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Pathways to agency: women writers and radical thought in the Low Countries, 1500–1800

Marrigje Paijmans ^a, Feike Dietz ^b, Nina Geerdink ^b, Inger Leemans ^{c,d},
Cécile de Morrée ^e and Martine Veldhuizen ^f

^aDutch Literature and Culture, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands; ^bEarly Modern Dutch Literature, Utrecht University, The Netherlands; ^cCultural History, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands;

^dKNAW Humanities Cluster Amsterdam, The Netherlands; ^eMiddle Dutch Literature, Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands; ^fMedieval Dutch Literature, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

ABSTRACT

Previous studies of radical thinkers have brought us few examples of female radicals from the Low Countries, even if the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic was a hub for radical thought which offered a relatively female-friendly climate. In this article, we explore how new perspectives and modes of analysis, better adjusted to the restrictions and opportunities women experienced, make women's radical thought visible. By doing so, we aim to present a more balanced perspective on what might count as female radical thought in the early modern Low Countries (1500–1800). Starting from the notion of “agency,” we analyze the life, work and relations of three Dutch authors, as well as representations of female radicalism in two literary works, in order to rebalance the notion of radicalism in a woman's world. Anna Bijns, Meynarda Verboom and Margaretha van Dijk were not radically disruptive in the sense of operating completely outside of male-dominated domains. Instead, they gained agency by negotiating their position in patriarchal knowledge systems and by bending conventions within male-dominated networks so that their voices could be heard. To understand these voices, it is necessary to disconnect “being radical” from “the amount of disruption caused” by female agency.

KEYWORDS

Women's writing; agency; Dutch literature; radical thought; the Low Countries

1. Introduction

The seventeenth-century Dutch Republic was a hub for radical thought. Jonathan Israel's seminal study *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity 1650–1750* (2001) pinpointed the Dutch philosopher Benedict de Spinoza (1632–1677) as the pivotal figure in the developments that led to the collapse of traditional structures of authority and belief. Spinoza's philosophy did not emerge in a vacuum. It should be understood within a wider spectrum of republican, naturalist, heterodox and libertine

CONTACT Marrigje Paijmans  m.g.paijmans@uva.nl

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ideas, embodied by freethinkers, scholars, natural philosophers and political activists who found fertile breeding ground in the Dutch Republic, with its thriving international book market, its malfunctioning mechanisms of repressive – as opposed to preventative – censorship and its statutory freedom of conscience – albeit not always of expression – grounded in the Dutch Revolt.¹

Another famous characteristic of the Low Countries, which encompasses more than the period and geographical area of the Dutch Republic, is its relatively female-friendly climate. In the recent publication *Women and Gender in the Early Modern Low Countries, 1500–1750* (2019), editors Sarah Joan Moran and Amanda C. Pipkin emphasize how the Low Countries, as a highly urbanized, literate and cosmopolitan environment, “included attitudes towards women and gender that were among the more female-friendly in Western Europe, and were exceptional in the degree to which they located women in the ‘masculine’ spheres of public space and business.”² From an international, comparative perspective, the levels of education for girls were high, as were the opportunities for participation and self-representation by women in the public sphere.³

One would thus assume that the Low Countries, from the 1500s onwards, provided the pre-eminent matrix for female radical thinkers. And yet, studies of radical thought have brought us few examples of women engaged with profoundly threatening ideas. The circle around Spinoza, for example, seems to have consisted exclusively of men – René Descartes (1596–1650), Franciscus van den Enden (1602–1674), Lodewijk Meyer (1629–1681) and Adriaan Koerbagh (1632–1669), to name a few – as is pointed out by Wim Klever in *Men around Spinoza (1650–1700)* (1997). Tellingly, the study *Women on the Edge in Early Modern Europe* (2019), which examines the impact of gender on personal, political and religious agency in subversive practices, does not involve a single Dutch case study.⁴ Where are the female radicals of the early modern Low Countries? Did they simply not exist, or do we need new perspectives and modes of analysis, better adjusted to the opportunities then available to women, to make them visible? In this article, we take up this challenge. It should be read as a discussion in which the leading question is: In the early modern Low Countries, what would count as radical thought from a female perspective? And, moreover: What can modern-day cultural historians do to bring radical voices to the fore?

In search of female radicals in the Low Countries, we need to expand the notion of “radicalism” and take into account the position of women in learned society. This includes considering the limited possibilities for women to express disruptive ideas. Female radical thinkers had to find ways to operate in a knowledge system that was not their own.⁵ In this article, we adhere to the etymological meaning of “radical,” based on the Latin word *radix* (root), in the sense that radical thoughts undermine the roots, the values and beliefs of society.⁶ Our main case study in this chapter is the domain of literature. By analyzing women writers and female literary characters, we aim to show that female radicalism did exist in the Low Countries, from very early on, both in practice and in discourse. Central to our case is the notion of agency.

2. Theoretical and historiographical framework: women’s agency

The past decades have witnessed an increased use of the term “agency” in historical studies to emphasize instances in which women actively took control of their actions,

shaped their lives and gave meaning to their choices.⁷ At the same time, as Martha Howell recently argued in the aforementioned volume *Women and Gender in the Early Modern Low Countries, 1500-1750*, scholars have struggled to unite the very notion of agency as the “ability or capacity to act or exert power” with the powerful structures of the patriarchal system that envelops all individual action.⁸ Howell prompts us to probe how agency is acquired by radical women.⁹

To explicitly criticize society’s ground rules and hence to be credited as radical thinkers, women required agency. This implies that they needed to free themselves to at least some extent from the hierarchical structures that kept them “in place.” As the product of the dynamics between cultural discourse and individual action, agency could naturally arise or be willfully created in several ways.¹⁰ Howell analyzes the creation of agency and distinguishes three mechanisms. First, agency could originate from the opportunities offered by specific features of the system itself; second, it could result from controversies, conflicting norms or other instabilities inherent to the system, which offered opportunities to bend or negotiate the rules to fit one’s interests; or, third, it could be incited by a direct challenge to or disruption of the system.¹¹

The historiography of Dutch women’s writing has predominantly focused on the first two mechanisms, driven by the question of how women gained access to the male-dominated republic of letters.¹² Researchers have found many examples of the first mechanism: women fulfilling the gendered roles the system had to offer, emphasizing their marginal position as a subject by adapting the discourse of modesty and focusing on topics that were perceived as suitable to their gender, such as pedagogy, social events in a circle of intimates and personal religious experience (as opposed to theology). Agency in these cases originated in the system itself, and it was not likely to result in radicalism.

Examples of agency in its second form – that is, agency as resulting from controversies, conflicting norms or other instabilities inherent to the system – are numerous. Most recently, Martine van Elk, in her comparative study *Early Modern Women’s Writing: Domesticity, Privacy, and the Public Sphere in England and the Dutch Republic* (2019), shows how the development of the ideology of domesticity and the separation of the public and the private sphere in the Dutch Republic could offer women writers a potential public presence, while their authorship could also be situated in the sphere of sophistication and elegance. As a way to resolve these contradictions, Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678), for instance, ended up cultivating her reputation for eccentricity, forging a specific type of feminine publicity that combined modest retreat with isolated moments of public display.¹³ Such approaches would enable women to participate, to a certain degree, in discourses that were not traditionally part of their female role, and to express radical ideas. Remarkably, many of these cases, including Van Schurman, involve women performing central roles in religious sectarian groups. Religious groups offered women social communities with hierarchies distinct from those in society at large and, as such, the possibility to negotiate their agency, thus following the second mechanism distinguished by Howell.¹⁴

Howell’s third type of agency, incited by a direct challenge or disruption of the system, has hardly been observed in research on Dutch women writers.¹⁵ One rather isolated example of this type of agency, discussed in earlier scholarship, is the case of Isabella de Moerloose: a woman who published an autobiography in which she shows herself

very self-assured and writes openly about her controversial religious ideas, as well as private matters such as her sex life.¹⁶ The scarce occurrence of similar cases could be explained by the fact that, if women wanted to be taken seriously in the intellectual, literary, religious or political realm, they had to protect their social position and reputation, and highly disruptive measures to gain agency did not contribute to this cause. Building on this point, we argue that, in order to enlarge the number of known Dutch radical women writers, it is important to distinguish between disruptive ways of gaining agency and the radical ideas that might be expressed on the basis of that agency. A soft and wavering voice can convey ideas more radical than the fiercest cry.

This article therefore hypothesizes that agency, when exerted for the expression of radical ideas by women, is most likely to result from instabilities inherent to the system; that is, Howell's second type of agency.¹⁷ We explore three cases of female radicalism in textual form to demonstrate how women used these instabilities to create or increase agency, enabling them to voice their radical ideas. We reread the canonical author Anna Bijns (1493–1575) from the perspective of agency and radicalism; analyze Meynarda Verboom (?–1667), who is generally represented as an isolated literary voice; and highlight Grietje van Dijk (c. 1650–1719), who operated in a radical enlightenment context, but who is unknown as an author. Even if these women worked in different timeframes, seemingly under incomparable conditions, they all obtained agency through the development of a specific female voice that simultaneously appropriated and undermined the patriarchal system they participated in.

After discussing these authors, we present a brief analysis of female literary characters represented by male authors as agentive, radical thinkers. Based on gender theory, which regards literature as a representation or “projection screen” of gender patterns in society, and taking into account that these projections may be distorted, we argue that these literary characters are informative with respect to the social roles which were available to female radical thinkers at the time.¹⁸ As we demonstrate, these characters reveal fascinating similarities to the gendered roles performed by female authors. Even if these roles are in many cases stereotypical, marginal or objectivizing, they made sense to an early modern audience and, however compromised, can serve as a point of departure. Through exploiting, negotiating or combining well-trodden paths, women found their own paths.

3. Anna Bijns, the little she-wolf

For Anna Bijns and the other dwellers of the city of Antwerp in the Habsburg Low Countries, the city was in flux. The public space was filled with subversive verbal and physical behavior. And not just by men. In 1522, three hundred “angry women” (*quade wiven*) took to the streets of Antwerp to protest to the local authorities. They protested against the sentence of an Augustinian monk who was convicted for heresy.¹⁹ Anna Bijns was also notorious for her subversive public opinions, but she would not have been one of them. On the contrary, as an unequivocal Catholic, she ranted against heretics, especially Martin Luther (1483–1546), who she described as a “fanatic monk” and “worse than a Jew.”²⁰ Judith Pollmann argues that Bijns was “the most vocal lay opponent of heresy in the sixteenth-century Netherlands.”²¹ Three poem collections in the vernacular were published and reprinted between 1528 and 1668, and her

works appear in several collections in print and manuscript. Her first book was also translated into Latin. In what sense can this staunch advocate of the “Old Faith” be regarded as a radical thinker and how did her opinions attract interest?

Anna Bijns grew up in a middle-class family. After her father died, her mother continued to run the family business, a tailoring firm called “The Little She-Wolf” (*De Cleyne Wolvinne*). Anna started her own school in Antwerp in 1541, and became a member of the teaching guild. Being a head of school in the Low Countries was not extraordinary for a woman, but being a member of the guild, an “archetypical patriarchal institution,”²² certainly was.²³ It is unclear if Bijns was an official member of the local Chamber of Rhetoric, another male-dominated institution for artisanal writing and performance. In the southern Low Countries, women were permitted as members, but they did not have the same rights as men.²⁴ The work of Anna Bijns was, in any case, indebted to the rhetoricians in form and content.

While male rhetoricians do not seem to have been eager to discuss heresy, however, Anna attacked nuns and monks who misbehaved in a sexual manner.²⁵ Herman Pleij states that rhetoricians in general had the strategy of reacting to heretical opinions by keeping total silence: a *cordon sanitaire*. Heresy had to be endured, because it was a punishment of God. Introspection was needed, more than a defensive attitude and a vocal reaction.²⁶ Indeed, in the Catholic Low Countries, not many texts opposing Luther were written at all.²⁷ Moreover, lay women were expected to hide their theological opinions because they had no education in theology.²⁸ In both senses, Bijns’ publications can be considered radical.

Bijns’ agency was the result of her own doing and representation and endorsement by, principally, the Observant Franciscans. Members of this Antwerp monastic order recognized Bijns as a weapon in their fight against Lutherism. They enabled her to publish and distribute her work, through their extensive network of editors, printers and booksellers. In her writings, Bijns presented herself according to modesty formulas, as a weak and incompetent woman. For example, she used the phrase in a poem that preceded the virtuososo refrains in her first book: “Oh, it’s just women’s work” (*peinst tis al vrouwen werc*), it might be “flawed” (*misraect*).²⁹ In a concluding poem, however, the statement of a weak, incompetent woman is completely undermined: the “I” in the poem states that criticism of errors in the volume will only be tolerated if they come from literary experts.³⁰

According to Judith Kessler, the image of a weak woman could be used to gain agency. Bijns does this, for instance, by presenting herself as the exception; that is, a (weak) woman who publishes: “She employed the modesty formula as an important rhetorical trick giving her the freedom to speak more freely.”³¹ By paradoxically submitting to the patriarchal system of male writers, she creates space to voice her opinions. The image of Bijns as a weak woman was also used by the Ghent priest Eligius Eucharius (14?–1540), who translated her work into Latin. As he states in his preface, Luther’s defeat must be unbearable to Luther, because he has been defeated by a woman.³² The rhetorician and priest Stevijn van der Gheenste (1548–1620) wrote a poem to Bijns in which he explicitly admired her female strength: whereas men have abandoned the good cause, Bijns continues fighting.³³

Not only was Bijns constructed as a weak woman in order to stress her agency, she was also depicted by men as a saintly virgin. Direct allusions to the Virgin Mary were made in prefaces by Eucharius in the Latin edition and the Franciscan Henrick Pippinck, the

compiler of Bijns's third poetry collection.³⁴ According to Kessler, the status of a holy woman and virgin – someone who lives close to God – makes Bijns' words more credible and convincing.³⁵ It is not uncommon in the sixteenth-century Catholic tradition that saints, men and women, were depicted as truth-tellers like Bijns. For instance, the popular *Golden legends* (*Gulden legenden*) are full of saints who fiercely oppose and even insult their heretic opponents.³⁶ They were in immediate contact with God, and thus had both access to the absolute truth and nothing to lose in their earthly lives.

Bijns brings to the fore a radical voice in the religious-political debate on heresy in her time. She transgressed the boundaries of the patriarchal system of male writers who were entitled to publish theological opinions by using the male-dominated system of form, content and image-building. As a little she-wolf, she took advantage of the flaws in the system: she was a “weak” woman who proved that she was able to write better and more provocatively and, following the example of hagiographical narratives, was able to act as the voice of God who had nothing to lose. As we will now see, more than a century later, Meynarda Verboom did not take up a saintly role like Bijns but, in her case, too, the paradox of the strong “weak” woman was pivotal.

4. Meynarda Verboom: staging the silenced

In 1664, Meynarda Verboom's *Plea for Our First Mother Eve against Joost van de Vondel's Tragedy of All Tragedies. Of Adam in Exile* (*Pleyt voor onse eerste moeder Eva Tegens Joost van de Vondels Treurspel aller Treurspelen. Van Adam in Ballingschap*) was printed in Amsterdam.³⁷ It is a polemical poem of 296 verses, published, as Verboom herself writes, in support of “women's rights.”³⁸ Verboom defends women – as a group with its collective grandmother Eve – against men who pass their sinful weaknesses onto women, while despising them and denying their authority.³⁹

Verboom's criticism specifically targeted Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679), the most famous poet of the Dutch Republic, who had published a tragedy about the lapse of Adam and Eve in Paradise, *Adam in Exile* (*Adam in Ballingschap*, 1664).⁴⁰ According to Verboom, Vondel, as well as Adam, wrongfully portrayed Eve as being responsible for all the problems in the world. Arguing that men should take responsibility, Verboom not only offered a reading of the Bible from a female perspective but also attacked the patriarchal world of letters dominated by older, conservative men like Vondel.⁴¹

Verboom's *Plea for Our First Mother Eve* has been regarded as proto-feminist.⁴² As Verboom, as far as we know, did not publish any other literary works and biographical information is scarce, her attack has been regarded as an isolated opinion.⁴³ By analyzing Verboom's mechanisms of agency, however, we not only demonstrate how her voice can be interpreted as radical, but also show how this poem can be read as part of a stream of radical thought in Amsterdam.

At first sight, Verboom appears to comply with male standards. She adapts the conventions of men of letters in both form and content: her poem is obviously written by a *poeta doctus*, following the rules of meter, rhyme, intertextuality (referring to both the Bible and antiquity) and stylistic devices. Moreover, although she defends Eve against Vondel's representation of her as man's slave, Verboom's interpretation of the Bible still presents man as superior to woman. She refers here to Genesis 3:16: “To the

woman he said [...] he shall rule over you.” So, while Verboom positions herself as a learned poet like Vondel,⁴⁴ she simultaneously presents herself as inferior, following the prescription of the rhetoric of modesty.⁴⁵

At the same time, however, she uses this compliance to perform a female role that is explicitly disallowed within the patriarchal system. Using the possibilities of and discrepancies within the system in a strategic way, she creates a paradoxical position in order to acquire agency. Whereas she had at first conventionally presented herself as Vondel’s inferior, in the end she dares to doubt his authority and skill by presenting him as an arrogant liar, to be compared to Faëton,⁴⁶ and an old man who is no longer important: “the man is getting old and quarrelsome.”⁴⁷ In undermining the authority of the older male poet, Verboom attacks the patriarchal literary hierarchy, and implicitly claims her own agency.

Moreover, Verboom paradoxically legitimizes her publication by her statement that women are generally unable “to write for their own right,” which makes it a necessity for her to do exactly that.⁴⁸ Yet, while she portrays herself as a representative of the community of women who will come to their own defense, her authority is often grounded in her voicing of other women, such as Eve and her Muse, who both function as speaking protagonists in her poem. This again shows how Verboom obtains agency by using the possibilities and tensions already available within the system. Whereas it was very conventional (for men too) to let one’s Muse and other (male or female) characters speak freely, the femininity of Eve and the Muse in this case is very significant: by giving them a voice, Verboom both emphasizes and rejects women’s inability to speak in favor of their own right(s).

Verboom’s attack on the patriarchal system seems to be exceptional. There were other women in seventeenth-century Amsterdam who published texts through which they partook in discussions about the interpretation of the Bible or defended the female sex against male criticism⁴⁹ – we even know of another example of a woman who criticized the famous poet Vondel⁵⁰ – but none of these women really attacked the power of the patriarchal system as Verboom did.⁵¹

It is telling that such a radical attack was performed by Verboom, who seems to have been an author without a literary network, and who did not, as far as we know, publish any other books or pamphlets. The only other testimony to her writing activities we possess is a poem that was published in the front matter of a manual for notaries, written by Adriaen van Aller (dates unknown).⁵² There are no known responses to her attack on Vondel, though it is possible that Vondel, in *Noah* (1667), the sequel to *Adam in Exile*, which will be discussed as one of the literary examples at the end of this article, included a female antagonist, Urania, to reply to Verboom’s pamphlet. Did Verboom’s outsider position provide her with more space to undermine the patriarchal system? That may well be, but more important, perhaps, is that her plea can be analyzed as one voice in a broader stream of radical thought. Verboom can be placed in a longer line of female voices, from Christine de Pizan (1364–c. 1430) to Amilia Lanyer (1569–1645), which stressed the dignity and merit of women.⁵³

Another context that needs to be taken into account is Verboom’s social circle. Although we possess little knowledge about this, her husband, the painter Adriaan Hendriksz. Verboom (1627–1673), seems to have operated in a network of heterodox thinkers. The couple probably lived – at least for a while – with the Jewish merchant

Daniël Pinto (dates unknown).⁵⁴ The importance of Jewish circles for the origin of the radical Enlightenment in the Dutch Republic is commonly acknowledged.⁵⁵ More convincing for Verboom's familiarity with radical thinkers is her supposed connection to the libertine collegiant Jan Pietersz. Beelthouwer (c.1603–c.1665), born in Enkhuizen, the town Verboom probably also came from.⁵⁶ Beelthouwer was the author of another critical response to Vondel's *Adam in Exile*. Moreover, among the poems included in the front matter of Adriaen Allers's manual is not only a poem by a family member, Francois Verboom (1607–1676), but also one by "L.I. Beeldhouwer." The initials do not match, but this Beeldhouwer could well have been related to Jan Pietersz.

More radical women might come to the fore if we investigate Verboom's work and intellectual and social connections in greater detail. As we will see below, in the case of Grietje van Dijk, social networks were a catalyst for her radical thinking and actions.

5. Grietje van Dijk: guidance as care

Grietje van Dijk, probably born as Margareta van Dijk in 1650 in Leiden, would grow up to be a protagonist in the radical scene of the "Hebrew" conventicles in the province of Zeeland. She wrote several pamphlets and a two-volume religious treatise: *A Light Shining in Dark Places, Until the Day Will Break and the Morning Star will Rise in Your Hearts* (*Ligt, schijnende in duistere plaatsen, tot de dag aan ligte en de morgenster op gaa in uwe herten*, 1709–1711). The treatise led to Van Dijk's exile from Middelburg in 1710 and the instalment of a committee to investigate her ideas. Unfortunately, their findings are unknown.⁵⁷

Four factors stand out regarding Van Dijk's ability to exercise agency as a radical thinker in religious circles. First, Van Dijk had access to knowledge of the Hebrew language, which enabled her to criticize the Public Church's reading of the Old Testament. In 1686, Van Dijk's name first appears in the records of the Dutch Reformed Church of Leiden.⁵⁸ As a member of the Dutch Reformed Church, which was recognized as the Public Church, Van Dijk was allowed to practice her faith openly. Nonetheless, Van Dijk was interrogated about the Bible and the confirmation classes for children she was teaching with a woman named Maria de Riviere (dates unknown). These classes were the initiative of theology student Theophylactus van Schoor (c. 1659–?). As both women were unmarried, teaching was probably how they made a living. Teaching children was not uncommon for women, and Van Dijk considered it every Christian's duty to educate children in the Bible and catechism.⁵⁹ She also held that knowledge of Hebrew is necessary to truly read God's Word.

However, it seems that there was more to this teaching. Maria de Riviere's name appears in earlier sources for submitting a request, together with thirty-five other women, to follow Bible classes with Van Schoor, indicating that Van Dijk was involved in a religious network of adult, critical readers of the Bible. This is probably where Van Dijk learned Hebrew. In sharing her knowledge with fellow Christians, she gained respect and felt encouraged to assume responsibility for her ideas, further substantiating the aforementioned point that religious communities offered women opportunities to negotiate their agency. In 1686, the Church Council convinced Van Dijk to cancel her classes, but within two years she was questioned again. This time she was unwilling to negotiate, resulting in her censorship in 1688.⁶⁰

Secondly, Van Dijk's agency increased significantly after she left the Public Church. Historian Mirjam de Baar states that, even if women's independent judgement regarding the Bible was not officially considered disruptive to the divine order of the sexes, the records of the Dutch Reformed Church of Leiden indicate that women were not expected to express their ideas in public.⁶¹ When Van Dijk sought reconciliation in 1690, the Council replied that it did not befit a woman to mount the pulpit, in reference to Paul's commandments.⁶² Audaciously, Van Dijk replied that the Bible offered plenty examples of women teaching and prophesizing. The council does not seem to have been impressed by this: Van Dijk's attempt for reconciliation was denied. In 1692, Van Dijk nonetheless proceeded with her conventicles in the province of Zeeland, now in cooperation with Jacobus Verschoor (1648–1700). They would also hold services and lead theological debates, which would occasionally attract over three hundred people. In 1693, the Leiden City Council issued a prohibition against the gatherings of what was now called a "sect."⁶³ Van Dijk's case illustrates De Baar's point that, because the orthodox Public Church did not tolerate exceptions, assertive women were soon driven to the periphery of the faith – often against their will – where they were more likely to become radicalized.⁶⁴

A third factor in Van Dijk's efforts to gain agency is the fact that she published at least six texts, mostly under male pseudonyms. It was during her years in Middelburg that Van Dijk published her first pamphlets against the restrictions imposed on the Hebrews.⁶⁵ The most substantial work is the aforementioned *A Light Shining in Dark Places* (1709–1711), published under the pseudonym "Christianus Constans."⁶⁶ Van Dijk deliberately copied the title of the work of the infamous freethinker Adriaen Koerbagh (1633–1669): *A Light Shining in Dark Places to Enlighten the Crucial Issues of Theology and Religion* (*Een Ligt schijnende in duistere Plaatsen, om te verligten de voornaamste saaken der Gods geleertheyd en Gods dienst*, 1668). In fact, one of the two remaining manuscript copies is bound together with the second volume of Van Dijk's treatise. Similar to Koerbagh, Van Dijk denied the divinity of Christ. She also expressed the Hebrew conviction that only faith is necessary to salvation, instead of commandments or moral laws. On a more practical level, she advocated reading the Bible in its original languages and challenged the Reformed Church's monopoly on theological education, claiming that the truth "has been buried for a long time by the Ecclesiastical Serving Powers."⁶⁷ To justify her decision to seek publicity as a woman, Van Dijk describes how she found herself unable to explain and advocate her ideas orally, "because we never learned to controvert."⁶⁸ Clearly, "we" refers to women.

Fourth, Van Dijk combined several gendered roles to acquire agency in radical philosophy and serve as a spiritual guide, as can be demonstrated by *A Light Shining in Dark Places*. The most important thing, Van Dijk insists, is to "stick to the healthy truth [...] it is indifferent by whom one is taught, be it a Man or a Woman."⁶⁹ Remarkably, Van Dijk describes the truth that she teaches as "healthy." "Healthy" seems to indicate a form of truth that supports both mind and body. From this point of view, Van Dijk's understanding of the "covenant" becomes noteworthy. To the alliance between God and humanity, she adds the relation between "Earth" as the "Mother" and "nurse" of Adam, underlining the female genealogy in the covenant.⁷⁰ She also mentions how "covenants" have unjustly been compared to "women" in the Bible, suggesting this mistranslation had a grain of truth in it.⁷¹ Tapping into the common notion that women fulfilled a nurturing and

caring role by nature that reached beyond the purely physical and which was essential to humanity, Van Dijk supported her role as a teacher.⁷² Evidently, this role was also limiting, as it prevented Van Dijk from explicitly introducing herself as a learned and rational theologian. To what extent *A Light Shining in Dark Places* concerns itself with naturalism and how this relates to Van Dijk's view on women requires more investigation, but we have established that she operated at the intersection between heterodox religion and radical philosophy. Our literary examples will show in more detail how early modern discourse provided gendered roles as "caregiver" or "Mother Earth," which could prove productive in the context of Spinoza's naturalist and ethical philosophy.

6. Literary radicals: nature and care

Two examples of literary characters illustrate which images and narratives are generated where discourses of womanhood intersect with radical thought in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. The first example involves queen Urania in the biblical tragedy *Noah, or Downfall of the First World* (1667) by Joost van den Vondel, the celebrated poet who was so fiercely attacked by Verboom.⁷³ Urania lives in a palace next to where Noah builds his ark.⁷⁴ Her character is, to a large extent, made up by Vondel and she is Noah's strongest antagonist in criticizing his religious fanaticism and ascetic lifestyle.⁷⁵ Named after the muse of astronomy, Urania also features a strong interest in the natural sciences:

... Of all works
He who wants to fathom their nature will find the cause.
So many movements are mutually related.
As in the body blood vessels are dissipated,
So too the earth's humidified and irrigated.⁷⁶

She further expresses an untamable desire for sex and joy – "Here sensual desire finds everything that human lust yearns for" – that even Noah cannot withstand.⁷⁷ Evidently, she embodies Spinoza's principle of *conatus*, the innate striving of every natural being to enhance itself. Finally, Urania is abhorred by anything that restrains or disciplines life in her kingdom. Noah's menagerie, ordered by species, cleanness and sex, she compares to a coffin.

Urania's naturalist world view is explicitly gendered. Not only does she describe nature as a woman – "Nature reigns it all. This woman is at the helm"⁷⁸ – she also defends womanhood against Noah's misogyny:

How can you think so badly of women?
A woman has borne you, her love in childbearing obliges you
To be faithful: and your sons, devoted to women,
Rather behold her face than the most beautiful thing,
That is the face of the all-warming sun,
The joy of the living and source of every light.⁷⁹

Eventually, Urania perishes together with her wild kingdom, yet not without having referred to Noah's sins after the Deluge and therefore to the insane futility of God's intervention in nature. Urania reminds the reader that desire is irrepressible in humanity. In the long run, the forces of nature cannot be contained or disciplined; neither can women.

Cultural discourses that related women to nature, in opposition to culture, were common and have been a source of misogyny, prompting Dutch literary scholars to call Urania the most hideous female character ever drawn by Vondel, a “crude improbability,” a “monstrous exception” or “nymphomaniac.”⁸⁰ Urania and the forces she embodies cannot be deemed the “weaker sex,” which makes another reading possible. The sense of a female *natura naturans*, Spinoza’s concept for the self-causing activity of nature, may in fact have provided early modern women with agency in the realm of radical thought.

In our second example, another characteristic associated with womanhood may have had a comparable function: care. The sister of Philopater plays a supporting role in the two-volume novel about her brother’s life: *The Life of Philopater, Brought up in Voetian Lament* (*Het leven van Philopater, opgewiegt in Voetiaensche talmeryen*, 1691) and the *Continuation of the Life of Philopater, Saved from the Secrets of the Coccejans* (*Vervolg van’t Leven van Philopater geredded uit de verborgentheeden der Coccejanen*, 1697) by Johannes Duijkerius (c. 1661–1702). Philopater is a theology student who develops from a pious orthodox Calvinist towards a more moderate, Cartesian remonstrant, to eventually turn into a convinced Spinozist. By the end of the novel, he preaches materialism and denies the existence of an immaterial, immortal soul. The second volume, which contains the Spinozist ending, caused a major scandal. Duijkerius, a former minister, was interrogated and robbed of his right to preach. Printer Aart Wolsgryn (active 1682–1697) was fined four thousand guilders, sent to prison for eight years and banished from Holland for twenty-five years.⁸¹

Philopater’s sister is introduced at the very beginning, when Philopater’s name is explained. His father chose this name not only hoping that the boy would love him, but also that he would respect all that is “fatherly and truly authentic.”⁸² The name is thus a claim to a patriarchal notion of truth, to which not only the son but also his sister is being subjected through intense pedagogical training. The “sister,” who has no name in the novel, never speaks and repeatedly fades into the background, reappearing only at crucial moments. The studious boy is increasingly caught up in the zealous preaching of his father and several other preachers, until his exegetic enthusiasm dissolves into religious madness and panic about devils and eternal flames. Here, ample attention is paid to the boy’s physique: he loses weight, his body hair grows wild, his eyes sink and he is in a constant state of fever. It is at this point that the sister, together with their mother, intervenes to improve his physical and mental condition. In the end, Philopater is cured from his orthodox idiocies by a remonstrant preacher.

The sister not only preserves her brother in order for him to be cured; from a Spinozist perspective, her guarding of Philopater’s body runs parallel to the mental repair performed by the preacher. She takes care of the body that is to undergo the metamorphic development from orthodox Calvinist to Cartesian and Spinozist. At one point she even operates as the broker between Philopater and his friend Philologus, with whom he discovers Spinoza’s philosophy. The sister thus facilitates the narrative of spiritual growth and social support enabled by the healthy body.

Duijkerius makes this notion of female guidance explicit, for instance when he describes Philopater’s “saviour,” the remonstrant priest, as “a true Philometer.” “Mother loving” priests like him are protectors of a peaceful public sphere. They aim to prevent theological disputes by freeing the people of superstitions and anxieties.

They do not divide people but unite them.⁸³ This also becomes true for Philopater, who embraces Cartesianism and Spinozism, and evolves from a nervous and depressed boy into a joyous, sociable and elegant young man. As such, *Philopater* offers another example of an entry into radical thought for women, being the notion of care for happiness and sanity as prerequisites for enlightenment.⁸⁴

The example of Philopater's sister is no isolated case. In fact, early Enlightenment literature shows a pattern of female guidance in terms of care. As demonstrated by Inger Leemans, the anonymous pornographic novel *The Outspoken Mistress, or Hypocrisy Unveiled (D'openhertige juffrouw, of d'ontdekte geveinsdheid, 1680)* presents an old courtesan who initiates her "impotent" customers into an Amsterdam underworld that revolves around a candid lust for bodies and money. The motif of sexual desire functions as a metaphor for Spinoza's ethical concept of *conatus*.⁸⁵ Similar to Urania's character, the courtesan may be considered an oracle of practical materialism, connecting notions of nature and care. Another example involves the utopian novel *Description of the Mighty Kingdom of Krinke Kesmes (Beschrijvinge van het magtig Koninkryk Krinke Kesmes, 1708)* by Hendrik Smeeks (1645–1721). In this kingdom, women and men live on separate islands and have different knowledge systems. While the men embrace Descartes' rational philosophy, the women adhere to "a healthy philosophy" that leans towards Newtonianism.⁸⁶ The notion of "healthy philosophy" returns in *Heaven on Earth, A Brief and Clear Description of True and Steadfast Friendship (Den hemel op aarden; of Een korte en klaare beschrijvinge van de waare en stantvastige blydschap, 1702)* by Frederik van Leenhof (1647–1715). Van Leenhof, a theologian and pantheist, advocated a more loving and "feminine" Christian religion. His God loves humanity as a mother loves her children, nourishes them and takes care of them. In order to become children of this "free mother," Van Leenhof provides a detailed prescription about how to train mind and body in joy and free one from worry. Michiel Wielema has argued that this program is loosely based on Spinoza's *Ethics*, Part V: "On Freedom."⁸⁷

Feminist thinkers have observed that Spinoza's notion of freedom has affinities with a feminist ethics of care that emphasizes connection, relationality and dependency.⁸⁸ To be clear, we do not want to conceal the institutional mechanisms that produce feminine subjects as relational, nurturing and cooperative by nature. Rather, we have aimed to show that early modern women, in being appointed to roles of social and health care in society, developed an immense practical and ethical knowledge, which they were able to relate to existing radical ideas through their own scholarly ambitions.⁸⁹ A hypothesis for future research following from the case of Van Dijk and our literary examples would be that, as early Enlightenment literature reveals a pattern of female expertise in care and guidance, and considering that gender patterns in literature often represent similar processes in society, it is likely that Grietje van Dijk was no exception.

7. Concluding remarks

The main objective of this article has been to demonstrate that we, as literary scholars, need to disconnect "being radical" from "the amount of disruption caused" by female agency. For a radical voice to be heard, everybody – man and woman – depends on people giving them a platform and the opportunity to express their opinions; a

“license to speak.”⁹⁰ Our explorative case studies of radical women writers in the Low Countries, as well as our analyses of female characters in Dutch literary texts, show that these women were not radically disruptive in the sense of operating completely outside of male-dominated domains; they acquired agency by complying, in part, with patriarchal systems and, in part, by bending conventions within male-dominated networks so that their radical voices could be heard. Such women deserve not to be disregarded because of their (lack of) disruption, but to be granted a podium because of their ability to “work the system.”

In further research on radical (Dutch) women, at least three mechanisms of female compliance with patriarchal systems need to be considered and further explored. First of all, our case studies have demonstrated that women created *paradoxical positions* within the system: they presented themselves as both weak and powerful, or used gendered modesty formulas in order to stage their disruptive opinions. In the cases of Bijns and Verboom, for example, we have seen a discrepancy between their statements on women as the weaker sex and their own actions as self-conscious women who attacked powerful men.

Second, we have analyzed how women constructed specific *female roles* to claim their own position within a male-dominated system. Bijns, for example, used her virginity to obtain authority, while Van Dijk used the gendered role of caregiver to create her own radical voice. The fictional characters we analyzed used their feminine assets – nature and care, respectively – to enable them to initiate or participate in radical discourse. Moreover, all three women writers we discussed claimed religious authority, which was accepted as a female type of authority within certain groups or circles: while limited access to classical education and Latin generally excluded women from the literary culture of the *poeta doctus*, women were pre-eminently able to represent themselves as authors in religious domains.⁹¹ Instead of an inferior shelter, religious domains provided our radical women with access to a patriarchal literary and cultural system, and simultaneously offered the weapons to disrupt it.⁹²

In the third place, our radical women operated from within the contexts of their *networks* instead of from isolated positions. While Verboom is sometimes interpreted as an isolated voice because of her apparent lack of a literary network, we propose to read her case from either the perspective of international women writers or the perspective of her local family network. If we want to find more radical voices among Dutch women, we need to continue searching beyond the contemporary and modern “national” borders of the northern and southern Low Countries, as well as beyond networks of canonized authors and scholars. Only then will we obtain a better view of the religious, but also the educational, literary and philosophical networks in which women writers were operating at the time. Following this approach, we might also even uncover a place where female radical thinkers have remained hidden from modern scholars for several centuries.

Notes

1. Some seminal studies are: Jacob, *Radical Enlightenment*; Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*; Van Bunge, *From Stevin to Spinoza*; Van Bunge, *Spinoza Past and Present*; Wielema, *March of the Libertines*; Leemans, *Het woord*; Hollelland, *The Banishment of Beverland*.
2. Moran and Pipkin, “Introduction,” 2–3.

3. Schenkeveld-van der Dussen et al., “Introductie”; Van Gemert, *Women’s Writing*; Van Elk, *Early Modern Women’s Writing*.
4. Hopkins and Norrie, *Women on the Edge*.
5. Spinoza himself was dubious about women’s capabilities to participate in politics, although opinions vary as to whether he believed these capabilities to be limited by their essential nature or by their social and historical circumstances. See Spinoza, *Political Treatise*, 11:3–4. See also Lord, “Disempowered by Nature.”
6. Here, we connect with studies that have contested Israel’s Spinozist interpretation of radical Enlightenment, with interpretations that highlight the more fluent transitions between moderate and radical, for instance through radical Cartesianism, or different schools of heterodox thought. See, for instance: Jorink, *Het “Boeck der Natuere”*; Buisman, *Verlichting in Nederland*; Van Bunge, *Spinoza Past and Present*.
7. Howell, “The Problem of Women’s Agency,” 21–3.
8. Definition from the *Oxford English Dictionary*.
9. Howell, “The Problem of Women’s Agency,” 22.
10. *Ibid.*, 22, 26–7. In the words of Judith Butler: “the subject who would resist such norms is itself enabled, if not produced, by such norms” (Butler, *Bodies That Matter*, 15).
11. Howell, “The Problem of Women’s Agency,” 22–30.
12. See Schenkeveld-van der Dussen et al., “Introductie,” as part of the first survey of female literary authorship in the early modern Low Countries and as such very influential for research into women’s writing during the last decades.
13. Van Elk, *Early Modern Women’s Writing*, 18–20.
14. As pointed out by Amanda Capern in her historical overview of early modern women’s involvement in Protestantism. See Capern, “Protestant Theology,” esp. 272–3.
15. By making this observation, we mean to respond to Howell’s call for scholars to make overt challenges to masculine authority a measure of agency more often. See Howell, “The Problem of Women’s Agency,” 24.
16. Roodenburg, “The Autobiography of Isabella De Moerloose.”
17. According to Howell, this is also the mechanism from which agency typically arises (“The Problem of Women’s Agency,” 29–31). However, Howell does not typically relate any mechanism of agency to radicalism.
18. One of the first feminist literary scholars to describe literary patriarchy was Kate Millett in *Sexual Politics*, 23–58. Some early examples of critical analysis of gender patterns in early modern Dutch literature involve works by Maaïke Meijer, Agnes Sneller and Els Kloek. See, for example, Kloek et al., *Women of the Golden Age*; Meijer, *In tekst gevat*.
19. Pleij, *Anna Bijns*, 225. On “quade wive,” see also Haemers et al., *Wijvenwereld*.
20. See the poem: “Tsjn eertsche duvels die de menscen quellen” (They are devils on earth who crucify the people), example and translation in Kessler, “‘Please Do Not Mind’,” 64.
21. Pollmann, *Catholic Identity*, 59.
22. Post, *Scholen en onderwijs*, 78–9, 90; Lucassen et al., “The Return of the Guilds,” 16; Crowston, *Women, Gender and Guilds*, 19.
23. Post, *Scholen en onderwijs*, 78–9, 90; Lucassen et al., “The Return of the Guilds,” 16; Crowston, *Women, Gender and Guilds*, 19.
24. Van Bruaene, *Om beters wille*, 79. Her father is said to have had ties with the Antwerp chamber: see Pleij, *Anna Bijns*; Kessler, “‘Please Do Not Mind’.”
25. Pollmann, *Catholic Identity*, 63–4.
26. Pleij, *Anna Bijns*, 113.
27. Pollmann, *Countering the Reformation*, 108.
28. Kessler, “‘Please Do Not Mind’,” 70.
29. Bijns, *Schoon en suverlick boeck*. Translated by Pollmann, *Catholic Identity*, 59. Translations are our own unless otherwise stated.
30. Kessler, “‘Please Do Not Mind’,” 64–72: “in the rhetoric.”
31. *Ibid.*, 72.
32. *Ibid.*, 82.

33. Ibid., 75.
34. Ibid., 77–83.
35. Ibid., 70. See also Lacey et al., “Gendered Language and the Mystic Voice,” 331.
36. See, for example, Nicolas against Constantine or Saint Lucie against judge Paschasius (resp. ed. *Gulden Legende*, 38, 43–46).
37. There is one surviving copy of the pamphlet. We used the modern edition of the text in Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, “Meynarda Verboom,” 305–12. Verboom is also known by her maiden name, Meynarda Jans: cf. Van Marion, “De vrouw als slavine?”; Kloek, “Jans, Meynarda.” We use the name Verboom as this is the name with which she published.
38. “’t vrouwenrecht,” vs. 292.
39. Cf. “our right” (*ons recht*), vs. 247, italicized by authors.
40. And he still is, as appears, for example, from Porteman and Smits-Veldt, *Een nieuw vaderland*.
41. Vondel’s representations of women were not consistently as negative as in *Adam in Exile*; however, see Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, *Vondel en ’t vrouwelijke dier*.
42. Vondel, *De Werken*, 458; Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, “Meynarda Verboom”; Van Marion, “De vrouw als slavine.” We gratefully used Schenkeveld-van der Dussen’s edition and analysis.
43. Only recently, Els Kloek gathered some details regarding her biography: Kloek, “Jans, Meynarda.”
44. Verboom presents herself and Vondel as “poetical souls” (*poëtische geesten*) who “harmonize” (*met malkanderen accorderen*) in the short prose introduction preceding the poem.
45. Cf. Pender, *Early Modern Women’s Writing and the Rhetoric of Modesty*.
46. Faëton is the protagonist of Vondel’s 1663 tragedy, who is reckless enough to steal the chariot of the sun-god, his father Apollo, but cannot handle the horses. To prevent him from destroying the earth he is cast down by Zeus and his thunderbolts: Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, 31–93.
47. “de man wordt oud en raakt misschien aan ’t suffen” (vs. 270), translation from Van Gemert et al., *Women’s Writing*, 49.
48. “voor haar gelijk te schrijven,” vs. 237.
49. See Schenkeveld-van der Dussen et al., “Introductie.”
50. Goudina van Weert participated in the controversy about Vondel’s tragedy with the pamphlet *Maria Stuart* (1646). Her contribution represented the mainstream opinion, in noticing and condemning a Catholic bias in the tragedy: see De Jeu, “Goudina van Weert.”
51. A new reading of their writings from the perspective of agency could unveil radicalism.
52. Aller, *Inleydinge*.
53. Van Dijk, “Foreword.”
54. We don’t know much about him, except the fact that he was Rembrandt’s neighbor and as such quarreled with him: see Vaz Dias, “Rembrandt in conflict.”
55. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*.
56. About Beelthouwer: Israel, *Radical Enlightenment*, 104; Zilverberg, “Jan Pietersz. Beelthouwer.”
57. Biographical information is based on De Baar, “Margareta van Dijk,” unless mentioned otherwise. De Baar bases the birth date on Regionaal Archief Leiden: Doopboeken Hooglandse Kerk, 18 October 1650.
58. Archief Kerkenraad Ned. Hervormde Gemeente, Actenboeken, inv. no. 7 and 8 (1684–1694), d.d. 25 January 1686. See also De Baar, “Van kerk naar sekte,” 161–2.
59. Capern, “Protestant Theology.”
60. Archief Kerkenraad Ned. Hervormde Gemeente, Actenboeken, inv. no. 7 and 8 (1684–1694), d.d. 26 March 1688.
61. De Baar, “Van kerk naar sekte,” 166. See also Wielema, *The March of the Libertines*, 50–1.
62. Archief Kerkenraad Ned. Hervormde Gemeente, Actenboeken, inv. no. 7 and 8 (1684–1694), d.d. 20 October 1690, 13 February 1693. See also De Baar, “Van kerk naar sekte,” 162; Statenvertaling 1637, 1 Timotheus 2 and 1 Corinthiërs 14:34.

63. Archief Kerkenraad Ned. Hervormde Gemeente, Actenboeken, inv. no. 7 and 8 (1684–1694), d.d. 13 February 1693.
64. De Baar, “Van kerk naar sekte,” 166.
65. Vigilans, *Waterloose fonteynen*. For an overview of the publications that can be attributed to Van Dijk, see De Baar, “Margareta van Dijk.”
66. The copy bound with Koerbagh is kept at The Hague: Museum Meermanno-Westreenianum. The title on the spine is “Koerbagh, *Ligt in 't Duistere 2.*”
67. Constans, *Ligt*, fol. A2^v.
68. Constans, *Ligt*, fol. A2: “alsoo wy niet geleerd hebben Contraversien te maken.”
69. Constans, *Ligt*, 17: “Men moet maar sien, dat men by de gesonde Waarheid blyft, en dan is 't in different, van wien men onderwesen werd, al wast Man, of Vrouw.”
70. Constans, *Ligt*, 22: “De Aarde is ook geweest de moeder en voedster van onse eerste Vader, en ook onser aller Moederlye in hem, en ook nog oner Moeder voedster, want gelyk wy gesegd hebben, dat wy ons Dierlyke uit onse aarde hebben, en onse Ziel, onse Onsterfelyke reden uit God.”
71. Constans, *Ligt*, 26. See the *Luther translation*, Galat. 4:24. This translation has been changed in the *States Translation*.
72. Capern, “Protestant Theology.”
73. Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, 391–454.
74. This interpretation is based on research by Korsten, “Ordering Life,” and Van Bunge, “Vondel’s *Noah*.”
75. Vondel may have been inspired by a series of English mystery plays dating back to the early fifteenth century, in which Noah is accompanied by a shrewish wife, designated as Uxor, who refuses to enter the ark. See Young, “Noah and His Wife’.”
76. Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, 427, vs. 798–802: “van alle werken vint / Hy d’oirzaek, wie den aert der dingen wil doorgronden. / Zoo veel bewegingen staen onderling verbonden. / Gelyk ons lichaem is met aderen doorgroeit, / Zoo wort het aertrijk ook bevochtight en besproeit.” Translation by Korsten, “Ordering Life,” 54.
77. Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, 401, vs. 68: “Hier vindt de snoeplust al wat ’s mensen lust loopt zoeken.” Translation by Michiel Wielema in Van Bunge, “Vondel’s *Noah*,” 126.
78. Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, 427, vs. 793: “Natuur regeert het al. Deez’ stuurvrouw zit aan ’t stuur.”
79. Vondel, *De werken van Vondel*, 433, vs. 965–71: “Hoe staen de vrouwen u zoo byster in het licht? / Een vrou heeft u gebaert, haer liefde uw trou verplicht / Door kinderbaeren: en uw zoons, verknocht aen vrouwen, / Haer aenschijn liever dan het allerschoonste aenschouwen, / Dat is het aenschijn van d’alkoesterende zon, / Der levendigen vreught, en aller lichten bron.” Translation by Michiel Wielema in Van Bunge, “Vondel’s *Noah*,” 128.
80. Kok, *Vondel*, 17; Konst, *Determinatie en vrije wil*, 20.
81. Wielema, *March of the Libertines*, 89.
82. Duijkerius, *Het leven van Philopater*, 12: “vaderlijck en regt oorspronckelijck.”
83. *Ibid.*, 77: “Een waere Philometer of Moeder-liever van de ruste en vrede der Kercke. Een dood vyant van alle krakelen, van broeder-twistinge, afscheuringe en verwyderinge. Noyt arbeyde iemant met meerder vlijt om de verschilstucken, die het wesen der saligheyt niet en quetsten onder de Reformateurs weg te nemen en hun tot vereeniging te brengen; Nagt en dag was hy beesig sijn Gemeynthe met leer en leven te stigten en boven alle leyde hy het’er op toe, de menschen van hun hartstogten en elendig waengeloof te genesen.”
84. Moreover, in these specific cases, there also seems to be a relationship between womanhood, traditionally fulfilling health and social care roles, and Spinozism, especially Spinoza’s central notion of the body in its interrelatedness to other bodies in the network of affect. Cf. Urania: “Zoo veel bewegingen staen onderling verbonden. / Gelyk ons lichaem is met aderen doorgroeit.” It should also be noted that, both in *Philopater* and *Noah*, female Spinozism is contrasted with orthodox Calvinism.
85. Leemans, *Het woord*, 252–6, 260–3; Matheron, “Spinoza et la sexualité.”
86. Smeeks, *Krinke Kesmes*, 140: “een gesonde Philosophie.”

87. Wielema, *March of the Libertines*, 103–32.
88. Aurelia Armstrong, “Autonomy and the Relational Individual,” 44. See also Sharp, *Spinoza’s Politics*, 34.
89. More generally speaking, women’s practical knowledgeability as fitting to their social roles was commonly used in negotiating their agency: cf. Dietz and Geerdink, “Clever, but not learned?”
90. Van Renswoude, *License to Speak*, 5.
91. Geerdink and Dietz, “Women’s Strength Made Perfect in Weakness.”
92. Pipkin, “Women’s Writing during the Dutch Revolt.”

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Notes on contributors

Feike Dietz is an Assistant Professor Early Modern Dutch Literature at Utrecht University. Her current research focuses on how books for young people taught literacy and knowledge skills. She also participates in a project on knowledge representations in Dutch female writing (KNAW/UU/Max Planck Institute), and is one of the leaders of an interdisciplinary project on seventeenth-century Dutch language variation (funded by the Dutch Research Council).

Nina Geerdink is an Assistant Professor Early Modern Dutch Literature at Utrecht University and currently working on a project about early modern Dutch literary authors’s financial advancement and its representations. She has published on authorship, patronage, women’s writing and occasional poetry. Among her publications is the co-edited volume *Economic Imperatives for Women’s Writing in Early Modern Europe* (Brill 2018).



Inger Leemans is Professor of Cultural History at Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and PI of NL-Lab, a research group on Dutch Culture and Identity at the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW). She has published on the history of pornography, (radical) Enlightenment, cultural infrastructure, stock markets and financial crises.

Cécile de Morrée is Assistant Professor in Middle Dutch Literature at Radboud University, Nijmegen. She is an expert in song culture and currently works on aspects of gender in late-medieval Dutch and French popular song. She has published on the materiality of books and manuscripts, festive culture, multilingualism and sensory history.

Marrigje Paijmans is an Assistant Professor in Dutch Literature at The University of Amsterdam. She studies early modern literature from a critical analysis perspective, aiming to recover marginalized voices and to balance our understanding of the past. Her current project, “Literary Unsettlements,” analyzes voices of discontent in seventeenth-century colonial discourse. She has published on Spinozism and slavery in *JEMCS* and the ethics of affect in *Foucault Studies*.

Martine Veldhuizen is an Assistant Professor in Medieval Dutch Literature at Utrecht University. She is fascinated by historical ideas about the power of the spoken word. In her doctoral research, she investigated “sins of the tongue” in ecclesiastical, legal and ethical texts in the Low Countries (1300–1550), which has been published by Brepols Publishers as *Sins of the Tongue in the Medieval West* (2017).

ORCID

Marrigje Paijmans  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-0170-8644>
Feike Dietz  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-2453-0367>

Nina Geerdink  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-4641-7330>
 Inger Leemans  <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-1640-4109>
 Cécile de Morrée  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-6350-3591>
 Martine Veldhuizen  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-1695-4277>

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