also physics and mathematics. The topic of women's learning would have to be included as well, since he held her as the only example in a plea for women's learning:

In the midst of the truly learned heroines, that girl from Utrecht will continue to outshine others; through a rare fortune of our century she excels in a variety of learning and virtue.

In England Van Schurman also had a defender of female learning: the member of parliament Simonds D'Ewes in London. 'It would have been impossible for your fame not to reach my ears,' thus he wrote in his first Latin letter to Van Schurman. She had sent him five self-portraits (I assume at his request), to which he responded enthusiastically.



*Coenitis sic picta nostras in imagine vultus:  
 Si negat aēs formā, gestia vāstra dabit.  
 A.M. à S. Fec.*

Self-portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman. She wrote in Latin underneath the picture that she should be forgiven the small flaws.

Your letters, very famous young woman from Utrecht, I received on the last day of March, together with five self-portraits of you. From these I gave three into the hands of my wife and two daughters, the fourth I have earmarked for myself and placed between portraits of other persons of excellent fame; the fifth I mean to save for a son that maybe will still be born (if I read the signs correctly) [...]. Heartfelt thanks from all of us.<sup>367</sup>

He placed her portrait ('the most learned young woman') in a gallery of celebrities. His second wife, Elizabeth Willoughby, and his daughters also each received a portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman, and the fifth was intended for the son that was indeed born at a later stage. D'Ewes occupied himself with numismatics, history and old manuscripts, and he compiled an Old English dictionary. D'Ewes had heard of her via the daughter of his former school principal, Bathsua Makin, a learned woman with whom Van Schurman corresponded in Greek:

As to what you write concerning the most Learned Matron, madam Bathsua Metkins, that she so highly commended my Industrie in sublimer studies and that you were upon that account inflamed with an incredible desire of having conference with me: All this, I impute both to her undeserved affection toward me, and to your courtesie in giving so easie an Assent.<sup>368</sup>

Van Schurman and D'Ewes corresponded with each other on politics, women's learning and old manuscripts. In his letters to Van Schurman he uses Anglo-Saxon quotations. We can deduce from this that Van Schurman had a knowledge of Old English. But what language would they have spoken when Simonds D'Ewes visited her in Utrecht? In the seventeenth century, knowledge of English in Europe was very limited and not many could speak English. The medium of communication between speakers of English and of Dutch was mostly Latin or French, so these were probably also used in the conversations between Van Schurman and D'Ewes.<sup>369</sup>

In 1639 a septuagenarian modelled for Anna Maria van Schurman: she drew a portrait of Pierre du Moulin, a prominent French theologian at the academy of Sedan in France. Previously Du Moulin had been minister in the church of Paris, chaplain of the French king's sister, theological counsellor to the King of England and professor in Leiden. The contact between Du Moulin and Van Schurman had once again been initiated by Andreas Rivet, whose second wife was Pierre du Moulin's sister. In the only letter to him that is available to us and which has been included in the *Opuscula* (dated March 20, 1635), Van Schurman conveyed her heartfelt thanks for his letters. Through him, she felt even more connected to his daughter Marie du Moulin, her younger friend whom she encouraged to study Hebrew. Pierre du Moulin approved of women's learning; he taught his own daughter Marie the rudimentary principles of the Hebrew language.<sup>370</sup>

*Question Célèbre* | 'A famous controversy: whether it is necessary or not that girls become learned women', thus Van Schurman's *Amico Dissertatio* was translated into French by Colletet: an advocate of parliament, poet and founding member of the French Academy in Paris. The work was based on the edition of 1638 by Du Chesne in Paris; he added praise poems and published the work in 1646 under the following title: *Question*

*Celèbre s'il est necessaire, ou non, que les Filles soient scavantes.* From the *Advis au Lecteur* [Advice to the reader] it becomes clear that Colletet had been gently compelled by a friend to 'make a French version of these three modest writings in Latin [...]' in which 'she sets herself the task to prove that all girls could be learned.' Colletet collected Van Schurman's occasional poems on several persons and occasions, in manuscript as well as in printed form, in his museum San Marcello in Paris. In his own sonnet written on Van Schurman, he describes her as 'Prodige de la sagesse', prodigy of wisdom, and compared her to Marie le Jars de Gournay, a famous French learned woman. The poet Pierre du Pelletier also wrote a praise poem on this book in which he praised Van Schurman as 'Cette Fille illustre et sçavante' [that illustrious and learned girl]. The book had been adapted to suit the French reading public, with a dedication to 'Anne Marie Louise d'Orleans, Fille unique de Monseigneur le Duc d'Orleans' [only daughter of His Lordship the Duke of Orleans], a niece of the French king. Following the translation, a Latin catalogue of praise writings on Van Schurman was included, recorded by Louis Jacob and translated into French by Paul Jacob.<sup>371</sup>

*The Learned Maid* | In 1659 a translation of the *Dissertatio* (1641) was published in England by the Anglican pastor and writer Clement Barksdale. The full title of the translation reads as follows: *The Learned Maid; or, whether a Maid may be a Scholar? A logick exercise written in Latine by that incomparable Virgin Anna Maria à Schurman of Vtrecht with some Epistles to the famous Gassendus and others.* It is clear from the title that the translation contains only the *Logisch Betoog* and not the correspondence between Rivet and Van Schurman on women's learning.<sup>372</sup> The letters that are included in *The Learned Maid* are selected with an eye on the relationship with England: the dedication to Lady A. Huntington, letters to Lady Dorothea Moore and Simonds D'Ewes, and a section of a letter by Van Schurman to Rivet in which she praised Lady Jane Grey, the young, learned queen of England who had died on the scaffold, in particular her learning and martyrdom. According to Van Schurman, Jane Grey was the ultimate learned maid:<sup>373</sup>

To conclude I will here alledge one Example which is ever before my eyes: the Example of that incomparable Princess *Jane Grey*, to whom no Nation, no Age, (Let me speak it with the good leave of all) will afford an equall. [...] She magnanimously pronounced:

Nothing in all her Life was so pleasant to her, as that she had the Knowledge of the three Learned Tongues. And, if the delight, thence arising to us in this Life, may be called by the name of true Felicity, She confessed, her selfe had found it in the study of good Letters, and especially of the Holy Scripture. And, although many men doe greatly blame such studies in a Woman; yet she, for the great comfort of her Soul which she had at last percieved thence, and still did perceive within, judged their Opinion contrary to all reason Oh sweet words, pronounce not under shade of the Schools, but at a last Act of a most Glorious Martyrdome! Who would not reverence this saying, and take it for an Oracle.<sup>374</sup>



'The Learned Maid' was the second translation of the 'Dissertatio' in English. The first was published under the auspices of Bathsua Makin.

*De Vitae Termino* | In addition to her (*Amica*) *Dissertatio*, the *De Vitae Termino* also became widely known internationally. The scholar Zacutius Lusitanus referred to it in his standard work, and the professors Lauremberg, Conringius and Lucas spoke in laudatory tones of this work and called it a wonderful treatise. It was translated into German under the title *Der Marckstein vom Ziel und Zeit unseres Lebens*, and published together with some praise poems. The scholars Lazarus Meysonnerius and Guy Patin both wrote to Van Beverwijck how much they valued her contribution to the international discussion on the end of life. Even from Italy, congratulations arrived in Utrecht. But the book also elicited negative responses abroad, in contrast with the *Dissertatio*. Remonstrants and Lutherans came down on her, especially the Strasbourg professor Johann Conrad Dannhauer, who accused her of fatalism in *De Vitae Termino* and called her the 'Belgica Lachesis, fatorum nutrix, altera Clotho, filia fati' [the Dutch Lachesis, foster mother of fate, second Clotho, daughter of destiny]. Dorothea Loeberia regarded the work as so controversial that she did not include it in her edition of the *Opuscula* in 1749.<sup>375</sup> But Johann Heinrich Hottinger from Zürich, church minister and an expert on Semitic lan-

guages, gave her a place of honour for this publication in his standard work on theology, in which he referred per topic to important publications. In the section on *Providentia* (divine providence) he refers not only to Zwingli, Thomas of Aquino, Samuel Rutherford and Andreas Rivet, but also to the *epistola ad Bevervic. Med. de termino vitae, Palladis Vltrajectinae*. He did not even have to mention Van Schurman's name or the title *De Vitae Termino* for everyone to understand who and what was meant by 'the letter on the boundary of life to Van Beverwijck by the Utrecht Pallas'.<sup>376</sup>

### *Poemata*

In the section of Latin poems in the *Opuscula* we do not find names of foreign male scholars, although she did write poems for such scholars, for instance, for Samuel Collins, royal professor of theology and provost of King's College, Cambridge.<sup>377</sup> He had sent Van Schurman a letter accompanied by a Latin poem and some books; in response she sent him this Latin poem to thank him. But, she said, that which has crossed the sea in honour and praise of her, is not her fame, or the little works of art, but the piousness so uncommon in those times. This united friends by a common bond, namely by one faith, one God and one love:

Anna Maria van Schurman greets the famous Sir Samuel Collins

Your letter, coming to me from foreign coasts, has moved me deeply with its praise. I blushed and was speechless at the same time and have experienced joy thus far unknown to me, as your heavenly muse touched my heart. But what Grace of me is worthy of that of Collins? How can I merit the favour of his great muse? Certainly neither by the products of my weak hand nor by my fame, should the latter have crossed the boundaries of the sea? [...] No, it must be your piousness – unfortunately so uncommon in our times – that is the only source of your favour. Piousness is the link between the highest spheres of heaven and the lowest levels of the earth, as well as between the hearts of people and the majestic God. It is also piousness that unites pure friends of the same blood, friends who know only one faith, one God and one love. It is this 'pietas' of yours that I honour [...] But although this is the most important, your great righteousness and natural humility also deserve praise. I will follow your great poetic example immediately, even though I be the last (in the line of your followers) and my talent is inadequate. But for me it suffices that your life line has touched mine and that I have earned your respect. Greetings to you, o Holy Angel of the English, Collins, always favour our friendship in future with an equally great amount of love!<sup>378</sup>

Unfortunately we do not know how the correspondence between Cambridge and Utrecht progressed from here; the trail has come to a dead end.

**Elogia** | 'All learned women from antiquity must yield to this new star from Utrecht.' Thus wrote Jacques Martin from Paris. After all, she knew many more languages than they did:

Illustrious daughters of Parnasse  
 You have to give up your place  
 to this new star of Utrecht  
 You could only speak one language



Album contribution with a Bible verse in Hebrew (Psalm 16:3) for A. de Zadeler.

But Anna very learned and wise  
can speak French, Arabic, Hebrew, Latin and Greek.

[Illustres filles de Parnasse  
Il faut que vous cediez la place  
A ce nouvel Astre d'Vtrect  
Vous n' avez parlé qu' un langage  
Mais Anne tres docte et tres sage  
Parle Francois, Arabe, Hebreu, Latin et Grec.]

The most important and most often quoted contribution to the *Elogia* of the *Opuscula Hebraea* is called 'Elogium eruditissimae virginis Annae Mariae a Schurman, Batavae', written by the French Carmelite monk Louis Jacob. He had published this praise writing already in 1646, as part of the *Question Célèbre*, bound in the back of this work together with a somewhat adapted translation into French by Paul Jacob.<sup>379</sup> Before we take a closer look at what foreign scholars wrote about Van Schurman and what it was they praised in her, it is interesting to have a look at how Jacob went about describing this '34-year-old beloved of the Muses living in Utrecht, the Netherlands'. He spoke to people – for instance, one of his informants was Nicolaas Heinsius who lived in Paris for a while and who told him that Van Schurman had written poetry in Dutch and Latin – visited Colletet's museum, was allowed to peruse Van Schurman's letters and poems circulating in the scholarly circle of the brothers Dupuy, and finally listed her poems that he had read in manuscript as well as in published form (among others *De Vitae Termino*, *Amica Dissertatio*, *Dissertatio*). The court historian Franciscus de la Mothe le Vayer also told Jacob everything he knew about the learned Van Schurman. By way of books of others that were published and circulated, Jacob also read her Latin poem on Pontanus' work on the history of Gelderland and the one on Buchelius' histo-

ry of Utrecht. Thus Jacob collected everything published on her and subsequently compiled a catalogue of her writings and those praising her in writing (Salmasius, Crucius, Martin and Naudé). 'Much of what she has written has escaped me,' so he writes, 'for she adds daily to her diverse writing.'<sup>380</sup> Jacob not only supplied a short background sketch on her (mentioning her nobility, place of birth and exemplary education), but also praised her virtuousness as well as her knowledge of the humanities, languages, philosophy and theology.<sup>381</sup>

Other Parisians heaping praise on Van Schurman were the advocate Jolivet and the poets Peyrarède, Balzac and Sorbière. Peyrarède wrote a beautiful quatrain in Latin underneath her self-portrait, praising her poetry, artistic talents and graciousness in one breath: 'When Van Schurman painted her own face, she simultaneously painted Minerva, the Graces and the Muses.'<sup>382</sup> François Colletet wrote a praise poem on the *Amica Dissertatio*, 'la version des lettres latines de Mademoiselle Anne Marie de Schurman' [the version of the Latin letters of Miss Anna Maria van Schurman]:

When I see the Latin of that heroic soul  
and the nature of your French of which the power exudes  
I am of both equally surprised  
because in her discourse I find miracles  
that are capable of charming the wisest spirits  
I find in yours graces not to be equalled

[Quand ie voy le Latin de ceste ame heroyque  
Et l' air de ton François dont la force l' explique  
Je suis de tous les deux esgalement épris;  
Car si dans son discours ie trouve des merueilles  
Capables de charmer les plus doctes Esprits,  
Je trouve dans le tien des graces nonpareilles]<sup>383</sup>

He wrote not only this epigram for her, but also a charming sonnet in French, in which he referred to her as 'Reyne des beaux Esprits que tout le monde admire' [Queen of the beautiful spirits that are admired by all the world]. He claimed to have fallen in love with her exceptional writings; the more he read them, the more he wanted to reread them. He ended with a comparison between Rome and Utrecht in which Utrecht was the clear favourite. Rome should stop boasting about learned women and acknowledge that Utrecht deserved more honour for having a much greater treasure (namely Anna) within its walls:

O Rome, stop exalting yourself once again,  
rather confess that Utrecht has taken away that glory  
for carrying in its bosom a much greater treasure...

[O Rome, cesse donc de l'exalter encore,  
ou confesse qu' Utrec r' emporte ceste gloire  
De porter dans son sein un plus riche thresor...]

Several long praise poems on Van Schurman were published abroad, for example in Rome, where the following work was published in 1642: *La Fama Trionfante panegirico alla bellissima, castissima e dottissima signora Anna Maria Schurman*. It was a volume of Italian praise poems by Dominico da Cesena and dedicated to Gabriel Naudé, secretary of the French Academy of Science, correspondent of Van Beverwijck and previously librarian in Rome. One of the sonnets on Van Schurman reads as follows [translation from the Italian by Otto Plassmann]:<sup>384</sup>

Thou art a sun, more beautiful than the rising sun.  
 Thou art a sky, who hast more brilliance than the sky;  
 Thou art a light, more radiant than any other light.  
 Thou blindest the weak, the wings catch fire.

If I lift my eyes, to thee, beautiful and shining sun;  
 if I spread my wings, in thee, beautiful sky of love;  
 if I turn my heart to thy glowing light:  
 then I become blind, I fall down, my heart ablaze.

How much the eyes, or the wings, or the heart aspires  
 to cling, to rise, to orbit  
 around you, the sun, in you, the heavens,  
 towards you, the great light.

A foolish butterfly, I orbit the light,  
 a marsh bird, I lift my feathers to the sky,  
 an impetuous night owl, I rivet my eyes on the sun.<sup>385</sup>

Anna Maria van Schurman reacted rather drily to this pompous piece of praise. On 14 October 1644 she wrote in a letter to Van Beverwijck:

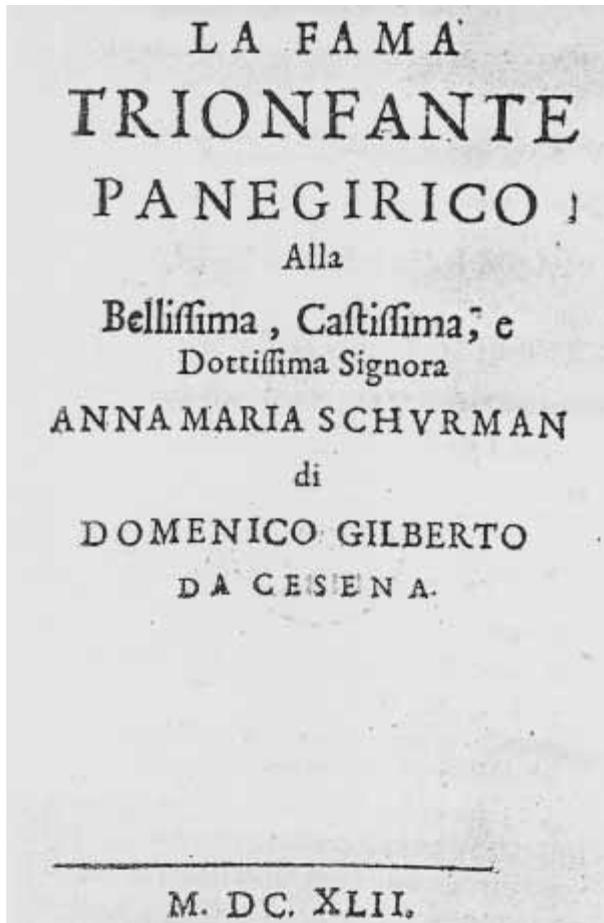
The letter of Mr Slingelandt I have seen, as well as the Italian praise poems that were printed in Rome, which I would have praised for their charm and poetic spirit, were it that this Apellos had a beauty in mind that was deserving of his art.

[Den brief van den Heer Slingelandt heb ick gesien, als oock de Italiaansche Lof-dichten, te Romen gedrukt; die ick van wegen haer aerdigheyt, ende Poëtischen geest seer soude prijsen, by soo verre dien Apellos een schoonheydt voor gehadt hadde, waerdigh sijne konste.]<sup>386</sup>

In the same year a volume with Latin praise poems on Van Schurman was also published in Breslau: *De literaris virginibus tribus nostri saeculi* [On the three learned virgins of our age]. In this work Augustinus Wiseaus compared her to two other learned women from that region: Anna Memorata and Sophia-Anna Corbiniani. (Memorata published a volume of Latin verse, Corbiniani translated a grammar by Donatus from Latin into German and wrote a praise poem on Christina of Sweden.)<sup>387</sup> In Italy a certain Ottavio Ferrarius, professor in rhetoric at the University of Padua, wrote a few laudatory poems in honour of Queen Christina. In these he compared her to Van Schurman. Van Schurman also re-

ceived a praise poem in Hebrew from Switzerland, from Buxtorf, professor of theology and Semitic languages at the University of Basel, with which she was very impressed.<sup>388</sup>

**Praise from abroad** | When we compare the praise for Anna Maria van Schurman originating from abroad with that from within the Netherlands, as a first impression there are few differences. Just like in the Netherlands her refined manners, her learnedness (theology, philosophy, knowledge of languages, poetry), artistic talents, piousness, celibacy as well as her city and country are praised. She is a real aristocrat: 'Eine Dame von vornehmen Geslechte, hohen Ahnen, stattliche Mitteln, vortrefflichem Reichtum und mannigfaltigen Wissenschaften' [A lady from a distinguished family, eminent ancestors, considerable resources, excellent wealth and manifold learning]. She is extremely learned for a woman, a person at home in all disciplines, 'ein rares Mirakul der Gelehrsamkeit' [an exceptional miracle of learnedness], 'ein Phoenix der Gelehrsamkeit' [a phoenix of learnedness]. The Danish scholar Sperling even wrote that she was omniscient:



Volume of Italian praise poems on Van Schurman, Rome, 1642.

She was at home in all fields of learning, whether one is referring to the languages of scholars (Latin, Greek, Hebrew) or the foreign languages French and Italian. In all of these languages she has achieved rhetoric as well as poetic elegance and has excelled in them. I will not now refer to her more serious study of theology, law, philosophy or mathematics. In all these disciplines she has shown evidence of her sharp and ample intellect to countless scholars. She has not left untouched most of the remaining arts and for her skill in painting she is counted among the highest master artists. For these reasons this omniscient young woman is praised by many.<sup>389</sup>

Her knowledge of languages was often emphasised. The poets and members of the French Academy were very impressed by her proficiency in French. Thus the famous writer Balzac wrote that his letters were linguistically inferior to those written in French by Van Schurman. Morhoff, librarian of the University of Kiel, wrote in his work *Unterrihts von der teutschen Sprache und Poesie* that Van Schurman had written beautiful poetry in Latin and Dutch.<sup>390</sup>

Just as it was in the Netherlands, in foreign countries her learning was also often compared to that of learned women from antiquity. For example, Jacob Martin of Paris wrote the following:

Let Roman antiquity keep silent about the mother of the Gracchi brothers (Cornelia) and let the conquered Greek country hold their tongues about Sappho. Let the Roman and also the Greek Muses give way; there is a greater light shining from the Batavian firmament.<sup>391</sup>

She was also compared to learned women from the country of the respective writers: Marie le Jars de Gournay from France or Anna Memorata and Sophia-Anna Corbiniani from Poland. The French scholar Paulus Colomesius, in his standard work *Gallia Orientalis*, compared Van Schurman to Marie du Moulin, with whom she had exchanged several letters in Hebrew, and described her as the all-surpassing 'miracle of the world' that he had seen with his own eyes.<sup>392</sup> Her modesty is seldom praised as a separate virtue in foreign writings. Understandably the most noticeable difference in praises from abroad is the fact that her country or her city is mentioned: she is the Utrecht goddess of wisdom, the star of Utrecht, the real goddess of wisdom in the Netherlands, the highest glory of the Batavian land.<sup>393</sup>

It is also apparent that, with the exception of the preposterous Meletios Pantogalus, foreign writers only referred in general terms to her virginity, for example by referring to her as 'noble virgin'; they did not see it as a reason to mock her. However, her beauty received more attention. Anna Roemer Visscher had praised her beauty as a young girl at the age of thirteen ('de schoonheid van uw' leden' [the beauty of your limbs]), and the scholar Anthonie Clement from Middelburg had called her 'the most beautiful woman in the Netherlands, yes, the shining star on Christianity's firmament, who coupled eye-blinding beauty to great erudition'. But generally there was silence on the topic of her beauty in the Netherlands. The praise poems from France and Italy are conspicuous in their chivalrous and charming tenor. We have already had a look at the beautiful Italian poem of Da Cesena in which Van Schurman was compared to the sun; a sun that burns the lover and makes



Multilingual sheet, with Bible verses in Hebrew, Aramaic, Samaritan, Syriac, Arabic and Ethiopian.

him fall back unto the earth. The writers openly professed to be in love with her or with her learnedness. In France they wanted to know exactly what Anna Maria van Schurman looked like. 'Is she beautiful?' they asked Salmasius. He initially sent her portrait as a 'handless' girl from 1633 and asked Rivet for advice on what to write about her beauty. Finally he wrote to the Dupuy brothers in Paris about 'cette femme savante neerlandaise' ['that learned Dutch woman']: there were more beautiful women than Van Schurman, but also those that were much uglier. 'She is a brunette and has a bit of a melancholic face, with dark eyes [...].'<sup>394</sup>

Her piety was also praised, albeit less markedly than her learning. At a later stage she stated incorrectly in her autobiography that the praise writers never glorified her piety, since piety did not count in the world of scholarship, while to her it was the most important virtue. But Van Schurman's piety was indeed taken seriously and praised within the different Christian denominations in Europe. Only when she criticised a principle of faith such as divine providence, she duly received protest in reaction. For example, the Lutheran profes-

sor Dannhauer remarked after reading her *De Vitae Termino* that it would have been better if Van Schurman ‘had occupied herself with the spinning of hemp instead of working on the weaving of providence with her dangerous pen!’ Catholics sometimes (dutifully) remarked that, unfortunately, she was not a Catholic, for example the Spanish professor of law Nicolaas Antonius, who wrote the following in his book on famous Spanish women: ‘She would have been the miracle of the century, were it not that her excellent talents from heaven had been adversely affected by a heretic infection and thus deprived her of this honour.’ Louis Jacob also remarked that she had unfortunately been educated in a strange (read: false) religion. Seen in this light, it is understandable that in his overview he left out her important contacts with the Huguenots Pierre du Moulin of the University of Sedan and Andreas Rivet. But he did praise her study of the divine (‘et somme en suite elle eust embrassee la Philosophie de mesme les mysteres de la Theologie, elle s’y acquit le nom de tres sçavante’ [‘and finally she has embraced philosophy and even the mysteries of theology, thus she merits the name of very wise woman’]). Jacob does mention her scholarly letter to Lydius on the baptism for the dead, and also mentions that she has now dedicated herself to the study of the Holy Scriptures (‘Elle donne maintenant tous les soint et toute son affection a l’estude de l’Ecriture Saincte’). Thus it is not correct to claim, as Rang and De Baar do, that in the earliest time of the reception history no attention was given to the religious aspect of Van Schurman’s work. This aspect, as well as her study of theology, definitely did receive attention, and not only in the Netherlands, but also abroad.<sup>395</sup>

**On the wall of the Academy of Science** | The Italian scholar Dal Pozzo had heard much about Van Schurman during his stay in Stockholm at the court of Queen Christina of Sweden. He got hold of her portrait, and when Nicolaas Heinsius visited him in his house in Rome where the Italian Academy of Science (*Accademia dei Lincei*) held their meetings, he saw the portrait of Van Schurman hanging in the gallery of scholars. This must have been the ultimate honour that a woman could achieve, for even though tradition has it that the first academy of Plato was decorated with a wall painting of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, and even though several academies of science chose her picture as symbol of their institution, these academies, founded from the 16th century, did not admit women. Women were excluded, although the portrait of Pallas Athena – Minerva – was hanging on the wall. In the Netherlands a similar institution was founded in 1752 under the name ‘Hollandtsche maatschappij’. In 1808 Louis Napoleon founded the Koninklijk Instituut [Royal Institution] that later became the KNAW, the Koninklijke Nederlandse Academie van Wetenschappen [Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences]. But their first female member was only admitted in 1950.<sup>396</sup>

### *Peregrinatio academica*

Before the establishment of the University of Utrecht, Van Schurman hardly had any contact with foreign scholars. But the university climate in the Netherlands attracted many students and scholars from abroad, also to Utrecht. Students and scholars alike showed

great mobility in the seventeenth century and travelled throughout Europe in search of knowledge, culture, adventure, safety, people sharing their religious conviction and more prestigious academic distinctions – or just to be in vogue. Most often they would finish the preparatory studies at home, and obtained a degree at several European universities during the course of their *peregrinatio academica*. The Dutch universities were very popular. But in addition to studying and obtaining a degree, visitors, armed with the textbook of the *ars apodemica* – the art of travelling – also visited the most important scholars and sights of the country. Van Schurman resorted under both categories. As learned woman she was such an exception, and moreover she also had artistic talent, was rich, devout, of noble birth and unmarried. All of this appealed to the imagination. People wanted to see her with their own eyes, wanted her signature, to exchange thoughts with her, to see her museum and works of art and other curiosities. They brought her letters and gifts from other scholars, and in return received letters to pass on again. And they spoke and wrote about her. This started already in 1636 when she became a student in Utrecht, culminated at the end of the 1640s, but continued even after her departure from Utrecht. Intellectuals from all over Europe travelled from east to west, from north to south, from one centre of learning to the next, attracted by famous professors or other people. It was not uncommon for students to attend three, four or even eight universities. Johan Godschalk van Schurman was no exception with his enrolment at five different universities. The Dutch universities, being Reformed themselves, were well-known for their tolerance, and admitted students from various religious and political convictions. This applied to Utrecht as well. Van Schurman received not only visitors from different nationalities, but also from different fields of study and religions.<sup>397</sup>

For example, in addition to the many scholars already mentioned, Rotger zum Bergen, professor at the University of Riga, visited Van Schurman. In his report he wrote that she was the only specimen of all miracles in a scholar, and a monster of her sex, but without any shortcomings or negative characteristics. The Danish physician Thomas Bartholinus had such a high opinion of Van Schurman's *Dissertatio* on the right of women to study, that he prescribed the book in his *Dissertatio de libris legendis* [Dissertation of books that have to be read]. He visited her in Utrecht in 1646 and wrote a Latin praise poem on Van Schurman in which he also praised her beauty:

Her masculine spirit intimidates others, and eventually the male hand is abandoned, conquered by female weight. Here nature conquers faith. Van Schurman surpasses her sex by her body, and males by her ingenuity.<sup>398</sup>

From Sweden arrived the poet and humanistic scholar Georg Stiernhielm, who was the translator of Wulfila's Gothic Bible into Latin and Swedish. Furthermore he was preparing a Gothic dictionary and the Gothic language was probably the topic of conversation when he visited Van Schurman in 1648. The Dane Olaus Borrichius was professor of medicine at the University of Copenhagen. During his European scholarly travels of four years he saw letters in manuscript form from the hand of Van Schurman, Meursius, Salmasius, Heinsius and Camerarius while visiting the Leiden scholar Vorstius in November 1661. In his



Album contribution for Johannes Fredericus Gronovius.

diary he mentions Van Schurman in one breath with these learned gentlemen. On 4 May 1663 he saw in Vorstius' library in Leiden some Latin letters written to Van Schurman; letters that are no longer available to us today. The only other woman whom Borrichius visited in the Netherlands and whom he deigned to mention in his diary was Catharina Questiers from Amsterdam. At a later stage he praised Van Schurman as a Latin poet and described her as the 'light of our century shining on women'.<sup>399</sup>

A French saying of the time runs as follows: 'Avoir été à Utrecht sans avoir vû Ml de Schurman, c'étoit comme si l'on avoit été à Paris sans avoir vû le Roy' [Having been to Utrecht without having seen Miss Van Schurman, it is like having been to Paris without having seen the king]. Balzac, a famous French writer and one of the first members of the Académie Française, also came by at the house *Achter den Dom* and wrote that Van Schurman spoke and wrote beautiful French. Furthermore, her poetry was no less impressive than her other achievements ('*Ses vers ne sont pas les moindres de ses merveilles*'). He even claimed that she wrote better French than he himself did. Another visitor was Jean Chapelain, also a member of the French Academy. But when he looked at her poetry, the same that had been admired by Balzac, he was a little disappointed. In his opinion it was not as good as he had expected. But she wrote a very strong type of prose. We do not know

whether he would have told her all of this during the visit. Chapelain also wrote as follows about Van Schurman: 'she should be counted as one of the miracles of the century, she who leaves behind all women past and present for she competed with outstanding men in virtue and learning. She has such an extensive knowledge of Greek, Latin and the Oriental languages that she can be held as a native of these regions. Not less impressive are the liberal arts in which she excels; she paints, sings and writes hymns as if she has never done anything else.' Some visitors, such as Samuel Sorbière, physician and physicist, came along a second time. But the second time around the door remained closed:<sup>400</sup>

in 1660 they met in Utrecht with the intent of seeing the famous Miss Schurman, but this Statira of precious women defends her door well against bothersome people.

[in 1660 ils se rendent a Utrecht dans le dessein de voir la célèbre Mademoiselle Schurman, mais la Statira des Précieuses défend bien sa porte contre les gêneurs.]<sup>401</sup>

At that time, she probably already lived in Lexmond on the river Lek. Another traveller was Balthazar de Monconys, a French art connoisseur and optician who had an extended network of acquaintances in the world of European optical science and who, together with Christiaan Huygens, was involved with the foundation of the *Royal Society* in London. In the Netherlands he visited, among others, Van Schurman and the painter Vermeer.<sup>402</sup>

Of the German baroque writers, Philipp von Zesen was not the only one visiting Van Schurman. The list of German visitors included Martin Opitz, Daniel Caspar von Lohenstein, Justus Georg Schottel, Daniel Georg Morhoff, Paul Fleming and Christian Hoffmann von Hoffmannswaldau. She probably drew portraits of all of them, but the only one available to us today is the portrait engraving of Paul Fleming, physician and poet laureate.<sup>403</sup>

Thus the ideas and knowledge in the *Respublica Litteraria* were maintained, enriched and distributed over the whole of Europe by the mobility of thousands of individual students and scholars on their *peregrinatio academica*. This also made it possible for the learned Anna Maria van Schurman's fame to be spread to the most remote corners of Europe. In the next section it will become clear that women in other countries were inspired by her fame to follow her example as learned woman.

### *The European Women's Republic of Letters*

Professor Johannes Leusden wrote the following in a Hebrew letter of recommendation at the beginning of the *Opuscula*: 'Come, *men*, buy this book!'<sup>404</sup> He should have known better, because it was precisely from the *Opuscula* that a number of European learned women stood out who were able to read the book from cover to cover. Even though in the catalogues of learned women dating from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – in nearly all cases compiled by men – women were already regarded as being learned when they knew more than housekeeping, had artistic talent and knew languages other than their native tongue; even though up to this day seventeenth century women in France are included under the cat-



Anna Maria van Schurman with the attributes of her learning and artistic talents surrounding her. In the background the Utrecht Dom is visible.

egory *Femmes savantes* when they excelled as writers of novels or letters, as philologists, painters, mystics or musicians, I follow the criterion of bishop Jens Bircherod that seventeenth century women could only be regarded as learned if they knew Latin. That was the criterion for participation in the *Republic of Letters*, and for being accepted as an equal. Within this network Van Schurman transcended the boundaries of faith, nationality and social status by corresponding in Latin with the Danish Lutheran Birgitte Thott, in Hebrew and Latin with the Irish Puritan Dorothea Moore, in Greek with the British Anglican Bathsua Makin, in French and Hebrew with the French Protestant Princess Anne de Rohan and in French and Latin with the French Catholic Marie le Jars de Gournay. We have already discussed the differences between the female and male networks within the *Republic of Letters* in the Netherlands. After a full discussion of the female scholars, attention will be given to the differences on an international level. But a note in the meantime: not a single scholarly letter exchanged between these women is available to us, like those that were exchanged between Van Schurman and scholars such as Rivet, Lydius, Salmasius, Spanheim, Smetius, Van Beverwijck and Colvius and in which complex theological, philological, medical or philosophical issues were discussed. To the best of my knowledge these women did not mutually operate on this level. Yet we must not underestimate them and act as if it was not a sign of learnedness that Van Schurman corresponded with these women in Latin, Greek or Hebrew, for knowledge of these three languages was the first requirement for real scholarship.<sup>405</sup>

### *Learned correspondences*

**Bathsua Makin** | On 13 May 1640 Van Schurman was sitting in her study in Utrecht. A while ago she had written a letter in Greek to a learned woman in England, but had received no reply. Maybe the letter had never arrived. It was the second time that this happened; she had also received no response to an earlier letter. From Rivet and other scholars she had heard so much about this woman; she really would like to befriend her! For the third time she took up her quill pen, dipped it into the ink and wrote the following letter in Greek:

Anna Maria van Schurman sends greetings to the excellent Mistress Bathsua Makin. Not so long ago, most esteemed lady, I sent you a letter asking you whether you had received my previous letter or not. I still do not know. But it would not be proper in our time to just let this favourable opportunity pass in silence. You would do me a huge favour if you could write to me often about your activities, for as a matter of course we have profound sympathy with your terrible circumstances. In particular I would like to know from you what the situation is in the church, also what your present dissertation on virtue entails and what discussions you have with your royal pupil. Farewell.<sup>406</sup>

Van Schurman did understand that this woman found herself in difficult circumstances, since a civil war was raging in England at the time. Bathsua Makin was employed at the court of Charles I and thus was close to the hostilities. She was born in 1600 in London as the daughter of Henry Reginald, a famous schoolmaster. When she was 16 years of age, her father published a thin volume of poetry she had written, *Musea Virginea*, a collection of poems from which her knowledge of Latin, Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, German and



Bathsua Makin was the governess of Princess Elizabeth of England. She corresponded with Van Schurman in Greek, for instance on women's education.

Hebrew was evident. The booklet was meant to honour the royal family of James I, but also to promote father Reginald's school. Bathsua married Richard Makin and together they had three children. From 1640 she was the governess of the Princess Elizabeth, youngest daughter of King Charles I and Queen Henrietta Maria.<sup>407</sup>

The reason why Makin did not respond in the first instance probably had to do with the political riots surrounding the reign of Charles I, to which Van Schurman referred as 'terrible circumstances'. From 1629 to 1640 the King reigned without a parliament, and in 1642 civil war broke out, culminating in the King's decapitation in 1649. It is typical of Van Schurman's interest in religion that she enquired after the situation of the church in England. But she was also curious about Makin's philosophical writings. Finally she wished to know what Makin's discussions with the little Princess entailed, being always interested in the education of women and girls. After all, Makin had so much more practical experience in teaching than Van Schurman. Unfortunately we do not have any responding letters from Makin, but on a portrait of her it is mentioned that she was the governess of Princess Elizabeth, teaching her Greek, Latin and Hebrew. Makin would write at a later stage that 'Princess Elizabeth at nine years old could write, read and in some measure understand Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French and Italian'.<sup>408</sup>

The second letter of Van Schurman is dated five years later (1645). The correspondence between these two dates is unknown to us, but it is clear that Makin did write back,

also in Greek, for Van Schurman praised her on her beautiful Greek, and, with reference to Homer, also for her determination to continue her philosophical work in the midst of the war tumult, by writing a piece on Beauty:

Greatly honoured Mistress Bathsua Makin

Even if I would write you a letter that by its awkwardness would disappoint you when compared to your expectations, I would rather have your positive opinion about my learning come to grief than neglect my duty. I was overjoyed on reading your letter. It is clear from your letter that I could not even come close to match your eloquence in Greek. It is most admirable that you, despite being kept busy by many domestic obligations, are not seldom found in the company of philosophy and that your Muses have not been silenced in the midst of the tumultuous battle. I think that is why I value your dissertation on Beauty so much and I can only praise you for your encyclopaedic knowledge that forced you to serve theology, the Discipline above all disciplines. For the rest you should not be troubled about anything but the dedication of your talent to the education of the little royal girl, so that you may resurrect the famous Elizabeth for us (under whose holy and just government your island has indeed flourished). Farewell and please love me, in return for my love for you.

Utrecht, ca. 20 October 1645 A.D.<sup>409</sup>

In addition to Van Schurman praising Makin's general knowledge of literature and her joy that Makin also regards theology as the queen of all disciplines, she encourages her by saying that she should only trouble herself about the education of little Elizabeth and she should keep the example of the famous learned and art-loving Queen Elizabeth in mind. After all, under her government England had experienced a time of peace and prosperity, with writers such as Shakespeare, Marlowe and Spencer. The example of Elizabeth I is well-suited, not only to convey learning to a little princess carrying the same name, but also because of the huge contrast with the times of war in which Makin found herself. She could draw courage from this example.

During the turbulence of the civil war, Elizabeth and her younger brother Henry were taken hostage; her mother Maria Henrietta and other brothers and sisters fled to Europe and Charles I was imprisoned. Even during the hostage period Makin remained Elizabeth's governess. Two days before his execution Elizabeth visited her father for the last time:

He wished me not to grieve and torment myself for him, for that would be a glorious death that he should die, it being for the laws and liberties of this land and for maintaining the true Protestant Religion [...] He told me, he had forgiven all his enemies and hoped God would forgive them also, and commanded us and all the rest of my brothers and sisters to forgive them. He bid me tell my mother that his thoughts had never strayed from her and that his love should be the same to the last [...]

But Elizabeth herself died soon after her father's death. 'Had she lived What a Miracle would she have been of her Sex', lamented her governess more than thirty years later.<sup>410</sup>

From the prologue to *The Learned Maid* it becomes clear that Van Schurman's *Dissertatio* had previously been translated into English; for in it the following reference can be found: 'This strange Maid, being now the second time drest up in her English habit'. Recent research has established that the first translation of the *Dissertatio* came into being in

1645 under the auspices of Bathsua Makin and was included in the work *The Woman's Glorie*, a manifesto written by Samuel Torshell, a devout chaplain at the royal court.<sup>411</sup> After the Restoration, Makin became private tutor of Duchess Lucy Huntington and her daughter and she founded a special girls' school just outside London, with emphasis on a classical education. But she had to compromise: only half of the available teaching time could be spent on Latin, French, Greek, Hebrew, Italian and Spanish; the other half on music, dancing, singing, embroidery and bookkeeping, otherwise the school would have to close. In 1664 she described herself as a widow who had to provide for herself as an educator. At the age of 73 she published her *Essay to Revive the Antient Education of Gentlewomen*.<sup>412</sup>

From this essay it becomes clear that Van Schurman's *Dissertatio* inspired and influenced Makin, even though the form of the *Essay* is clearly different: it is in English, anonymous and in the form of letters, whilst the Latin *Dissertatio* uses the form of the *quaestio* and the name of Van Schurman appears proudly on the title page. The *Essay* is much more anecdotic in nature, but still contains many argumentative strategies. For instance, Makin chose a male *persona* and contrasted an enlightened male view in favour of women's education with a male view opposing it. An example:

Custom, when it is inveterate, hath a mighty influence: it hath the force of Nature itself. The Barbarous custom to breed Women low, is grown general amongst us, and hath prevailed so far, that it is verily believed (especially amongst a sort of debauched Sots) that Women are not endued with such Reason as Men; nor capable of improvement by Education, as they are. It is looked upon as a monstrous thing, to pretend the contrary.

A learned Woman is thought to be a Comet, that bodes Mischief, whenever it appears. To offer to the world the liberal Education of Women is to deface the Image of God in Man, it will make Women so high, and Men so low, like Fire in the House-top, it will set the whole world in a flame. These things and worse then these, are commonly talked of, and verily believed by many, who think themselves wise Men: to contradict these is a bold Attempt; where the Attempter must expect to meet with such opposition.<sup>413</sup>

From the Greek letters it becomes clear that Van Schurman had the highest respect for Makin. In her book, Makin in turn referred with admiration to Van Schurman as learned woman. In the section 'Women have been good linguists' she wrote the following:

Anna Maria of Utrecht (called by Spanhemius 'ultimum Naturae in hoc sexum conatum et decimam musam', Nature's master-piece amongst Women, excelling the very Muses) hath printed divers Works in Latin, Greek, French and the Persian Tongue; she understood the Arabick also. Besides she was an excellent Poet.<sup>414</sup>

She even reaches the conclusion that Van Schurman, who could write so beautifully, must also have been a public speaker of note. When discussing women and logic, she took Van Schurman's *Dissertatio* as example. Van Schurman was also held up as a classic example of a female philosopher. Finally, she wrote on women and religion:<sup>415</sup>

The works of Anna Maria Schurman that are extant declare how good a Divine she was.<sup>416</sup>

### Anne de Rohan |

My lady, [...] in you two facets have been combined that are normally incompatible, namely high prestige in the world coupled with Christian wisdom. As much as the high status of your very illustrious house will never allow me to unite my soul with yours through a bond of friendship – for that requires equal status – it is still the case that my soul unites with yours through a more enduring link than that of politics, insofar as my wishes are consistent with yours in our love for this heavenly virtue, namely wisdom, which, as the wisest of Kings says, is more valuable than rubies, and everything which one could desire, is not comparable to it.<sup>47</sup>

This was what Van Schurman wrote to a learned French princess, Anne de Rohan, who lived in a Parisian palace which was the 'central hub where all fair ingenuity and eminent scholars came together' ['het middelpunt [...] waar alle fraaije vernuften en uitstekende geleerden zich vereenigden']. Andreas Rivet was one of these scholars. Through him, Van Schurman received a letter from Anne de Rohan requesting contact with her. Van Schurman was favourably disposed towards this request. The Rohan family belonged to the prominent Protestants under Louis XIII, and Anne de Rohan, together with her mother, the learned Catherina de Parthenay, had even been imprisoned in La Rochelle on account of her faith. After her liberation she settled in Paris in a palace and resumed her studies. Van Schurman had already heard of De Rohan ten years earlier from Buchelius and had read her poems, but at the time did not initiate further contact. Anne de Rohan knew most newer and older languages, but preferred the Hebrew language. Her proficiency in Hebrew becomes clear from the fact that Van Schurman used Hebrew citations in a letter to her and did not supply a translation or an exact text reference.<sup>48</sup>

As we have already seen in the letter quoted above, Van Schurman praised Anne de Rohan because she combined two facets in herself: high worldly prestige and Christian wisdom, these being normally incompatible. Even though Van Schurman was not socially equal to De Rohan, they did have a connection through their pursuit of wisdom, and Anne de Rohan would serve as an example for her, a sparkling star in this dark, depraved age, because both of them cherished wisdom, so she wrote. Anne de Rohan replied in a short and sweet letter of which the ending is especially quick-witted: Van Schurman was already so accomplished that Anne de Rohan could not add anything to this, nor offer her services. Van Schurman just had to cherish the memory of a person in France who was carrying the same name and who admired her and wished her all the happiness she deserved. The letters are fair examples of seventeenth century epistolography: laudative, in our eyes overly flattering, in a beautiful style full of wordplay. The writers are competing in showing modesty. Even though Anne de Rohan indicated that she wished to engage in correspondence, unfortunately no other letters to Van Schurman from her hand are available to us today. We do not know in what way she acted as an example of a learned woman for Van Schurman. But in addition to her learning, what also must have attracted Van Schurman to her was her martyrdom.<sup>49</sup>

**Dorothea Moore** | In 1639 Van Beverwijck wrote the following about Dorothea Moore in his book on the excellence of the female sex:

In Ireland lives DOROTHEA MOORE, widow of an English nobleman, being not even 27 years of age, and prettily adorned with all gifts of body and spirit. Who, after she had learned in a short time the Italian and French languages, in the first instance in order to understand all books perfectly, but now also speaks them quite well, has then continued with Latin, which she has also nearly mastered. Not being satisfied, she has started with Hebrew, where she has shown such progress in a few months that she can understand the Bible in it. Furthermore she is so devout that she in between all these studies sets aside a few hours every day for reading and reflection on divine matters. A few days ago she has written a letter in the Hebrew language to the most learned woman who has ever lived in the world.<sup>420</sup>

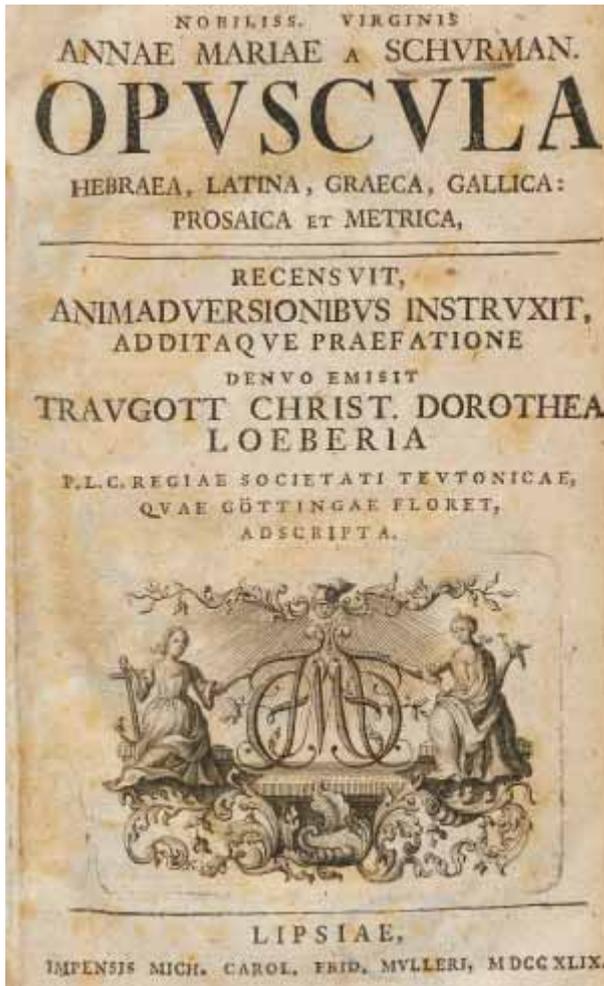
Dorothea Moore was born in Ireland in 1613 as Dorothea King, daughter of Sir John King. She received an aristocratic upbringing and moved in the circles of the Irish Puritan intellectuals. She married, but was widowed at a young age. From Dublin she wrote to Van Schurman in Hebrew and received the following reply in Hebrew:<sup>421</sup>

Peace to the woman I honour!

I have heard tidings about you, friend and esteemed mistress, and I was exalted and overjoyed about the good things that heaven grants us these days to renew the honour of your people. For I said that because of the lack of knowledge, wisdom had gone into exile after the deaths of Lady Jane Grey and Queen Elizabeth – may their memory be blessed.<sup>422</sup> But wisdom has settled in your heart and discernment in your soul,<sup>423</sup> and so is a source of joy to you. Adonai has selected you to be a crown of beatitude for all women.<sup>424</sup> Wisdom has shown the way and you have a fine heritage and have found hidden treasure.<sup>425</sup> That is why I was as happy to receive your book, as with the light of the sun when it rises. I was full of longing to love you and I said in my heart: I come for the honour of your blessedness with these ten words from my mouth: the poverty of my knowledge to conclude a covenant of salt between you and me.<sup>426</sup> Let us decide together to keep our eyes open and to acquire wisdom and discernment, for that is precious. Its value is better than that of silver and fine gold.<sup>427</sup> And if I find grace in your eyes, let me know all of your wishes.<sup>428</sup> May you be blessed by Jahveh and may there be honour and blessings for your people [...]<sup>429</sup>

Van Schurman pays Dorothea Moore a huge compliment: she is the first learned women since the passing of Queen Elizabeth I and Jane Grey. In this letter she again plays the intellectual and devout game in Hebrew that she also played in her Hebrew letters to Rivet and Voetius: a sequence of biblical phrases that the reader is supposed to recognise and identify.

Moore moved to England, probably just after the Irish rebellion of 1641. When Johan Godschalk van Schurman travelled to England, Anna Maria sent a Latin letter, a self-portrait and her *Dissertatio* from 1641 with him as a gift to Dorothea.<sup>430</sup> Unfortunately the letters written by Dorothea to Van Schurman have been lost, but from the following letter we can deduce that she had asked Van Schurman how she could go about life in the best possible way, without too much aggravation. Van Schurman answers as follows in Latin:



This reprint of the 'Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica' was published in 1749 in Germany. Dorothea Loeberia, poet laureate, was the editor.

Your letters were sweeter than honey to me. [...] You are asking me how I deal with matters in order to pass through life's difficulties with the least amount of aggravation, especially in these disastrous times. [...] Yet I do not doubt, should we ever through God's grace be fortunate enough to live together in the same house, that we could inspire each other to greater virtue through the cooperation of minds inclined to study.

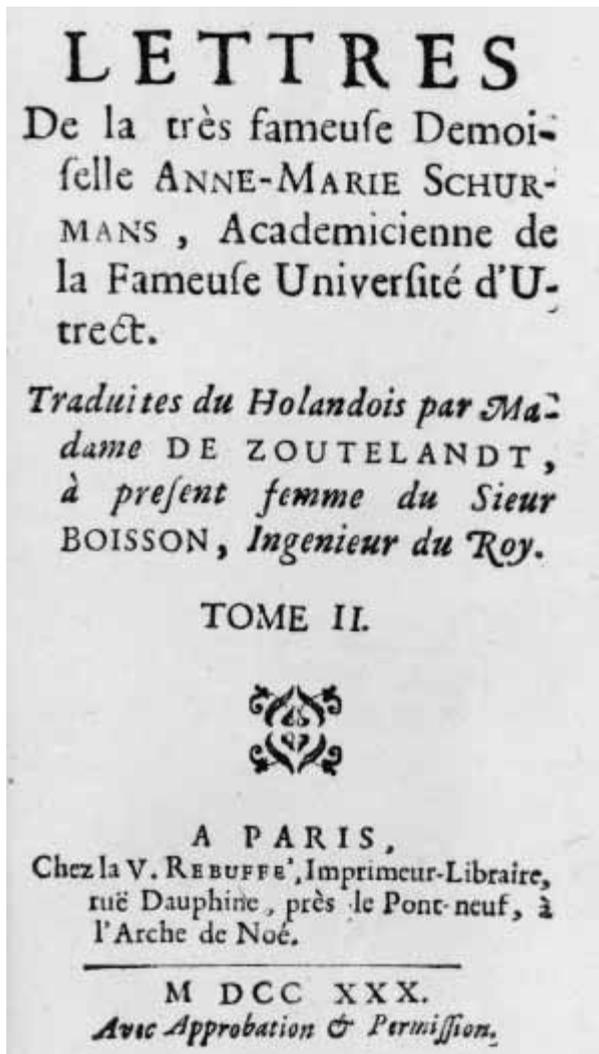
However, I will briefly tell you what my objective is – not that I always reach it. The shortest and by far safest road is shown to us by the Polar Star of the Holy truth. Undoubtedly everything that is necessary for a good and beautiful life must either be ascribed to divine providence or to our duty. Regarding the first, my only concern is that in matters outside our control, I will cast all my care upon him, according to the Apostle's advice: Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.<sup>431</sup> After all, this is the source of all our unrest, that we usually are too concerned with the outcome of matters and consider them continually in our minds, while the outcome is solely dependent on the judgement of the Highest Power. Then there is our duty with which we should moderate the matters within our

control by industriousness as well as insight. Nothing else can snatch us from the cocoon of restfulness so quickly as wrong examples and the cunning seductions of the world, not to mention the disagreeable occurrences and aggravation that are inevitably part of the life of those who find themselves on the public stages of the world. For this disease I know of no better remedy than to withdraw oneself into studying. [...] Here, in our niche where the world's deceptions are far removed from us, we more justly pass judgement on matters and condemn the vanities which fill more profane souls with admiration. Here we are able, in the restfulness that the Muses desire, to elevate our spirit to higher matters and to practise the acquisition of knowledge without any obstacle.<sup>432</sup>

But Dorothea Moore fell in love with John Dury, a man who roamed Europe all his life to realise his life dream of unifying the Protestant churches. For instance, in Utrecht he spoke with Voetius and other clergymen about cooperation. For a while he was the chaplain of Princess Mary, later the wife of Prince William II of Orange, and that is why he accompanied the royal household to The Hague in the spring of 1642. There was some talk that Dorothea Moore would also be included in the royal household as governess. 'Mrs Moore should be with her for her education and that no one more fitting could be chosen to educate her in the principles of religion, virtue and generosity.' In spite of this recommendation she was not appointed. Nevertheless, she did visit Utrecht in July 1643, not only to see her sons from her first marriage – who boarded with Voetius – but also to see Van Schurman. The two women had the pleasure of 'living together in the same house by God's grace as like-minded spirits aspiring to study'. Van Schurman had asked Rivet to admit her friend Moore 'ad intimum amicitiae sacrarium', to the inner sanctuary of friendship, in full accordance with the ideas of the Republic of Letters to write introductory letters to scholars for each other. During Moore's stay in Utrecht, a short but intense correspondence in French with Rivet arose, dealing with the role of women in the Church. Moore wanted to know what role she could play in her special circumstances to strengthen the community of the faithful and to honour God in this way – the main objective of all Christians. Rivet answered that there existed two possibilities: she could be a virtuous wife and mother (Proverbs 31) and she could assist the poor. But this was a problem for Moore, for her children had already left home and her husband had passed away. She wanted to play a more prominent role in supporting other believers and suggested the role of deaconess in the early Church. At that time, older women (widows) guided and taught younger women and assisted the poor (widows and orphans). But the role of deaconess had disappeared in the Church of that time. She asked Rivet again about the unique role of women in the community of the faithful. Which resources could she use to succeed, and what topics should be studied by women to reach this goal? And how could rules of decency be taken into account to allow women to play an active public role with regard to the full body of the Church, in battle against the world and the power of the devil that hindered the coming of Christ's kingdom? She found herself in a unique position within the Church: that of a learned, no longer married woman. She asked Andreas Rivet whether it would not be better for her to use her talents to build up the Church, instead of remaining silent as the Apostle Paul prescribed. But Rivet answered that even if a woman had exceptional talents for teaching and preaching, she still was not allowed to participate in these activities, un-

less she had a special and clear calling from God to do so. We have already discussed that he did regard Van Schurman as one of these exceptions, for according to him she had this special calling from above. It is noteworthy that in Van Schurman's own correspondence with Rivet she referred only in general terms to women and studying, and never to the specific role of women in the Church, as in the correspondence between Moore and Rivet, which was initiated by Van Schurman. It is of course possible that Rivet and Van Schurman did discuss this face to face.<sup>433</sup>

While still in Utrecht, Dorothea Moore subsequently wrote to her cousin Lady Ranelagh that she had two options in her life: she could attach herself to a 'great person' or she could take on the task 'of instructing the youth of her own sex'. She chose the first op-



French translation, 1730, of the 'Paelsteen' and the 'Vraaghbrief'; two scholarly letters by Johan van Beverwijck and Anna Maria van Schurman.

tion, for in 1645 she married John Dury and could in this way fulfil a role within the Church as wife of a church minister. In a long letter to her cousin Lady Ranelagh, she explained why she had married beneath her social status and without any dowry. For a long time she had been of the opinion that she had a calling to stay unmarried, to better serve God, but providence had shown her time and again that marriage existed to support and serve each other and to promote God's kingdom. Whether this point of view was influenced by what Rivet had written to her, we do not know. In any case she moved with Dury to Rotterdam where he became the minister of the English Church, but soon afterwards they left for England where Dury was made responsible for the religious education of the royal children James, Elizabeth and Henry. During this time Dorothea Dury must have met Bathsua Makin, governess of the Princess Elizabeth, and they probably spoke about Van Schurman.<sup>434</sup>

From the date of the Irish rebellion in 1641 Dorothea Moore had not received a penny of interest from her estates. Poverty set in, but her husband Dury regarded income as secondary to his two main objectives: the promotion of Protestant unity and reforming the education system. However, he did not receive the money that he had been promised. Dorothea then started experimenting with perfumes – production as well as sales. Gossip did the rounds: how could she, as a noble lady, have sunk so low:

I had thought that Mistress Dury could far less have stooped to have taken a public shop for the selling of spirits and oils, whether her own or others.<sup>435</sup>

It seems that in her marriage she did occupy herself with the education of girls, as can be seen from her pamphlet *Of the Education of Girls*. However, only a fragment of this work is available to us today, which makes a comparison to the *Dissertatio* impossible. Dorothea had received a sound aristocratic education and besides English, Irish, French, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, she also knew Italian and Spanish. But the ideals that she pursued had a strong Puritan leaning: education should be as simple as the gospel itself and should especially not resemble worldly concerns. For this reason she cancelled dance lessons and 'curious works' from the educational programme, because according to her these solely served to fill girls' fantasy with 'unnecessary, unprofitable and proud imaginations'. When too much money was spent on clothes and cosmetics, it was referred to as 'charitie quite lost'. 'So as we see generally our sexe in this Kingdom minds nothing but idleness and pleasure and live as not using reason, nor knowing God who hath declared that we must account for every idle word and thought.' To the best of my knowledge Van Schurman never spoke in such harsh and puritan tones about women's and girls' education. Only once, in the Dutch poem on the opening of the University of Utrecht, did she encourage women to rather build up inner beauty instead of wasting too much time on mirroring outer beauty. It was only when she became a Labadist that she rejoiced in the fact that she had focused on her study and artistic talents in her youth, for it kept her away from the vain company of other little ladies and from the creation of their embellishments ['daar na van 't ydele gezelschap van andere Jofertjes en van het maken van hare optooiselen heeft afgehouden']. Dorothea Moore had two more children with John Dury, but their little boy died at a very young age. In 1661 Dury left England for good to realise his ideal. He never saw either his wife or his daughter

Doro-Catherine again, even though he only died in 1680. Dorothea Dury passed away in 1664. Unfortunately no traces of any contact between Van Schurman and Moore can be found since the date of the latter's marriage with John Dury.<sup>436</sup>

**Marguerite d'Ailly** | The only surviving indication that Van Schurman had been in contact with the French Huguenot Marguerite d'Ailly de Péquigny, widow of admiral François de Coligny-Châtillon, is a copy of the *Dissertatio* from 1641 that is kept in the *Bibliothèque Nationale* in Paris. The book is exquisitely bound and decorated with gilded edges, initials and dedications such as *Te Tibi soli serviam* and *Te amando moriar*. Unfortunately these are the only indications that D'Ailly had put her stamp of approval on the *Dissertatio*.<sup>437</sup>

### *Poemata*

#### 'Ad Serenissimam Anglae Reginam' |

To the most gracious Queen of England who recently rose from her childbed, winter 1635

Echo. Referring to the coat of arms of the British Royal House, illustrated by three roses

Flora, what miracle has been born to you in this cold month of December, you who hate infertile seasons in which nothing happens?

A rose.

You have conquered nature; noble hope of an eternal springtime smiles on the English people

A rose.

May you be the mother of gods more often.

Destiny succeeds or fails as you do or do not bring forth new life industrious goddess.

A rose.<sup>438</sup>

On 28 December 1635 Queen Henrietta Maria gave birth to her fourth child: Princess Elizabeth. The wife of King Charles I would have four more children. Quite appropriately Anna Maria van Schurman addressed her as Flora, the classical goddess of blossoming fertility. Van Schurman had met the Queen via her contacts who moved in court circles (Rivet, Elizabeth Stuart, the mother of Elisabeth von der Pfalz). Whether or not Henrietta Maria knew enough Latin to appreciate the clever echo poem, we do not know; what we do know is that the poem first circulated in manuscript form, but already in 1638 it was included in a Utrecht volume of echo poems, together with two more echo poems written by her. From 1648 it appears in all editions of the *Opuscula*. The echo poem is full of female references: not only the childbed from which the Queen has risen, however high her station in life, or the goddess Flora as blossoming mother-goddess, but also the act of giving birth. In the poem Henrietta is portrayed as the goddess Flora, who hates infertility because such is

against her nature of being in bloom. She is so fertile that she has conquered nature by producing a rose in the midst of a dead winter. A rose in winter indicates glory to the mother, who, as a blooming woman, brings forth fruit, even in an infertile season. But also because she, being a Rose Queen, has given birth to a little Rose, a little princess, for the Rose Dynasty, this is of triple significance (three roses were the emblem of the House of Stuart). The praise that Van Schurman has for the Queen is embedded in the wish that she may bring forth more little rose gods and goddesses.<sup>439</sup> That wish was granted. Regrettably the 'little rose' Elizabeth was nipped in the bud: she passed away at the age of fifteen, shortly after the execution of her father Charles I. Henrietta Maria would only return to England when her son Charles II ascended the throne and she became queen mother.<sup>440</sup>

**'Magni ac generosi animi Heroinae Gornacensi'** | In February 1640 the learned inhabitant of Utrecht, Buchelius, wrote in his diary:

Mrs Marie le Jars de Gournay, who is still alive, has written very amicably to Mrs Anna Maria van Schurman that she has the intention, if she is granted sufficient years of life, to publish her letters and that she will bequeath them in commemoration of their mutual love and respect. Her brother has shown me this [letter].<sup>441</sup>

Anna Maria van Schurman greatly admired her French predecessor, the much older Catholic Marie le Jars de Gournay, writer and autodidact. Marie became famous mainly because of her friendship with Montaigne; she was his *fille d'alliance* [adopted daughter]. After his death she published his *Essais*. But in her own right she also published poems, translations, philosophical work, literary criticism and feminist tracts, for example *De l'égalité des hommes et des femmes* [On the equality of men and women] in which she puts women on a par with men.<sup>442</sup> Van Schurman spoke with approval about this booklet and attempted to establish contact with De Gournay by writing a Latin praise poem on it:

Anna Maria van Schurman congratulates the heroic Mrs De Gournay who has a great and noble spirit defending women's issues so gallantly:

You carry Pallas' weapons, gallant virgin  
in order to wear the laurel wreath, you carry Pallas' weapons.  
Thus it is appropriate that you make a plea for the cause of our innocent sex,  
and turn your own weapons against guilty men.  
Lead the way, noble Gournay, we shall follow your banner:  
indeed your good cause, stronger than oak wood, leads the way for us.<sup>443</sup>

In this poem she portrayed Marie le Jars de Gournay as a pioneer, as someone combining the wisdom and gallantry of Pallas Athena. Marie was years older and had already made her contribution to women's issues, not only by way of her book, but also through her way of life as an independent woman. Even though they had diverging worldviews, Van Schurman bestowed high praise on Marie le Jars de Gournay. She was fighting with men's weapons – the pen – and in this way she returned their words to them with a boomerang effect. De Gournay led the way, following the ideals; Van Schurman and other women would follow her banner.

De Gournay gave heartfelt thanks for the praise poem discussed above, but as an old-

er and wiser feminist, advised Van Schurman not to waste her talents on the study of Semitic languages. Whatever she was looking for in these languages could also be found in Latin, Greek, Italian and Spanish translations, but especially in her native language, French. In her reply to Marie le Jars de Gournay, Van Schurman defended herself. Although she was grateful for the letter and for the fame that De Gournay brought her, she did not agree with De Gournay's criticism of her study of languages. She was spending little time on the study of languages, except for Hebrew, since that was the language God himself spoke, and that would stay with people until they arrived in heaven. She did not heed the older feminist's advice but went her own way.<sup>444</sup>

**'In versionem Annaei Senecae ab illustri ac generosa Heroina Domina Birgitta Thott elaboratam'** | In 1658 the work of the famous classical author Seneca was translated for the first time from Latin into Danish by Birgitte Thott. Her book opens with a Latin praise poem by Anna Maria van Schurman:

On the edition of Annaeus Seneca  
by the illustrious and generous heroine Birgitte Thott.  
An epigram of Anna Maria van Schurman

Look! A noble woman has now dared  
to invoke the great shadow of Seneca  
and the ashes of so great a man.  
She grants him new life under the Arctic stars  
and enables the learned man to speak with a new voice.  
Cordoba, yield place, Annaeus' fame has left you,  
which only the Danish people claim as theirs.  
People from Jutland, weave garlands for the tenth Muse  
and let a choir of nymphs carry the worthy rewards.  
Isn't she worthy of the highest top of the Parnassus,  
she who gave him new life, but life without death?<sup>445</sup>

Birgitte Thott was a Danish learned woman of aristocratic descent, originally from Sorø. Both her mother Sophie Below and her sister Anne were learned women. Birgitte Thott was proficient in at least ten languages: Danish, German, Dutch, English, French, Italian, Spanish Latin, Greek and Hebrew. But she became famous particularly for her translations from Latin. She married Otto Giøe, but their marriage remained childless. Her second time of study started when, as a widow, she still set out to learn Latin. In 1658 she published her most important work, the first Danish translation of Seneca's *Philologus* – a book consisting of a thousand pages.<sup>446</sup>

Van Schurman's praise poem on the title page of the book took up a whole page. In that poem she referred to Thott as the tenth Muse, a common practice for referring to a learned woman. Thott had developed a great fondness for Seneca, just like Van Schurman and another Danish learned woman – the writer Leonora Christine Ulefeld. It was probably the result of the recommendation made by Juan Luis Vives in his work on Christian women. When women wished to study Latin, the short proverbs of Seneca followed by philosophical lessons were eminently suitable. From the other liminary poems in this edi-



Latin poem for Birgitta Thott, a Danish learned woman with whom Van Schurman corresponded.

tion of Seneca it becomes clear that Thott was in contact with many scholars from the Sorø Academy, for instance with Henrik Ernst, professor of law and moral philosophy, but also with academics from the University of Copenhagen, such as the professor of medicine and physician Thomas Bartholin. It was he who facilitated the contact between Birgitte Thott and Anna Maria van Schurman after his visit to Van Schurman in 1646. He would write to Birgitte Thott in what way she could surpass Anna Maria van Schurman.<sup>447</sup>

Birgitte Thott was respected as an equal member of the Danish circle of scholars, even though she did not have a public profession, did not travel or even leave her residential town of Turebygård. She had a lot of influence, and not only because of her translations. She became the first defender of women's rights in Scandinavia and she was strongly involved with the education of women in the family. For instance, she was the legal guardian of her motherless niece Elisabeth Thott, she urged Sofie Thott to study, and donated books to her relative Anne Giøe. These books later formed the basis of the Karen Brahe library. Inspired by Birgitte, her relative Susanne Giøe translated a booklet by Vives on the education of women. Birgitte Thott dedicated the book *Om et løcksallig Lief* (On a joyous life) to Danish women. She translated a great deal of moral-philosophical work, religious writings and genealogical studies. Some of these books were printed, others remained in manu-

script form. Unfortunately, after the great fire of Copenhagen in 1728, of her extensive correspondence in Latin, there remained no letter to or from Anna Maria van Schurman.<sup>448</sup>

**Elogia** | The only Latin praise poem for Van Schurman written by a learned woman was from the pen of Marie le Jars de Gournay. De Gournay included this poem in her *De l'égalité des hommes et des femmes* [On the equality of men and women]. In this work she included Van Schurman in the gallery of famous learned women and referred to her as the Dutch Minerva and the rival in eloquence of all famous women. She was proficient in all ancient and modern languages and all the liberal and noble arts.<sup>449</sup>

### *Peregrinatio academica*

Utrecht, 1645. Although it was only a day after Christmas, Van Schurman opened her door. The visitor was the Queen of Poland, Maria Louisa de Gonzaga. She had such a heartfelt wish to see the learned and famous Van Schurman with her own eyes that the latter gave in and allowed the visit. The historian Jean le Laboureur had to write down every detail. From his report, which was also partially included in the *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica* and which was translated into Dutch by her contemporary and fellow townsman Simon de Vries, a beautiful image emerged:

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of the winter month of the year 1645, the Queen wished to honour with a visit the world-famous Lady Anna Maria van Schurman, in the city of her birth, Utrecht. In order to avoid the crowd, she took the carriage of the wife of one of her marshals, left members of her court behind, and so appeared incognito at the house of the esteemed noble lady, together with the lord bishop of Orange and four more persons, of which he (Laboureur) was one.

Her Majesty was amazed by the many works of art, which had been produced by these noble hands in great numbers; paintings, dry-point and engraving on copper, pictures cut on glass with a diamond, embroidery, etc. But more amazed were all of them when they heard her replying intelligently in various languages to the most difficult questions from different disciplines. The lord bishop of Orange addressed her in Italian, and she replied in the same language. When she was asked to comment on theological issues, she gave appropriate and profound arguments. Furthermore she could express herself very well in elegant Latin.

Mr Corrade, personal physician of the Queen, entered into a discourse with her in Greek, and was answered by her in the same language. Laboureur did the same in French, and received a reply in the same language to what he had uttered; everything with the highest degree of perfection. She would have made herself heard in even more languages, had any of the company present been able to understand those, since in addition to the already mentioned Italian, Latin, Greek, French and her own native tongue Dutch, she is also well-versed in the Hebrew, Rabbinical [Hebrew], Chaldeic, Syrian, Arabic, Spanish, German and even more languages.

In her memory she has maps of all countries, and prides herself on travelling there without using a guide or interpreter.<sup>450</sup>

A year later another high society woman visited Van Schurman: Anne Geneviève de Bourbon-Condé, Duchess of Longueville, a woman praised in literature as beautiful and 'witty',



In 1660 S. van Lamsweerde made this drawing of the Utrecht Dom and Dom Square. Above the house 'Achter den Dom' [Behind the Cathedral], he wrote 'The house of Miss Schuermans' ('De Woningh van Juf Schuermans').

a woman who also participated in politics. She darted from the one love affair to the next, among others with the writer La Rochefoucauld. During the peace talks in Münster she visited Van Schurman in 1646. The Duchess wished to see her and sent her almoner to convey this wish to Van Schurman. Joly, writer and chaplain, accompanied him. Van Schurman replied via her brother that 'she was not used to such important visitors and, for that matter, there was nothing special to see. But if her Royal Highness really wished to come, she was welcome.' This unpretentiousness made Madame de Longueville decide to come accompanied only by four or five ladies-in-waiting, the almoner and the chaplain. Anna Maria opened the door herself and welcomed them in impeccable French. She showed them all her curiosities. When it came to learned topics, the ladies suddenly disappeared, the gentlemen stayed behind to admire her calligraphy in Hebrew, Greek, Rabbinical Hebrew, Syrian and Arabic. According to them, she was nearly as good as the French calligrapher Gagneur from France. She was also at home in the arts and sciences, just like these other learned men from Friesland had been once: Agricola and Gansfort. The visitors were of the opinion that Van Schurman surpassed most learned men – in addition to her learnedness, she had ample artistic talent. Joly immediately recognised the portraits of the Queens of Bohemia and of Poland. But how perfectly executed was the little sculpture in wood she made of her brother, and what about these two portraits that she had etched with a diamond on a mirror! The two clerics also tested Van Schurman's view on predestination:

We subsequently addressed her in Latin and the clergyman who had accompanied me, put several questions to her on predestination. She listened with great interest and then replied in much better phrasing and style than he had used.<sup>451</sup>

Joly was so impressed after the visit to Van Schurman that he immediately entered a Utrecht bookstore and bought her *De Vitae Termino*. When he was in Münster, he found copies of her *Vraaghbrief* (containing a discussion with Van Beverwijck on the healing of the blind-born man) as well as her *Dissertatio* and the *Opuscula*. He used all these sources in writing his report on the visit to Van Schurman.

### Differences

When we compare the visits of the three dignitaries, Queen Christina of Sweden (see beginning of this chapter), the Duchess Anne Geneviève and Queen Maria Louisa de Gonzaga with one another, it is striking how they followed a set pattern.<sup>452</sup> However learned and literate the women might have been, they were surrounded by learned men who acted as their spokesmen, who questioned Van Schurman and compiled an account of the visit. Anne Geneviève was solely interested in the works of art, not in learned discussions. When male scholars visited Van Schurman they did not need other men to put questions to her or to write a report; they did that themselves. It is an indication of the dependence of learned women. It seems that Van Schurman was also an exception in this regard, since she reported on her academic discussions at the University of Cologne, even though she did tone it down considerably:

About the disputes that have taken place, of which you wish to hear the particulars, they have not been of great importance. But there is an abbot, being a man of intellect and discretion, who has conferred with us about religion, as well as two Franciscan monks, one of whom is a professor of philosophy and lecturer in theology, who was so accommodating in our first discussion that I hoped he would renounce his vows and make his way to Utrecht. But he was more reticent in our second discussion, and seems not to be able to go without his [monk's] cap in winter.

[Aengaende de voorgevallene disputeren waer van U.Ed. de particulariteiten wenst te vernemen, syn tot noch toe van geen groote consideratie geweest; Alleen ister een Overste, synde een man van verstant en discretie, die met ons van de religie heeft geconferereert; als mede twee Franciscaner Monicken, waarvan den eenen is een professor in de Philosophie, en Lector in de Theologie, die onse eerste conferentie so toegevende was, dat ick verhoopte hy soude haest de kap op den tuyn hebben gehangen, en hem naer Utrecht hebben gegeven. doch was in de tweede meer vervreemt, en schynt deselve in den winter niet wel sal kunnen missen.]

The aforementioned is not the only difference between the female and male *Republic of Letters*. Even though the learned women, just like the men, transcended boundaries of language, nationality and religion in their writings, kept to the strict rules of etiquette and the rules of *antidora*, the exchange of gifts, passed on information and wrote letters of recommendation for scholars (Van Schurman did so for Dorothea Moore), there did exist clear differences. Learned women could not really undertake a *peregrinatio academica*, for even if they visited famous scholars, it was out of the question for them to follow lectures at

### Visit of Anne Geneviève, Duchess of Longueville, September 1646

And finally we arrived in Utrecht which is a city built more traditionally than other cities in Holland... (150) Besides, the most unusual thing that was present in the city of Utrecht was a young lady, who was about 35 years old, called Anna Marie de Schurman, who knew not only the Latin, Greek, Italian, Spanish and French languages, but who also knew Hebrew, and a few other oriental languages and who made wonderful pieces of work by hand.

As Their Highnesses were curious to see her, Madame de Longueville sent her chaplain to this lady, to make those wishes known.

I went with him and noticed that she did not wish to speak; she asked her brother to tell us that she was not used to going to high places and that Her Highness would not see anything special; nevertheless, that she would do as he pleased. Such modesty made Madame de Longueville decide to go herself, with few people and no men, except for her orderly, who was a very old man, so as not to trouble her; and she took in her carriage only herself and four or five women. Mademoiselle de Schurman came to greet them at the door of her house and complimented her in fluent French and then showed them all the places of interest.

When the Princesses had retired, I remained there with the chaplain of Madame de Longueville and we saw her writing on paper set in a frame with the characters of each language. The calligraphy in Hebrew and Greek of the famous writer le Gagneur is not more beautiful and I have never seen anything that would come near the beauty of her handwriting in Rabbinical Hebrew, Syrian or Arabic.

And if one can compare this excellent girl, as far as sciences and languages are concerned, to the most learned men of the past, one could say that she surpasses them all; one can compare her only to Rudolphe Agricola and Wessel Gansfort, both born in Friesland near Groningen, who were most illustrious in the sciences and even in the Greek and Hebrew languages, in the century of the 1500s and who possessed this same perfection of writing, which Agricola also had in painting.

This young lady had done the same : she showed us small portraits that she had painted, which were painted in such a natural way and so true in colour that I could easily recognise the Queen of Bohemia, whom I had seen in the Hague;

Another showed the Queen of Poland whose portrait she had painted when she was there, as this Queen was also curious and went to see her as our Princesses did; as S. Laboureur noted in his travels in Poland (printed in Paris in 1647 in 4. p.65).

She also knew about sculpture, as we could see a representation of her brother whose face she had sculpted from wood. And she had invented a way to make portraits on glass with the tip of a diamond: she showed us two portraits that she had done like this on mirrors. And she had done a very lifelike self-portrait, like the virgin Lala who excelled at painting in Rome at the time of Varron [...].

Afterwards, we spoke to her in Latin and the cleric whom I accompanied asked her some questions about predestination, she listened carefully, and she answered in much better language than I had used to speak to her. I noticed that whatever she was saying, she was saying carefully, like a person who listens to herself and is mistress of herself. She had written and had had printed a few books; I found one in Utrecht, and I bought it, on a difficult question of *termino vitae, fatali an mobile*.

Since then I have found in Munster a book entitled *Bevrovicij epistolicæ quaestiones*, in which there is an elegant letter to this famous doctor Berovicij [Van Beverwijck] of Dordrecht concerning the healing of the person who was born blind, in order to know why Our Lord took mud in order to cure him and did not simply use his words as He had done in previous encounters.

She has also written a few books on the problem *Num foeminae Christianae conveniat studium literarium* [Whether the study of letters is suitable for a Christian woman], in which she demonstrates, through both syllogisms of dialectics and an argument in the form of a letter to André Rivet, a church minister who lives in the Hague, that young ladies could and should be taught letters, and she concludes thus: The study of letters is suitable for a Christian woman.

From which we draw the following conclusion: Women may and ought to be excited and encouraged by the best and strongest reasons, by the testimonies of wise men, and, lastly, by the examples of illustrious women, to embrace of this kind of life, especially those women who have more leisure time available than others, and have above average means and support for their studies. And because it is best that the mind be seasoned with learning from very infancy, therefore the parents themselves should be spurred on and admonished of their duty in this regard.

[...] But I let myself be carried away in investigating all the learned women thoroughly, this search could be endless, and would in any case not reveal one woman which would be as learned as our Miss de Schurman, as we can deduce from her books in Greek, Latin and French, which have since been printed all together in Holland with her portrait at the beginning. We can indeed say that she is a miracle of our century. After all this I am not surprised that the author of the little book entitled *Cupido triumphans*, which was written in honour of the feminine sex, placed first, of all the famous women, Marie de Schurman, saying that she was *omnium scientiarum homo*.

Consequently, Madame de Longueville judged that there was nothing left to see in the whole of Holland, after her, and so she left to return to Munster.

I. Joly 1670: 146-150, 167.

[Et finalement nous arrivâmes à Vtrecht qui est une ville bastie plus à l' antique que les autres villes de Hollande.. (150) Au surplus la chose la plus rare qui estoit alors dans la ville d'Vtrecht, estoit une Damoiselle, âgée de 35 ans ou environ, nommée Anna Marie de Schurman, qui sçavoit non seulement la langue Latine, Grecque, Italienne, Espagnole et François, mais aussi qui avoit connoissance de la langue Hebraïque; et de quelques autres langues Orientales et qui faisoit de la main des ouvrages admirables.

Leurs Altesses ayans curiosité de la voir; Madame de Longueville envoya chez elle son Aumosnier, pour luy faire sçavoir son desir.

Je l' accompagnay et remarquay, qu' elle ne vous voulut point parler, mais elle nous fit dire par son frère, qu' elle n' avoit pas guere accoustumé d' aller aux grandes maisons et qu' au surplus son Altesse ne verroit pas grande chose: neantmoins qu' elle feroit ce qu' il luy plairoit Cette modestie fit resoudre Madame de Longueville d' y aller elle mesme, avec peu de personnes et sans aucun homme, sinon son escuyer, qui estoit un venerable veillard, pour ne luy donner de peine; et elle ne mit dans son carosse que Mademoiselle de Longueville et quatre ou cinq femmes. Mademoiselle de Schurman les vint recevoir a la porte de son logis et leur fit son compliment en bon François et leur montra en suite toutes les curiositez.

Les Princesses s' estans retirées, ie demeuray là avec l' Aumosnier de Madame de Longueville ou nous vismes de son escriture sur un papier enchasse dans un cadre en caracteres de chacune de ses langues. L' Hebreu et le Grec de la Calligraphie du celebre Ecrivain le Gagneur ne sont pas plus beaux et ie n' ay iamais rien veu qui approcheast de la beauté de son écriture Rabbinesque, Syriaque et Arabique.

Que si l' on peut comparer cette excellente fille, en ce qui est des sciences, et des langues, aux plus sçavans hommes des temps passez, on peut dire qu' en cy elle les a surpassez tous, ne voyant

que Rodolphe Agricola et Vessel Gansfort, tous deux nez en Frise près de Groningen, qui furent des plus illustres dans les sciences et mesme dans les langues Grecque et Hebraïque, au siecle de 1500 et à qui l' on ait donné cette perfection de bien et excellemment écrire: laquelle aussi donna entrée a Agricola dans la peinture.

Cette Damoiselle avoit fait demesme: car elle nous montra de petits portraits qu' elle avoit faits, qui estoient peints si au naturel, et si bien enluminés, que i' y reconnus sans peine la Reyne de Boheme, que l' avois veue à la Haye;

Un autre y reconnut la Reyne de Pologne qu' elle avoit peinte en passant par la, Car cette Reyne eut aussi la curiosité et prit la peine de l' aller visiter chez elle comme nos Princesses; ainsi que le S. Laboureur a remarque en son voyage de Pologne (imp. à Paris en 1647 in 4. p.65)

Elle estoit aussi sçavante en sculpture, comme nous vismes par une representation de son frere, dont elle avoit fait le visage en bosse sur du bois. Et elle avoit trouvé l' invention de portraire sur du verre avec la pointe d' un diamant: elle nous montra deux portraits, qu' elle avoit faits de cette sorte sur des miroirs. Bref elle s' estoit peinte elle mesme avec beaucoup de ressemblance, a l' exemple de la vierge Lala qui excelloit a Rome en la peinture du temps de Varron [...]

Nous luy parlames par apres en latin et l' Ecclesiastique avec qui i' estois, luy ayant fait quelque question sur la predestination, elle nous écouta attentivement, et 'a l' instant elle nous répondit en beaucoup meilleurs termes que ie ne luy avois parlé. Je remarquay que ce qu' elle disoit, elle le prononçoit posément et comme une personne qui s' écouitoit et qui s' écouitoit et se possedoit fort. Elle avoit écrit et fait imprimer des lors quelques ouvrages, donti' en trouvay un a Vtrecht, que l' achetay, sur une question difficile de termino vitae, fatali an mobili.

Depuis ie rencontray a Munster un livre intitulé Io. Bevrovicii epistolicae quaestiones, ou il y a une epistre elegante a ce Berovicium Medecin fameux, de Dordrecht sur la guerison de l' aveugle né, sçavoir pour quelle raison Nostre Seigneur prit de la boue a fin le guerit, et n' usa pas de sa simple parole, comme il avoit fait en d' autres rencontres.

Elle a fait aussi quelque écrits sur ce problème Num foeminae Christianae conveniat studium literarium, ou elle prouve tant par syllogismes de la Dialectique, que par une dissertation en forme d' epistre a André Rivet Ministre demeurant à la Haye, que plusieurs ieunes filles peuvent et doivent estre instruites dans les lettres, en concluant ainsi sa these: Foeminae Christianae convenit studium literarum

Vnde consecrarium hoc elicimus, Foeminas optimis ac validis rationibus sapientum testimoniis, ac denique illustrium foeminarum exemplis, posse ac debere ad hoc vitae genus amplectendum excitari: in primis autem eas, quae otio, aliisque mediis ac subsidiis ad studia literarum prae caeteris sunt instructae, et quia praestat ab ipsâ infantia melioribus studiis mentem imbui. Igitur ipsos parentes primario instigandos, atque sui officii serio ad monendos esse putamus.

[...] Mais ie m' emporte insensiblement à une recherche trop exacte de toutes les femmes sçavantes, qui pourroit estre sans fin, et ou ie n' en trouverois pas neantmoins une que approchant en science de nostre Damoiselle de Schurman comme on le voit pas ses oeuvres Grecques, Latines et Françaises, qui ont esté depuis impiimées toutes ensemble en Hollande avec son portrait au commencement. Enfin l' on peut dire que estois une merveille de nostre siecle. Apres quoy ie m' estonne pas si, l' Auteur du petit livre intitulé Cupido triumphans, qui a esté fait en l' honneur du sexe feminin, a mis en teste de toutes les femmes illustres Marie de Schurman disant qu' elle estoit omnium scientiarum homo.

De sorte que Madame de Longueville iugeant qu' il y avoit plus rien a voir apres elle dans tout la Hollande, elle se mit en chemin pour s' en retourner a Munster.]

their local or any other university. Dorothea Moore visited Van Schurman, entered into correspondence with Rivet and had discussions with Voetius, but at the same time she came to visit her two sons from her first marriage who boarded with Voetius. Van Schurman travelled to Cologne in the first instance for the sake of her aunts and then used this opportunity to participate in disputations with the professors at Cologne University, but that part was not planned.

Another difference with the male *Republic of Letters* is the theme of the education and development of women, that appears much more regularly in Van Schurman's correspondence with these women. That is not surprising, for these women had to follow a laborious route themselves to become educated or learned women. Universities were forbidden territories and their education was chiefly dependent on learned fathers or brothers (or, in the rare case of Birgitte Thott, a learned mother). They were also involved with the education of women and girls in their own countries: they were teachers and/or wrote books on women's education. In this respect, Christina of Sweden was an exception, when compared to women such as Bathsua Makin, Dorothea Moore, Birgitte Thott, Marie du Moulin, Marie le Jars de Gournay and Van Schurman. Their specific involvement in women's education stemmed from their consciousness of what development and education had meant to them in their own lives – a real transformation. Even today we see the same pattern with many women in science.<sup>453</sup>

Van Schurman also corresponded on women's studies with men, for instance with Andreas Rivet. However, in this case it was a different relationship, for he was her mentor and teacher. From these 'discussions', her (*Amico*) *Dissertatio* also evolved. But for most other learned and literate women she fulfilled the role of the shining example; not for the much older Marie le Jars de Gournay and to the best of my knowledge also not for Queen Christina of Sweden, but definitely for Sara Nevius, Anna van Beverwijck, Marie du Moulin, Elisabeth von der Pfalz, Birgitte Thott, Bathsua Makin and Dorothea Moore, as well as for the daughters of the English scholar John Morris. The latter occupied himself with manuscripts, the Anglo-Saxon language, botany and book discussions, and had his daughters Elizabeth and Anna send drawings and poems to Van Schurman. In their home, they heard their father praising Van Schurman's calligraphy and papercuttings, and ranking her letters on a par with those of Hugo de Groot.<sup>454</sup>

Yet another difference with learned men was that learned women, just like Van Schurman did, took historical women and women from antiquity as sources of inspiration and role models to identify with. Male scholars would not dream of invoking biblical heroes and heroes from antiquity as examples to justify their own studies. Van Schurman must have been able to recite this list of biblical women and women from antiquity in her sleep: Deborah, the Queen of Sheba, Sappho, Corinna, Paula, Sempronia, Cornelia, Laelia, Mutia, Cleobulina, Cassandra Hortensia, Enonia, Albina, Pella, Zenobia, Valeria, Proba and Eudocia. We have already mentioned that in the Netherlands the example of the three Anna's was impressed upon her, and via Voetius she had probably heard of Maria Landsberg and maybe also of Johanna Otho. But which foreign woman served as role model for Van Schurman?<sup>455</sup>

Georgette de Montenay (1540-after 1599), noble lady-in-waiting from the Calvinistic

milieu surrounding Queen Jeanne d' Albret, mother of the late Henry IV of France, wrote a book in French and Latin on Christian emblems. The volume experienced several reprints, and Anna Roemer Visscher translated the French texts.<sup>456</sup> However, Van Schurman never mentioned her. She did mention the learned and pious Olympia Fulvia Morata, born and bred in the Protestant atmosphere of the court of Renée de France and Ercole II d' Este, where she soon excelled in Greek and Latin. She had to flee the Inquisition and went to live in Germany with her husband. Following her early death in 1555, she was revered as a Protestant martyr. Her work in Latin and Greek was published several times. That combination of learnedness and martyrdom must have held a special appeal for Van Schurman.<sup>457</sup> Furthermore, she praised the learned woman Marie le Jars de Gournay in a praise poem as a heroine who fought the battle for women's issues, and also regularly mentioned the learned Queen Elizabeth of England, but her finest example remained Lady Jane Grey, in whose person learning, piousness and martyrdom were merged:

An example that I always kept in mind was that of the incomparable Queen Jane Grey. No other nation, no other time will bring forth her equal (if I dare be so bold). O swan song, not sung in the shadow of a school, but in the last moments of glorious martyrdom, who would not honour you as an oracle for God's cause?<sup>458</sup>

### The first female university student

'O bright torch of Europe and immortal ornament of letters'  
 ['O clair flambeau de l' Europe et l' ornement immortel des lettres']<sup>459</sup>

Van Schurman was the first female university student in Utrecht and the Netherlands. But was she also the first female university student in Europe? The women who formed part of her female network within the European *Republic of Letters*, such as Bathsua Makin, Dorothea Moore, Elisabeth von der Pfalz, Christina of Sweden, Marie le Jars de Gournay and Birgitte Thott were learned and proficient in Latin, but were not associated in any way with a university. This does not exclude the possibility that they received private tuition from university teachers, or that they, like the learned Birgitte Thott, mingled with professors and scholars. Of the women from the past whom she admired, Olympia Morata is presumed to have given Greek lectures at the University of Heidelberg, but according to recent research this is based on a misunderstanding. Furthermore, her education had been private. Other learned European women, such as Elizabeth Weston, Anne Dacier, Louise and Julia de Sigea, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz were indeed associated with the *Republic of Letters*, but not with a university. In most cases they moved in royal or aristocratic circles or they lived in convents and received private tuition, sometimes from their father or from professors. That also applies to Anna Memorata from Poland.<sup>460</sup>

I do not take into account women who attended lectures disguised as males, such as the women mentioned in the quotation preceding Chapter 2, Lastinea Mantinea and Axiothea Phlissia, who came to listen to Plato. For the same reason I exclude the case of the

Polish woman Nawojka, who presumably followed lectures in Cracow dressed as a boy in the late Middle Ages. The point is that Van Schurman had permission to attend lectures; she was an official and accredited student.

In Italy, where some of the earliest universities had been established, Bettisia Gozzandini was allowed to teach at the University of Bologna, and in the 15th century some young and beautiful women were allowed to deliver a public oration in Latin, for example Constanze Varano on the occasion of a visit of a foreign head of state, but they had received private tuition from teachers. Andrea Novella, daughter of a law professor, was also famous and was allowed to stand in for her father when he was ill. She read out his written lecture from behind a curtain. Cassandra Fedele, who moved in humanist circles of the University of Padua, participated in public debates on theological and philosophical issues. With due allowance for the fact that the praise she received focused more on her beauty than on her learning, she did not study at the university. Alessandra Scala also followed private lectures from some academic staff members at the University of Florence, but she did not follow public lectures. One Italian woman might qualify: Elena Lucrezia Cornaro Piscopia (1646-1684). She knew Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic and Aramaic and was also well-versed in theology and philosophy. She had written orations, letters and poems in Latin that were also published. In 1678 a doctoral degree in philosophy was conferred on her. She graduated, therefore one could say that she had been a doctoral student. But still, Anna Maria van Schurman preceded her with more than 40 years.<sup>461</sup>

The standard work on the subject, *A History of the University in Europe* (1997), claims that the resistance against women at universities was so enormous that real progress only took place in the 19th century. Van Schurman and Piscopia were the great exceptions. When Carla Gabriella Patin, daughter of a professor at the University of Padua, wanted to follow Piscopia's example and enrol for a doctoral thesis, the academic authorities did not give permission for fear that the phenomenon would spread. More than fifty years later, Laura Bassi succeeded in obtaining a doctorate in philosophy at the University of Bologna (1732). In Germany the first doctorates to women were only conferred in 1733 (Wittenberg) and in 1750 (Greifswald). Dorothea Erzleben obtained her doctorate in medicine in Halle in 1754.<sup>462</sup>

Admission to a university made Van Schurman (and to a lesser extent Piscopia) exceptional in society, and as a result, they received enormous attention in contemporary literature. Admittedly, the research on learned women is still in its infancy and somewhere in Europe a forgotten learned woman might still surface who then might be shown to have studied at a university. Until such time, Anna Maria van Schurman will remain the first female student at the University of Utrecht, the first in the Netherlands and also in Europe. And that is why her 'sun of justice [...] will not ever set in any time or place' ['die Sonne der Gerechtigheit [...] op geen plaats of tijd meer onder gaan'].<sup>463</sup>

PART III

**Anna Maria van Schurman  
leaves Utrecht  
(1669-1678)**



## ‘With clouded judgement?’ [‘Een wolk voor haar verstand?’]: severing ties with Utrecht

Regarding part of my possessions that I have sold that were the contents of the Utrecht house and a part of my library, together with furniture that I got rid of, leaving Holland with only two investment certificates [...] towards my upkeep; all the rest I have already spent and used for pious works, having done so completely voluntarily and without anyone’s insistence.

[Wat belanckt een gedeelte van mijn goederen bij mij vercocht, bestaende inden huys tot Utrecht, en een gedeelte van mijn bibliotheecqt, sampt meubelen daarvan ick mij ontlast hebbe, Hollandt verlatende met noch twee rentebrieven, [...] mij gedient tot mijn onderhoudt en de rest alreede besteedt en gebruikt tot pieuse werken, sulck gedaen hebbende geheel vrijwillig en sonder aendringen van ymandt.]<sup>464</sup>

### Utrecht

Utrecht, autumn 1669. The house behind the Cathedral is in a stir. Workers are carrying books and furniture outside, away. The house is being sold. From the neighbouring house, Voetius is looking on in disbelief. What is going on here? After fifty years, Anna Maria van Schurman is leaving the city. She is following her heart. Never again will she see Utrecht.

Van Schurman had had a successful life, filled with studies, publications, participation in academic life, a life filled with visitors, she was well known and had apparent influence throughout Europe. She was at the peak of her fame – now this... Her dissatisfaction with her life in Utrecht had started after her stay in Cologne (1653-1654), and was at first not too obvious on the surface of her life, but later it took over her whole life. In Cologne she lived for a year and a half with her brother and aunts while they were trying to retrieve an ‘old possession’ that had wrongfully been taken from them. Although she felt like an exile in Cologne and had extolled Utrecht as the holy city Jerusalem, a deep-felt desire from the time of her childhood now surfaced again: her longing for martyrdom. The Catholic

Cologne made short work with heretics. All non-Catholic gatherings, or celebrations of engagements, weddings or christenings were forbidden. 'The City of Cologne will not be tainted by heresy' ['Die Stadt Köln wolle nun einmal nicht durch Ketzerei befleckt werden']. In Cologne, Van Schurman had to put in much more effort for her faith, whereas in Utrecht it had become something that was taken for granted.<sup>465</sup> Taking their lives into their own hands, they crossed the wide Rhine River in a small boat in order to attend a Protestant church service in Mülheim:

Although there are many churches they are all against us  
 We have to cross the Rhine, through wind, through snow, through rain  
 Very few in number are joining us to go against the stream  
 And if I look at it, I live as in a dream.

[Al sijn der kercken veel sij sijn ons alle tegen  
 Wij moeten over rijen door wint doer snee door regen  
 Seer wijnig int getal gaen met ons tegen stroom  
 En als ick daer op sie, ic leef als in een droom.]<sup>466</sup>

She was shocked when she heard the rumour on her return that she had become a Roman Catholic, having followed the example of Anna and Tesselschade Roemer Visscher, who had both converted to Roman Catholicism. She adamantly defended herself: the residents of Cologne knew full well that she did not subject herself to papist rule. Despite being warmly welcomed by Voetius on her arrival back in Utrecht, and seemingly having resumed her former life when Queen Christina came to pay her a visit, her great love for the city Utrecht had, however, begun to wither because of the slander.<sup>467</sup>

What attracted her even more in Cologne was the anonymity. Except for her nearest relatives, almost nobody knew her in that large city. An odd male friend or female friend would come to visit her there on their way elsewhere, such as Utricia Ogle. Back in Utrecht, she now became less hospitable to all and sundry. A Frenchman voiced his disappointment in a poem: Van Schurman had now become invisible to him – she was all spirit:

To the very wise and very virtuous Miss Van Schurman, whom it was impossible for me to have the good fortune of seeing:

Beautiful place that holds the most rare treasure ...  
 You are wisely frugal in sharing it:  
 Like you, my mind condemns my hope;  
 To ask, Van Schurman, that you should be visible  
 Is to wish an impossible thing of you:  
 As you are all spirit, one cannot see you.

[A la très sage & très vertueuse Mademoiselle de Schurman sur ce qu'il m' a été impossible d' avoir le bonheur de la voir:

Beau lieu qui possède le thésor le plus rare,  
 Avec juste sujet vous en êtes avare:  
 Comme vous, ma raison condamne mon espoir;



An 18th century portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman.

Demander, de Schurman, que vous soyés visible,  
C'est desirer de vous une chose impossible:  
Car étant toute esprit on ne vous sçauroit voir.]<sup>468</sup>

But the most important factor in all this was that she had mixed in Cologne with only a small group of like-minded people, positioned against the mainstream. In Utrecht, she found among the thousands of people who were Christians in name only, a mere handful – about ten – Christians who truly spoke her language regarding the spirit of martyrdom. Quarrels over the use of the church's property and over the observance of the Sabbath further soured the atmosphere around the Cathedral, and two of her friends, who were church ministers (Abraham van de Velde and Johannes Teellinck), were even expelled from the city. She decided to leave Utrecht, and to move to a remote place. Together with her brother, aunts Agnes and Sybille and two servant girls, she travelled in 1660 to Lexmond.<sup>469</sup>

Lexmond was situated a few hours away from Utrecht, across the river Lek. The Van Schurman family owned some land there, for instance, in the polder near the Lakerveld quay, in the direction of Achthoven. Although she did meet the aristocratic Van Brederode and Van Amerongen families, the bailiff Dirk Amburen, the tenants named Hardenboll, and the church minister Cornelius Cuperius, she lived in the utmost seclusion. Exactly as she did in Cologne.<sup>470</sup>

But our life seemed to me to be at its sweetest, when after several upheavals that occurred in the church in Utrecht, as a result of which two of the best church ministers were thrown out of the city, we started living a quiet life in the country, where we, if I remember correctly, spent two years removed from almost all worldly company, with my two aunts, and my brother, who held piety and us very dear, and with two very devout maidservants, we were almost like a little Christian church on our own.

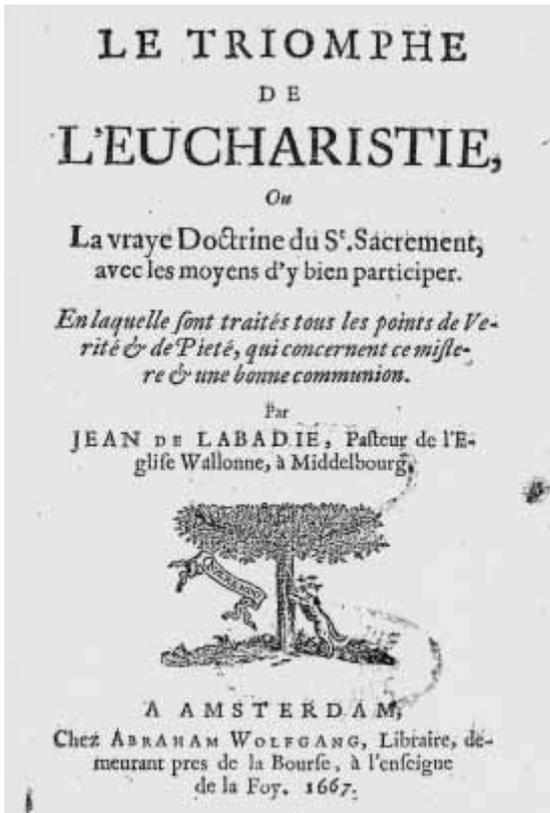
[Maar onz' leven scheen my aller zoetst te zijn, wanneer na verscheiden beroerten die in de Kerke tot Utrecht ontstaan waren, waar door ook twee van de beste Predikanten uit die Stat geworpen wierden, wy een gerust leven op het lant begonden te voeren. Alwaar wy, zo ik recht onthouden heb, twe jaren lang van alle wereltsche gezelschappen bykans ten eenmaal ontslagen, met mijn twe moities en mijn Broeder, die de godvruchtigheid en ons zeer minde, met twee zeer vrome dienstmaagden, als een zeker Christen Kerkjen quamen uit te maken.]<sup>471</sup>

Within one year, the aunts passed away, a few days apart. Subsequently, she herself became so ill that she thought she would follow her aunts into death. Johan Godschalk even had to cancel his meetings in Utrecht.<sup>472</sup> Only a year later she could write to her female friend Van Soulekercken in Zeeland:

[...] my health, which it had pleased God the Almighty to return to me, contrary to my expectations, since I had already prepared to follow my two very dear late aunts [into death]. As you have rightly pointed out to me, I have indeed reason to thank the Lord God that I had the opportunity to the very end to return the love of these two dear and worthy persons, who were like mothers to me. However, their parting and absence are not without deep sorrow for me, when I think about the loss of such devoted and sweet company, which I really miss here. Therefore I try to direct my thoughts to the happy state in which they now enjoy the rewards which we all await through hope.

[...] myne gesontheit, welke God de Almachtige my gelieft heeft, buyten myn vermoedens, weder te geven, nae demael ick alrede rekeninge hadde gemaect myn seer waerde Moeyen Saliger te sullen volgen. Jck hebbe wel reden gelyck U.h.Ed. recht aenwyst om God de Heere te dancken dat ick die twee lieve en waerde personen, die als myne moeders waeren, tot den laetsten toe hebben mogen myne wederliefde betoonen; doch is het scheyden, en afwesen van deselve niet sonder bittere droefheit, wanneer ick reflexie neme op het derven van sulken trou en soet geselschap, dat ick hier bysonderlyk misse. Jck trachte daerom myne gedachten op te heffen tot de bedenckinge van de geluckigen staet, waerin sy tegenwoordigh genieten de vruchten der goederen, welke wy door de hope verwachten.]<sup>473</sup>

She returned to Utrecht when Johan Godschalk once again departed on an academic journey, this time to Germany and Switzerland. Without her family, the house felt very empty. While he was studying theology, delivering an oration in Basel, and was being confirmed as church minister, she became actively involved in Utrecht to counteract 'the decline of Christianity'. In her view, many people still went to church, but just as easily from the church into the pub. If one was a member of the Dutch Reformed Church, then one was automatically entitled to partake of Holy Communion. The church was indeed not a state church, but to be appointed into a good position, membership of the church was crucial. That was a major reason for objection, not only to Van Schurman, as that blurred the difference between true Christians and those who were Christians in name only. In that way



Volume of French poems by Jean de Labadie, dedicated to Anna Maria van Schurman. From this it becomes clear that he wanted to take the place of her brother Johan Godschalk, who had recently passed away.

the world was penetrating the Church via the latter 'Christians'. Moreover, the affluence in the Republic was spilling over into the church. People now wore expensive clothes and wigs, their houses looked like palaces, they had teachers who taught their children how to dance. What had happened to the simplicity of the ancestors, who had struggled for possessions and family? A huge discrepancy had developed between the church's teachings and daily practice, a shocking lack of knowledge; superficiality reigned supreme. Where was the richness of faith that was experienced within? The church had drawn up orthodox reformation programmes to improve society. But this Dutch Second Reformation ['Nadere Reformatie'] had little effect; together with many others, Van Schurman found that there were endless complaints; there was no hope of recovery.<sup>474</sup>

On the other hand, during his academic travels, Johan Godschalk van Schurman wrote enthusiastic accounts in letters to her, especially about meeting a certain Jean de Labadie, a former Roman Catholic priest, who was now a Reformed minister in Geneva. He was very successful in his radical reformation of the church. After Godschalk's return to the Netherlands, there was a flourishing correspondence between him and De Labadie, which was continued by Van Schurman after Godschalk's death in September 1664.<sup>475</sup> The contrast increased her deep dissatisfaction with Christianity:

Corrupted Christianity! Where is your former lustre?  
Of love and hope and faith? Why does your light shine so darkly?

[Verbastert Christendom! Waer is u eerster luyster?  
Van liefde, hoop, geloov? hoe schijnt u licht zo duijster?]<sup>476</sup>

She regarded the Reformed Church as the epitome of worldliness, except for a few 'ministers and followers who also lamented the abominations of the unfaithful Jerusalem' ['Leeraers en Leerlingen die ook over de gruwelen van 't afvallige Jerusalem suchten']. No wonder that she saw, with them, Jean de Labadie shining on the horizon as their only hope. Anna Maria van Schurman was asked by church ministers in Utrecht to write to him in support of the call that he had received from the Walloon Church of Middelburg. Later De Labadie said that it was this beautiful letter that had persuaded him. Because of his age and ill health he was not looking forward to the discomfort of travelling, the bad air and the sea being so near. But Van Schurman pointed out to him that he had to focus on 'the glory of God, the salvation of the souls and the needs of the church' ['de eer van God op het oog te houden, het heil van de zielen en de noden van de kerk']. She also told him about the 'burning desire of various ministers and church members' ['brandende begeerte van verschillende predikanten en lidmaten']. Then he dared not refuse, and regarded her letter as 'the voice of God'.<sup>477</sup>

In midsummer 1666, Jean de Labadie arrived in Utrecht, together with his students Pierre Yvon, Pierre du Lignon and Jean Menuret. Waiting on the quayside stood Anna Maria van Schurman to welcome them. For ten days she was their hostess in her home behind the Cathedral. They spoke in French and in Latin with one another. With Voetius and other theologians she organised meetings and also scheduled various turns for Jean de Labadie to deliver the sermon in the Walloon Pieterskerk. The sombre mood in the city disappeared. The charismatic De Labadie subsequently travelled to various other cities, such as Amsterdam, Haarlem, Leiden, The Hague, Delft and Rotterdam, and attracted tremendous interest. He also organised conventicles (religious home meetings) and departed to Middelburg to take up his position. He was a gifted preacher and attracted churches filled to overflowing, despite the considerable length of his services (3-4 hours). Van Schurman often followed him on his travels.<sup>478</sup> She and many others took to what he was preaching:

Imitation of the first Pentecostal congregation in Acts 2. The Kingdom of God now. A church consisting exclusively of [true] believers, removed from worldly influence; a church showing a life of self-denial and real love for one another. The new Jerusalem.<sup>479</sup>

### 'Republic of Letters'?

Before we now follow Van Schurman further in her wanderings from Amsterdam, I wish to first discuss her work of those years critically. It is clear that Van Schurman broke with some of the fundamental principles of the *Republic of Letters* in her last years in Utrecht

and as Labadist. The typical character of the *Res Publica Litteraria* was precisely that one communicated across the boundaries of countries, language, social class and faith. That one distributed knowledge. That one received visits from scholars, was open to their ideas and passed these on again, with or without criticism. That one wrote about all kinds of topics. That one returned the favour when having received a gift, that one upheld a certain etiquette in carrying out one’s duties.<sup>480</sup>

But Van Schurman began writing exclusively about theology and increasingly ignored other topics, and this in a time when others in the *Republic of Letters* were writing more and more on topics outside of theology. The scope of her communication diminished. She still transcended the boundaries of country, language and social class, but not the boundaries of religion any more. On the contrary; she became so convinced that she was right, that she tried to persuade and convert others. She was still using Latin as scholarly language in exchanges with scholarly opponents or sympathisers, but now, in addition to Latin, she used also French, Dutch and German to proclaim her new-found, burning religious conviction. Although use of the vernaculars became more prevalent, still Latin remained the most important medium for conveying knowledge in Europe until well into the nineteenth century. More and more, she abandoned the strict rules of etiquette (the superlatives such as *vir illustrissimus* [‘most famous man’]), or the seeming humility (‘your very humble and most obliged servant’). Everyone was now addressed as ‘brother or sister in the Lord’, or even: ‘Anna Maria van Schurman sends these greetings to her beloved brother, brave comrade in arms and peace-loving servant of our Lord Jesus Christ, he who is Lion as well as Lamb’. She returned gifts that were sent to her, and ‘worldly’ visitors were left standing at her door.<sup>481</sup> The tone of her writings changed; gone was her tolerance:

Oh, that one day everybody would know  
The life of a true Christian  
Then the false appearance would disappear  
That there are many Christians.

[Dat eens alle menschen wisten  
't Leven van een ware Christen  
Dan verdween de valse schijn  
Datter veele Christen sijn.]<sup>482</sup>

However much self-criticism there was within the Dutch Reformed Church itself, leaving the church was seen as a mortal sin. Then one was categorised with the sects, the fanatics, the Anabaptists, and with those who had lapsed into false doctrines. But Van Schurman left the ‘corrupted’ church and joined the ‘true’ house church of Jean de Labadie. Even if it meant scraping together all her courage to go against the will of Voetius, her old professor, friend and rector, and against all the authorities that surrounded him.<sup>483</sup>



Portrait of Jean de Labadie, with on the left a wreath of rose leaves, and on the right a crown of thorns.

## Dear Miss!

Miss ANNA MARIA VAN SCHURMAN,  
 'Achter den Dom' [Behind the Cathedral]  
 To Utrecht

In Amsterdam, the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October 1666

Dear Miss!

I have received your pleasant [letter], with the accompanying parcel, in good order, and in time I will deliver it. I am sending according to your wish, the copy concerned, and request that it be returned immediately, in order for the work to be printed without delay, and it would be appreciated if a copy of the French [book] could also be sent with it, then it may be submitted to the judgement and modesty of friends. In the meantime, I hope to receive this back soon. If you have the opportunity, please send me a picture of yourself, I would be much obliged, to be able to replace it, and for the rest will take care that no difficulties arise from it. And meanwhile, may you be blessed and kept safe among all those who truly love Jesus Christ, in the protection of God, who may lead us all to salvation, and be greeted kindly, and rest assured that I am and will always remain

Dear Miss!  
 Your Willing and Obliged  
 Friend and Servant  
 JOHANNES JANSSONIUS VAN WAESBERGE

[Me Juffrou!  
 Me Juffrou! ANNA MARIA à  
 SCHURMAN, achter den Dom  
 Tot Utrecht

In Amsterdam den 3 Octobris 1666

Me Juffrou!

VE. aengenamen nevens 't bijgaende paxken, hebbe wel ontfangen, dat tzyn der tyt sal laeten bestellen, sende volgens begeeren de bewuste Copie, die versoecke doch terstont weder te rugge magh gesonde worden, om sonder uijtstell in twerck te kunnen geleyt worden, soo een Copie van de fransche gelieve mede te senden, soude niet onaengenaem wesen, dan stelle sulx aent Oordeel en Bescheydentheyt der Vrienden, ondertusschen sal dese ten eerste weder verwachte, soo VE. bij gelegentheyt VE. afbeeltsel eens gelieft over te senden, soude Mij ten hoogste verplighen, om te kunnen veranderen, in overige sal sorge dragen geen swarigheyt van komt en zijt ondertusschen nevens alle rechte Liefhebbers J.Christi, in de Bescherminge Godes, die VE. en Ons al samen, tot saligheyt gelieve te sparen, bevolen en vriendelijck gegroet, en versecckere VE. dat ben en altyt sal trachten te blijven

Me Juffrou!  
 VE. Dienstbereyde en Verplighete  
 Vrient en Dienaer  
 JOHANNES JANSSONIUS VAN WAESBERGE] <sup>1</sup>

I. Ledeboer 1869: 125, 127; the original manuscript can be found in the university library of Hamburg, Sup. ep. 28:213.

### Anna Maria van Schurman to Philip Ernst Vegelin van Claerbergen

Sir

The busier you are, the more grateful I am that you should add to your activities that of speaking sometimes to me through your courteous letters. A long time ago, I received the beautiful book of Mr Haek entitled *The Natural History of the Royal Society in London*, which I like very much: but not the *Micographia* of Mr Hookes for which you wanted the microscope which we despair cannot be made in Holland, whereas this country is clever enough to invent these.

As I was writing these words, the valet of his lordship van den Eng arrived and told me on behalf of his lordship and lady, your father- and mother-in-law, that their sister Madame de Marienborde has left this life for the eternal life, which is yet another example of the uncertainty of our stay on this earth. May our immortal and lenient God lead us, by a straight route, to blessed immortality, which he reserves for the faithful. Perhaps this unexpected event will change somewhat the intent of your father-in-law and will delay his trip to Friesland that you had told me about. My Cousin de Schurman intends coming here in the middle of May so that, as he wrote to me, he could take me back with him to Friesland, but the visit which my Cousin de Bennebroek has promised he would arrange for me with his family, in the same month, and then with one of my friends from the country of Berge, removes all hope of accepting his offer. Awaiting the next opportunity to see each other either in Leeuwarden or here, I will always remain

Sir

Your humble and obliged Servant

A.M. de Schurman

of Utrecht

the 22nd April 1666

With your permission I shall also humbly greet here Milady your dear wife

I must also add a word about my Cousin de Breidenbach, who is also going to need your advice for a case that he will tell you about himself; I count on your sincerity and kindness, which you have shown earlier towards him and me, so that you will not refuse him and hence will oblige both of us.

[Monsieur

Plus vos occupations sont frequentes, plus je vous suis redevable que pour vous y ajoutez encore celle de m'entretenir parfois par vos courtoises lettres. J'ay reçu il y a long temps le beau livre de Mons. Haek intitulé *The Natural History of de Royal Societé at Londen*, qui m'agrée forte: mais non la *Micographia* de Mr. Hookes pour lequel vous desirés le miscroscope lequel on desespere pouvoir estre fait en l' Hollande, laquelle est autrement assez habile pour en inventer en la morale.

On en escrivant la presente voyla venir le valet du Seign. van den Eng qui me fait rapport de sa part de son Seigneur et de Madame votre Beaupere et Bellemere que leur soeur Madame de Marienborde est decedée de ceste vie a une immuable, nous laissant un nouvel emple (exemple?) de l'incertitude de nostre demeure icy bas. Le Dieu immortel et Clement nous veuille conduire, par le chemin droict, a 'l' immortalité bienheureuse, laquelle il reserve a tous ses fideles. Peut estre que ce cas inopiné apportera quelque changement au dessein de Monsieur votre beaupere et le sera dilayer son voyage en Frise, dont il vous a plû m'advertir. Mon Cousin de Schurman a l'intention de venir icy au milieu du mois de May pour m'attirer avec luy comme il m'a escrit, en retournante en Frise, mais la visite que mon Cousin de Bennebroek me promet de me donner avec sa famille, au mesme mois et encore une de mes amis du pays de Berge m' en este l' esperance de pouvoir y consentir. On en attendant l' occasion favorabel de nous entrvoir soit a Leeuwarden soi icy, je demueray

tousjours  
 Monsieur  
 Votre bien humble et obligée Servante  
 A.M. de Schurman  
 d' Utrecht  
 le 22 d' Avril 1666

Avec votre permission je salueray icy tres humblement Madam votre chere Espouse

Encore me faut il adjouter vn mot de mon Cousin de Breidenbach, qui aura aussi besoin de votre conseil, dans vn cas qu' il vous expliquera luy mesmes; je me fié a votre sincerité et bonté dont vous avez accoustumé d' user envers luy, et moy, que vous ne le luy refuserez pas et ainsi obligerez de nous l' un et l' autre.]

### Scholarly letters

The subject matter of a corrupted Church had already earlier occupied her. In the early sixties Van Schurman published a scholarly theological letter in Latin on 'Christianity's almost total decay and deviation from its origins' ['de bijna totale verwording en afwijking van het christendom van haar oorsprong']. In 1666 she published a book in Latin. The Amsterdam publisher Van Waesberge wrote to her that he would very much like to publish the manuscript, but could she please also send a French translation and a recent portrait? A section of her letter to a church minister from Gulik (1664) – which was also published separately by this publisher – was reprinted in 1666, together with 'a tract, titled *De Propaganda Fide*'. All these publications and letters have disappeared without trace.<sup>484</sup>

But apparently, until her departure in 1669, she remained abreast of scientific developments in microscopy or the establishment of the *Royal Society* in London. She also still enjoyed writing a scholarly Latin letter to Constantijn Huygens (dated 1 November 1666), full of wordplay, about calligraphy, and she made a beautiful, multilingual *tabella* with it. She pleaded for a position at the Frisian court for her cousin.<sup>485</sup>

Utrecht had been her favourite city, but after her stay in Cologne, that gradually changed. The ties between her and Utrecht became more and more tenuous. She handed out her (presently unknown) art works, which she originally wished to bequeath on her death, now already: a self-portrait, a portrait of her brother, of the 'beautiful brunette' Lady Toftin, of Mrs Van Soulekercken, two small paintings of Balthasar van der Ast and a silver lizard with a flea. Finally, she stipulated in her will that she wished 'bells to be rung over her deceased body, but still wished that her body be taken to Rhenen and buried in the *Groote Kerk* in her noble family's crypt' ['haer dood lichaem met clocken over luijt te worden, maer begeerde als noch dat men haer lijck tot Rhenen in de groote kerk in haer comptes graffstede sal brengen ende begraven'.]<sup>486</sup>

Within a year, she had committed herself totally to Lbadism. She returned the art works about which Constantijn Huygens had asked her opinion, to him. She could no longer be bothered with that kind of art, she wrote:



It makes no sense that I should try here, on my part, to sing the praises of these pictures one by one, since I have given up this kind of sensual pleasure for some years now; [...]

[Het heeft geen zin, dat ik mijnerzijds hier zou pogen, van deze beeltenissen stuk voor stuk de loffelijkheden af te malen, nu ik reeds enige jaren terug dit soort van zinnestrelingen vaarwel heb gezegd; [...]]<sup>487</sup>

That did not mean that she was totally saying farewell to the arts. As Labadist she did still make some portraits, but only of other Labadists, among others of De Labadie, Du Lignon, and also of herself. She also still retained her art collection.

### *Poemata*

Only very few of her poems in Latin from the period after Cologne until her departure to Amsterdam are available to us, namely a praise poem on the collected works of Jacob Cats, on Birgitte Thott's edition of Seneca's work, on a portrait of Voetius, a few poems for Constantijn Huygens, and a poem on the spire of the Cathedral of Utrecht, which she praised above all the spires of the world:

Look, the Utrecht giant so huge and tall,  
challenging the stars in the high heavens  
Let the old world be silent about its seven wonders  
the work of this one city equals that of all others [...]

This poem was published together with the engraving of S. van Lamsweerde and other poems by Dousa and Westerbaen in 1660, and was also included in 1663 in a volume of Voetius' *Politica Ecclesiastica* [*Ecclesiastical Politics*].<sup>488</sup>

Around 1660 she wrote religious didactic or occasional poems in Dutch. They were about the future of the Church ('Concerns about the future of the Kingdom of Christ' ['Bedenkingen over de toekomst van Christi Coninkryk']), about the love between Christ and the soul ('The song about the spiritual marriage between Christ and the faithful soul' ['Gezang over het geestelyk huwelyk van Christus met de gelovige ziele']), and about the interpretation of Genesis 1-3 ['Uitbreiding over de drie eerste Capittels van Genesis']. These circulated in manuscript form, and some were printed. The poems had an additional educational purpose because they were set to music. For instance, on 15 September 1668 the 'Bedenkingen ...' were sung in Mijdrecht, at the home of the church minister Van Almeloveen, in a circle of friends.<sup>489</sup> In March 1669 she published in Amsterdam her *Pensées [...] sur la Reformation nécessaire à présent à l'Eglise de Christ* [*Thoughts ... on the reformation necessary at present in the Church of Christ*], in which she lashed out at the wicked times, the morals and the Church in decline, where 'Reason' reigned supreme and where 'citizens of heaven' sat side by side with 'children of the devil':



Latin poem on the Utrecht Dom [Cathedral]. According to Van Schurman, this church building could hold its own against the seven wonders of the world of antiquity. But this was before the hurricane of 1674, which separated the church from its tower.

But God does not dwell in Temples made by hands,  
Where the citizens of heaven join the worldly.

[Mais Dieu n' habite point aux Temples faits de mains,  
Où les Bourgeois des Cieux se joignent aux mondains.]<sup>490</sup>

### Elogia

The earlier stream of books and poems that were dedicated to Van Schurman now seemed to have dwindled to a trickle. Yet the Swiss professor Buxtorf wrote a praise poem in Hebrew for her in 1663, and the former Utrecht professor Johannes Hoornbeek dedicated his book about the reconciliation between the Lutherans and the Calvinists to 'the very religious maiden, Anna Maria van Schurman'. Not long before that, she had sent him a beautiful calligraphed art work, with texts in Hebrew, Samaritan, Syrian and Arabic. Now

## Anna Maria van Schurman to Philip Ernst Vegelin van Claerbergen

Sir

This has been a considerable task of patience when before my departure from Leeuwarden my intention to say goodbye to you at your home was thwarted. And then the next day, your indisposition prevented me to express my regrets via my cousin de Breidenbach, who desperately wanted to give his respects, and obtain signs of the friendship which you have always demonstrated towards my late brother and myself.

And though I have much evidence of your civility, not so much through words but rather acts, which you did not put in my thoughts, there is still some defect in your Court which must be rectified to make it perfect; namely a gentleman who is master of the hunt. I would like my cousin to be made useful by this responsibility or a similar one in this court, which I believe to be well on the way to becoming an example of all kinds of virtues and divine benedictions. Your Princess already is one, who resembles the rising sun in the Church of God, and particularly in his court, to favour all men of goodwill. I am sure that my cousin would recommend himself already to this generous Princess through his generosity and other qualities,

Since he has been lucky enough to be known to his Highness, I consequently ask your advice to know the time and convenience when he can present himself at the Hague in front of the said Princess either under your guidance or mine if necessary.

I do not have enough time to tell you other things and I am,

Sir, your humble and obliged Servant

At Utrecht

This 23rd June

1667

[Monsieur

Ce m'a esté vn exercice assez fort de patience quand devant mon departement de Leeuwarden je voyois traversé mon dessein de vous dire l' a Dieu chez vous. Et que le jour suivant votre indisposition fut cause que je ne pouvois vous en tesmoigner mes regrets, par mon Cousin de Breidenbach, lequel desiroit passionnement de pouvoir vous rendre ses respects, et deprendre quelque part dans l' amitié, dont vous avez honoré tousjours mon feu Frere et moy.

Et pource que j'ay tant de preuves de vos civilitez, qu' elles ne consistent pas tant en paroles, qu' en effects et que vous n'avez mis dans ma pensée, qu' il y a encore quelque defect en votre Cour, pour la rendre toute accomplie; a scavoir d' un gentil homme qui fut maistre de la chasse, je desireois que mon Cousin fus dit se pourroit rendre considerable par ceste ou semblable charge a ceste Cour, laquelle je croy estre en estat pour devenir bientost un paragon de toutes vertus et benedictions Divines. pour ce que votre Princesse l' est desja laquelle se monstre comme un soleil levant dans l' Eglise de Dieu, et particulièrement dans sa cour, pour favoriser tous les hommes de bien. Je me persuade que mon dit Cousin se recommanderois assez soy mesme a ceste genereuse Princesse par la generosité et autres bonnes parties,

S' il eust le bonheur d' estre cogneu de son Altesse et partant je demande votre conseil et avis pour scavoir le temps et la commodité quand il pourra se presenter a la Haye a la dite Princesse sou votre conduite ou sou la mienne s'il seroit necessaire

Le temps me manque pour vous direau autre chose sans que je suis

Monsieur Votre tres humble et tres obligee Servante

A Utrecht

ce 23 de Juin

1667]<sup>1</sup>

1, Both letters to Philip Vegelin van Claerbergen can be found in the family archive in the State Archive of Friesland, Leeuwarden (inventory number 67 EVC).

he wished to return the favour.<sup>491</sup> Less than a year after Jean de Labadie's arrival in the Netherlands, he dedicated *Le Triomphe de l' Eucharistie* [*The triumph of the Eucharist*] (1667) to Anna Maria van Schurman, a volume with a hundred quatrains in French about Holy Communion. The dedication showed that he had done this out of brotherly affection and spiritual affinity. He wrote that he had come to fill the place of Johan Godschalk, her brother who had been her soulmate, who had grown up with her and with whom she had competed in their studies. Johan Godschalk had travelled especially to Geneva to meet Jean de Labadie, and had become a close friend of him, perhaps even his best friend. After the death of Johan Godschalk in September 1664, De Labadie became a kind of brother to Anna Maria van Schurman. Contact between them was at first via letters and via the exchange of their publications, and after his coming to the Netherlands, it developed into a friendly, spiritual interaction with each other.<sup>492</sup> It was already August 1668 when the former Utrecht professor Matthias Nethenus dedicated his *Examen Arminianismi* [*Examination of Arminianism*] to her. In the letter of dedication he praised her as 'our Utrecht Minerva, but not pagan, rather Christian; no goddess, but a worshipper of the true God; not fictitious, but a living being' ['onze Utrechtse Minerva, maar niet heidens, wel christelijk; geen godin, maar een aanbidster van de ware god; niet fictief, maar een levend wezen']. His book was a re-issue of work of Professor Samuel Rutherford from St. Andrews, a man who had been offered tenure at the University of Utrecht, but had declined. Van Schurman apparently knew him and his work very well. Nowhere is there any trace or mention that Nethenus had noticed her unrest and discontent.<sup>493</sup>

### *Peregrinatio academica*

Scholarly travellers still dropped in, but Van Schurman no longer opened the door to each and everyone. The world traveller De Monconys knocked in vain at her door:

I came to see Miss de Scurman, but according to her maid she was unable to see me as she was in a meeting with ministers, and our host told me that she did not want anyone to see her without an introduction from Salmasius or another person of equal repute.

[...] ie fus pour voir Mademoiselle de Scurman, mais elle estoit empechée à ce qui me dit sa fille, à une assemblée de Ministres, et nostre hoste me dit, qu' elle ne vouloit pas permettre qu' on la vit moins que ce ne fut des Saumaises, ou des personnes de ceste reputation.]<sup>494</sup>

She did admit the German theology student Johannes Schweling and wrote in his *album amicorum*, as well as the Swiss student Friedrich Seiler and Johann Heinrich Heidegger, a Swiss linguist and church historian. The following was written about the latter meeting:

In 1664, during his travels in the Netherlands, he met with the most noble young woman, the tenth Muse, Anna Maria van Schurman, whose refinement and admirable and versatile, developed intellect he could never proclaim sufficiently.<sup>495</sup>



south, had come to Amsterdam to establish a community of true Christians. Both women discussed theological topics such as the 'redemption by Christ', [divine] grace and predestination. Their interpretations differed enormously, however, and it was impossible to find common ground for cooperation.<sup>497</sup>

What was remarkable in these years was that she acquired a leading role *as woman* within the Dutch Reformed Church. That had started already before she played a leading role as Labadist. She participated in meetings of church ministers, wrote letters and organised church meetings. We have already mentioned the letter that she wrote to Jean de Labadie, as requested by the Utrecht church council, and the effect thereof. When in 1663 there stood a world traveller at her front door, the servant girl said that Van Schurman was in a meeting with church ministers. In September 1668 she travelled to Stavoren, where she met with the principal of the Latin school, Theodorus Noordbergen, and his colleague, the church minister Wilhelmus à Brakel and his wife Sara Nevius. From Leeuwarden she then organised meetings with Frisian church ministers to actively involve them in church reform.<sup>498</sup> Later on she would write to Noordbergen:

Everything is now set to progress well; since all the church ministers got together and promised one another mutual support, the last ones arriving, who were also the youngest, offered to do most of the work: the others will try to assist them with sound advice, as they had promised to do.

[En is nu hier alles in eenen goeden stand van hope tot meerder voortgang in het goede; naerdien alle de Leeraers nu 't samen geweest zynde, malkanderen onderlingen bystand hebben beloofd, de laest gekomene Leeraers, de jongste zynde, presentereen het meeste werk te willen doen: de andere versoeken zullen met goeden raet haer te wille helpen: gelyk sy beloofd hebben te sullen doen.]<sup>499</sup>

### 'Respublica Labadiana'

Van Schurman had academic discussions with Voetius about De Labadie. She again borrowed from his library the book of Erasmus on *De Historie van die heylige Vrouwe* [*The history of the holy woman*], the history of the early-Christian woman Paula, who with her daughter Eustochium had followed the learned church father Hieronymus in his travels from Rome to Bethlehem, and lived with him for twenty years. Voetius strongly condemned the behaviour of Hieronymus and Paula; Anna Maria van Schurman, on the other hand, regarded it as a fantastic example:

... I still remember the feelings of Voetius, my old friend and adviser in matters of conscience, that he had previously exposed me in my presence, for he condemned the actions of Paula, who, together with her daughter Eustochia, had followed Hieronymus – the most learned preacher of his time, and who also very ably edified her – into the Jewish land. On that occasion I had commended their actions, but Voetius felt that they had harmed their reputation because they had chosen to show the world such an uncommon course of action, and in doing so had disregarded propriety.

[...ik had ook nogh geheugenis van het gevoelen van D. *Voetius*, mijn ouden vrient, en mijn raats-man in de gevallen van mijn consciencie, dat hy my al te voren in mijn tegenwoordigheid nakent genoeg ontdekt hadde, als hij het doen van *Paula* voor quaat keurde, die met haar dochter *Eustochia*, *Hieronymus* als den geleerdsten Leeraar van sijn tijt, en die allerbequaamst tot haar stichting was, tot in het Joodsche lant gevolgt was, 't welk ik by die gelegenheit geprezen hadde, te weten, om dat zy by de meesten hierom een quade naam gekregen hadde, om datze de Werelt een ongebruikelijk voorbeeld zonder weerga getoont had; en datze niet genoeg gelet hadde op het gene wel voegde.]<sup>500</sup>

She sold her house, went to Amsterdam and moved in with De Labadie and his followers. De Labadie had started his own house church, which was allowed in Amsterdam. In the seventeenth century, there was a wide variety of religions in Amsterdam, where ethnic minorities had rights and religious groups had freedom of worship. There were enclaves of Jews, Turks, Persians, as well as Greek Orthodox churches and underground churches [‘schuilkerken’] for Catholics. But also within Christianity, there were many different denominations, e.g. Calvinists, Lutherans, Anabaptists, Quakers, Socinians, Mennonites, Brownists and Collegiants. There were also Cartesian philosophers, rabbis and prophets in the streets. It was the city of freedom, Eleuteropolis. The Labadists were welcome too. Van Schurman first wanted to rent a house somewhere else in the city, but there was a huge housing shortage, and after having trudged up and down through the streets, she moved into the canalside house [‘grachtenhuis’] of Jean de Labadie on the Lauriersgracht. The men lived upstairs, and the women downstairs. She had been expecting that this step would bring her the ‘loud chidings of malevolent people’ [‘grote rasernye van quaatwillige menschen’], but the desire was too strong. She had always wanted to be a martyr; to her it seemed the pinnacle of devotion. If she could not sacrifice her life, then at least her wealth, name and fame. In French poems she described her conversion. She had found the ‘pearl of great price’ [‘parel van grote waarde’] and was euphorically happy.<sup>501</sup>

Van Schurman knew many influential people in the *Republic of Letters*, not only theologians and church ministers. De Labadie could simply take over her network. But the nature of their participation in the *Republic of Letters* was changing. We have already mentioned the one-sided communication of topics, her handling of visitors and the rules of strict etiquette. Learning as such was not abolished, but was narrowed down and undertaken for a higher purpose: a Church as in Acts 2, far removed from the world, pure and perfect. Through these lenses she looked back at the past, and also disapproved of the *elogia*. Visitors on their *peregrinatio academica* still came, but the topics discussed were mainly theological. This narrowing of scope is also clear from a detailed letter that Van Schurman wrote in Latin as Labadist to Samuel Rachelius, professor in Kiel. Therein she referred for instance to her earlier publication, *De Vitae Termino*:

In a letter to Mr Beverwyk I have previously tried to prove, from various testimonies by pagans themselves, that God alone was the first cause and the first mover, and also the ultimate cause who has unlimited freedom to decide everything, is prescient and executes everything; with the result that this learned man, who had raised a question about the end of life, and who leaned towards Remonstrantism, testified by means of a public response that he had been won over by the power of truth.

[Dat God alleen de eerste oorzaak is en de eerste beweger, als mede de eyndelyke oorzaak, die alles op het aldervryste besluit, te voren weet, en uitvoerd, heb ik eertyds in eenen brief aan den Heer Beverwyk uit verscheiden getuigenissen der Heidenen zelve getracht te bewyzen, met dat gevolg, dat die geleerde Man, die een vrage geoppert hadt over de Eindpaal des levens, en het Remonstrantsdom was toegedaan, door een openbaar antwoord getuigde, dat hy door de kracht der waarheit was overwonnen.]<sup>502</sup>

It is typical that she now suddenly referred to the 'Remonstrantist' inclination of Van Beverwijck, whereas she previously never mentioned it; boundaries between different faiths did not count in the *Republic of Letters*. Moreover, what she added in this letter was also illuminating, namely that the Holy Bible alone would have been absolutely sufficient in this argument, and that she could have done without the 'pagan' (Classics).<sup>503</sup>

Criticism of her crossing over to the Labadists was immediate and vicious. She was inundated by an avalanche of venomous writings: gall, criticism and slander. That she had left the true church, had run after a man, was now following a false doctrine, that her judgement was clouded. It was the opposite of the *elogia*, the praise writings that she had received all her life.<sup>504</sup> Voetius was disappointed, hurt and furious that his only female student, friend, kindred spirit, the 'star of Europe', had chosen another spiritual leader than himself. He complained at home that De Labadie had lured her away, but at the University he organised disputations without delay. On 30 October and 13 November 1669 he put out the following statements against De Labadie and that new 'Amsterdam cloister' ['Amsterdamse Klooster'], to be defended:

Nobody may leave the church or refuse to partake in the Holy Communion, merely because there are unbelievers present in church.

Nobody may join such a semi-cloistral group, who do little else than meditate and hold meetings.

Everyone should avoid such private gatherings in order to abstain from the appearance of evil.<sup>505</sup>

That was the beginning of an effective smear campaign. Lodensteyn wrote to her; Saldenus asked her to reconsider her decision; Professor Maresius of Groningen regretted her revering such a 'human pestilence' ['homo pestilentissimus'] as De Labadie, and with the approval of the theological faculty at Utrecht, Gentman published 'Concerns about schism in the Church' ['Bedenkingen over de Kerkscheuringe']. Louis du Moulin (professor in history in Cambridge) even admonished her in a scholarly letter from London. The Utrecht professor, Johannes Graevius, wrote in Latin to his friend Nicolaas Heinsius:<sup>506</sup>

Our Van Schurman has not only renounced all studies of letters, but has also sold her possessions, and has departed from this city, which she has revered for so many years. She has pursued a certain French fanatic by name of De Labadie. The Walloon Synod as well as the magistrate of Middelburg have removed him from office on grounds of heterodoxy [...]. He has now settled in Amsterdam and has seduced many by a strange, unctuous piety. They yield to his discipline and are hanging on his lips day and night. It is rumoured that they have formed some or other community à la Pythagoras or a community of property [...]. This is the group that our Anna Maria has joined.<sup>507</sup>

From scholarly and religious quarters, the reactions were so fierce, because they feared that she, the most famous woman of Europe, would lure many away from the Church to the Labadists. There was already so much discontent within the Church. Who would not realise the truth in what she wrote about the Church:

For who would rightfully refer to a heap of chaff as a heap of wheat, even if a few grains of wheat were mixed into it? Or who would call a swinery a flock of sheep, even though he sees a few sheep among the swine?

[Want wie zou een hoop kaf, met eenig recht, een hoop terwe noemen, hoewel enige weinige terwe granen daar onder mochten vermengt zijn? of, wie zal een hele kudde Varkens een kudde Schapen noemen, hoewel hy ziet, dat’ er hier en daar eenige weinige Schaapjes onder lopen?]<sup>508</sup>



Anna Maria van Schurman.

Constantijn Huygens also reacted with unbelief and reprimanded her in a long poem in Latin and in Dutch.<sup>509</sup> He reproached her that she was renouncing her Utrecht academic education. Voetius and other Utrecht professors did not deserve that:

Has Voetius deserved these thanks for his years of toil,  
having taught you to drink the nourishing milk  
on which you have thrived to equal great men?  
Has Utrecht deserved this, and all who shine there  
as torches of Academe in that learned city? [...]

[Heeft Voetius dien danck verdient voor lange moeyt,  
Die u de goede melck, daer van ghij sijt gegroeyt  
Tot grooter mannen waerd' van jongs heeft leeren drincken?  
Heeft Uytrecht dat verdient, en alle die daer blincken  
Als Hoogschool-fackelen in die geleerde Stadt? [...]]<sup>510</sup>

Why did she follow this 'French rooster' who only wished to 'pour' piousness into her? The words that Huygens used were full of strongly sexual connotations and he was not the only one to resort to such language. Jacob Campo Weyerman related in even more colourful terms: 'She embraced at her advanced age the lascivious feelings of Labadie, the fondler of tits' ['Zy omarmde in haare hooge jaaren de wellustige gevoelens van de Tettentaster Labadie']. There were even malicious rumours that she had secretly gotten married to him, a myth that still surfaces from time to time, for instance, in the popular book by Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches* (1987). But Van Schurman remained celibate. In the early years of Labadism it was mainly women from the aristocracy who became members (Van Beuningen, Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck, Huygens, Martini). That afforded the writers of pamphlets more opportunity to write about Jean de Labadie as a cock among the hens.<sup>511</sup> But De Labadie came to the defence of Anna Maria van Schurman and wrote to Voetius that

...he [Voetius] had, so to speak, worshipped miss Schuurmans when she was young, and idolised her, and now that she is of advanced years, he tramples on her and maligns her [...]

[...hy juffrouw Schuurmans, toen ze jong was, om zoo te spreken, aangebeden en tot zyne Afgodinne had gemaakt en dat hy ze onder de voet trapt en leelyk uitmaakt, nu zy oud van jaaren [...] is.]<sup>512</sup>

In Utrecht, after a few futile efforts to get her to come back, she was 'deleted'. For instance, from the Hebrew handbook in Dutch that professor Leusden had published at Van Schurman's insistence. It was such a success that a second edition appeared. Whereas in the first edition, Van Schurman's role had been formally acknowledged, in the second, her name had disappeared – she had been deleted. The book was even dedicated to someone else.<sup>513</sup> Her own family also attempted to persuade her to return to the safety of the Church. She replied to her cousin in a long letter ['Brief van Kerckelijke Consideratie']:

Dear Sir,<sup>1</sup>

I have read the letter, which according to you was sent to me at the instruction of the church council, with amazement and sadness, noting in it the similarities with its predecessors, from the Dutch [Reformed] Church as well as the Walloon Church, regarding the removal from office or suspension of the legally ordained and innocent persons, Mistery De Labadie and Yvon, together with the entire church council. For I still had some hope, if we were to receive some moderation in these malevolent and unprecedented procedures, that it would be from the church of Utrecht. But daily it is becoming more and more clear what the multitude of voices are achieving, in order to attain a comfortable measure of worldly peace and quiet, which they seem to seek at all costs. And they are turning everybody against these faithful servants of Christ, who, seeing the decline of the churches, are trying to bring about a separation between the world and the true Christians, who find themselves among other so-called Christians, to unite these in the love for divine truths, and the confession thereof, through words and deeds of piety. And whereas all meetings of heretics and informal groups are tolerated, a small, orthodox house church cannot be tolerated, solely because it finds it impossible, within the narrow bond of ecclesiastical and sacramental community, to fall in with the followers of the world who make out the substance and body of the church. Bear with me in my complaint that people refer to these house-church services, which are held in accordance with the instructions of God’s Word and according to the practices of true Christianity of the first Reformation, as dissenting practices. And that they are accusing me of feeding this dissent on the grounds that I have not yet become a member of the church congregation of Amsterdam, to which you refer as your sister church. I have not done so, since I daily attend and enjoy the devout and quite true interpretations and applications of God’s Word, in a true reformed or reforming church, while the huge gatherings of the Amsterdam church do not conform to the description of a true church, which one should join if one regards oneself as a Christian, according to clauses 27 and 28 of our Belgic Confession, a fact which is also pointed out by your own ministers and by the Reverend Belkampus (in his *Hora Novissima*). Furthermore, we are told that the pulpits are continuously resounding with criticism against Mister De Labadie and our family, without any indication that the church has any intention of a thorough reformation from its own terrible decay. And therefore, I think, if one adheres to the truest confessions and the most sound practices of the divine truths of the Reformation, albeit in smaller gatherings, that that does not imply that one is more guilty of causing a schism in the church, which would be severing the unity that should exist among Christians (as Amesius pointed out in his *Gevalen van consciëntie* [*Instances of conscience*]), as is the case in the two congregations of Serdam, where each one has its own specific minister, its own members and celebrates the Holy Communion separately; likewise, I should have the right to choose to join the congregation that I regard as the most devout. And so, I hope that you, together with all those who do not wish to listen to the vague rumours or loose opinions and passions of the masses, but who rather want to consider the truth and gravity of sacred matters, to those, I say, not to suspect me of causing a schism any more, while I, still awaiting an essential reformation from the decay of the Amsterdam church as well as her sister churches, am a mere observer, remaining unwaveringly united to those truths contained in the Gospel and our reformed confession, and which I have professed up to now, wishing that I and everyone claiming the same, may express and confirm the power of such faith, through living in practice like a true Christian. I am ending herewith, and remain, dear Sir

Your noble servant  
 A.M. van Schurman  
 [beneath it was written]  
 From Lexmond,  
 the 5<sup>th</sup> of August 1670

[Mijnheer,

Ik hebbe den brief, uyt den naem en last van den kerkenraet, gelijk u edele schrijft, aen mij overgesonden, met verwonderinge en droefheit gelesen, daerin aenmerkende de overeenstemminge van de voorgangeren, soo van de Duytsche als Walsche kerken, aengaende het afsetten ofte approberen desselven van de wettelijke beroepene en onschuldige personen de heeren De Labadie en Yvon, neffens den heelen kerkenraet. Want ik hadde noch eenige hope dat, indien het yvers vandaen sou komen, dat het van de kerke van Utrecht te wachten stond, eenige moderatie te vinden in dese onordentelijkheden en ongehoorde proceduren. Maer het wordt dagelijks meer en meer openbaer wat de veelheit van stemmen vermag en uitwerkt, tot de vaststellinge van een wereldsche ruste, die men boven alles schijnt te behertigen. En men maekt land en lieden op tegens die trouwe dienaeren Christi die, de deformatie der kerken siende, een scheidinge trachten te maken tusschen de wereld en de ware christenen, welke onder andere vermengt en ingewickelt zijn, om die in de liefde der goddelijke waarheden, en de professie derselve door woorden en werken der godsaligheid te vereenigen. En daer men alle vergaderingen van ketters en onregeltheyden verdraegt, daer en kan men een kleine rechtsinnige huyskerke daarom alleen niet verdragen, omdat sij haer in den nauwen band van kerkelijke en sacramentele gemeenschap niet verwoegen kan met alle die wereldlingen die het gros en het lichaem der kerken uytmaeken. Verdraegt mij een weinig in mijne klachte dat men dese huyssoefeningen, aengesteld na den regel van Godes Woord en volgens de pratijke des waren christendoms van de eerste Reformatie, scheuringe noemt. En dat men mij daerover kerkelijk, als een scheuring-voedende aanspreekt op dat fundament, dat ik mij nog niet in de gemeenschap van de kerke tot Amsterdam, welke u edele noemt hare susterkerke, begeven hebbe, daer ik, dagelijks genietende de stichtelijke en geheel suyvere verklaringen en applicatio van Godes Woord, in een ware particuliere gereformeerde ofte sig reformerende kerke bijwone, terwijl mij de groote vergaderingen der Amsterdamsche kerke niet anders bekent zijn als soodanige gelijk sij van hare eygenen leeraers en van Ds. Belkampus (in sua *Hora Novissima*) in 't bijzonder beschreven wordt, als niet overeenkomende met de beschrijvinge die ik van een ware kerke, waarbij men sig voegen moet als men een christen is, in den 27 en 28 art. van onse Nederlandsche Confessie beschreven vinde, en dan uyt het verhael dergener die ons seggen dat de predikstoelen gedurig klinken tegens den heer De Labadie en onse familie, sonder dat wij yets vernemen van een vast voornemen van een goede reformatie van haer schrickelijk verval. En daarom meine ik, als men sig houdt aen de suyerste belijdenisse en de suyerste praktijk der goddelijke waarheden der Reformatie, al is het in een kleinder vergaderinge, dat men sig daarom niet meer schuldig maekt aen een verwijtelijke scheuringe, welke een ontbindinge is van de eenigheid die onder christenen moet onderhouden worden (gelijk Amesius wel spreekt in sijne *Gevallen van consciëntie*) dan die van de twee gemeinten van Serdam, daer yder sijnen bijsonderen leeraer, sijne bijzondere ledemaeten en sijn bijzonder Avontmael houden, gelijk ik berecht ben, dewelke eene van die twee als aen haer de stichtelijkste verkiesen, om haer aen die te houden. En dit doet mij verhopende dat u edele, neffens alle diegene die dese sake niet na de onsekere geruchten ofte losse opiniën en passien der meenichte, maer na de waarheit en het gewichte des heyligdoms willen overwegen, dat dieselve segge ik, mij niet meer van scheuringe sullen suspecteren, terwijl ik, noch wachtende op een noodige reformatie van het verval der Amsterdamsche en harer susterkerken, mij als een aenschouwerse houde, standvastig vereenigt blyvende met deselver waarheden die in den Evangelio en onse gereformeerde confessie zijn vervat, en van dewelke ik tot noch toe hebben professie gedaen, wenschende dat ik, en alle diegene die sig derselve beroemen, de kracht derselve door een levende pratijk des waren christendoms mogen uytdrucken en bevestigen. Waarmede eyndigende, sal ik verblijven, mijn heer

U edele dienaeresse  
A.M. van Schurman  
(onder stont)  
uyt Lexmonde,  
den 5 augusti 1670]

I am very glad that your letter gives me the opportunity to speak a timely word regarding my having moved into a house in Amsterdam, together with a fair number of devout souls, which it seems the world condemns.

[Ick ben seer verblijdt, dat U.H.Ed. schrijvens my gelegenheit geeft, om een woordt te rechter tijd te kunnen spreken, aengaende mijn verblijf met een goedt ghetal van godvruchtige zielen, zijnde te samen vergadert in een Huys alhier tot Amsterdam; hetwelcke, so het blijkt de werelt tegen spreekt.]<sup>514</sup>

The letter was published at the end of Hendrik Schluter’s *Kenteeckenen van de Weder-geboorte* [*Signs of being born again*]. Desiderius Pacius (Saldenus) responded at once with a *Modest Request to the honourable and very famous Miss Anna Maria van Schurman* [*Zedig Versoek aan de Wel-Edele seer vermaarde Juffrouw Anna Maria van Schurman*], in which he requested that she answer 32 questions that arose from her little book. But in the reprint of the *‘Kenteeckenen’* the publisher in Amsterdam – not she – responded to those questions. Then an anonymous pamphlet *‘The Devout Farmer’* [*Den Godvrughtighen Boer*] appeared, in which her views were opposed.<sup>515</sup>

**Martyrdom** | Various explanations have been given for Van Schurman’s joining the Labadists. For instance, she had followed her passions; her judgement had been clouded; she was deeply disappointed about the decline of Christianity in the Church; she wanted to follow Christ’s example; she wanted to put Acts 2 into practice again; she wanted more scope as spiritual leader; the death of her close relatives threw her, as single woman, into an identity crisis, for which she found a solution only in the group of the Labadists.<sup>516</sup> Her writings do indeed clearly indicate her disappointment with the Church, as well as the theme of following Christ’s example, the love for the early church and her fascination with De Labadie (in a spiritual and not a sexual sense). He filled the space that had been left by the death of her brother. In the group of De Labadie she had even more say as theologian, and for her as single woman, such a ‘family’ commune must have been very agreeable. All this may be true, but in my opinion, it was largely the desire for martyrdom that was driving her.<sup>517</sup>

We saw already in the first chapter that she had been fascinated by martyrdom since childhood. Martyrdom was the ultimate following of Christ’s example. As a child she had to flee, her parents and grandparents had suffered personally in the persecutions, and she had devoured the books of martyrs. As eleven-year-old little girl she had experienced a burning desire for martyrdom. But during her secure life in Utrecht this burning desire subsided to a mere little ‘pilot light’. It was not possible any more to die a martyr’s death; she had to sublimate her desires into a kind of spiritual martyrdom, with asceticism and thus also celibacy as important components. Every now and then her longing flared up when she met people who had been in the persecutions in France or Germany, or during the lectures of Voetius on martyrdom. In Cologne this feeling returned again, and since then, she had seen the spirit of martyrdom being practically extinguished in the Dutch Reformed Church. Only when she met Jean de Labadie, she recognised in him a true martyr’s character. She was afire with zeal, gave up everything she had, her books, house, possessions, her name and fame, mindful of the words: *Whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not*

*all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.* Being driven from city to city, the slander, the opposition, the loss of friends, the wave of anti-Labadistic writings would bring her close to a martyr's crown.<sup>518</sup>

**Writings** | Despite the many vituperations, a few traditional *elogia* by the German writer Martin Kempe appeared in 1670, in which he ranked Van Schurman with famous woman poets:

Oracle of art, jewel of the world  
 wisdom's torch, sun of virtue  
 miracle of time, the Muses' delight  
 God's shrine and receptacle of gifts  
 Musca, Cornificia  
 Sappho, Claudia, Praxille  
 Sosipatra, Thelesille  
 Polla and Falconia  
 triumphed in poetry.  
 She surpasses all of you,  
 arch-poetess, your clangour  
 finds acclaim with all artists.

[Kunst-Orackel, Schmuck der Welt  
 Weisheits-Fackel, Tugend Sonne,  
 Zeiten Wunder, Musen Wonnen



Writing chest, supposedly having belonged to Anna Maria van Schurman.



Anna Maria van Schurman. The head scarf formed part of the dress of female Labadists.

Gottes Schrein und Gaben-Zelt.  
 Musca, Cornificia  
 Sappho, Claudia, Praxille  
 Sosipatra, Thelesille  
 Polla und Falconia  
 Siegten in der Dichterey  
 Ihr allein besiegt sie alle  
 Ertz-Poetin, eurem Schalle  
 Fallen jede Künstler bey.]<sup>519</sup>

She must have been deeply embarrassed by these praise poems now. Although she had never felt totally comfortable being the object of praise writings, and had always humbly protested, she now radically broke with this custom. She regretted having previously put up with the praises and having agreed to the publication of the *Opuscula*, which included the *Elogia*. She had not been driven by vanity but by duty, because she had thought, as others

(e.g. Voetius) had, that it was part and parcel of being a scholar that one was 'gradually trained' ['al voet voor voet te laten opleiden'] for 'those outer ostentations of an illustrious name' ['schoutonneel van een doorluchtigen naam']. Thus her ideas were dispersed, after all, and she had to accept the praise into the bargain. Now she thought that she had been blinded or thoughtless, because afterwards she could not rid herself of the fame. 'It was pure idolatry of learning, of which all lovers of vain glory are guilty. The singers of praise are liars, who bewitch themselves with their joint laudations and change themselves into "glory-animals"' ['Het was pure afgoderij van geleerdheid, waaraan alle liefhebbers van ijdele eer zich schuldig maken. De lofredenaars zijn leugenaars die zich betoveren door hun onderlinge loftuiterye en zich tot rechte Eerdieren veranderen']. She should have protested much more vehemently against these 'trumpeters of her praise' ['uitbazuiners van haar lof'], which equalled her (a 'mortal little human being, a mere worm of the earth' ['sterffelijk menschje, een wormpje der aarde']) to the pagan gods, yes, even ascribed divine qualities such as omniscience to her. Van Schurman therefore recalled her writings which smacked of vanity, and asked everyone to burn 'those praise writings that were branded by that sign of sinfulness' ['die lofgeschriften die door dat teken van goddeloosheid gebrandmerkt waren']. She herself burnt an unknown number of letters and poems that she had in her possession. The only thing that she could still do was to sacrifice 'the small traces of honour, which the scholarly world has inflicted upon my name' ['het kleine eergeruchtje van mijn naam, welke de weerelt der Geleerden my heeft toegebracht'].<sup>520</sup>

As a woman, Van Schurman was in a position of leadership among the Labadists; she was called 'mama' and De Labadie 'papa'. She supported the group not only through her money, but also through her learnedness, her contacts and piety. The renegade Antoine Lamarque afterwards told of the strict discipline, and the observance of the Sunday rest among the Labadists in the house on the canal in Amsterdam. Unconditional obedience to De Labadie was demanded. Eyes open during prayers? Punishment. Men wearing earrings? The ban on jewellery applied to men too. Sunday or Sabbath day? Every day was a Sunday. Church services were held in the mornings (from 7 to 10) and in the evenings (from 5 to 7). At mealtimes, two kinds of tables were laid: one for the chosen, the other for those who were still 'on probation'. At table one sat Jean de Labadie, and on his right sat Anna, on whose right sat Yvon.

In this *Labadist Republic*, a different hierarchy applied than in the real Republic: people sat according to rank and status in [divine] grace. Lamarque grudgingly conceded that there was sometimes a contagious atmosphere of gaiety. After dinner, they rowed through the canals, with group one singing and group two doing the rowing.<sup>521</sup> Pious gatherings were held with like-minded people, but also deliberation sessions with other free spirits such as Comenius, Gichtel and Antoinette Bourignon. But cooperation was not possible; the views were too widely divergent. The Labadists started their own printing press and in that one year in Amsterdam, nine publications rolled off the press. These were handed out to visitors, mailed and distributed. Missionary journeys were also undertaken in the Netherlands and the Rhinelands. There was a burning desire for missionary work. Through that the Labadists became known, not only in the Netherlands, but also in Ger-

many and England. But after some riots erupted in Amsterdam following the mysterious death of an old widow, and of their colleague Menuret, who had become insane, most of the Labadists departed by boat from Amsterdam at the end of 1670. Van Schurman and her friends travelled via Bremen to Herford where her friend, Princess Elisabeth von der Pfalz, as abbess of a Lutheran abbey offered them shelter and protection, in answer to an urgent letter from Van Schurman.<sup>522</sup>

The Labadists lived in Herford in a beautiful house. But very soon problems cropped up: the local population of Herford was annoyed because of a ‘gathering that was neither Roman Catholic, nor Lutheran nor Dutch Reformed’, and where civil marriage was declared superfluous. If two people wished to share their lives, notification to the leaders was sufficient. With fourteen nuns under her care in the abbey, Princess Elisabeth could not allow this, and also insisted on a civil marriage. So, then Yvon got married to Catharina Martini, Dulignon to Aemilia van der Haer and De Labadie to Lucia Aerssen van Sommeldijk.<sup>523</sup> In Herford, community of property was introduced. That was celebrated by an ecstatic Holy Communion: people whispered that ‘they danced and kissed’. The news spread like wildfire, and elicited again a series of writings. Borstius then wrote in the ‘*Short and sincere story of the dancing, kissing and embracing of Mr Jean de Labadie and his party*’ [‘*Kort en oprecht verhael van het Danssen, Kussen en Omhelsen van Mr. Jean de Labadie en sijn Geselschap*’] that Van Schurman had also joined in the dancing.<sup>524</sup>

Van Schurman sent a letter in French, together with two books of De Labadie, to Princess Sophie, sister of Elisabeth von der Pfalz, who later became Queen-mother of England. Princess Sophie thanked her for the lovely books, but declined the honour of becoming part of the ‘blessed’ commune now – that could wait until she was in heaven, she thought. She did come to Herford to take a look, together with her cousin and surrounded by an entourage of learned men, among whom the learned historian and court official Paul Hachenberg: the fixed procedure of a female royal visit. According to the report, Anna Maria van Schurman deliberately wore a frugal habit, and greeted them halfheartedly with a ‘*languino osculo*’, a lame little kiss. But her earlier enthusiasm returned when she showed them her art cabinet:<sup>525</sup>

We were brought into a room in which many beautiful objects vied for our attention. There were paintings by the highly learned virgin which were more true to life than nature itself; also sculptures in wood and wax with such expressive faces that we were carried away in admiration while looking at these masterpieces in astonishment.

[Men bragt ons in eene kamer waarin vele schoone voorwerpen onze aandacht trokken, het waren schilderijen der hooggeleerde maagd, die in waarheid van voorstelling met de natuur strenden, ook houten en wassen beelden van een sprekende uitdrukking die ons in bewondering wegsleepten terwijl wij deze meesterstukken met verbazing aanschouwden.]<sup>526</sup>

There were many visitors from Utrecht and Zeeland, but also from Germany itself. Van Schurman, De Labadie, Yvon and Du Lignon held disputations with professor and principal Sandhagen and the Lutheran minister Kracht about millennialism. And just after ar-

riving in Herford, she made a statement about the purity of doctrine in front of magistrates, ministers and professors of theology from the University of Rinteln.<sup>527</sup> After that, the Labadistic confession *Veritas sui vindex seu solemnis fidei declaratio* [The defender of truth, or a solemn decalaration of faith] was published in Latin, French, Dutch and German. Van Schurman signed it as follows:

Since God has granted me the grace that through my studies and through the assistance of his Holy Spirit, I obtained knowledge of the truths of our faith, and of the pure evangelical doctrine as well as of Christian piety; I cannot neglect, after I have perused this document, to pledge my total agreement with the truths contained therein.

[Also my God de genade heeft gedaan, dat ik door mijne studien, en door den bystand synes H. Geestes, kennisse, soo wel van de waarheeden des Geloofs, en van de suivere Evangelische Leere, als van de Christelike Godsaligheid verkregen hebbe; soo kan ik niet nalaten, nadien my dit geschrift is meede-gedeelt, myne ganschelyke vereenigingh met de waarheden, die daarin zyn voorgesteld, te betuygen.]<sup>528</sup>

From Kassel, the Protestant ecumenicus John Dury, a former acquaintance of both Van Schurman and De Labadie, wrote a warm letter. But they absolutely did not agree with his ideal of Protestant church unity, she wrote in Latin. The situation in Herford deteriorated daily. While Anna Maria van Schurman was lying ill in bed, the windows were shattered with stones. Princess Elisabeth went to Berlin for help, but during her long absence, the Labadists moved in 1672 to Altona near Hamburg.<sup>529</sup>

Altona was a thriving commercial city with hundreds of religious dissidents, religious fringe groups and freethinkers, similar to Amsterdam. The Labadists were also welcome. However, here there also arose skirmishes with dissentients, but Van Schurman felt at home in this community, she was happy. She gave advice, modelled miniature portraits of Du Lignon and De Labadie (one of the miniatures was the size of a hazelnut), and drew a portrait of herself as proud Labadist with a scarf around her head. She worked on her autobiography, wrote letters in Dutch and Latin, and wrote poetry about the life of a true Christian. She also tried to persuade her relatives, and with partial success: Aemelia and Vincentia van der Haer and their mother Levina Ocker from The Hague joined the Labadists. Her namesake and second cousin, Anna Maria van Schurman, however, still stayed at Abbingastate in Leeuwarden, and Van Schurman felt that she had to warn her:

My dear child [...] And write to me, if you please, just as you did at the time at the beginnings of these wars, from the innermost feelings of your heart, which were very pleasing to me, [...] and do write to me the reason on which you base your multiple excuses for your absence here...

[Mijn lieve Kind [...] En schrijft my, so het u gelieft, gelyk ten tyden van de beginselen deser oorlogen, uyt binnenste gevoelens uwes herten, die my seer aengenaem waeren, [...] en schryft my eens de reden waerop gy de hope van de verschooning uwer plaetse fondeert.]<sup>530</sup>

Much singing was done. Van Schurman translated French hymns of De Labadie into Dutch, or wrote some herself:

The sailor has taken down his sails  
As soon as he saw the stars appearing  
And has gone to his hut to rest  
On the arrival of the night full of darkness.  
The sheep too, however dispersed they were  
Are now gathering together in the stable.

[De Seeman heeft sijn zeylen ingenomen  
Soo haest hy heeft de sterren voort sien komen  
en is ter rust na sijne hut getreden  
Op d’ aenkomst van de nacht vol duysterheden.  
De Schapen ook/hoe seer verstroyt sy waren  
Sietm’ in de stal haer nu by een vergaren.]<sup>531</sup>

Anna Maria van Schurman completed the first part of her autobiography in Altona, titled *Eukleria of Uitkiezing van het Beste deel* [*Eukleria or Choosing the best part*].<sup>532</sup> The title referred to the well-known story from the Gospel according to Luke, about Jesus and the sisters Mary and Martha. Martha complained that her sister was sitting at Jesus’ feet, listening to him, while she [Martha] had to do everything in the kitchen. Jesus defended Mary and said, ‘But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part.’ These were also Anna Maria’s sentiments.<sup>533</sup> Her crossing over to the Labadists was the only thing that was needed, the good part. She at once went ahead and delivered a barely disguised side-swipe at Voetius:

As is by now well known from the public writings of some famous men, who previously regarded me with special favour and fondness, they strongly disapprove of my new way of life.

[Nadien het nu een iegelijk uit de openbare schriften van enige vermaarde Mannen, die my voortijts met besondere goetgunstigheid genegen zijn geweest, heel bekend is, dat haar mijn nieuwe maniere van leven zeer mishaeft.]

She joked that, even on her sixty fifth birthday, she apparently still needed the approval of many learned men and friends for her choice of a different way of life:

However, there is no lack of famous and learned men, who regard the previous state of my life to have been so excellent and agreeable, that I would not be allowed the freedom to exchange that state for another, except perhaps with the permission of all my friends, or to the cheers of the scholarly world, as if I partially owed the fame of my name to them.

[Dog dewyl’ er geen vermaarde en geleerde mannen ontbreken, welke den vorige stant mijns levens zo voortreffelijk en beminneijk agten geweest te zijn, dat het mij niet vrij zou staan dien met een ander te verwisselen, als veelligt met toestemminge van alle mijne vrienden, of ook met toejuichinge der Geletterde werelt, als aan welke ik de beroemtheit van mijn naam ten dele schuldig was.]<sup>534</sup>

In impeccable Latin she explained what had moved her to embrace Labadism. The book contains not only her life story and the experiences of the Labadists since De Labadie’s arrival in the Netherlands, but also extensively deals with the contentious theological topics:

observance of the Sunday (every day Sunday), the sacraments (no christening of infants and Holy Communion only for the chosen), marriage (getting divorced if the partner did not want to convert to Labadism) and numerous other matters such as the concept of Church. All this she illustrated with many appropriate quotations from the Classics and the Bible. In the book, she recalled, among other things, her defence of science and learning. She even blushed as she remembered the excesses of her studies, her *Dissertatio* and the poems that she had once written in honour of the Utrecht University:<sup>535</sup>

[... how I was dragged to fame...] That, however, happened precisely in the time when I was encouraged by a few refined scholars and especially by Gijsbertus Voetius, most important professor in theology, to glorify the establishment of the University of Utrecht with my poems.<sup>536</sup>

She wrote disapprovingly about the time that she had wasted in learning so many languages. That had been like 'lighting torches for the sun' ['aansteken van fakkelen voor de zon']. In the book Utrecht often features, but mostly in a derogatory sense. She found for



Dutch translation of the first part of Van Schurman's autobiography.

instance that theology in Utrecht was poor, because one learnt there the 'wretched' art of praying from little books (the so-called formulary prayers), so stiff and unnatural that one could never pray spontaneously in times of need. We have already mentioned her criticism of the disputations, where the 'devil was chairman'. Still, her criticism did not mean that she had become anti-intellectual or that she would break with science and learning; she merely disapproved of the misuse of learning and the vanity that accompanied it. One's studies should not be an obstacle to the imitation of Christ, bearing the cross and suffering. She concluded her *Eukleria* by writing that her 'present state was blessed, and that the best part had befallen her'.<sup>537</sup>

Van Schurman was the first woman in the Netherlands to publish an autobiography in Latin. But the *Eukleria* is not an ordinary autobiography such as we are used to; it is a mixture of defence (apology), her life story, the stories of her travels and her conversion, and especially theological dissertation. The title does not indicate this: it reads ΕΥΚΛΗΡΙΑ (the good choice) and *Melioris Partis Electio* (choice of the better part), and the subtitle reads: *Tractatus Brevem Vitae ejus Delineationem exhibens* [*Dissertation, showing a brief sketch of her life*]. Only in the Dutch translation the title is more in line with the actual content of the book: *Eucleria, of uitkiezing van het beste deel. Waar in vertoont wert een kort begrip van haar leven, als mede veel Hoofst-stukken van den Godsdienst grondig werden verklaart* [*Eucleria, or Choosing the best part. In which a summary of her life is shown, and also many chapters of religion are thoroughly explained*]. She herself referred to the *Eukleria* as a 'Dissertation, entailing the story of my past and present life' ['Tractaetjen, behelsende een verhael van myn voorleden en tegenwoordig leven'] or 'Mea dissertatio' or 'Discours':

I have strongly desired to declare openly, by means of a particular and more comprehensive document, which I have drawn up to this end, also for the benefit of my friends to whom such an explanation appears to be long overdue, the reasons that have moved me to leave my previous more ordinary life, and to join this emerging church and its leaders and preachers or pastors [...] resolutely and with commitment. But since various obstacles are still delaying this small work of ours, the *Discours* [...]

[Soo heb ik grotelijks begeert, dit door een bysonder en wijdlopiger Geschrift, 't welk ik tot dien einde heb gemaakt, opentlik te betuigen, om ook met eenen mijne Vrienden, die ik dit al overlang schuldig schijnt te zijn, de redenen te verklaren, dewelke mij bewogen hebben, om myn voorig meer-gemeen leven te verlaten, en my tot dese opkomende Kerke, en tot hare Leiders en Leeraars, of Herders [...] vaerdig en bestendiglik te voegen. Maar aangesien verscheide hinderpalen dit ons klein Werk of *Discours* noch een weinig ophouden [...]]<sup>538</sup>

The genre of the *Eukleria* thus seems to be a medley. Some alleged that Van Schurman had modelled it after the *Confessiones* of Augustine, which had been a defining influence on many autobiographical conversion histories. After all, Augustine also wrote alternate fragments of life story interspersed with spiritual digressions. She often quoted him in agreement, and recalled, just as he did, the vain writings. But if we compare both works in Latin, there are very few similarities (the continuously addressing of God in the second person, for instance, does not feature in Van Schurman's text). Others pointed out the possible influence of spiritual autobiographies of Spanish convent women, as Van Schurman had to

defend herself, just as these women had to. But we cannot infer from anything that she had known these Catholic and unpublished texts. Besides, the *Eukleria* is more than a spiritual autobiography. It seems better to relate it to the genre of the humanistic autobiography. The humanistic autobiography relied heavily on the Classics and this genre clearly showed that one could describe one's life story by means of a variation of literary forms, in prose or poetry. Many writers preferred a commentary [or narrative] written in the third person or an *Epistola ad posteritatem* [a letter to posterity]. But whatever form was chosen, the *variatio docta* [the learned variation] played an important role. Often the life story is interrupted and an *ekphrasis* is inserted, a separate unit which was written for a different purpose. This variation is exactly what we find in the *Eukleria*. If the main purpose of the humanistic autobiography was to reap eternal fame, with Van Schurman it became a Christianised ambition: her aim was the glory of God. In this respect, she met the requirement of an ancient ideal, namely to improve on the *imitatio* of the pagan Classics by means of a Christian emulation [*aemulatio*].<sup>539</sup>

The *Eukleria* was printed on their own printing press and was distributed via all kinds of channels, also via the Frankfurter Buchmesse [Frankfurt Book Fair]. She sent it herself to the Frisian politician, Allart Pieter Jongestal, to her friend, the church minister Daniel Meyer in Dreischor, and to Professor John Owen in England. The book evoked an avalanche of reactions. It was the best defence of the Labadists. Everyone thought the style and the language (Latin) were excellent. Next to the content, this alone was sufficient reason for many German professors to make the book available to their students. 'One of the most beautiful flowers cultivated in the garden of the Labadists,' said à Brakel. 'No', responded Gichtel, 'it smells of Labadism.' Others thought it was 'an extravagant product of someone old and dozy'. The philosopher Leibniz and his circle, on the other hand, were very pleased with it. Johann Drechsler from Leipzig published *Eukleria eukeatos*, a book that specifically opposed her view about learning. But rector Mechovius from Halle wrote to defend her, to which Drechsler again reacted with an *Epistola Amica*. Thomasius, also professor at Leipzig, felt that he had to defend the fine arts and sciences against her. From Frankfurt am Main Willemerus and Feustkinger wrote, rejecting everything in the *Eukleria* that went against Lutheranism. The Scottish church minister John Brown from Rotterdam published a separate book in which he railed against her view of the Sabbath. Koelman attacked almost the entire book, and Bourignon again disputed Van Schurman's views on predestination and reconciliation. Samuel Rachelius, professor in law from Kiel, started a correspondence, and her *Eukleria* was sent to him, together with digressions on her opponent Antoinette Bourignon. The long scholarly letter that she wrote to him in Latin from Altona, was published separately and translated. Voetius once again voiced his opposition to her views. He once again published his disputations from 1669, together with his critique of her *Eukleria*. That was a great blow to her.<sup>540</sup>

The German lawyer Johann Jacob Schütz from Frankfurt read the *Eukleria* and was so deeply moved that he sought contact with Van Schurman. From their extensive correspondence in Latin, which continued until Van Schurman's death, it is clear that she had given him instruction and spiritual guidance on topics such as self-denial, Tauler,



Jean de Labadie; drawing by Anna Maria van Schurman.

Bourignon and divine grace. Thus she exerted much Labadistic influence over the Lutheran circle in Frankfurt, where Spener was also a member. At her request, Schütz translated a description of the Labadistic house church into German. It was also he who introduced her idea of separate *collegia pietatis* [colleges for teaching piety] for students of theology. In such institutions they would be able to practise piety, and so enhance their spiritual life. For a short while, the correspondence came to a stop when she suspected him of having too much affection towards the protector of Antoinette Bourignon, Pierre Poiret. But the brief rift in their relationship was again repaired. What touched her in Schütz was the way that Providence had led his life in such twists and turns, and eventually leading him to the correct way of life, thus she wrote.<sup>541</sup>

Meanwhile Jean de Labadie had become terminally ill. On his deathbed he said that he was happy. He had seen his ideal being realised: a church of true Christians around him, its members bound by love and communal possession, separate from the world, with only one wish, namely to follow Christ, to bear his cross and deny themselves. Van Schurman wrote an appropriate Latin elegy in which she equalled De Labadie with the patriarchs and the Apostles. But the dislike of the Labadists was so strong in Altona that a month passed before De Labadie was given a burial. One month! The Lutherans refused to bury him, neither did the Dutch Reformed Church wish to give up a patch of their cemetery, nor had the city any wish to sell a piece of land to foreigners about whom wild rumours were abounding. Rumours of war strengthened the feeling of anxiety. Jean de Labadie's corpse was still not buried when Van Schurman wrote a letter in Latin to John Owen: whether he perhaps knew of somewhere in England where the Labadists were welcome? He, a former professor of theology and Chancellor of the University of Oxford, and at the time a church minister in Lon-

don, was well-disposed towards the Labadists. Before a response reached her from England, the fatherland unexpectedly offered a solution to the problem.<sup>542</sup>

### *'My last hours'*

As it is apparent that my last hours have drawn near, due to my advanced age and continuous weaknesses, I Miss Anna Maria van Schurman, residing in the house in Wieuwerd in Friesland, healthy in body and – thanks to the grace of the Lord – sound of mind and memory, [...]

[Naedemael 't apparent is, dat mijn laatste ure nabij is, aangesien mijnen hogen ouderdom en geduirige swackheden, so heb ik Juffr. Anna Maria van Schurman, resideerende op 't huijs te Wyuwaert in Frieslandt, gesond van lichaem en door des Heren genade bij goede verstande ende memorie [...]]<sup>543</sup>

Thus the first lines of the last will and testament of Anna Maria van Schurman read. But a few years would pass before she would close her eyes for ever. The threatening war between Sweden and Denmark and the hostilities in Altona forced the Labadists to move to Walthastate, near Wieuwerd in Friesland. That was the property of the Van Aerssen van Sommelsdijck family. Via a beautiful driveway lined with trees, one came to 'a great noble estate, with all the subordinate housing, gates, gardens, crescents, trees and plantations' ['een groot Adellijke Heerlijkheit, met alle onderhorige Huisingen, poorten, Hovingen, Cingels, Bomen en plantagien']. In Wieuwerd the commune thrived. They tried to be self-sufficient and produced wool [so-called 'labadistenwol'], ointment and soap. There was a scientific curiosity, despite the focus on an inner spiritual life. For instance, an autopsy was done on Jean de Labadie, not because the human body was seen as unimportant, but because people wanted to know what he had died of. Hendrik van Deventer, who had joined the Labadists in Altona, was the surgeon and developed into a very capable and well-known gynaecologist. Under his leadership a surgery was established, as well as an orthopedic workshop, a pharmacy and a laboratory. They manufactured painkillers (opium pills) and tablets against excessive perspiration and toothache, not only for the commune, who by now counted almost four hundred, but also for the Frisians from the neighbouring towns. This brought in much needed income.<sup>544</sup>

In Wieuwerd many visitors also came to their door, for example the religious leader of the Quakers, William Penn. In the meantime, three kinds of tables had been instituted, the third was for visitors. But Penn was allowed to sit at the 'table of grace' ['tafel der genade'], which was number 1. He discussed some of the problematic theological issues with the leaders and told of the persecutions in England, which he had experienced personally. Afterwards, he was deeply moved by Van Schurman's emotional telling of her life story.<sup>545</sup>

Together with Yvon, it was Van Schurman's task to write scholarly letters by which outsiders could be rationally convinced of the correct lifestyle of the Labadists. These Latin letters were then mostly accompanied by her *Eukleria* or other Labadistic books, as becomes clear from a letter to Matthias Cramer, teacher in Western languages in Nuremberg

and his friend Gabriel Talientschker. 'I was pleasantly surprised that the name of the Labadists had penetrated into such remote regions and that you are all aflame with the light of truth in the love for Christ the Lord' – thus she wrote. Talientschker's eyes had been opened by her *Eukleria*, and in all modesty, she compared her book to 'the clay that the Saviour wanted to use long ago to give to the man who had been born blind, his sight'. The title of the book, *het beste deel* ['the best part'], now also applied to Talientschker. Her advice to them was to 'leave behind all the worldly people and the blind leaders of the blind (the church leaders), and to follow Christ, the Eternal Light, and his infallible Spirit as Guide. Then we would not be walking in the dark, but on the way of life, which would end in eternal life', she wrote. She wished them the 'complete love of Christ and perfect hate for the things that he hated'.<sup>546</sup>

In the Latin correspondence with her own physician Bernardus Swalve from Leeuwarden, she thanked him for his help. In addition to trying by means of well-known passages from the Bible to persuade him to join the Labadists, she informed him with medical insight about her complaints and her use of medicines:

Every other day I take some tamarind, for it softens the bowels. Unfortunately one of the side effects is a burning thirst. Fortunately my hand is now almost free of pain, but the pain has moved to my right knee, which is now so badly inflamed that I almost cannot walk any more. I am therefore going to move to a room that is less cold.<sup>547</sup>

What did Van Schurman do as Labadist for women's learning? We know that, 'instead of maidservants who would have had to be paid', she was surrounded by a 'series of amiable sisters' ['rij beminnelijke zusters'], for whom no trouble was too much. We also know that she was ashamed about her own erudition and about her *Dissertatio*, because she had not first sought 'the one thing that was needed':

Recently, I marvelled about the excesses that I was prone to in my studies: when at this occasion, not without blushing, I looked again at my dissertation on a Christian woman's right to study, written to Mr Andreas Rivet [...]. Because at that stage I believed that I had to study everything that is knowable, in order to *escape ignorance*, in the words of the philosopher which I quoted there. [...] But how far my thoughts were removed from the admonishment of our Saviour, *One thing is needful*, anyone can see from what was said there.

[Ik heb my onlangs verwondert over mijn onmatigheit in de studien, daar ik eertijds krank aan gelegen heb: als ik bij deze gelegenheit, niet zonder root worden mijn redenvertoog aangaande de studie van een Christelijke Vrouwspersoon aan den H. Andreas Rivet geschreven, doorzag [...] Alzo dat ik doen geloofde, dat ik alles, wat weetlik is, leeren moeste, en dat wel, gelijk ik ook de woorden van den Filozooft daar heb aangehaalt, *om de onwetenschap t' ontgaan*. [...] Doch hoe verre mijn gedachten doen geweest zijn van de vermaninge onzes Zaligmakers, *Een ding is nodig*, zulks kan een yder zien uit het gene gezegt is.]<sup>548</sup>

Still, Van Schurman did not make a clean break with all learning; but it had to be of the kingdom of God, or a life of servitude. I assume that the children of Labadists received tuition, with much emphasis on biblical studies. We do not know of young girls or women who had especially received any (further) tuition or encouragement from Van Schurman. But it does seem likely to me, as she had also encouraged women outside the Labadist



The Labadist Anna Maria van Schurman, self-portrait. The poem was written by an unknown writer after her death.

community. Van Schurman wrote letters in Latin to the German lady-in-waiting Eleanore von Merlau in Frankfurt. Van Schurman found her letters 'pleasant and pure as snow' ['aangenaam en sneeuwwit'], and wrote about her to Schütz:

I have kept the letters of this noble and dear young woman. She is very dear to me and I appreciate her even more after your long letter. I am not asking you, my dear brother, to be more detailed and precise in writing. But I assure you that among us Christians nothing is more precious than honesty and avoidance of verbosity. Our Saviour already instructed his disciples accordingly. We have seen fine examples of this in the language of the young woman (Von Merlau). Therefore I have no reason to blame her for hastiness or carelessness in her letter. On the contrary, I liked the richness and efficiency of expression which exposed the intimate feelings of her heart and showed her passionate zeal and caring for the saving of souls.<sup>549</sup>

Influenced by Van Schurman, Von Merlau then left the court of Holstein Sonderburg to live a life of piety. She moved in with the widow Maria Juliane Baur von Eyseneck, and to-

gether they organised conventicles and taught biblical studies and Greek to young girls. Following Van Schurman's example, Von Merlau also wrote an autobiography, titled *Gespräche des Hertzens mit Gott* ['Conversations of the heart with God'] (1689).<sup>550</sup>

Despite Van Schurman's becoming physically weaker, her spirit remained strong until the end. That was evident from the Latin letters to Schütz, which she wrote with a surprisingly firm hand, and also from her *Eukleria* II, the second part of her autobiography. What strikes one in this, is that, although she was writing in Latin, she was now not quoting from the Classics any more, but only passages from the Bible. The book further follows the same varied pattern as Part I, with snatches of life story, alternated with theological dissertations and justifications. The book ended with her death and was supplemented by letters and poems from friends.<sup>551</sup>

The last chapter was the most difficult to write. She had repeatedly postponed it, but shortly before her death, she once again wrote with an aching heart about the discord between Voetius and herself. Even though she had heard that he had passed away in the meantime, she wished to clarify the matter once more for those who were still living. To her mind it was unforgivable that Voetius, by his sharp attacks in public against the group of De Labadie, had prevented many people from joining the Labadists:

I refer to the honourable and, because of his great and versatile learning, famous Doctor and Professor of Theology, Gisbertus Voetius, who right from the start opposed this work by means of his public disputations, which he then also published, and thus incited many with his prejudices. Especially for the students he set an example of speaking insolently about our church, yes, of ridiculing it and trumpeting his damning judgement all around. After all, wasn't he this great theologian!

She was initially very sad, but soon she learned to 'leave everything to God, who could even call forth light from darkness'. Even though many were deterred from joining by the mere authority of Voetius, some did have the courage to investigate the true facts of the matter for themselves. She explained in great detail what had driven her when she departed from Utrecht to Amsterdam: not so much the example of Paula, but the example of Abraham who had followed the voice of God and had given up everything 'not knowing where he would end up'.<sup>552</sup>

A few days after completing this chapter, she passed away in calm and peace, surrounded by her friends and kindred spirits. Yvon wrote to Princess Elisabeth about her blessed ['zalig'] deathbed, where some of the last words she spoke were: 'I have almost reached the harbour; I am just waiting for a gust of wind to bring me to the fatherland'.<sup>553</sup> And the Labadist Strauch wrote to Schütz after her death:

She has departed from this life and has crossed over to a better life, to her father, I say, and to her God, as the humble and faithful handmaiden of Jesus Christ, our dear sister and mother, whom I deeply respected.<sup>554</sup>

She, who had written so many elegies for others during her life, got only one single poem. The *Hollantsche Mercurius* limited themselves to the following line: 'In the beginning of May Anna Maria Schuurman died' ['In 't begin van Mey is mede overleden Anna Maria

Schuurmans']. An unknown person had a medal struck on her death,<sup>555</sup> and beneath her last self-portrait the following poem was engraved:

See here the noble maiden, described as unparalleled  
 before she chose the best part instead of worldly praise.  
 She seemed to be composed of Wisdom, Spirit and Virtue,  
 Her Love was crucified, the Cross was her joy.  
 Art, languages, science: erudition, greatness, glory,  
 Gladly she laid it all at the feet of Christ.

[Siet hier de Eedle Maegt, genaemt weergadeloos,  
 Eer sy voor 's Werelst lof het beste deel verkoos.  
 Sy was als saemgesteld van Wysheyt, Geest en Deugd,  
 Haer Liefde was gekruyst het Kruys was hare vreugd.  
 Kunst, Talen, Wetenschap: Geleertheyt, Grootheyt Eer,  
 Met blytschap ley sy 't al voor Christi voeten neer.]<sup>556</sup>

## Epilogue

Anna Maria van Schurman was buried in the cemetery of Wieuwerd, next to her friend Sara Moot. At least, that was her wish. But when eleven mummified bodies were found in 1765 in the sepulchral crypt of the Reformed Church in Wieuwerd, it was immediately assumed that Anna Maria van Schurman's body had not decayed to dust, but instead had been mummified. This has never been conclusively proven. As it is, of the original eleven mummies, only four have 'survived' due to 'corpse nabbing'. Anna Maria van Schurman acquired yet another name after this, namely 'the Miracle of Wieuwerd' – as if she had not been inundated with enough accolades during her life.<sup>557</sup>

In 1620, the Dutch poet Anna Roemer Visscher had prophesied of Van Schurman, when the latter was still very young, that she would be 'the pride of all those maidens who ever pursued knowledge'. She clearly had a prophetic view, because Van Schurman did indeed become the most erudite woman of Europe. She had acquired a kind of popstar status. In addition to the many inscriptions by her in the *alba amicorum* of visiting intellectuals, it is also clear from the many books containing her scholarly letters, portraits and self-portraits, poems, praise poems or dedications. She had become a prime example of a learned woman among the male scholars in Europe. Already in 1644, G.P. Harsdörffer, in a book with 'Frauenzimmer Gespräch-Spiele', referred to 'Miss Van Schurman as an example of great intellect among women' ['die Jungfer Schurmann als Beispiel für hohen Verstand bei Frauen']. He was referring to her *Dissertatio*. Already during her life she became the subject of dissertations, orations and intellectual discussions. Izaak Leickherus, for instance, praised her in 1650 in his oration on the privileges and abundance of the time as 'the outstanding young Van Schurman woman from Utrecht as advocate for the better sex'. In 1657 J. Herbinius at the University of Wittenberg discussed Van Schurman in his two dissertations on the erudition of famous women. Also after her death she retained her influence: in 1796 two students at the University of Lund completed their studies, titled *Dissertatio historica de vita et meritis Annae Mariae Schurmanniae* [*Historical dissertation on the life and merits of Anna Maria van Schurman*].<sup>558</sup>

There were always scholars who wanted to have her portrait, for instance, Professor

Gernler (Semitic Languages, Basel). When in 1663 there were no more portraits, Van Schurman engraved a self-portrait surpassing in excellence all her previous portraits, according to her brother.<sup>559</sup> Her portraits were passed on from hand to hand. They were put away in curiosity cabinets or hung on the walls of [other] scholars (Simonds d'Ewes, Dal Pozzo). But also her art works were hung or displayed in houses, such as in the house of the Reverend Petrus de Witte who lived in number 16 Rapenburg, in Leiden. Wherever she went, she was immediately noticed. For instance, on 12 July 1650, she was on an unscheduled visit to Leiden, when Du Plessis Gourest immediately informed his uncle, Rivet: 'Miss Van Schurman has appeared in this country with a lot of fanfare' ['Mademoiselle de Schurman a paru en ce pais avec trop d' Eclat'].<sup>560</sup>

Van Schurman was also portrayed by many well-known artists, for instance, by Van Dijck, Jan Lievens, Cornelis Jansen van Ceulen, Gerard Dou and Van Miereveldt. She created many self-portraits. In 1637 she made a miniature woodcut of 4 cm diameter of herself, portrayed with a laurel wreath – as a poet laureate. With that she placed herself in a long tradition which had started in the times of the Roman empire, where learned male poets were crowned with a laurel wreath as poet laureates. This custom was continued in Germany, and from the eighteenth century, sometimes even women were crowned there, for instance, Dorothea Loeberia or Christiane von Ziegler, the poet who wrote the texts for the cantatas of Johann Sebastian Bach. Recently, Lisa Kahn, a poet and professor at the University of Mexico, was nominated as 'poeta laureata'. The scholarly laureate writer is therefore a well-known phenomenon. But a woman awarding herself a laurel wreath in the seventeenth century is certainly an uncommon phenomenon. Did she deserve such an accolade? Let the reader be the judge.<sup>561</sup>



Anna Maria van Schurman as poet laureate, self-portrait. It is unusual for a seventeenth century woman to portray herself with a laurel wreath. It does say something about her self-image.



After her death, this portrait of Anna Maria van Schurman, with curtain and laurel branch, was published in Germany. The praise poem is by Jacob Cats, translated into German.

Only a small part of Van Schurman's work, her national and international network, her influence, has been studied. She sat like a spider in a web and spun more threads than we can now discern. Did she, for example, have contact with the French philologist, Anne le Fèvre-Dacier? There were remarkable similarities in their life stories, for instance, Anne le Fèvre's father – who was a professor in Greek at the University of Saumur – also discovered when she was eleven, that she had literary talents, when she helped her brothers by whispering to them the correct answers to their father's questions.<sup>562</sup> In the recent past the view has been taken 'that Van Schurman has proven to have been a traditional Renaissance polyhistor [a person of wide knowledge], who had read something about everything, had heard something about everything, who especially knew the classical authors, but who had found that knowledge of classical literature could only lead to one conclusion, namely that there was nothing new under the sun'. This view is proven untrue by this very book. Van Schurman had achieved the highest pinnacle that a woman could possibly reach. By being admitted to the University of Utrecht she was afforded opportunities that other women could only dream of. Even if she could not officiate in a public office such as church minister or professor, she was able to participate as scholarly writer. Her views on women's learning, on the boundary between life and death, but also on specific theological topics such as baptism for the dead, the transubstantiation, 'the shackling of Satan', or the decline of Christianity, were taken seriously in the academic world. That was why her book, the *Opuscula*, was published: 'It constituted in itself a public space, a claim to the right to be judged by one's peers and to engage in judgement of them.' She featured as an authority in the textbooks of professors such as Cloppenburg and Hottinger, in the company of men such as Melancthon, Luther, Rivet and Voetius. She rivalled the learned women in Europe in her knowledge of theology and Semitic languages. She was the first person in the Netherlands and the first woman in Europe, who had written a grammar for the Ethiopian language. Right up until her joining the Labadists, she was very interested in developments in the field of knowledge – also outside the discipline of theology.

By consulting source documents directly, I was able to revise the image of Van Schurman in a few respects: she was indeed the first female student at a university; she was regarded as an academic on an equal footing with the male academics; she wrote poems also in German; she was a typical member of the Reformed faith, but was also steeped in the humanistic learning that applied in the *Republic of Letters*. That made her receptive to ecumenic exchange with other denominations and other religious groupings. She studied their holy scriptures; she even copied the Koran over by hand. She corresponded throughout Europe with male and female scholars in Latin, Greek and Hebrew, and was a source of inspiration for many women through her involvement in the education of women, also as Labadist. Already before her departure from Utrecht, she had been a religious leader within the Dutch Reformed Church.

Van Beverwijck had written to Van Schurman that she dared not hide her good qualities. She had not learnt so many languages just to be silent now. And if she remained unknown, other young women would not have her example to follow.<sup>564</sup> She had taken his words to heart. Not only was she the head of the *Women's Republic of Letters*, where Latin

## Character

A question that is often asked is what kind of character Van Schurman actually had, what kind of woman she was. It is difficult to give a straight answer, not only because she wrote in many foreign languages, but also because the style of writing in those times was so formal and impersonal. Everything had to take place within the constraints of the rules of etiquette that were current then. Only where she wrote about matters of the heart, can one more readily penetrate to her personality, even if it remained limited to domestic or religious affairs. It is still too early to give a definite statement about her character – there is still so much material waiting to be accessed – but I can say the following, based on my research so far.

Firstly, Van Schurman knew how to draw attention to herself, how to take the initiative. That had started already at home when her father was giving lessons in Latin to his sons, and she, who had to be satisfied with taking French, spontaneously called out the correct answer in Latin. She was then allowed to study Latin, and through that, was admitted to the *Republic of Letters*. She initiated contact with Rivet, with whom she started an extensive correspondence in 1631 on women's capacity for studying. This would lead to her first publication (*Amico Dissertatio*). She must have brought her thorough knowledge of Latin to Voetius' attention, for he invited her to write a Latin poem in honour of the establishment of the University of Utrecht. That poem was written totally in the tradition of eulogies for cities, but she adapted it, and at the rhetorically correct moment, she pleaded for women's admission. This also changed her life radically, for that brought her permission to attend lectures in public – which made her the first female university student. Another example is the self-portrait in which she gave herself a laurel wreath, and so immediately placed herself in the tradition of the 'poeta laureata'. Already during her lifetime, she attracted international attention because of her learning, and from the 1640s onward, the first biographical sketches about her were published. She was also actively involved to get her poems in praise of the university published, and mailed books and portraits of herself to others. That may seem to us a bit immodest, but in those times it was the done thing. She stood up for herself, not because she was conceited, but because she was convinced of her own qualities. The success of her actions encouraged selfconfidence.

Another character trait was her concern about the well-being of others, not only her brother Johan Godschalk, for whom she put in a good word in her Latin letters to Revius. She had namely heard that a colleague of Revius, M. Schoock at the Illustre Athenaeum in Deventer, had been promoted to professor in Groningen. She knew of someone who would be perfect to fill the vacancy, and suggested her own brother.<sup>1</sup> After the death of her mother, she took over the household duties, and looked after both her aunts until their deaths. Even if she did have domestic help, caring for the household and family was a time-consuming business. But she extended her caring even further: she made it her calling to promote the women's cause. Not only through her publications, but also in letters she pointed out to women what an oasis studying could be. She urged a professor to write a handbook for Hebrew in Dutch, so that women could also learn Hebrew.

A certain Petersen remembered the warmth radiating from Van Schurman when he (as a small child) and his father once visited her. She picked him up and gave him a lovely embroidered satchel as a gift. As Marie du Moulin's friend, she also showed her lovable side.

But she could also be strict: if the maidservants did not do their work properly, they were discharged.

Although she was accommodating by nature, and observed the rules of courtesy and decency of those times, it was only up to a point. If she was convinced that she was right, and that deviated from the acceptable norm, she would dare to challenge the highest authority by asking questions, or by presenting her own work. When, as a kind of martyr, she gave up everything in order to devote herself to a life of faith and servitude, she went against the highest authorities of the church, against Voetius and the entire academic world. Bravely she went her own way and was happy.

I. Schotel 1853b: 106-108; Leiden University Library. Periz. Q 5 f. 216.

was the medium of communication, she also wrote in French or Dutch to Dutch women. She conducted intellectual discussions about philosophy and Hebrew via correspondence with Elisabeth von der Pfalz and with Marie du Moulin, but with other women who did not have such learning, she would correspond more about domestic matters and matters of faith, and would write poems about music. She always urged them to study, for instance, Elisabeth Heinsius, and the daughters of Van Beverwijck. They knew antique languages, but although their father (just like Vossius in Amsterdam) allowed his daughters to do well in languages, music and history, they should never forget that housekeeping was their most important task, he said. Van Schurman put into practice what she preached in her *Dissertatio*, namely that women had to help other women through their studies.<sup>565</sup>

Van Schurman occupied the top position in the Netherlands. There was no other woman who studied, or who knew so many languages as thoroughly as she did. She was the only one. Through her studies she removed herself farther and farther away from the other members of her sex. Yet, many women in the Netherlands and Europe knew her, and regarded her as their role model; for many she was their source of inspiration, and a *topos* in the genre of women's praise, for instance for Charlotte de Huybert, Franske van Doyem, Johanna Hoobius, Elisabeth of Bohemia, Bathsua Makin, Marguerite d'Ailly, Sara Nevius, Sara Moot, Catharina Martini, Eleonora von Merlau, et cetera. After her death she was a role model for Sophia Brenner (Sweden), Mary Wolstonecraft (England) and for Dorothea Christina Leporin (Germany), as shown in her *Gründliche Untersuchung der Ursachen, die das weibliche Geschlecht vom Studiren abhalten* ['Thorough investigation into the reasons that are keeping the female sex from studying']. The Duchess Benigna von Solms-Laubach advised her daughter to read the *Dissertatio* in the *Immer grünendes Kleeblatt mütterlicher Vermahnungen* ['Evergreen Clover leaf of Motherly Admonishments'] (Frankfurt 1717), and in 1709 Elizabeth Elstob from England found proof in the *Dissertatio* that learning was good for women. Henrietta von Gersdorff and Dorothea Loeberia were so inspired by Van Schurman that they both got involved in a reprint of her *Opuscula*. Von Gersdorff included her poems and letters in a new edition of the *Opuscula* in 1730, to which the principal of the Latin School in Dresden, Johannes Gelenius, added some philological-political notes. Dorothea Loeberia was a poet laureate herself. She put in a lot of effort to study Greek, Latin and Hebrew in order to be able to create a new edition of the *Opuscula*. This was published in 1749 in Leipzig. Van Schurman deserved a new edition, wrote Loeberia, not only because of her noble origins, but also because of the versatility of her learning (theology and languages), and also because of her dignified conduct. She did feel that Van Schurman had sometimes deviated strongly from the truth, and because of that omitted *De Vitae Termino* and the letter to Salmasius about transubstantiation. She corrected the mistakes, adapted the spelling, and finally expressed the wish that this book would help 'Literature flourish like a fresh flower'.<sup>566</sup>

It sounds fantastic: that already in 1636 a young woman was a university student, and achieved through her studies a level that at least equalled that of the men. According to many scholars of her time, she was so brilliant that she could have been appointed as a professor in theology, if she had been a man.<sup>567</sup> As a matter of fact, Van Beverwijck wished that women could become professors, for he wrote in a poem:

What does love of learning lead to, especially in women!  
 Who wishes to keep such spirited beings from our schools?  
 They jumped out of their frocks and put on trousers  
 where Plato's golden lips gave lessons.  
 That was still not enough  
 They could not stand  
 Seeing only the men on the high chairs  
 They also climbed onto those  
 and thus taught as sweetly  
 As our great Heyns is now doing in Leiden.

[Wat doet de leer-sucht niet, besonder in de Vrouwen!  
 Wie wil dat geestigh volck uyt onse scholen houwen?  
 Sy sprongen uit de rock en trocken broecken aen  
 Waar Platoos gulden mond de lessen heeft gedaen.  
 Dat was noch niet genoegh  
 Zy konden niet verdragen  
 Dat sy de mans alleen in hooge stoelen sagen  
 Sy klommen oock daer op  
 en leerden alsoo soet  
 Als onsen grooten Heyns nu binnen Leyden doet.]<sup>568</sup>

That was a joke, for in Utrecht, for instance, it would take until 1917 when Johanna Westerdijk was appointed as first professor extraordinary. Up until 1940, there had been in the Netherlands only seven female professors, and of those seven, five were appointed as poorly paid professors extraordinary. The struggle for equality commenced with a victory in 1636, but it happened under strict constraints. Moreover, it took another 236 years before the next woman was allowed to study at a university in the Netherlands: Aletta Jacobs in 1872. Why did it take so long? To answer that question one would need to undertake another study.

At present (2009) it looks like the glass ceiling is breaking for women in Utrecht. More than half of the students are women, but still, women are extremely under-represented among professors and top management. In 1990, an Anna Maria van Schuurman Centre was established in Utrecht, but her name was removed. Now that her picture has been sketched more fully, it is time to reinstate her name for the Centre. Then, for a start, one may be able to further research Van Schurman's work and make it more accessible. Except for the fact that we owe that to *the first female university student*, we have to keep in mind that 'young women cannot take an unknown woman as a role model'. Even now, in the enlightened Netherlands and outside our borders, there are still women and young girls who are being prevented from using their talents. They still have to fight for their right to study as women, or have to resign themselves to an inferior position among the academic footsoldiers. Van Schurman could serve as shining example, until the *Sol iustitia* one day shines equally just for women and for men.<sup>569</sup>



# Endnotes

1. Brongersma 1686: 306.
2. Apart from Schotel 1853, Douma 1924; Van der Stighelen 1987a; Van Beek 1992a; De Baar et al. 1992; De Baar et al. 1996 (this is the translation 1992); Van Beek 1995a and b; Van Beek 1996a and b; Sneller 1996; Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996; Van Beek 1997a and b; Van Beek 1998; Van Beek 1999a and b; Van Beek 2002; see also [www.dbnl.org/tekst/beek017klei01/](http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/beek017klei01/).
3. Crawford 1983; Crawford 1985; Schenkeveld et al. 1997; King and Rabil 1983; Churchill et al. 2002.
4. Van Schurman 1673: 16.
5. Churchill et al. 2002: 1-10.
6. Stevenson 1998: 109; Stevenson 2001.
7. Het Utrechts Archief, no. 2966, box: Adelsbrief [patent of nobility]; Goebel 1852: 275-276; De Kruyff 1892; in 1623 Frederik van Schurman wrote a French poem in the *album amicorum* of Charles de Montigny de Glarges (The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, B 74 1 48); De Groot 1978: 11.
8. Arnold 1967: 1261-1262; Van Schurman 1754: 73-74.
9. The house has been demolished, but was situated near the present-day GROSSER GRIECHENMARKT 4; Schotel 1853a: 1-4; Van der Stighelen 1987: 36.
10. Van Schurman 1684: 17-18.
11. Arnold 1967: 1261-1262.
12. Van Schurman 1684: 23.
13. Gregory 2001; martyrs were found among Protestants, Anabaptists or (much less common) Roman Catholics, in all their different branches and divisions.
14. Van Schurman 1684: 18.
15. Gregory 2001: 279; 318-319; 344; 342-434.
16. Van Beek 2004b.
17. Van der Stighelen 1987a.
18. Van der Stighelen 1987a; Van der Stighelen 1996.
19. Visscher 1925: 28; Schenkeveld and De Jeu 1999.
20. Bol 1955; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 15-16.
21. *Album studiosorum Academiae Lugduno Batavae* 1925: 168; De Pater 1975: 308-327.
22. Jamin 2001; Algra 1984; Kingmans 1986: 12-13.
23. *Album studiosorum academiae franekerensis* 1968: 73.
24. Museum 't Coopmanshûs in Franeker.
25. Van Schurman 1684: 23.
26. The notion of virginity (parthenia) refers specifically to the untouched state before marriage. Virginity implies celibacy, but celibacy does not imply virginity. Thus Augustine, who chose celibacy after having been married to several women, was no longer regarded as virginal. However, the two terms are often confused with each other. Van Beek 1999.
27. King and Rabil 1998.
28. Van Schurman 1652: 303; Van Beek 1997b: 309-317; Van Beek 2002a: 287-288; quoted in Van Beek 1992b: 138; Van Schurman 1673: 25; Van Schurman 1684: 35-36; Van Schurman 1754: 77.
29. Franeker, Museum 't Coopmanshûs, album; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 180, 190; I am grateful to Dr. Otto Plassmann for his assistance with the transcription.
30. Cf. Lady Filosofía in Boethius, V.E. Watts (ed.), *The consolation of philosophy*, London, 1984: 35; Utrecht, *Poemata Errantia* 179; adapted in Douma 1924: 80-81.
31. Van Schurman 1652: 152-153; 286-297; Veenhoven 1902: 40.
32. Fuks 1985: 409-425; Veenhoven 1902: 40; Van der Stighelen 1986: 78; Jamin 2001: 27-28.
33. De Kruyff 1892; Het Utrechts Archief, Protocols of notary public Nicolaes Verduyn 1626; Rijksarchief Leeuwarden, Janssonius 1978.
34. Thyssen-Schoute 1967; Bots 1972; Dibon 1975; Dibon 1976; Bots 1977; Dibon 1978; Ultee 1987; Waquet 1989; Stegeman 1993; Stegeman 1996; Van Beek 1996.
35. Van Beek 1996; Van Beek 1997b; Van Beek 2002a.
36. Van Schurman 1652: 294-295.
37. Birch 1909: 55; Van Schurman 1652: 166-167; Van Beek 1992a: 49-50.
38. Utrecht University Library, hs. 7 E7.
39. Deucalion was a Noah from antiquity who, together with his wife Pyrrha, survived a disastrous flood engineered by Zeus; Smit 1930 1: 64-65.
40. Deventer Stadsbibliotheek or Athenaeumbibliotheek, 100 A 16 KL Adversaria 1624-41 letter 23; Schotel 1853b: 72; Veenhoven 1902: 40.
41. Van Campen 1940; Pollmann 2000; Brom and Langeraad 1907: 28; Utrecht , hs 837, *Poemata Errantia*; Quaritch 1994: 244.
42. Leiden University Library, manuscript AP 2; Schotel 1853b: 112.
43. Quoted in Van der Stighelen 1987a: 17.
44. Dichterswoningen te Utrecht 1946: 17; De Kruijff 1892; De Jong 1995.
45. Van Beek 1992a: 49-53.
46. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8; Arnold 1967: 1261-1262; Bulckaert 1997.
47. Stevenson 1999; Rang 1988.
48. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8; translation in Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996: 75.
49. Van Schurman 1638; Van Schurman 1641; Bulckaert 1995; Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996; Van Beek 1997b; see also Chapter 3.

50. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8 no. 1; Rivet 1634; Honders 1930; Van Opstal 1937; Van Beek 2002b.
51. Utrecht University Library, *Poemata Errantia*.
52. Utrecht University Library, *Poemata Errantia* 89; Stevenson 1999.
53. Van Beek 1997b: 178-182; 279-285; Van Beek 2002a.
54. Schotel 1853a: 28-30; Van Beek 1997; Van Beek 2005.
55. Basel, Mscr G II 33, letters to Schütz, no. 9; IJsewijn 1985: 275; Van Beek 1997b.
56. Van Beek 1995a; Van Beek 1992a; Van Beek 1995b; Van Beek 1995a; Van Beek 1997b; Van Beek 2002a; Van Beek 2003.
57. Het Utrechts Archief, 5 H40; Mars, the god of war, got caught in the nets of Venus; Sneller 1996: 59-70.
58. Reynolds and Wilson 1974: 130, 138; Gardthausen 1913.
59. Douma 1924: 25; Van Schurman 1652: 250; Schotel 1853a: 31, 32; Van Schurman 1652: 309; *passim* Van Schurman 1652 and Van Schurman 1673.
60. Translation following Simonides; original in: Van Schurman 1639; Van Schurman 1652: 11.
61. Mollerus 1744: 814, 817; Schotel 1853b: 30-31, 40; Van Schurman 1652: 155-165; Steinberg 1974: 112-114; Douma 1924: 26; Franeker, Museum 't Coopmanshuis, PR 750; for several reproductions, see Van der Stighelen 1987a: 223, 228, 230; Van Beek 1992a:10.
62. Van der Stighelen 1987a: 180.
63. Von Ingen 1970: 63; Von Ingen 1993.
64. Van Beek 1992a: 128.
65. Schenkeveld et al. 1997.
66. Van Beek 1992a: 139.
67. Van Beek 1992a: 104-106.
68. Van der Stighelen 1987a: 180; see primary bibliography. During her lifetime and after her death several translations of her work were made into German.
69. Schotel 1853a: 25-26; Van Schurman 1652: 27, 324, 344; Van Beek 1997b: 317; Van Beek 2002a: 288.
70. Quoted in Van Beek 1992b: 138.
71. Van der Stighelen 1987a: 85; Van Schurman 1659; Van Schurman 1673; Van Schurman 1652: 337-339.
72. Schotel 1853a: 73.
73. Cats 1637; Leiden University Library; Grijp 1996: 63-79.
74. Van Schurman 1652: 253-254; Van Beek 1992a: 59-60.
75. Van Beverwijck 1643: 27, 28.
76. Voetius 1636; Schotel 1853a: 89-90; the word 'university' was used together with the word 'academy', Schotel 1853a:114; Voetius 1978; Van Beek 1992a: 56-63.
77. Van Beek 1995a; Van Beek 1997a: 321-327; Van Beek 2002: 271-293.
78. Van Schurman 1652: 300-301; Huygens 1981: 6; Slits 1990: 54-70; 252; *Academiae Ultrajectinae* [...] 1636: f H 2 r-v.
79. Struyck 1984; Kernkamp 1936; Van Dockum and Van Ginkel 1993: 34.
80. Van Beek 1995a.; Van den Broek 1995: 9-13.
81. Jamin 2001: 27-28; Cunaeus 1725: 245-246.
82. *Acta et decreta Senatus* 1938: 96-97.
83. 'Quelle mine de duel, quelle triste parure' in: Van Schurman 1652: 302-303.
84. Voetius 1636; Van Beek 1992a: 54-63.
85. *Acta et Decreta Senatus* 1938: 96-97, 102.
86. Van Schurman 1652: 321; Schotel 1853a: 92; Worp 1893: 1-2; Sneller 1992; Van Beek 1995a.
87. Cunaeus 1725: 245-246; Van Beverwijck 1639: II.
88. De Baar 1992: 107; Sneller 1996: 72-82; Noordhoff 1997: 73-76.
89. Leiden Universitij Library; Schotel 1853b: 106.
90. Voetius 1636; Voetius 1736; Le Long 1736; Vriemoet 1757; *Algemeene Feestwijzer voor het tweede eeuwfeest* [...] 1836: 76-80; Schotel 1853a: 92-93; Douma 1924: 23; Van Schurman 1652: 300-303.
91. Cats 1637; Worp 1897: 304-306.
92. Van Beverwijck 1643: 27, 28.
93. Van Beverwijck 1639.
94. Jamin 2001: 48.
95. Jamin 2001: 45; Duker 1989 deel 4: 168-171.
96. Van Campen 1940: 102-103; Voetius 1655: preface; Van Schurman 1673; Ahsmann 1990; Van Schurman 1684: 53.
97. Adam and Tannery 1899: 230-231; Hoornbeek 1663: A3.
98. Gössmann 1998.
99. Van Beek 1992a: 74.
100. *Album studiosorum* 1836: 7; De Groot 2001; Jamin 2001: 48-49.
101. Jamin 2001: 61; Geudeke 1996.
102. Jamin 2001; Van Schurman 1652: preface; Van Beek 1997b: 204.
103. Rothscheidt 1938: 36; Van Schurman 1684: 219.
104. Van Beek 1992a: 66-78; Keussen 1934: 213.
105. Van Beek 1992a: 140.
106. Jamin 2001: 41-46; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 21.
107. *Algemeene Feestwijzer voor het 2de eeuwfeest* 1836: 8, 9.
108. Cats 1637: voorrede.
109. Jamin 2001: 26-27, 58-59; Voetius 1636.
110. Somewhat later in the seventeenth century the scientific revolution took place, but that experiment-based natural science evolved mainly outside the university, especially at societies such as *The Royal Society* (1666) or was practised by individuals such as Antonie van Leeuwenhoek.
111. Voetius 1663: book 1, dissertation four; Irwin 1998: 95-130.
112. Van Schurman 1641; Bulckaert 1995; Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996; Van Beek 1997b: 208-209; Van Schurman 1652: 29-89.
113. Cats quoted in Van Beek 1992a: 138.
114. With regard to her knowledge of geography (which also formed part of the Faculty of Letters) we only know that Schotel claimed that she 'had a thorough knowledge of geography' ['grondig de aardrykskunde verstont'] and had read all the old and new books on the topic, yes that she herself had drawn maps. Le Laboureur 1645; Schotel 1853a: 73; Van Campen 1940: 65.
115. *Dissertatio inter nobilissimam virginem Annam Mariam a Schurman et Andraeam Rivetum, de ingenii muliebris ad scientias, et meliores literas capacitate*. Van Schurman 1641; Van Campen 1940: 65; Schotel 1853a: 77; Van Beek 1997b; Roothaan and Van Eck 1996.

116. Roothaan and Van Eck 1990; Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996.
117. Van Schurman 1641; Bulckaert 1995; Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996; Van Beek 1997b: 208-209.
118. Van Eck 1992; Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996.
119. More on the *Amica Dissertatio* in Chapter 3; Makin 1673: 13.
120. Van Campen 1940: 102-103; Van Schurman 1652; Van Schurman 1673; passim; Douma 1924: 24-25.
121. Gemeentearchief Nijmegen, Smetius collection.
122. Utrecht University Library, hs.\* F. 19; Van der Horst 1984: 282-283.
123. Roothaan 1990; Roothaan 1992.
124. Van Dooren 1980: 308; Jamin 2001: 70; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 44; Van Schurman 1652: 249-255; 266-269; Gaukroger 1995: 385-393.
125. Van Schurman 1684: 58.
126. Roothaan 1992.
127. Köln University Library, not catalogued.
128. Schotel 1853a: 97; Schotel 1853b: 115.
129. Van Schurman 1652: 249-255.
130. Ecclesiastes 1: 9.
131. Van Schurman 1652: 252-253; Van Beek 1997b: 264-267; Levin 1985: 92-10.
132. Van Schurman 1652: 308.
133. Van Schurman 1652: 305-306.
134. Bastiaensen, Langereis and Nelissen 1999: 48-53.
135. Cats 1637.
136. Nat 1929; Schoors 1980; Nauta 1937; Van Beek 2004a.
137. Van der Waals 1992; Nat 1929; Schoors 1980; De Moor 1981; Van Rooden 1989; Duker (I) 1989: 1, 373; Voetius 1636.
138. Voetius 1636.
139. The catalogue has not been paginated. The books are ordered and numbered according to theme and format. Voetius 1677/1679: *Miscellanei Libri in Octavo*, no. 6.
140. Van Schurman 1684: 46.
141. Van Schurman 1652: 169.
142. Van Schurman 1652: 283-284.
143. Arnold 1967: 1261-1262.
144. Proverbs 10:21: The lips of the righteous feed many.
145. Proverbs 20:27: The spirit of man is the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.
146. Not found in Old or New Testament; cf. 'that great shepherd of the sheep' in Hebr. 13:20, or in 1 Petr. 5:4: 'when the chief Shepherd shall appear'.
147. Literally: 'I have expected you eagerly'. Psalm 40:1: I waited patiently for the LORD.
148. Cf. the books Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, which are filled with verses on the preciousness of words and wisdom coming forth from a mouth, for example Psalm 19:10: More to be desired are they than gold.
149. Psalm 13:2; 30:2; 69:18; 102:3; Proverbs 13:12: Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.
150. Psalm 84:7: They go from strength to strength; Proverbs 18:4: the wellspring of wisdom.
151. Psalm 32:9: Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding.
152. Jesaja 63:9, 11: all the days of old; Psalm 94:19: thy comforts delight my soul; Psalm 128:3: like olive plants; Psalm 1:3: And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water.
153. Ruth 2:2: Let me [...] glean ears of corn.
154. See Psalm 128.
155. Cf. Proverbs 22:1: A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.
156. Schotel 1853a: 34; Van Beek 1997b.
157. Van Campen 1940: 48.
158. Crucius 1661: 536; Amsterdam University Library (University of Amsterdam), letter from Marie du Moulin.
159. Van Schurman 1652: 153-154.
160. Van Rooden 1989: 225-227.
161. Heiman Gans 1971: 78; Van Beek 1992a: 64-65.
162. Stronks and Van Strien 1999: 59, 146, 307-308; Smit 1930: 40-73; the Dutch quatrain in Van Schurman's handwriting has also been included in the front of a copy of the *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica, prosaica et metrica* in the Koninklijke Bibliotheek in The Hague.
163. Zutphens Archief; Van Schurman 1652: 98; 8, 132; 155-160; Van Beek 1999a.
164. The Lord's prayer: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. Cf. Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:1-4.
165. I am grateful to Dr. Plassmann for the translation.
166. Voetius 1677/1679; Van Beek 2004a; Schotel 1853a: 34-35; Van Schurman 1652: 188.
167. Schotel 1853a: 34-35; the codex is kept in the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg.
168. Van Schurman 1652: 9-10; 362; Voetius 1677/1679; Van Beek 2004a; Schotel 1853a: 34-35.
169. Vilsker 1981; Voetius 1677/1679; Deist 1988: 95-116; Douma 1924: 29; De Moor 1981: 166,afb. 27; Koninklijke Bibliotheek 121 D 2/49; Gen. 49:10: The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.
170. Van der Stighelen 1989: 231; Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8: 75; Juynboll 1932; Voetius 1677/1679; Schotel 1853a: 35; Schotel 1853b: 11-12.
171. Makin 1673: 12; Van Beek 1995b.
172. Worp 1895: 147-148 (deel 4); Alenius 1987.
173. Praetorius 1955; Crucius 1661: 521-527 (524); Leiden University Library; Schotel 1853b: 12; Van Schurman 1684: 44.
174. Schotel 1853: 35-37; Silverberg 2001: 163-192.
175. Cats, quoted in Van Beek 1992: 138; Praetorius 1955.
176. Hartmannus 1707.
177. Schotel 1853: 35-37; Weijers 1838: 389; Huygens 1895: 147-8.
178. Mayer 1715: 786.

179. Multilingual work of art in Het Utrechts Archief; Psalm 19:9.
180. Schotel 1853a: 35-37; Mollerus 1744: 817; Weijers 1838: 389; Pankhurst 1982: 1-4.
181. Franeker, Museum 't Coopmanshûs; Schotel 1853a: 115.  
Madam,  
In order for my letter to please you, I will add some curiosities that you might never have seen before, namely Persian and Japanese letter characters as well as some from the Kingdom of Siam, where that great city of Odia is situated. If you want to do so, you can keep the originals, I will be satisfied with copies in your handwriting. As for the Chinese characters, they are fairly easy to come by and I have sufficient other examples. I hear that there is a Chinese man in Amsterdam who knows their writing. I send greetings to your brother, and as soon as Mr Hoogeveen, my cousin, is ready, I will notify him of the matter. Finally you know that I wish for nothing more than to testify that I remain, Madam, your very humble servant André Colvius. 3 November 1637.
182. Schotel 1853a: 38.
183. Voetius 1644; Van Schurman 1652; Van Schurman 1673; Van Schurman 1685; De Groot 2001: 10-25; Van Asselt 2001: 99-109.
184. Van Asselt 2001: 99-109.
185. Cats, quoted in Van Beek 1992: 141-142; *Theologia Textuali* (philology), *Dogmatica* (dogmatics), *Practica* (ascetics), *Elenctica* (disputations/polemics).
186. Van Schurman 1684: 82.
187. King James Version: Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?
188. Van Schurman 1652: 95-101; Lydius 1640; Cloppenburg s.a.: 662-663; Mollerus 1744: 815-817; Korte 1987; De Baar 1992: 105-107; Sneller 1996: 150; Rang 1992: 46-47.
189. Van Schurman 1652: 95-152; Mollerus 1744: 815; Van Schurman 1673; Van Schurman 1685.
190. Van Beek 1992a: 79-121; Van Schurman 1669; Van Schurman 1683; Van Schurman 1699; Van Schurman 1732.
191. Worp 1913: 164.
192. De Niet 1995.
193. Van Schurman 1684: 82-90.
194. Van Schurman 1684: 150, 219-220.
195. *122 Poemata Errantia* s.a.: 175.
196. Van Schurman 1684: 31; Mollerus 1744: 817.
197. Lusitanus 1659: Section A.
198. Schotel 1853a: 75-76.
199. Jamin 2001: 62; Quoted in Schotel 1853a: 75; Lieburg 1975.
200. Van Stipriaan 2002: 88-89; Van Beek 1992a: 138.
201. Van Beek 1997a; the solution is a theorbo, a kind of lute.
202. Schotel 1853a: 67, 203; Van Schurman 1652: 303-304.
203. Van der Stighelen 1987a: 25, 168, 171, 172; Van Beek 1992: 137.
204. Voetius 1655: \*2\*-4; Irwin 1998.
205. Cf. Chapter 1 on the nature of the Neo-Latin poems.
206. Quoted and translated in Van Beek 2003: 62.
207. Quoted in Van Beek 1992: 141-142.
208. Van Campen 1940: 120-121.
209. Lap van Waveren 1643; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 25; Pollmann 2000; Van Schurman 1652: 306; Van Beek 2003: 58-64.
210. Van Beek 2003: 60.
211. Van Beek 2003.
212. Van Schurman 1652: preface; Van Campen 1940: 62; Dousa 1638.
213. Schotel 1853b: 79; Van Schurman 1652: preface.
214. Van Beek 2003: 58.
215. Van Campen 1940: 6 August 1638.
216. Voetius 1655; Nethenus 1668; Hoornbeek 1653; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 275-276; Staehlin 1941: 147; Van Stipriaan 2002: 118; Van Beek 1992a: 122-125; 142.
217. Leusden 1668: preface; Zwiep 1993: 37.
218. Poimenander 1643: 96-7.
219. Van Beek 1992a: 139.
220. Het Utrechts Archief, Protocols of notary public Gerrit Houtman, no. U 022-a 018 1647, p. 6.
221. Leeuwarden, Provinciale Bibliotheek, copy of codicil testament 8 January 1668.
222. Van Lieburg 1988: 116-127; De Jeu 1997: 324-329; Het Utrechts Archief, Protocols of notary public Gerrit Houtman U 022 a 018 1647; Van Schurman 1652: 236-237; 313; Van Beek 1997b: 334-338.
223. Van Schurman 1641; Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8.
224. Rang 1992: 42.
225. Schotel 1853b: 20; Mollerus 1744: 811-815.
226. Cats 1637 in Van Beek 1992a: 138.
227. Van Schurman 1652: \*2rv-v; Van Beek 1997b: 204-206; cf. the online version [www.dbnl.org/tekst/beek017k1eio1/](http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/beek017k1eio1/).
228. Van Schurman 1652: 213-214.
229. Van Schurman 1652: 234-235.
230. Kist 1833: 94-95.
231. Van Schurman 1652: 87-89; 92-95.
232. Van Schurman 1652: 291-292.
233. Van Schurman 1652: 273.
234. Van Beek 1998: 63.
235. Van Schurman 1652: 201, 222; Van Beek 1997b; Van Beek 1998; I am grateful to Dr. Harm Jan van Dam; Parijs, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Dupuy 789 f. 133.
236. Alenius 1991; Rang 1988; Van Beek 1996b; Schotel 1853a: 90-97; Sneller 1992; Sneller 1996.
237. Davies 1954: 150.
238. Willems 1880; Davies 1954.
239. *Index* 1681: 11; *Index* 1938: 434; Van Schurman 1652: 107-120; 121-139; Van Beek 1996.
240. Van Beek 1996; Van Schurman 1652: passim; Van Beek 1997.
241. Rang 1992: 32; Van Eck 1992: 49; De Baar et al. 1996: 184; Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996: 8-9; cf. Bulckaert 1996 and Van der Stighelen 1989, who do demonstrate knowledge of the *Amica Dissertatio*; Van Schurman 1638: 23.
242. A friendly exposition on the ability of women for science and letters by the very noble young woman Anna Maria van Schurman and Andreas Rivet.
243. Van Schurman to Rivet ('Nihil mihi gratius ac-

- cidere', 8 March 1638, p. 3-22); Rivet to Van Schurman ('Dissertatio tua elegantissima', 23-35, 18 March 1638); Van Schurman to Rivet ('Qvod tot tantisque negotiis', 14 March 1638); the dating does not tally with the originals in manuscript form, for example the first letter from Van Schurman should read 6 September 1638 according to Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B7, no. 14; the one from Rivet between 8 and 14 March 1638; according to the *Question Célèbre* (a rough translation of the *Amica Dissertatio*), the first letter from Van Schurman should be dated 6 March 1638, the last one 14 March 1640.
244. Van Schurman 1638: 40; Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 7, no. 16; this postscriptum also appears in her manuscript. However, it has never been printed again, not even in the reprints.
245. Schotel 1853a: 12; Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 7 no. 77.
246. Exposition by the very noble young woman Anna Maria van Schurman on women's ability [to study] science and letters. Followed by some letters on the same topic.
247. Van Schurman 1641: 7-8.
248. A few printing errors, among others 'telum' instead of 'telam' (p. 7), or 'En' instead of 'An' (p. 22).
249. Van Schurman 1652: 273.
250. Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 7 no. 22.
251. Van Eck 1992: 49.
252. A number of letters between Van Schurman and Rivet are as yet unpublished, cf. Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 7.
253. Van Schurman 1641: 6: 'Praefixi Dissertationem Logicam, olim mecum communicatam, ejusdem argumenti'.
254. Van Schurman 1652: 194; Van Schurman 1652: 194; Roothaan and Van Eck 1996; Bulckaert 1995; Ferguson 1998.
255. British Library, Harley 6824 f90: 'Magni certe, prout decet'. This letter is a shortened version of the letter from Van Schurman to Rivet (which appears in the *Amica Dissertatio* on p. 4, in the *Dissertatio* on p. 44, in the *Opuscula* of 1652 on p. 59); cf. Rang 1992 footnote 7.
256. In the *Opuscula* (1st and 2<sup>nd</sup> impressions) there appears a dedication: *Ad Reverendum et Clarissimum D. Andream Rivetum*, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> impression this dedication has been deleted; Van Schurman 1659; Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 7; Douma 1924: 55.
257. Van Schurman 1638; Van Schurman 1641; Rang 1992.
258. Marinella's treatise was published in 1600: '*De adel and uitmuntendheid van vrouwen en de fouten and mankementen van mannen*'. [The nobility and excellence of women and the errors and shortcomings of men].
259. Van Schurman 1641; Rang 1992; Roothaan and Van Eck 1996.
260. Van Schurman 1652: 55-87; Rang 1992; Gössmann 1998; Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996.
261. Van Schurman 1648: 28; Van Schurman 1650: 28; Rang 1992: 36.
262. Sneller 1996: 63-64; Worp 1913: 499, 503; Du Moulin 1651: 68-69.
263. Van Schurman 1639: preface.
264. Baumann 1910; Nellen 1992; Van Gemert 1992; Van Schurman 1652: 1-26; 160-162; 180-183; 184-186; 202-204; 335-337; 362; Van Beverwijk 1634; Van Beverwijk 1636; Van Beverwijk 1639a; Nellen 1992.
265. Van Schurman 1652: 335-337.
266. Van Schurman 1639.
267. Lusitanus 1657: Section A; Hottinger 1664.
268. Lydius in Van Schurman 1639: B 4.
269. Van Beverwijk 1651: Nn8 recto.
270. Van Schurman 1652: 102-104; Andreas 1643: 59-60; Van Lieburg 2000: 173; Van Cloppenburg 1684: 662-663; Schotel 1853a: 93.
271. Van Schurman 1652: passim; Mollerus 1744: 815; Clement 1656: VIII.
272. Gemeentearchief Nijmegen, Smetius collection, date: 22 April 1647.
273. Idem; Van Schurman 1652: 254; Gemeentearchief Nijmegen, Smetius collection.
274. Van Campen 1940: 120-121; Bastiaensen, Langereis and Nelissen 1999; Kist 1833.
275. Van Schurman 1652: 230; Van Schurman 1652: 231, 341; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 27-28, 46; Stevenson 1999.
276. Blok 1999: 30; Schotel 1853a: 94; Van Schurman 1652: 287-289.
277. Van Schurman 1652: 308.
278. Van Schurman 1652: 164-165; in 1643 Salmasius published two books at Leiden on the Greek language: *De Hellenistica commentarius, controversiam de lingua Hellenistica deciens et plenissime pertractans originem ac dialectos Graeca linguae* (published by Elzeviers) and *Funus linguae hellenisticae sive confutatio exercitationis de Hellenistis et lingua hellenistica* (published by Joannis Maire); Van Schurman 1652: 323-324.
279. Rozemond 1966: 24-25.
280. Van Schelven 1944: 137-160; Hadjiantoniou 1961; Belmont 1938: 342-362; 535-553; Belmont 1939: 127-138; Belmont 1940: 237-247; Runciman 1968; *Album studiosorum Academiae Lugduno-Batavae* 1874: 355; Thomassen and Gruys 1998: 180; Van Schurman 1652: 155-158, 159-160; Runciman 1968: 287; Van Beek 1999.
281. Van Beek 1996b.
282. *Christelijke Encyclopedie*, entry: oosters orthodoxe kerken: 305; Luke 1:26-28.
283. Van Schurman 1652: 155-158; Van Beek 1999.
284. Van Schurman 1652: 159-160; Van Beek 1999; quoted by Van der Stighelen 1978a: 258.
285. Sneller 1996: 139-157; Worp 1913 (volume II): 464.
286. Van Schurman 1652: 307.
287. Van Beek 2002a; Van Beek 2003.
288. Cf. Chapter 1.
289. Van Schurman 1652: 340.
290. Schotel 1853a: 86, 108; Schotel 1853b: 17; Des Hayons 1649; Schotel 1853b: 17, 87.
291. Magendie 1928: 1-7; Ehrman 1963; De Grève 1980: 29-30.
292. Astraea: daughter of Zeus and Themais, goddess of

- justice. During the so-called Golden Age she dwelled among people on earth; when humanity came more and more under the influence of evil, she disappeared from earth and became a sign of the zodiac.
293. Franeker, Museum 't Coopmanshús, Van Schurman collection.
294. Van Schurman 1652: 360-361; the poem *Apologia A.M. a S. contra erroneos quosdam rumores, quibus propter nominis schurmanni homonymiam Astraeam d' Urfe e Gallico in Belgicum sermonem vertisse creditur*, as well as another poem of which we only know the name from the *Elogia* of Louis Jacob: *Epigramma aliud Latinum de Historia fabulosa alterius Batavae Astraeae Schurmannae, quod legi, sed ineditum quod sciam* (another Latin epigram on the gossip history of another Dutch woman named Anna Maria van Schurman, which I have read, but which has to the best of my knowledge not been published); Van Heemskerck 1935:12; the first edition had appeared anonymously in Amsterdam in 1637; Skura 1996: 60 A373, 61 A374; Schotel 1853 b: 9; *Pomata Errantia* fol. 165; Van Beverwijck 1643: 193; Van Schurman 1652: 304-305.
295. Van Schurman 1652: 170-172; 233-234; 237-239; 297-299; 324-325; Worp 1893 volume II: 299-302; Van der Stighelen 1987b.
296. Van Schurman 1652: 298.
297. De Moulin 1651: 68-69; Schotel 1853b: 112.
298. Van der Stighelen 1987a: 221; Van Schurman 1652: 316-317.
299. Van Schurman 1652: 316-317.
300. Crucius 1661: 512.
301. Crucius 1661: 507-511; Book VI: 41-42.
302. Paper titled 'De *Virgo Batava* van Crucius' held at the Classics congress in Pretoria 2001; Crucius 1642: 530-532; Vestal virgins were chaste priestesses in Rome; Cato: strict moralist in Rome, 150 AC.
303. Crucius 1661: 514-517; 521-527; 528-529; 533-534; 535.
304. Jacob 1646; Binns 1990: 64-65; Kajanto 1990.
305. Bray 1990; Van Schurman 1652: 319; many after the publication of the *Opuscula*: Schotel 1853b: 3-46 passim where he supplies hundreds of names, 71-83 (captions on her portraits) 84-91; epigrams by Des Hayons 91-105; Gilberto da Cesena *La fama trionfante* 1642.; Van Schurman 1652: 346-364; Ludovici Jacobi à sancto Carolo, Cabilonensis Carmelitae in Bibliotheca illustrium Foeminarum, quae scriptis claruerunt, p.361: *Carmina varia, Latina et Batavica scripsisse compertum habeo ex relatione Doctissimi Nicolai Heinsii, magni Danielis filii, nuper Parisiis degentis*.
306. Churchill 2002; Van Beek 2003; Sneller 1996; Spies 1986.
307. *Simile (alike or impar)* of op contrast *dissimile contrarium (complete dissimilitude)* Kajanto 1990; Crucius 1642.
308. Van Beek 1992a.
309. Hosington 1997; Van Schurman 1648: title page; Van Schurman 1650: title page; Gemeentearchief Nijmegen, Smetius collection.
310. Van Schurman 1652: 325.
311. Van Schurman 1652: 346; Crucius 1661: 525.
312. Van Schurman 1652: 334.
313. Van Schurman 1652: 344 # 345 (Balzac) ; 322 (Barlaeus); 324-325 (Huygens); 325 (Heinsius); 342 (Smetius).
314. Van Schurman 1652: prologue.
315. Cheney and Hosington 2000; Crucius 1661: 534.
316. Crucius 1661: 521-527.
317. Van Schurman 1652: 332; Guhrauer 1850: 99; Kajanto 1990; see the beginning of chapter 4.
318. Van Schurman 1652: 334.
319. Van Schurman 1652: 87-89; 90-92; 92-95; 228-229; 229-231; 231-232; 341; 342.
320. Sneller 1996: 72-82; Van Beverwijck 1639: 282-284.
321. Schotel still had knowledge of it in 1853, when it formed part of the collection of the sculptor Van Voshol. Schotel 1853b: 30; Gemeentearchief Nijmegen: *album amicorum* J. Smetius jr; Brinkhoff 1955: 68-82.
322. Van Schurman 1673: 19-20.
323. Van Schurman 1684: 27-28.
324. Van Schurman 1652: 243-245.
325. Leiden University Library, collection of letters by Huygens. The nineteenth-century translation by A. de Vries in: Schinkel 1856: 20-23.
326. Streekarchief Schouwen-Duiveland, Zierikzee, baptismal register Dreischor; Van Beek 1992: 141-143.
327. Proverbs 4:4, 5, 7. He taught me also, and said unto me: [...] Get wisdom, get understanding [...]. For the full text, see the boxed text.
328. University Library, University of Amsterdam; Van Beek 2002b.
329. Opstal 1937: 81, 144, 146. There has been considerable confusion regarding these two Marie du Moulins, but from the date of her marriage, aunt Marie always signed as 'madamoiselle Rivet' or 'mary revet'.
330. Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8 no. 61: I was overjoyed to hear that you are still in good health and about your successful progress in [acquiring] a sound knowledge of the holy language.
331. Douma 1924: 28, 63; Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8 no. 61, 63; Van Beek 1997b: 116-123; 186-187; 294-300; Van Beek 2002b.
332. Van Beek 1997: 116-123, 186-187, 294-300; Van Beek 2002b; Douma 1924: 28, 63.
333. Van Schurman 1652: 274-275.
334. Ammerman 1983; Opstal 1937: 130-133.
335. Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8.
336. Van Schurman 1652: 199, 210, 222; Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8 No. 61; Keynes 1946: 131-132; Van Schurman 1646; Barthlemy & Kerviler 1878; Van Opstal 1937: 130-133; Colomesius 1665: 272; Moulin 1651: 33; Huygens 1894 (IV): 253; Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8 no. 62, 13 March 1652; Van Schurman 1652: 274-276; Van Opstal 1937: 146; Bouillot 1830: 5; Haag 1886 (V): 830; Limouzin 1970: 253; Enschede 1878: 33, 43; Zijlmans 1999: 127-144; letter from Marie du Moulin in British Library; Van Beek 2002b.
337. Van Schurman 1652: 57; Schotel 1853a: 122-124; Goslings-Lijnsen 1936; Cohen 1921: 603-651; Gaukroger

- 1995; Van Schurman 1684: 279; Gaukroger 1995: 359; Gude and Holierhoek 2000.
338. Churchill 2002; Bloemendal and Van Marion 1997; Stevenson 2001; Stevenson 2002; Van Beek 1992a; 1995a; 1997b; 1998; 2002b; 2003.
339. Schotel 1853a: 21-24.
340. De Jeu 1998: 289-293.
341. Van der Stighelen 1987a: 18, 39; Schenkeveld and De Jeu 1999; Sneller and Van Marion 1994.
342. Van Schurman 1652: 256-260.
343. Van Schurman 1652: 255-256.
344. Van Schurman 1652: 290-291.
345. Schotel 1853a: 21; Van Schurman 1652: 203; Van Beverwijck 1643: 18; Van Beek 1992: 139-143; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 224-239; Delen 1990: 129-132.
346. Van Schurman 1652: 203.
347. Schenkeveld 1997: 265-267; Spies 1986.
348. Schenkeveld 1997: 201, 255.
349. Stronks 1997: 233-234.
350. Sneller 1995: 103-111.
351. Cf. among others Schotel 1853a: 116.
352. Banningh 1637: 176-177.
353. Hoobius 1643; Sneller 1996: 103; Visscher 1925; Spies 1986; Heybloccq 1662: 178.
354. Boy in Van Schurman 1639: preface.
355. Schotel 1853a: 97-98; Schotel 1853b: 25; Mollerus 1744: 807.
356. Van Gelder 1992; Heesakkers 1992.
357. I have not yet been able to find those letters. After a visit to Stockholm (Royal Library, Postmuseum) it became clear to me that her letters are scattered all over the world and have never been collected as a whole and published. There are some letters from Christina to Vossius, among others in the Leiden and Amsterdam university libraries; some have been published in Kristina 1760; Christina 1966; Lusingh Scheurleer and Posthumus Meyes 1975: 364-365; Maeger 2000; Bruzaeus et al. 2002; *Femton Brev från drottning Kristina* 2002.
358. Mollerus 1744: 807; Leiden University Library.
359. Roden 1997; Roden 1999.
360. Schotel 1853a: 121-122: Of her French letters a single one from Descartes and of Pierre Gassendi, a man of extraordinary learning, 'the crown of all scholars of his age', have been published; the ones to the bibliographer Marin Mersenne, Gabriel Naudé, physician of Louis XIII, his colleagues Laurens Meyssonnerius and Guy Patin have been lost; lost also are those to Jean Louis Guez de Balsac, the restorer of the French language, to Samuel Bochart, Pierre Daniel Huët, Adrien Baillet, Valentin Conrart, Paul Jacob, Jolivet, Jean Chapelain and other literators and poets; however considerable the list of friends in the Netherlands may have been, it must have been even more substantial in other parts of our continent. Especially the German scholars were striving to make her acquaintance. If only Pierre Yvon had kept his promise to record her life story, we would have been able to mention a line-up of men with whom she exchanged thoughts. But at present we are only able to mention
- Wolf, Thomasius, Mayer, Rachelius, and Owenus as men with whom she exchanged thoughts [Van hare fransche brieven is een enkele van Descartes en van Pierre Gassendi, een man van buitengewone geleerdheid, 'de kroon aller geleerden zijner eeuw' uitgegeven; die aan den bibliograaf Marin Mersenne, Gabriel Naudé, geneesheer van Lodewijk XIII, zijne ambtgenooten Laurens Meyssonnerius en Gui Patin zijn verloren; verloren zijn die aan Jean Louis Guez de Balsac, den hersteller der fransche taal, aan Samuel Bochart, Pierre Daniel Huët, Adrien Baillet, Valentin Conrart, Paul Jacob, Jolivet, Jean Chapelain en andere letterkundigen and dichters; Hoe groot de rij der vrienden in Nederland ook was, nog aanzienlijker moet die in andere deelen van ons werelddeel geweest zijn. Vooral waren het deutsche geleerden die zich als om strijd beijerden haar te leeren kennen. Had Pierre Yvon haar leven geschetst zoo als hij beloofd heeft, wij zouden eene reeks van mannen kunnen noemen met wie zij van gedachten wisselden. Doch thans kunnen wij slechts een Wolf, Thomasius, Mayer, Rachelius, Owenus noemen met wie zij van gedachten wisselde]; Schotel 1853a: 121, 96: even in the far north her name was mentioned with awe. Denmark, Norway and Sweden built altars for her and offered her incense like a goddess of letters. She lives on in the writings of Thomas Bartholinus, Otto Sperlingius, Olaus Borrichius, Joh. Esbergius, professor at Upsal, Rotger zum Bergen, from Riga; of her northern friends we can only mention Bartholinus and Rotger zum Bergen. Their letters, like hers, have been lost, but their praise writings on her are available to us. The latter referred to her as 'the only specimen of all miracles in a scholar, and a monster of her sex, but without any shortcomings or negative characteristics.' [zelfs in het verre noorden werd haar naam met eerbied genoemd. Denemarken, Noorwegen en Zweden, stichtten haar altaren and bewierookten haar als eene godin der letteren. Zij leeft in de schriften van Thomas Bartholinus, Otto Sperlingius, Olaus Borrichius, Joh. Esbergius, hoogleraar te Upsal, Rotger zum Bergen, van Riga; Van hare noordsche vrienden kunnen wij alleen Bartholinus and Rotger zum Bergen noemen. Hunne brieven zijn gelijk de hare verloren gegaan, maar hunne lofredenen op haar zijn tot ons gekomen. De laatste noemde haar: 'das einige Exemplar aller Wunderwercke an einem gelehrten Menschen, und einn gänzlich Monstrum ihres Geslechtes, doch ohne Fehler und Tadel'.]
361. Schotel 1853a: 121.
362. Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8: no.51, 52.
363. Schotel 1853a: 121.
364. Parijs, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Dupuy 789 f. 133 and the *Opuscula Z* 19198; Van Beek 1997b: 113; Schotel 1853a: 82; Schotel 1853b: 20.
365. Van Schurman 1652: 206-208; Schotel 1853b: 21.
366. Gassendi 1658: 116-117, 198; Michel s.a: 262-263; Van Schurman 1652: 206-208; Mollerus 1744: 811; Van Schurman 1659: 34-35.

367. British Library MS Harley 378: 76, 94-95.
368. Van Schurman 1659: 48-49.
369. Van Schurman 1652: 211-213; 216-217; Schotel 1853a: 97.
370. Van Schurman 1652: 248; Van Campen 1940: 71; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 28-29; Van Schurman 1652: 199, 210, 222; Rimbault 1966.
371. The dates are 6, 14 and 18 March 1638; Schotel 1853a: 121; Schotel 1853b: 21.
372. Schotel 1853a: 71; Van Schurman 1659.
373. Levin 1985: 92-106.
374. Van Schurman 1659.
375. Mollerus 1744: 811-815; Schotel 1853a: 82; Van Schurman 1646: 98; Schotel 1853a: 121-122; the Fates were Clotho (Spinster), Lachesis (Allotter) and Atropos (Inevitable), who respectively spin, determine and cut off the human thread of life.
376. Schotel 1853b: 22; Hottinger 1664: 435.
377. Douma 1924: 84.
378. Turnbull 1946: 156, 159; *Poemata Errantia* s.a. 163; according to the position of the poem in the manuscript it can be dated at approximately 1636.
379. Van Schurman 1646; Van Schurman 1652: 346-364.
380. Schotel 1853a: 121; Schotel 1853b: 21, 22, 72; Schotel 1853a: 121-122.
381. De Baar and Rang 1992: 13; Van Schurman 1646: 100, 110; Jacob 1646: 83-119; Van Schurman 1652: 346-364.
382. Van Schurman 1646; Van Schurman 1652: 344; Mollerus 1744: 812; Schotel 1853b: 21.
383. Mollerus 1744: 812; Van Schurman 1652: 364; Van Schurman 1646: 118.
384. Da Cesena 1642; cf. also Schotel 1853b: 91-105.
385. Da Cesena 1642: 31. Free translation, following a German translation from the Italian by Dr. Otto Plassmann.
386. Apello: a famous painter from antiquity; Van Schurman 1642: 124.
387. Tschackert 1876: 13: 'Auch in Breslau kannte man sie; wenigstens hatte hier ein Dichter lateinische Verse auf sie gemacht' [People knew her also in Breslau; at least, a poet here wrote a Latin poem on her]; Tschackert 1876: 30: Augustinus Wiseaus, Schurmann A.M. etc. (Carm.lat.) Vratist. 1643 (Exempl. auf der Bresl. Stadtbibl.). The document is described in the card catalogue, but cannot be found. I am grateful to Stefan Kiedron for his assistance; Mollerus 1744; Schotel 1853b: 22.
388. Basel University Library, letters from Johan Godschalk van Schurman, dated 5 June 1663.
389. Lehms 1715; Mollerus 1744: 812.
390. Van Schurman 1652: 344-345; Schotel 1853b: 21.
391. Van Schurman 1652: 357.
392. Colomesius 1665: 272.
393. Schotel 1853b: 20, 25; Mollerus 1744: 811-815.
394. Clement 1656: 8; Parijs, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ms. Dupuy 898, f. 36v.
395. Mollerus 1744: 811-815; Schotel 1853b: 22; Van Schurman 1646; Van Schurman 1652: 346-364; De Baar et al. 1992: 13.
396. Academies were first founded locally in Italy; from the seventeenth century nationally: the Royal Academy, 1666; l'Académie Française, 1635; Akademie der Wissenschaften, etc.); Blok 1949: 152-153; Blok 1999: 293; Noordenbos 2000.
397. De Ridder-Symoens 1997: 416-448.
398. Schotel 1853b: 25; Schotel 1853a: 121; Mollerus 1744: 811, 813, 815; Schotel 1853b: 24, 121, 71.
399. Wrangel 1897: 184-185; Vrieze 1975: 348; Schepelers 1983: 258, 302; Borrichius 1683: 146.
400. Arnold 1967: 1263, 1265.
401. Mollerus 1844: 811; Schotel 1853a: 97; Schotel 1853b: 21; Cohen 1930: 163.
402. De Monconys 1666.
403. Mollerus 1744: 812; Arnold 1966: 1264; Mollerus 1744: 812; Schotel 1853b: 23.
404. Alenius 1991; Nativel 1999; Rang 1987; Makin 1673; Van Schurman 1652: \*5r.
405. Van Beek 1996b.
406. Van Schurman 1652: 162-163.
407. Van Schurman 1652: 162-164; Van Beek 1995b; Van Beek 1997b: 156-159; 246-251; Saunders 2002.
408. Van Beek 1995b.
409. Van Schurman 1652: 163-164.
410. Saunders 2002; Brink 1991: 313-326; Teague 1989: 289; Teague 1986: 16; Van Beek 1995a: 30-31, 37; Makin 1673: 10.
411. Norbrook 2003: 283; I have not yet been able to consult this translation.
412. Van Beek 1995a: 30-31, 37; Makin 1673.
413. Makin 1673: 8.
414. Makin 1673: 12.
415. Makin 1673: 12, 13.
416. Makin 1673: 16.
417. Proverbs 8:11.
418. Van Schurman 1652: 260-266; Schotel 1853a: 124-127; Van Beverwijck 1639b: 29, 252-255; Van Beek 1997b: 279-285; Douma 1924: 63.
419. Van Schurman 1652: 260-266.
420. Van Beverwijck 1639b: 498-499.
421. Van Schurman 1652: 154; Van Beek 2004b: 67-68.
422. Isaiah 5:13: Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge.
423. Cf. Proverbs 2:10: When wisdom entereth into thine heart and knowledge is pleasant unto thy soul.
424. Ezekiel 16:12: [...] and a beautiful crown upon thine head.
425. Psalm 16:6: The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage; Isaiah 45:3: and I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the LORD, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel.
426. Numi 18:19: [...] [...] it is a covenant of salt for ever (= an unbreakable covenant)
427. Proverbs 3:14: For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold.
428. Ruth 2:10: [...] Why have I found grace in thine eyes [...].
429. Cf. Psalm 8:5: [...] and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

430. Schotel 1853a: 33, 130; Van der Stighelen 1978a: 28; Birch 1909: 83 (incorrect information); Douma 1924: 27; Schotel 1853a: 33, 130; Van Schurman 1652: 199, 237; Turnbull 1947: 62, 242, 247; her sister was the widow of Lord Caulfield, and we hear of a brother Sir Robert King, a farmer. Turnbull 1947: 65; Van Schurman 1652: 194.
431. 1 Petrus 5:7: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.
432. Van Schurman 1652: 191-194; Van Beek 1997b: 235-236; Van Beek 2002a: 289-291.
433. Turnbull 1947: 266-270, 24, 229, 230; Dibon 1971: 396, the letters form part of the Hartlib Papers in the university library of Sheffield, England. Three letters are by Moore (23-9-43/18-10-43/3-11-43), two replies from Rivet (29-9-43/28-10-43); Schotel 1853a: 97.
434. Turnbull 1947: 237, 248, 249.
435. Turnbull 1947: 261.
436. Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8, no. 28; Turnbull 1947: 13, 228, 230, 237, 248, 249, 297; Ranelagh was also an Irish-English learned woman who actively participated in religious, political and philosophical debates among Puritan intellectuals; Schotel 1853: 97; *Of the Education of Girls* in: Turnbull 1947: 120-121; Van Schurman 1684: 24.
437. De Bry 1966; May I serve only you; I will die loving you. [Que je serve a toi seul; je mourrai en t'aimant.]
438. Van Schurman 1652: 300; the poem has been included in *Poemata Errantia* s.a. 164. Later it was included in the *Opuscula* of 1648 and the subsequent impressions; Van Beek 1997: 190, 304-306.
439. Van Beek 2002a.
440. Fraser 1994: 14; Opstal 1937: 25; Fraser 1994: 94; Mars-hall 1990.
441. Van Campen 1940: 10.
442. Schiff 1910; Wessel 1987: 123-133; Bonnefon 1898; Il-sley 1960; Horowitz 1986: 271-284; Dezon 1988.
443. Van Schurman 1652: 303.
444. Koninklijke Bibliotheek 133 B 8, no. 76, 77; Van Schurman 1652: 282-284; Schiff 1910: 120; Van Schurman 1652: 63, 89.
445. Thott 1658; Schotel 1853a: 130; Alenius 1983; Van Beek 2002b.
446. Alenius 1983.
447. Schotel 1853a: 130; Van Beek 1997b; Alenius 1983: 35.
448. Alenius 1983.
449. Schiff 1910: 79; Zedler 1989: 302: 'The Dutch Minerva' and 'the rival of these illustrious women in eloquence and who possesses the ancient and modern languages and all the liberal and noble Arts'.
450. Van Schurman 1652: 337-339; Frisschius 1681: 206-207.
451. Ioly 1670: cf. boxed text.
452. Maria de Medici, the French Queen-mother, allegedly also visited her during her visit to Amsterdam in 1638, but I have been unable to trace a report of such a meeting.
453. Roothaan and Ter Haar 1996: 40.
454. Van Beverwijck 1639: 507; Bekkers 1970: 21, 46, 50, 53-54, 143-144; Van Beek 1996.
455. Feichtinger 1997; Stevenson 2002.
456. Schenkeveld and De Jeu 1999: 53-59.
457. Van Schurman 1652: 80; Parker 2002; Van Schurman 1641: 71; Labalme 1980; King 1991.
458. Van Schurman 1652: 71-73; 154; in the letters to Rivet, Elizabeth, Bathsua Makin and Dorothea Moore.
459. Jacques Martin in: Van Schurman 1646.
460. Churchill et al. 2002.
461. Stevenson 2006: 252; Churchill et al. 2002: 56; Kristeller 1980: 91-116.
462. Rosa di Simone 1997: 295-297.
463. Van Schurman 1685: 114.
464. Greebe 1878: 504-506.
465. Van Beek 1992a: 66-78.
466. Van Beek 1992a: 73.
467. Van Schurman 1684: 221-222.
468. Arnold 1967: 1265.
469. Van Schurman 1684: 205, 222-223.
470. Het Utrechts Archief, Testaments notary public Engelbert van Rhee, 17 May 1664; 7 October 1664; Van Meurs 1906: 56.
471. Van Schurman 1684: 222-223.
472. Leiden University Library, letter from Johan Godschalk van Schurman to ex-mayor Booth, May 1661.
473. Van Beek 1992a: 142, 4 July 1662.
474. Van Schurman 1684: 223; Van Lieburg 1989; De Niet 1998.
475. Saxby 1987: 124; Arnold 1967.
476. Van Beek 1992a: 126-131.
477. De Labadie 1667: preface.
478. Saxby 1987: 132-139; *Kroniek* 1869: 71-72; Saxby 1987: 138; Van Beek 1992a: 66-67; Schotel 1853b: 38.
479. Saxby 1987: VIII.
480. Cf. Chapter 1.
481. Basel University Library, Mscr G 2 II 33, letter 4.
482. Van Beek 1992a: 134.
483. Koelman 1770.
484. Mollerus 1744: 814, 817; Van Schurman 1684: 8; Ledebøer 1869: 275; Van Beek 1992a: 148; furthermore, on 12 February 1669 Van Schurman thanked the learned church minister and poet Van Vollenhove for his poem. Written communication from G. Dibbets referring to lot 323, auction catalogue Van Vollenhove. Letter could not be traced.
485. Rijksarchief Leeuwarden EVC 67. Letter dated 22 April 1666 to Philip Ernst Vegilin van Claebergen, highest court official at the Frisian court of the stadholder Princess Albertina Agnes of Orange, in which she presents him with heartfelt thanks for the book *The Natural History of the Royal Society at London*. She also offers her critical comments on the work *Micrographia or, Some physiological descriptions of minute bodies made by magnifying glasses, with observations and inquiries thereupon*, by R. Hooke.
486. Het Utrechts Archief, Codicil to testament dated 8 January 1668, notary public Engelbert van Rhee:
- \* a portrait of the Honourable countess herself in an oval frame, in which she wears a necklace with a large, oblong pearl,
  - \* a small portrait of the countess' brother, made by the countess, in a silver oval 'boat'
  - \* two small paintings by Balthasar van der Asch

- \* a miniature art work by herself, being a beautiful brunette named My Lady Toftin
- \* a portrait of Lady Van Soulercken in crayon
- \* a silver lizard and
- \* finally, a silver oval engraved little box, in which lay a golden chain to which a flea had previously been fastened; not in Van der Stighelen 1987 or 1996.
- 487. Van Schurman 1684: 32-33; 8 September 1669.
- 488. Van Beek 2002a: 277, 285-286; 291; Van Beek 2003: 62, 64; Voetius 1663: 899.
- 489. De Baar 1992: 177; Van Beek 1992a: 78-92.
- 490. Van Beek 1992a: 82-121; Van Schurman 1669: 6; Van Schurman 1732.
- 491. Hoornbeeck 1663.
- 492. De Labadie 1667; Saxby 1987: 445.
- 493. Nethenus 1668: preface.
- 494. Monconys 1666: 181.
- 495. Schotel 1853b: 22; Mollerus 1744: 812.
- 496. Schotel 1853a: 181; Oosterhuys 1927; Stahelin 1941; Saxby 1987.
- 497. Gössmann 1998: 103-112; Zwiep 1993: 47-48; Leusden 1668: *Alloquitio* (\*3); Irwin 1991; De Baar 1994.
- 498. De Monconys 1666: 181; De Baar 1992: 107; De Korte 1987: 64.
- 499. Van Beek 1992a: 144-145.
- 500. Van Schurman 1684: 246.
- 501. Evenhuis 1967; Schurman 1684: 251-252.
- 502. Van Schurman 1728.
- 503. Van Schurman 1684: 202-206.
- 504. Van Schurman 1684: 18; Arnold 1967: 1261; Van Beek 2003.
- 505. Voetius 1669; Gössmann 1998.
- 506. Saldenus 1670; Schotel 1853b: 39-40; Saxby 1987: 177, 366; Landman and Saldenus 1670; Gentman 1669; Desiderius Pacius 1670; Duker III 1989: 35; Schotel 1853a: 116; for a comprehensive bibliography of the many anti-Labadist writings, cf. Saxby 1987: 455-460.
- 507. Latin quotation in: Schotel 1853b: 39; Saxby 1987: 455-459.
- 508. Van Schurman 1684: 157.
- 509. Huygens 1670; Zwaan 1976.
- 510. Woep 1897: 304-307; *Lange Rijghveter waar aan opgezamelt zijn alle de Versjes van verscheyde Schrijvers voor and tegen Jean de Labadie* [ Long string to which have been attached all songs/poems of several writers in favour of and against Jean de Labadie ] s.a.
- 511. De Baar 1987.
- 512. Koelman 1770: 34. On the conflict Voetius-de Labadie: Van der Linde 1976: 259-275.
- 513. Duker 1887: 171-178; Van Lieburg 1989:125; Van Leusden 1668; Van Leusden 1683.
- 514. Van Schurman 1670; Van Beek 1992a: 146.
- 515. *Den God-vruchtighen Boer of Missive van een Vrind aan een Vrind* 1670.
- 516. Van Beek 2004b.
- 517. De Baar 1989; Becker Cantarino 1996: 43; Van Beek 2004b.
- 518. Lucas 14:33; Van de Linde 1978.
- 519. Mollerus 1744: 817.
- 520. Van Schurman 1684: 12-13, 249; De Baar 1992.
- 521. De Baar 1987: 24; quoted in Saxby 1987: 188-189.
- 522. Saxby 1987: 441-454 counts 150 Labadist writings; Saxby 1987: 174-175; Van Schurman 1685: Chapter VI; De Baar 1994: 147; Irwin 1991; Saxby 1987: 180-181; letter in: Van Lieburg 1987: 127-129.
- 523. Saxby 1987: 212.
- 524. Borstius 1671: 5, 11, 58.
- 525. Letters in French available in the British Library; Saxby 1987: 197.
- 526. Schotel 1853a: 224-225; Saxby 1987: 202-206.
- 527. Saxby 1987: 195-196.
- 528. De Labadie 1671: 167.
- 529. Saxby 1987: 121; Bazel University Library Mscr G 2 II 33, no. 6.
- 530. Van der Stighelen 1987a: 92; Schotel 1853b: 61; Van der Stighelen 1987a: 91-2; 145-147; The Lutherans tried to extort money from the Labadists; they affixed posters proclaiming anti-Labadist sentiments to trees, and the list of anti-Labadist writings grew daily; Becker-Cantarino 1996: 42-45; Van Beek 1992a: 161.
- 531. Van Schurman 1675: 211-212; Wumkes 1932: 29 translated a few stanzas into Frisian; Boendermaker 1978: 83.
- 532. Cf. the following on the various aspects of the *Eukleria*: De Baar 1996; Scheenstra 1996; Becker-Cantarino 1996; Irwin 1991; Van der Linde 1978; Roothaan and Van Eck 1990; Roothaan 1996; my main objection is that, with the exception of Van der Linde, the second Latin part is never taken into account and the focus is solely on the Dutch translation of Part 1; the work was translated into Dutch in 1684, she wrote a second part, which was published posthumously in 1685. Both parts were reprinted in 1782 and partially translated into German in 1783. The Dutch translation of Part 2 *Continuatie van de Eukleria* was published in 1754 but is incomplete: it ends with the fifth paragraph of Chapter 3.
- 533. Van der Linde 1978; De Baar 1992; Roothaan and Van Eck 1990; Scheenstra 1992; Becker-Cantarino 1996.
- 534. Van Schurman 1684: 1.
- 535. Van Schurman 1684: 43-44.
- 536. Van Schurman 1684: 25. Cf. Chapter 2.
- 537. Van Schurman 1684: 84; Van Beek 1999; Van Schurman 1684: 47-48; Van Schurman 1684: 86; Van Schurman 1685: 343; Roothaan and Van Eck 1990.
- 538. Van Schurman 1673; Van Schurman 1684; Van Schurman 1673: 168; Schotel 1853b: 134.
- 539. De Baar 1996; Scheenstra 1996; Van Schurman 1684: 13-14; Van der Linde suggests possible influence of Lodenstein's *Beschouwing van Sion*; IJsewijn 1973; IJsewijn and Sacré 1998: 212-214.
- 540. Van Schurman 1685: 197-198; Joh. Wilhelm Petraeus, geciteerd in Schotel 1853a: 239-240; Drechsler 1675; Schotel 1853: 246-247; Brown 1674; Koelman 1770; Saxby 1987: 225; Van Schurman 1728; Van Schurman 1685: Chapter 6; Voetius 1676.
- 541. Basel University Library, Mscr G 2 II 33; Wallmann 1970: 297-300; Scheenstra 1996; Van Schurman 1685:198-202; Schotel 1853b: 145-146.
- 542. Schotel 1853b: 60-61; Van Schurman 1754: 32-33; the

- Latin letter is included at the back of the second part of the *Eukleria*. Van Schurman 1685: 195-197.
543. Greebe 1885.
544. Saxby 1989; Van Lieburg 2002.
545. Saxby 1987: 253, 434.
546. The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek 135 K 12.
547. Gerdesii 1756: 179-187; Schotel 1853a: 141-147; 145-146.
548. Schotel 1853a: 233; Van Schurman 1684: 43-44.
549. Basel University Library, Mscr G 2 II 33, letter 5.
550. Van Schurman, who previously tried to find a job at the court for her cousin Breydenbag, later abandoned this attempt: he first had to become a 'true Christian'. Letter to Vegelin van Claerbergen, Koninklijke Bibliotheek; Van Beek 1992a: 164; Saxby 1987; Scheenstra 1996: 126-130.
551. Van Schurman 1685.
552. Van Schurman 1685: 176-183.
553. Van Schurman 1685: 176-186; cf. Schotel 1853b: 204.
554. Basel University Library, Mscr G 2 II 33.
555. Völcker 1888: 36; Van Beek 2002a; a Latin *Mnemosynon* by Daniel Meyer: in Van Schurman 1685: 189-190; quoted in Landwehr 1981: 136.
556. Van Schurman 1684: frontispiece.
557. Kruizinga 1978.
558. For the (very incomplete) reception history, see De Baar and Rang 1992; Gössmann 1998 (Herbinus, *Dubius dissertationibus de Foeminarum Illustrum eruditione*; Leickherus *Oratio de ubertate et praerogativa temporis nostri*); Harsdörffer 1968: 216-217; Wickelius 1796.
559. Basel University Library: MS. Ki.Ar.24 a: 461 r-467v; Leiden University Library G I 59: 342-345v.
560. Scheurleur et al. 1990 (IV): 306; Leiden University Library BPL 282 f, 250r-251rv.
561. I here make a choice for the beautiful but masculine word 'poeta' and claim that word, in quotation marks, to mean 'female poet'; Van Beek 2004a.
562. Schotel 1853a: 121-122, 124-127, 130, 131; Bury 1999; Van Schurman 1641; Van Eck 1992; Ter Haar 1996.
563. Norbrook 2003; Rang 1992: 41.
564. Van Schurman 1641.
565. Van Beverwijck 1643: 18.
566. Mollerus 1744; Jung 1998: 27-43; Van Schurman 1749: preface; Van Beek 1997: 62-71; Schotel 1853: 121; 567. Schotel 1853b: 21.
567. Korte 1987: 35-44; De Baar 1992: 105-107; Sneller 1996: 150.
568. Van Beverwijck 1643: 25.
569. Jamin 2002: 119-124.

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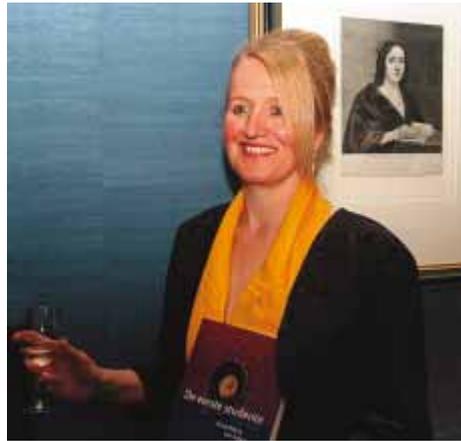
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## About the author

After having convinced her parents that a girl should be allowed to study, Pieta van Beek (Rotterdam 1958) studied Dutch linguistics and literature at the University of Utrecht (Drs.Litt. 1987), followed by Classical Languages (D.Litt. 1997) and Ancient Near Eastern Languages (MA cum laude 2004) at the University of Stellenbosch (South Africa). She published an edition of the Dutch poems of Anna Maria van Schurman: *‘Verbastert Christendom’: Nederlandse gedichten van Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678)* (Houten 1992), and wrote her doctoral dissertation on Van Schurman’s *Opuscula*, entitled *Klein werk: de ‘Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica, prosaica et metrica’ van Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678)* (Stellenbosch 1997, <http://www.dbnl.org/tekst/beeko17kleio1/>). She wrote contributions on Van Schurman’s Neo-Latin poetry in the three-volume work *Women writing Latin* (New York 2002) as well as in *De Utrechtse Parnas* (Amersfoort 2003) and the *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe* (2009). She published contributions on Van Schurman’s martyrdom in *The Low Countries as Crossroads of Religious Beliefs* (Brill 2004) and on Van Schurman’s teachers in *Historica* (2009).

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The author wishes to thank Diane Niemantsverdriet for her photographs.

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