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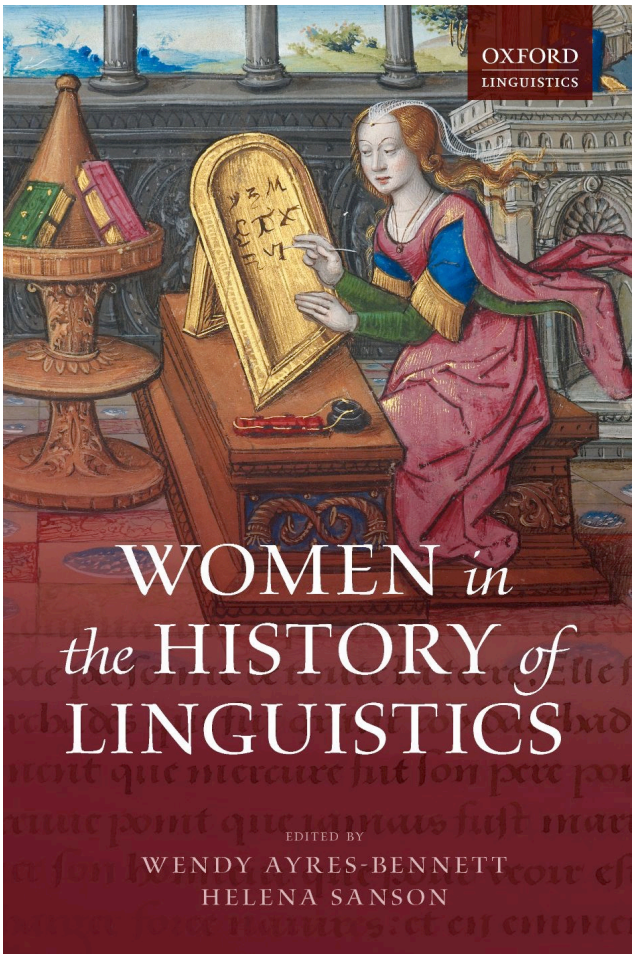

8

The extraordinary and changing role of women in Dutch language history

Marijke van der Wal and Jan Noordegraaf

8.1 Standardization in the Low Countries in the early and late modern period

In this contribution we focus on the northern Low Countries, present-day the Netherlands, for the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. For the sixteenth century, during which the political unity of the Low Countries still existed, we include the southern Netherlands, roughly the Flemish-speaking part of present-day Belgium.

8.1.1 Chambers of rhetoric and codification

A grammatical or linguistic vernacular tradition did not begin in the Low Countries before the second half of the sixteenth century, when treatises on orthography started to appear. One such was the *Nederlandsche Spellijnghe* (*Dutch Orthography*; 1550) that appeared as one of the early examples of codification. For the author, the Ghent printer Joos Lambrecht (d. *c.*1556), and other printers, orthographic rules were important, as normalized spelling was assumed to favour a broader distribution of their books. A few decades later, detailed Dutch–Latin dictionaries such as the *Dictionarium Teutonico-latinum* (1574) and the first printed Dutch grammar, *Twe-spraack vande Nederduitsche letterkunst* (*Dialogue of Dutch Grammar*; 1584), were published: the former was compiled by corrector Cornelis Kiliaen (1528/1529–1607), an employee of the famous Antwerp printer Plantijn, and the latter was produced by members of the Amsterdam chamber of rhetoric *In Liefd' Bloeyende* (*Flourishing in Love*; see Wal 2003). The *Twe-spraack* was part of a Dutch trivium; manuals for logic and rhetoric were also published by the Amsterdam chamber (Wal 2007: 217–20). A long tradition of grammars, dictionaries, and linguistic treatises followed, publications composed by male authors of various professions. In the eighteenth century, linguistic issues were also discussed in the context of literary societies.

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Surveying the Dutch linguistic tradition, however, it is striking that, apart from the single example of Johanna Corleva (1698–1752), who published a dictionary and a Dutch translation of the *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* (*General and Rational Grammar*; 1660), no women seem to have been involved in linguistic codification. In the present section, we investigate whether the context in which the linguistic publications came into being might explain the lack of any contribution from women. We will focus first on the chambers of rhetoric and subsequently on the literary societies. In passing, we will also note the existence of particular networks of individuals who stimulated one another to publish linguistic work.

From the late medieval period until well into the seventeenth century, chambers of rhetoric were established both in the north and south of the Low Countries, where almost every town had at least one such chamber. They were amateur guilds or confraternities of laymen devoted to the composition of vernacular poetry and drama. Their members were trained in the skills of analysing and composing texts, staging and performing plays, and improving their technical reading and writing skills (Bruaene 2005: 11–12). Members from the urban elite and middle-class groups such as skilled artisans and merchants had the opportunity to test these skills in private and public performances and competitions (Dixhoorn 2002: 20). This context of literary culture and training 'in argumentation and performance techniques' was the cradle of a vernacular Dutch trivium, published in the 1580s, to which we have already referred. Research by literary historians has revealed that the culture of the chambers of rhetoric was based on a strong male group identity and inspired by the religious role model of the apostles and by social models such as the shooting guilds (Moser 2001: 69–97; Bruaene 2005: 14–18). Van Bruaene argues that women could therefore never fully integrate into the culture of the chambers of rhetoric, if they were even allowed to become members in the first place. In the southern province of Brabant, they were excluded, but in the province of Flanders, women were admitted as so-called sisters, who had no formal voice in collective decision-making and could never be elected to the official positions of prince, deacon, or factor (the official playwright) of the chamber (Bruaene 2005: 21–3). They appear to have had mainly devotional duties in the religious services for the patron saint and the commemoration of deceased members. In the chamber's public performances of drama and comedy, they seem to have played a very minor part in *tableaux vivants* (young men played women's roles), and there is even less evidence that they were allowed to participate in the rhetorical exercises organized within the chambers themselves (Bruaene 2005: 25–6). Moreover, membership lists indicate that in the early modern period female membership (of about 10 per cent in the Flemish chambers of rhetoric) largely depended on their relations with male members (Bruaene 2005: 15, 23). A typical example is the female playwright Barbara Ogier (1648–1720), who wrote texts for the Antwerp chamber, but only as the daughter and later as the wife of influential rhetoricians (Bruaene 2005: 29). In the northern Low Countries, where the

chambers had lost their religious functions after the Reformation, women were no longer welcome. Thus, women even lost their marginal roles in the chambers of rhetoric, which became more or less institutions where (young) adult men met one another and acquired a general education (Dixhoorn 2003: 71).

In summary, for the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, one of the explanations for women's absence in the grammatical tradition may be found in their absence or limited role in the chambers of rhetoric, which were the cradle of particular codification activities such as the compilation of a Dutch grammar.

8.1.2 The socio-cultural context of societies

Chambers of rhetoric had their heyday in the sixteenth century, during which period they frequently participated in contemporary religious debates. After the mid-seventeenth century, however, they became marginal institutions (Singeling 1991: 35). Another type of meeting place of culture and study came into being: the so-called societies. In 1669 the Amsterdam society Nil Volentibus Arduum (Nothing is Impossible for the Willing) was founded, the aim of which was to study both science and literature. We will discuss Nil's activities in more detail in section 8.3.3 below. The eighteenth century, in particular its second half, saw the rise of many societies, which not only created social bonds but were also exemplary of a civilizing enterprise aimed at disseminating knowledge and culture (Vries 2001). At least sixty literary societies existed between 1750 and 1800 in the north of the Low Countries, that is, in the Republic of the Seven United Provinces. These were of two different types: the so-called reflective and the poetic societies (Vries 1999: 188). Linguistic issues such as norms and grammar rules played a role in both. Within the reflective societies the male-only members discussed literature, national history, linguistics, and sometimes philosophy (Vries 1999: 188–9). They critically analysed literary works of seventeenth-century celebrated authors such as Joost van den Vondel (1587–1679) and P. C. Hooft (1581–1647), in order to determine what would constitute 'good Dutch' (Singeling 1991: 202–8). In the same vein, Balthasar Huydecoper, a playwright himself, wrote the *Proeve van taalen dichtkunde* (*Sketch of Linguistics and Poetics*, 1730), a linguistic and poetic commentary on Vondel, who was considered the great poet of the so-called Dutch Golden Age, the seventeenth-century period of economic and cultural wealth. By discussing and commenting on Vondel's language, Huydecoper's *Proeve* presented preferred linguistic variants. The commentary therefore was a typical instance of language cultivation or codification and functioned as a helpful model in the societies (see also Vries 2001: 87–96, 148–53; Kloek and Mijnhardt 2004: 405–7). The poetic societies aimed to improve the standard of Dutch poetry, and women could participate by submitting their anonymous contributions to the competitions organized on a regular basis or by asking for comments on their

poetry on other occasions (Oostrum 1996: 14; Vries 1999: 190–2; Baar-de Weerd 2009: 183–4).

Commenting on poetry and discussing linguistic norms and grammar rules have been closely related since the second half of the seventeenth century, as is clearly shown, for instance, in the case of Joannes Vollenhove (1631–1708), who commented extensively on linguistic issues in his poem *Aan de Nederduitsche schryvers* (*To the Dutch Writers*; 1686). In the 1760s, drafts of grammars were published as appendices to collections of poems by two members of the poetic society, *Natura et Arte*: Kornelis Elzevier (1717–1761) and Frans de Haes (1708–1761). These are convincing examples of grammar serving literature (Rutten 2009: 59). Although women became members of poetic societies, they do not seem to have been involved in any grammatical enterprise, although they did contribute to the societies' publications of poetry and wrote about public affairs such as religion, nation, and morals (Vries 1999; Baar-de Weerd 2009: 170). In 1800, large poetic societies, based in Leiden, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam, merged into a national society under the title of Bataafsche Maatschappij van Taal- en Dichtkunde (Batavian Society of Linguistics and Poetics), which had a mixed reflective-poetic character and was less welcoming to female members (Vries 1999: 212). One of the exceptions was the philosopher and poet Johannes Kinker (1764–1845) who, as President of the Amsterdam department of the Bataafsche Maatschappij, welcomed women into the audience when papers were presented.

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We may conclude that women could play a less marginal role in the literary societies than they did in the chambers of rhetoric, although they remained a small minority and only participated in the poetic societies. Between 1772 and 1800, only forty-five women were members, compared to the *c.*1,700 men (Vries 1999).[1]

8.1.3 The grammatical tradition: Authors and readership

Looking at the professions of linguistic authors in the early and late modern period, the number of clergymen is striking. The mid-seventeenth century *Aanmerkingen op de Neederduitsche taale* (*Remarks on the Dutch Language*; 1653) was a grammar written by minister Petrus Leupenius (1607–1670). In the first decade of the eighteenth century an extensive Dutch grammar, *Nederduitsche spraekkunst* (1706), was published by minister Arnold Moonen (1644–1711), and a small stylistic grammar, *Aanleiding tot de Nederduitsche taal* (*Introduction to the Dutch Language*; 1703), by his colleague Jacobus Nylöe (1670–1714).[2] Both

[1] On the position of women in general in the second half of the eighteenth century, see Kloek and Mijnhardt (2004: 219–41).

[2] Other authors of linguistic treatises were the ministers Samuel Ampzing (1590–1632), Geeraert Brandt (1626–1685), and Joshua van Iperen (1726–1781). Among the authors of grammars there were also merchants such as Allart Kok (1616–1653).

authors were well acquainted with Joannes Vollenhove, mentioned above, who was also a minister, and with David van Hoogstraten (1658–1724), vice-principal of a Latin school, and author of the frequently reprinted *Aenmerkingen over de geslachten der zelfstandige naemwoorden* (*Remarks on the Gender of Nouns*; 1700), a useful list of Dutch nouns with their masculine, feminine, or neuter gender classification. Van Hoogstraten commented on preliminary versions of Moonen's grammar and edited the third impression of Nylöe's grammar. What we see here is a network of well-educated people who encouraged one another to publish on the Dutch language. A relative outsider was Willem Séwel (1654–1720), translator, and author of successful dictionaries and grammars for foreigners, who published his *Nederduytsche spraakkonst* (*Dutch Grammar*) in 1708. About a century later, ministers were once again the authors of two highlights in the codification of Dutch: the official Dutch orthography (1804) by Matthijs Siegenbeek (1774–1854; Professor of Dutch Language at the University of Leiden from 1797), and the official Dutch grammar (1805) by Petrus Weiland (1754–1841). Both works were written at the request of the government and intended to be implemented in the administration and in education. Linguistic publications of quite another character are represented by Lambert ten Kate's *Aenleiding tot de kennisse van het verhevene deel der Nederduitsche sprake* (*Introduction to the Elevated Part of the Dutch Language*; 1723), an extraordinary comparative-historical linguistic study by a man of leisure, and the above-mentioned *Proeve van taal- en dichtkunde* (1730) by Huydecoper, a literary writer from a well-to-do family. The authors of linguistic publications thus appear to be mainly ministers, a male profession, or people of leisure, a category which in principle could include women, as we will see in sections 8.2 and 8.3.

Although Dutch grammars and orthographies show many similarities in their contents, the social and cultural context and, as a consequence, their function had changed considerably in the course of two centuries. This development has been characterized as a change from elitist grammar (in the second half of the seventeenth century until about 1740/50) via civil grammar (from 1740/50 until about 1780/90) to national grammar in the long nineteenth century (see Rutten 2009). During the first period, grammatical works such as Moonen's and Séwel's grammars and Huydecoper's *Proeve* were mainly written for the urban upper classes of politicians, lawyers, preachers, and literary authors, and were used in the education of the cultural elite. At this stage, Dutch grammar presupposed knowledge of Latin or Greek. In the second period, as a consequence of democratic revolutions, the intended readership of mainstream grammars was enlarged and comprised both upper and middle classes and men as well as women. Knowledge of Latin or Greek was no longer required, as the grammars were rephrased in less classical vocabulary. Grammatical knowledge now distinguished the middle and upper classes from the lower classes (Rutten 2009: 58). The above-mentioned Elzevier and de Haes, who conducted their linguistic activities within the context of a literary society, were representatives of this democratizing development

(Rutten 2009: 63). The third period shows a further extension of readership to the whole population, as grammar became a matter of national concern. Weiland's grammar (1805) is a *national grammar* that was supposed to be used by the administration and by schoolteachers (Rutten 2009: 58). Grammar as a cultural phenomenon had changed from an elitist leisure activity, through a short period of civil responsibility, into a compulsory element of the school curriculum. The contents of linguistic publications were simplified, further systematized, refined, and sometimes reshaped in order to make grammar accessible to the extended audience (Rutten 2009: 83). Apart from one exception, Johanna Corleva (1698–1752), women did not play a role in the linguistic activities of any of the three periods, although they belonged to the implicitly intended readership of the second and third periods, that of civil and national grammar.

8.2 Knowledge of foreign languages: The polyglot and learned Anna Maria van Schurman

8.2.1 Foreign language study and exclusion of women

Codification and Dutch linguistics constitute one part of the linguistic activities in the Netherlands. The other part is the knowledge and study of foreign languages, first of the various classical languages, but also of oriental and rediscovered languages. In the second half of the sixteenth century, at the University of Leiden, illustrious scholars such as Professors Bonaventura Vulcanius (1538–1614), Franciscus Raphelengius (1539–1597), and Josephus Justus Scaliger (1540–1609) were discussing their relatively new discoveries of the hitherto mostly unknown Gothic and Persian languages in their correspondence and their Latin publications (Wal 1999: 148–50). During the seventeenth century, Leiden remained a centre of oriental language study conducted by professors such as Thomas Erpenius (1584–1624), from 1613 Professor of Arabic and other oriental languages, and his pupil and successor Jacobus Golius (1596–1667), who held the chair of mathematics as well as that of Arabic (Juynboll 1931; Zwiep 1993). Erpenius published grammars of Semitic languages (Arabic, Hebrew, Chaldean and Syriac) such as the frequently reprinted *Grammatica Arabica* (1613), *Rudimenta linguae Arabicae* (1620), *Grammatica Ebraea generalis* (1621), and the *Grammatica Chaldaica et Syria* (1628).[3] His colleague, the famous philologist and theologian Claudius Salmasius (1588–1654), was also familiar with Syrian, Arabic, and Persian, albeit not thoroughly (Juynboll 1931: 195–6). Students such as, for instance, Hugo Grotius (1583–1645) became familiar with the new linguistic

[3] A new edition of his *Grammatica Arabica* was published, with considerable additions, by Golius in 1656.

knowledge and ideas (Wal 1999). Women, however, could not enrol at a university and were therefore denied access to academic knowledge. They did not even attend the Latin schools, which were the preparatory stage of academic study (see Frijhoff and Spies 2004: 243–6).

Women thus remained outsiders who were able to learn and study languages only by alternative means, such as teaching by family members or private tutors. Early modern examples are the poet Margaretha van Godewijck (1627–1677) and Elisabeth Hoofman (1664–1736), both members of well-to-do families (Kloek 2013: 408–9, 580–3). Margaretha, referred to as the pearl of the town of Dordrecht, was familiar with Latin, Greek, Hebrew, French, English, and Italian, languages which she was probably taught by her father, Pieter Govertszoon van Godewijck (1593–1669), teacher at the Latin school. Elisabeth Hoofman received private tuition in the classical languages from Jacob Storm, preceptor of the Haarlem Latin school. How painter Maria Verelst (1680–1744), living in London and a member of a family of painters of Dutch origin, acquired her proficiency in foreign languages is not known, but she was said to have given a strikingly apt multilingual response to German gentlemen who discussed her appearance in a London theatre (Hut 2014). She commented on their private remarks in German, responded again when they switched to Italian and Latin, and concluded:

> Waarom zouden de heren meer bevoorrecht zijn om de Latijnse taal te bezitten als de vrouwen? En is het niet genoeg om onze sekse buiten alle publieke digniteiten te hebben uitgesloten, zonder die nog daarenboven buiten de taalkunde te willen sluiten? (Weyerman 1729: 254)
>
> (Why should gentlemen have the greater privilege of possessing the Latin language than women? And does it not suffice to have excluded our sex from all public dignities, without excluding us from linguistics?)

Being able to speak and write in Latin or even in Greek is one thing; contributing to classical philology and foreign-language scholarship is another matter. In the contemporary context, could we assume that any early or late modern woman would be capable of such scholarly linguistic contributions? In the seventeenth century, one woman did not accept the exclusion of females from high-level knowledge and scholarship: the multitalented miracle of learnedness, Anna Maria van Schurman (1607–1678; Figure 8.1).

8.2.2 Anna Maria van Schurman: Biographical details and education

Anna Maria van Schurman was born in the city of Cologne in 1607 where her grandparents on her father's and mother's side, both of noble families, had settled

Figure 8.1 Anna Maria van Schurman, *Self-Portrait* (1640).
Reproduced with kind permission of the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

after having fled from religious persecution in Antwerp in the late sixteenth century.[4] Although the city of Cologne had been a refuge for non-Catholics in the past, her parents Frederik van Schurman (1564–1623) and Eva von Harff (d. 1637) married in 1602 in the underground church of the Reformed Congregation, where Anna Maria and her three brothers were later baptized in secret. When the religious climate for Protestants further deteriorated, the Schurman family moved to the Netherlands between 1613 and 1615, where they settled in the city of Utrecht (Baar 2004: 111). This was the town where Anna Maria lived for most of her life and where she became famous in the Netherlands and in Europe. To the surprise of many admirers, she spent her last years among the Labadists, a radical Protestant community under the leadership of Jean de Labadie (1610–1674). As a member of this community, Anna Maria died at the age of 70 in 1678 in the Frisian village of Wieuwerd. She had remained single, having made a promise of celibacy to her father on his deathbed.

[4] We owe the biographical details to Beek (2010a) and Kloek (2013: 345–8). We refer in particular to Beek (2010a) for extensive information on Anna Maria van Schurman's life and work.

Anna Maria van Schurman was of noble birth and her parents gave her, just like their sons, an excellent education which was not limited to French and the female artistic activities usual for her rank, such as painting, paper cutting, embroidery, and engraving. Having noticed her talents, her father taught her Latin and Greek, theology, history, geography, and mathematics. She achieved a high level of competence in the classical languages, which in principle allowed her access to the world of learning from which women were usually excluded; but how could she in practice enter scholarly and literary circles? Male mentors were indispensable: her father, her brother Johan Godschalk (1605–1664), and the poet and civil servant Jacob Cats (1577–1660), with whom she exchanged letters from 1622 until his death. It has been argued that Anna Maria even owed her fame and the firm position she acquired in Dutch cultural circles largely to her contact with Cats, who praised her learning in his own widely popular *oeuvre*. This praise would have resulted in correspondences with the poets Jacobus Revius (1586–1658), Daniël Heinsius (1580–1655), Caspar Barlaeus (1584–1648), and Constantijn Huygens (1596–1686). Via her brother, who studied medicine, she easily came into contact with professors at the University of Franeker, but she also initiated correspondence on various topics with the Leiden Professor of Theology, André Rivet (1572–1651; Beek 2010a: 27). However, her most influential mentor over a long period was Gijsbertus Voetius (1589–1676), minister and Professor of Theology and Oriental Languages at the newly founded University of Utrecht. Not only did he give her private lectures in theology and Greek, and permit her to use his extensive library, but, most importantly, he also allowed her to follow his lectures at the university behind a screen from where she was invisible to male students.

8.2.3 The polyglot Anna Maria van Schurman

Anna Maria was proficient in French, German, and English, and she had a profound knowledge of Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, Syrian, and Ethiopian. Dutch and German were her home languages for daily matters; for the world of learning she wrote in Latin, Greek, or Hebrew. She was taught Latin and Greek by her father, but how did she acquire Hebrew and the other oriental languages?

Leiden was a centre for oriental languages, as we discussed in section 8.2.1, and grammars of these languages had been published by Leiden scholars and by others abroad. These grammars and many other standard works such as dictionaries and philological commentaries in the field of Semitic languages were to be found in Voetius' library. Voetius, who himself was first and foremost a theologian and did not publish on Semitic languages, must have successfully introduced Anna Maria to the world of oriental languages, but he was not familiar with Ethiopian.

Yet this language had already drawn Anna Maria's attention in 1637, although hardly any books and no grammars of it were available at that time (Beek 2010a: 83–7). In some way or another, she became an *autodidact* in Ethiopian (and Samaritan; Beek 2010b) and must have succeeded in mastering the Ethiopian language through biblical texts and commentaries to such a degree that she was able to write an Ethiopian grammar in Latin.[5] This grammar was finished in 1648, when the young student Job Ludolf visited her, as did many others who had heard of her fame and learning. Unfortunately, the grammar and her other work on Ethiopian seem to have been lost (Beek 2010b).[6] All that is left are quotes in her correspondence and multilingual contributions to various *alba amicorum*. Consequently, we cannot assess her possible contribution to the study of oriental languages, and we do not know how much of her work was integrated into Ludolf's Ethiopian grammar and description of Ethiopia, published in 1661, a publication which earned him the title of father of Ethiopian studies.

Reflecting on her linguistic activities, we may wonder what drove Anna Maria to pursue such profound linguistic studies. We have to stress that she was also very much involved in theology and philosophy and discussed theological and moral issues with both male scholars and learned women of her national and international correspondence networks (Beek 2010a: 108–99; Baar 2004). Many of them, including Queen Catharine of Sweden, also came to visit her in Utrecht in order to meet this exceptionally learned woman themselves.[7] Van Beek (2010a: 7–8) rightly stresses that, with her correspondence, she became a member of the international circle of scholars, who communicated mostly in Latin, sometimes in Greek or Hebrew, and crossed boundaries of mother tongue, religion, social status, and nationality. Her international fame had spread widely after the publication of her Latin eulogy on the University of Utrecht (1636) and her *Dissertatio de ingenii muliebris ad doctrinam & meliores litteras aptitudine* (*A Treatise on the Aptitude of the Female Spirit for Science and Arts*; 1638). In the eulogy she addressed the exclusion of women from academic study. Shortly after publication, she herself was permitted by the University of Utrecht to follow lectures and thus became the first female university student in the Netherlands (Beek 2010a: 55–8). The *Dissertatio*, the follow-up to a discussion with the Leiden Professor André Rivet, is characterized as a treatise on women's right to academic study (Beek 2010a). Subsequently, her correspondence with Rivet was published in French under the title of *Question celebre. S'il est necessaire, ou non, que les filles soient sçavantes*

[5] Ethiopian was included in the multilingual Bibles from 1645 onward (Beek 2010a: 83).

[6] Her Ethiopian handwritten manuscripts fell into the hands of Johannes Mayer from Greifswald, according to the printed catalogue of his library, but these papers have not yet been traced (Beek 2010b).

[7] Pieta van Beek (2010a: 194) notes that the royal visits followed a set pattern: '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'.

(*Famous Question: Whether it is Necessary or Not for Girls to Be Learned*; 1646), and her *Dissertatio* was published in an English translation in 1659, entitled *The Learned Maid; Or, Whether a Maid May Be a Scholar*. Another publication that reached an international audience was her *Opuscula Hebraea Graeca Latina et Gallica* (*Minor Work in Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and French*; 1648), which comprised her multilingual correspondence and other work.

Returning to the issue of Anna Maria's motivation for her extensive linguistic studies, we note that Schurman specialists identify the desire for a better understanding of the Bible as the driving force behind her linguistic studies (Baar 2004: 111; Beek 2010a: 64, 87). That is in line with Anna Maria's own arguments on the aim of female scholarship in her *Dissertatio*. Further confirmation of this hypothesis is said to be found in the sequence of the languages on the pages of Van Schurman's multilingual *album amicorum*. These always start with Hebrew as the most honourable language, followed by related languages such as Aramaic, Syrian, Samaritan, Arabic, and Ethiopian, and, finally, where they are present, Greek and Latin (Beek 2010a: 87). However, we question whether learning languages was purely a holy duty. If that had been the case, would she have regretted the time spent in learning so many languages, as reported in her autobiography *Eukleria*, by the end of her life?[8] We would rather argue that she was continually fascinated by the secrets of foreign languages and that it was this fascination combined with her amazing talents that drove her to her language studies. Her interest was also not limited to Bible-related languages, as appears from the Persian, Japanese, and Siamese characters she received from the theologian Andreas Colvius (*c.*1594–1671; Beek 2010a: 82, 85–6). Could she have felt the need to justify her studies by stressing a religious aim?

As discussed above, Anna Maria did not leave any scholarly linguistic contribution, apart from the lost Ethiopian grammar. Nor did she contribute in any way to the standardization of Dutch. When she encouraged the Utrecht Professor of Oriental Languages Johannes Leusden (1624–1699) to publish a Dutch handbook for learning Hebrew (Zwiep 1993: 45–50; Beek 2010a: 219), her request should not be interpreted as a plea for the vernacular's elaboration of function, that is, for the extended use of the Dutch language (instead of Latin) in the field of scholarship. Her only concern was to make a Hebrew manual available for women who did not know Latin. Leusden's *Korte Hebreuse Grammatica of Taal-konst* (*Concise Hebrew Grammar*), published in 1668, together with a Hebrew–Latin–Dutch dictionary, provided these women with access to Hebrew. Leusden even explicitly referred to the 'vele Jongedochters' ('numerous young ladies') all over the

[8] *Eukleria seu Melioris Partis Electio* was published in 1673 (Altonae ad Albim: Cornelis van der Meulen). The Dutch translation *Eucleria of Uitkiezing van het Beste Deel* (Amsterdam: Jacob van Velde) followed in 1684. The title *Eukleria or Choosing the Best Part* refers to Luke 10:38–42 and to her joining the Labadists (Beek 2010a: 233).

country's provinces, who were wasting their talents studying French, Spanish, and English 'uyt curieusheyt' (Zwiep 1993: 45–50; 'just for the fun of it'). It is in the eighteenth century that we find a woman who was interested in cultivating the Dutch language and contributed to its codification by compiling a Dutch dictionary. This woman was Johanna Corleva.

8.3 Johanna Corleva

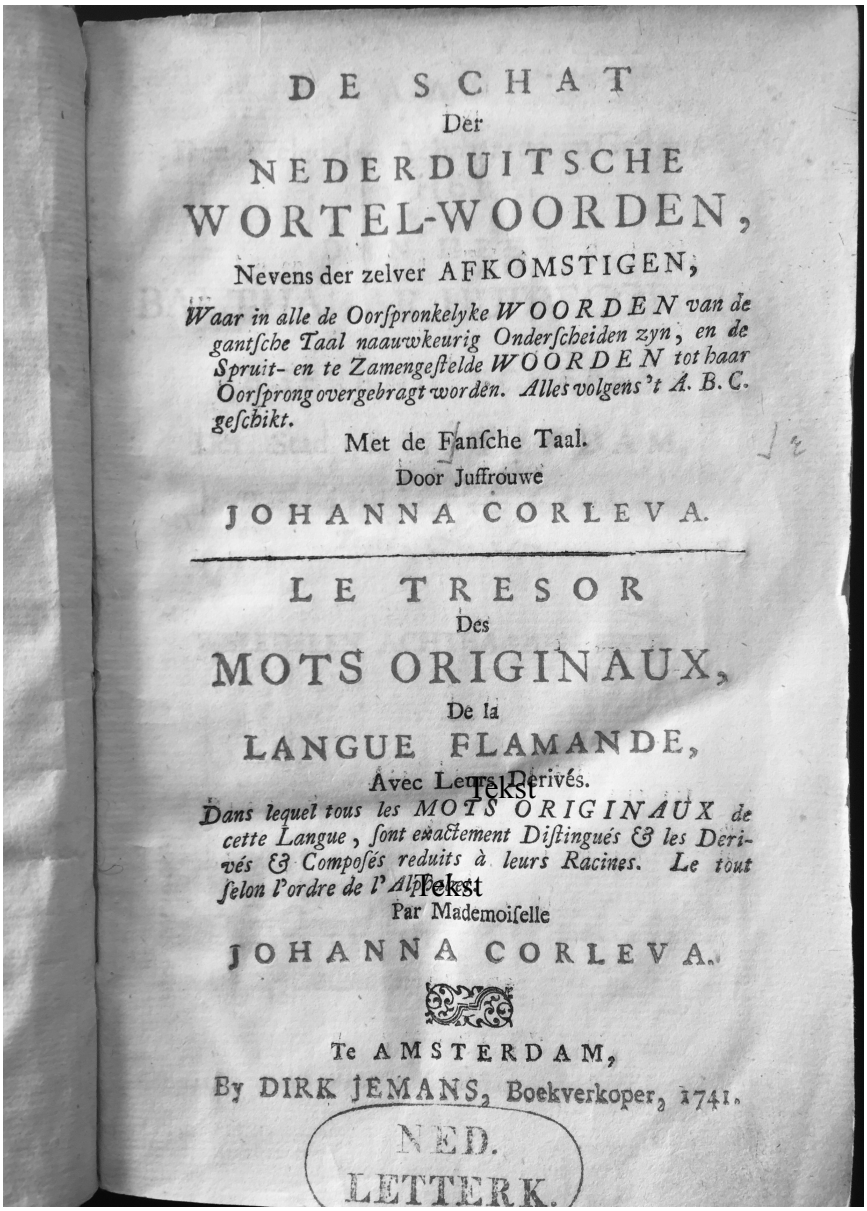
8.3.1 A short biography

There is so little information concerning the life of 'Juffrouwe' or 'Mademoiselle' Johanna Corleva that almost all the evidence we have can be summarized in just a few lines.[9] Johanna Corleva was baptized on 8 October 1698 in the Reformed Zuider Kerk (South Church) in Amsterdam. Dead at the age of 54, on 16 November 1752 she was buried in the Amsterdam Nieuwe Kerk ('New Church') as 'bejaarde dogter', which means that she had remained single all of her life. An 18-year-old orphan from Cologne, Johanna's mother, Anna Catrijna Tessemaker, married Lourens Corleva in the same Nieuwe Kerk on 12 January 1698. Lourens, who was born in the city of Delft in 1670, earned his living as an embroiderer. Johanna's profession is not noted in any official record of which we are aware. At any rate, she must have been well educated, for she was acquainted with French, Latin, and Greek, as will become clear. It is not known whether she was a member of a local or a national literary society.

The year 1740 saw the publication of Corleva's Dutch translation of the *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* written by Antoine Arnauld (1612–1694) and Claude Lancelot (*c.*1615–1695) and published in 1660. This very first translation of the well-known *Port-Royal Grammar* appeared under the title of *Algemeene en geredeneerde spraakkonst* and was indirectly based on the second edition (1664) of this grammar. As the title page informs us, the book was 'printed for the translator', and it could be obtained in Amsterdam at Jacobus Loveringh's. This means that Corleva herself paid for the printing of this work.

The following year she published *De schat der Nederduitsche wortel-woorden* (*The Treasure of Dutch Root Words*; Figure 8.2), which also bears the French title of *Le Trésor des mots originaux, de la langue Flamande*. This dictionary was dedicated to Balthasar Huydecoper (1695–1778), an alderman of the city of Amsterdam and an influential man of letters (see section 8.1.3). It is interesting to see that in the *Trésor* the bookseller informed his customers at the end of the book that he had in print several of Corleva's other books 'pertaining to the

[9] Section 8.3 is mainly based on Noordegraaf (1994).


DE SCHAT
Der
NEDERDUITSCHE
WORTEL-WOORDEN,
Nevens der zelver AFKOMSTIGEN,
Waar in alle de Oorſpronkelyke WOORDEN van de gantſche Taal naauwkeurig Onderſcheiden zyn, en de Spruit- en te Zamengeſtelde WOORDEN tot haar Oorſprong overgebragt worden. Alles volgens 't A. B. C. geſchikt.
Met de Fanſche Taal.
Door Juffrouwe
JOHANNA CORLEVA.

LE TRESOR
Des
MOTS ORIGINAUX,
De la
LANGUE FLAMANDE,
Avec Leurs Dérivés.
Dans lequel tous les MOTS ORIGINAUX de cette Langue, ſont exactement Diſtingués & les Derivés & Compoſés reduits à leurs Racines. Le tout ſelon l'ordre de l'Alphabet.
Par Mademoiſelle
JOHANNA CORLEVA.

Te AMSTERDAM,
By DIRK JEMANS, Boekverkoper, 1741.

NED.
LETTERK.

Figure 8.2 Johanna Corleva, *De schat der Nederduitsche wortel-woorde* (~~1695~~), title page, which also bears the French title of *Le Trésor des mots originaux, de la langue Flamande*.

Photograph by the authors. Reproduced courtesy of the University Library Leiden.

wortel-woorden (1741)

perfection of the Languages'. Among them were both a *Fransche letter-konst* (*French Grammar*) and a *Nieuwe Nederduitsche spraakkonst* (*New Dutch Grammar*), both based on the principles of the general grammar already published, a Dutch rhyming dictionary, and the complete philosophical works of the French philosopher Pierre Bayle (1647–1706; Bayle had lived in Rotterdam from 1681 onward), which by then had already been translated in full by Johanna Corleva from French and Latin into Dutch.

As far as we know, the books announced by the bookseller never appeared in print and to date none of Corleva's manuscripts have been traced. Only two of her letters written to Huydecoper in 1740 have been preserved (Noordegraaf 1994: 188–90). The letters written by 'Madame Johanna Corleva' to the Swedish scholar and visionary Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772), who was a frequent resident of Amsterdam, 'have entirely disappeared' (Tafel 1890: 881; see also Hobart 1831: 127).

8.3.2 Towards 'the perfection of the mother tongue'

In the late 1730s Johanna Corleva must have been quite active, translating and composing a number of books in the field of grammar, lexicography, and philosophy. As it appears, her ultimate motive was to improve contemporary language usage by opening up new paths, that is, by facilitating the learning of 'our fair and glorious mother tongue', as her venerated Huydecoper had once put it in the introduction to one of his plays, *Achilles* (1719: 28). From the dedication to Huydecoper in *De schat der Nederduitsche wortel-woorden* and the introduction to this dictionary, it becomes clear that Corleva was concerned about the proper usage of the Dutch language. She felt confirmed in this by Huydecoper who had complained that it was a great shame that, at a time when it was easy to achieve the perfection of the mother tongue, publications still appeared written in unpolished Dutch. Those who are writing, Huydecoper said, are 'not even properly acquainted' with the language they use (Huydecoper 1719: 28). Pointing to 'the necessity of having a thorough knowledge of the language which one is to employ', Corleva quoted in full Huydecoper's lamentation of the deplorable language usage of his day, referring also to his appeal to a well-known passage in Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux's (1636–1711) *Art poétique* of 1674 (*Art of Poetry*, Chant I, ll. 155–62) (Corleva 1741: 6r–6v). Finally, after having characterized, with conventional modesty, her own work as just a rough outline, Corleva expressed the wish that 'vernuftiger verstanden, en letterkundiger geleerden, iets beters in 't licht brengen zullen, om onze moedertaal te volmaken' (1741: *7r; 'more ingenious minds and scholars of greater literacy should publish something better as to the perfection of our mother tongue').

It is safe to conclude that Corleva was engaged in the advancement of cultivated Dutch and as such, just like Huydecoper, she was part of a broader movement that

was to dominate the eighteenth-century study of the Dutch language to a large extent and that culminated in an official language codification many years later. The first decades of the nineteenth century saw not only the publication of an eleven-volume Dutch dictionary compiled by the Rotterdam minister Pieter Weiland (1754–1842) but also Weiland's Dutch grammar (1805) and the publication of Siegenbeek's treatise on orthography (1804; see section 8.1.3).

8.3.3 A general grammar and a particular dictionary

By translating the celebrated *Grammaire générale et raisonnée*, Corleva linked up with earlier linguistic activities, namely those in the 1670s of the Amsterdam society Nil Volentibus Arduum (see section 8.1.2). Its members are known to have been highly interested not only in science and literature but also in grammar. In 1671, one of Nil's most distinguished members, Lodewijk Meyer (1629–1681), a Cartesian philosopher and a friend of Benedictus de Spinoza (1632–1677), was commissioned to write a 'Grammatica Generalis'. Although Meyer was reading for his Nil audience from chapters of his *Algemeene spraakkonst* (*General Grammar*) as late as 1677, the book never appeared in print. In 1671, other members of the society started working on a *Nederduitsche grammatica* (*Dutch Grammar*), which was modelled on the 'Grammatica Generalis'. Only the first three chapters of its first part were published in 1728 (Noordegraaf 1996a: 96–7).

In 1672, Meyer's *Italiaansche spraakkonst* (*Italian Grammar*) appeared anonymously. This grammar was based on the same principles as the *Nederduitsche grammatica*. In his introduction Meyer made it clear that the Italian grammar should be considered a derivative of the general grammar. As to 'the special rules concerning the Italian tongue', Meyer consulted such works as Lancelot's *Nouvelle Méthode pour apprendre la langue Italienne* (*New Method for Learning the Italian Language*; 1660). The attempts by Nil to produce a general grammar as a basis for grammars of other languages such as Dutch and Italian may have been inspired by the Port-Royal grammarians who adopted a similar approach (see their Greek, Latin, Spanish, and Italian grammars). De Boer (2012: 86) indicates that the *Port-Royal Grammar* and Meyer's *Italiaansche spraakkonst* were indeed written in the same theoretical framework. However, he concluded that there was no question of direct influence of one on the other. Be this as it may, it is clearly stated that Corleva's *Fransche letter-konst* as well as her *Nieuwe Nederduitsche spraakkonst*, works which have remained unpublished, were based 'on the principles of the general grammar already published': 'Een Fransche Letter-Konst, uit de vermaardste Letterkundigen vergadert, met een geduurig toezigt en opmerking tot de Algemeene Spraakkonst, die reeds in 't Nederduitsch gedrukt is' ('A French grammar, compiled from the most famous literary authors, with continuous attention to the General Grammar, which has already been printed in Dutch') as the bookseller noted in the end matter to the

Trésor (Corleva 1741: [799]). Thus, we may conclude that Corleva was closer to Port-Royal than Meyer was.

The translation of the *Grammaire* into Dutch is not impeccable. Without going into details here, we would like to point out that Corleva seems to have stuck rather closely to the French original, which at times results in Gallicisms or unclear phrases in the Dutch version. An example is her literal translation of French *venir de*, which refers to the past, whereas the Dutch, *komen te*, refers to the future. In other passages, phrases have been omitted or words have been translated incorrectly. In short, the Dutch translation is marred by a number of (minor) inaccuracies.

Furthermore, it is interesting to see what grammatical terminology was used. From the sixteenth century onward, due to puristic concerns, it had become more and more common to use Dutch equivalents of Latin terminology, the terms as such not yet being fixed. In Corleva's translation we find only Dutch terms. It appears that she was rather eclectic in her choices and did not borrow her terminology from any single Dutch grammar. We should also note that she did not always remain consistent in her use of terminology. For example, the technical term *casus* ('case') is translated both as *naamval* and *geval* (Corleva 1740: 50–1).

Corleva's dictionary, *De schat der Nederduitsche wortel-woorden*, consists of two parts: following the dedication to Huydecoper and an introduction of equal length, pages 1–736 contain the dictionary proper, including the 'root words', derivations, and compounds; pages 737–97 present the approximately 3,300 primitives once more in a separate section entitled 'a collection of all Dutch root words from which all other words flow, both derivatives and compounds' (Corleva 1741: 737).

As is not uncommon in lexicographical practice, Corleva was much indebted to a work of one of her predecessors, namely the *Woordenboek der Nederduitsche en Fransche taalen, Uit het gebruik der beste schryveren, met hulpe van voornaame taalkundigen, opgesteld* [...] (*Dictionary of the Dutch and French Languages, Compiled from the Usage of the Best Authors with the Assistance of Important Linguists*, compiled by François Halma (1653–1722). A first edition of this Dutch–French dictionary appeared in 1710. Although Corleva never refers to Halma, it has been demonstrated convincingly that as far as the actual lexicon is concerned the *Schat* is completely based on Halma's work. Corleva literally takes head words, examples, and translations of passages from Halma (see Brakel 2010 for details).

The *sui generis* character of Corleva's dictionary has to do with a different aspect of this work. Although the words were arranged in the usual alphabetical order, the *Schat* distinguishes itself from other dictionaries insofar as it only briefly mentions the various meanings of each Dutch word in French, leaving out the 'abundant and almost superfluous number' of phrases and expressions other contemporary dictionaries typically gave (Corleva 1741: *3r). Furthermore, all

primitives or root words were marked by capitals, and brought together in a separate section at the end of the book. This was something novel, Corleva felt: it was 'van een gansch Nieuwe Wyze' ('a completely new manner/method'). Struck by the regularity and productivity of word formation in Dutch, she believed that it was feasible to know the Dutch language in full by learning only a limited number of words, without being obliged to go 'outside the Dutch language', that is, without using loanwords. Claiming that this approach was new for a Dutch dictionary, Corleva acknowledged that in this matter she had followed the method applied by the Dutch scholar Cornelius Schrevelius (1608–1664) in his *Lexicon manuale Graeco-Latinum et Latino-Graecum* (*Concise Greek–Latin and Latin–Greek Dictionary*; 1654). In the same manner, she said, the French Academy had managed to reduce many thousands of words to a very small number—see the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française* of 1694.

Corleva's introduction includes several basic morphological insights but definitely not something constituting an explicit morphological theory. For reasons of space we will not go into further details. It must suffice to say that Corleva's originality lies in the fact that she applied the method found in Schrevelius's Greek dictionary to lexicographical material provided by Halma.

8.3.4 The lightness of this method

In the 'Voorreden' ('Introduction') the author claimed that her dictionary was most useful both for Dutch speakers seeking to learn French and for French speakers seeking to learn Dutch. Young people and those who were acquainted with the Dutch language would find it easy to use.

Seasoned language teachers will recognize Corleva's situation. As always, the method of learning a new language was a pedagogical problem, and an appropriate method could help shorten the job of learning, that is, to relieve the burden of memory. Hence Corleva's outspoken claim of 'the lightness' of her method. What she must have had in mind was the idea that anyone who had learnt the rules laid down in the general grammar could master the grammar of a particular language efficiently, and that anyone who had learned the root words of a language could quickly form all other words of that same language. The ratio thus shortened the job of learning the rules of grammar and the vocabulary of a language. It is this underlying idea that is the link between Corleva's grammatical and lexicographical work.

One could argue, then, that in Corleva's work the morphological principle of analogy which reigned in the lexicon and which generated an endless number of new words had been given a much broader scope and had been extended to the domain of grammar. Thus, as a generative principle active in several domains, it

embraced both areas. If this assumption is correct, that is, if the underlying principle of analogy in Corleva applied to much more than just morphology, as it did in the teachings of the Dutch *Schola Hemsterhusiana*, it could be argued that her conception of it comes close to the Cartesian doctrine of innate ideas.[10] However, as she did not produce any theoretical discussions, we must leave it at these tentative remarks on what seems to be an interesting theoretical perspective.

8.3.5 At the vanishing point

Corleva's lexicographical work did not apparently earn her a great reputation, for more than a hundred years ago the Dutch polyhistor Taco de Beer (1892: 418) noted that her dictionary, which presented a 'modest overview of eighteenth-century Dutch' ('een bescheiden overzicht van de taal der 18e eeuw'), was 'not so generally known' ('niet zoo algemeen bekend'). It is striking that De Beer did not notice the extent to which Corleva was indebted to Halma. Why her 1741 dictionary had so little success is something we can only surmise. Obviously, it suffered in the competition with other already more or less established dictionaries such as Halma's; his work saw reprint after reprint in the eighteenth century. This lack of success could explain why Corleva's other works that were ready for the press in 1741 ultimately did not appear in print. At any rate, her merits in the field of lexicography must mainly be seen from a didactic perspective.

Corleva's association with Port-Royal's activities in the field of grammar is a modest chapter in the history of so-called 'Cartesian linguistics'. Evidently, the translation of the *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* had a rather limited circulation, since traces of its reception in eighteenth-century Dutch linguistics are hard to find. Copies of the *Algemeene Spraakkonst* are listed in several auction catalogues, but there is just one physical copy extant today. We could add that, concerning their philosophy of language, the leading eighteenth-century Dutch schools of linguistics, namely the *Schola Hemsterhusiana* and the *Schola Schultensiana*, showed a penchant for a more empirical approach, which resulted in what has been called 'inductive rationalism' (Noordegraaf 1996b). Thus, the contemporary 'French connection' of Dutch linguistics has at a metatheoretical level much more to do with the 'linguistique condillacienne' (Joly 1970: 28; 'the linguistics of Condillac') than with Port-Royal. Consequently, the *Algemeene spraakkonst* and its author disappeared for a long time from the collective memory.

[10] See Noordegraaf (1996b) for the *Schola Hemsterhusiana*, an eighteenth-century group of Dutch classical scholars, consisting of Tiberius Hemsterhuis (1685–1766) and some of his pupils who followed his approach in the study of Greek.

8.4 Female activities in education

8.4.1 Women as teachers?

Johanna Corleva was interested in a light method of learning languages. So far, we have only touched on the field of formal education, although schools and school manuals must have played a role in various aspects of the linguistic tradition, in particular in the transmission of Dutch language norms and the learning of foreign languages. In this section we will give a brief overview of the school system and its changes from the sixteenth until the first decades of the twentieth century. We will discuss the training of teachers and examine whether women contributed to the series of reading, writing, and foreign-language manuals that have been published for centuries.

Apart from private tuition, education in the early and late modern period took place at three types of schools: the elementary Dutch schools, the secondary French schools, and the Latin schools. Dutch schools offered tuition in elementary skills such as reading, writing, arithmetic, and religion. A broader range of topics such as history, geography, French, bookkeeping, and calligraphy were available at the French schools, whereas the Latin schools prepared their pupils for university by teaching classical languages according to the *trivium* and *quadrivium* system (Boekholt and de Booy 1987; Kloek and Mijnhardt 2004: 244–50). Who were the teachers at these different types of schools? A few teachers at Latin schools, all male, have already been mentioned in the previous sections. In the sixteenth century, quite a few women taught in the metropolis of Antwerp, as we know from the archives of the local teachers' guild (Haar 2015). A few women are known to have assisted their fathers or brothers in teaching, for instance the poet Anna Bijns (1493–1575), who initially assisted her brother, but at the age of 43 started her own school, as demonstrated by her official registration in the teachers' guild (Kloek 2013: 113). Maria Strick-Becq (1577–post-1625), educated by her father Casper Becq, taught at his Dutch and French school in the town of Delft and directed this school after his death in 1606; later she directed a French school in Rotterdam. Maria Strick was a skilled calligrapher, trained by the famous writing masters Felix van Sambix (*c.*1533–1642) and Jan van den Velde (1568–1623). She produced four manuals with writing models not only in Dutch but also in French, German, English, Italian, and Spanish (Kloek 2013: 270–2). Magdalena Valery (*c.*1573–*c.*1625), daughter of a notary, initiated a French school for girls in the town of Leiden in 1599. She also published *La Montaigne des pucelles / Den maeghden-bergh* (*The Mountain of Young Girls*; 1599), a conversation manual with French and Dutch dialogues (Haar 2015).

We may conclude that, apart from teaching, women were allowed to direct a school and that some of them actually did so. Apart from Maria Strick's manuals and Magdalena Valery's conversation manual, schoolbooks—whether for teachers

or for pupils—published up to 1800 were written by male authors, mainly teachers or directors of boarding schools.

At the start of the nineteenth century, education became a national responsibility (see section 8.1.3). Various educational reform acts were passed, which involved establishing a national school system and a national inspection scheme. A system of four teacher ranks was also introduced, for which ranks the teachers had to apply and demonstrate their skills (Essen 2006: 34–7). However, proper teacher-training colleges with public funding did not exist before 1815, the year in which such an institution under the direction of P. J. Prinsen (1777–1854) was established in the town of Haarlem. Prinsen had been a head teacher of the privately funded Nutskweekschool in the city of Groningen, a training college founded in 1797 by the Maatschappij tot Nut van 't Algemeen (The Society for the Promotion of the Public Good). Apart from these two educational centres, training was provided by the so-called teachers societies, which arranged meetings of trainees and experienced teachers. Generally, most of the teaching was still learnt in practice; many trainee teachers combined working as a teaching assistant with studying for the rank examinations (Essen 2006: 39). Teaching learnt in practice was also what women did who worked in nursery schools, knitting schools, and French schools for girls, which offered a range of subjects with the emphasis on needlework and French. Women also had to apply for a teaching permit ('akte van toelating'), but, unlike male teachers, they only had to pass a simple examination held by a regional school inspector. An illustrative quotation on female teachers is to be found in one of the school-inspection reports written by inspector Mulder, March 1813, in the village of Veendam:

> Marchien Pijlmer, een vrouw van een onbesproken gedrag, kunnende vrij goed spellen en lezen, doch haar schrijven is maar wat gemeen, doch aangezien hare acte van toelating of van examen alleen houd om a.b schrijven te leeren zoo kan het er nog wel door, voor het overige, is de vrouw vlijtig in het onderwijs, zeer streng in de schooltucht. (personal communication, Dr Bob Schoemaker)
>
> (Marchien Pijlmer, a woman of impeccable behaviour, can spell and read relatively well, although her writing is somewhat moderate, but as her admission permit only comprises teaching elementary writing, it may pass; for the rest, the woman is diligent in teaching, very strict in school discipline.)

Discipline and good conduct were obviously decisive elements.

Although a proposal for a public training college for female teachers was rejected in 1816, a scholarship scheme for girls was initiated in 1827, which allowed them to prepare for the teaching permit examination (Essen 2006: 48–54).[11] In the

[11] The proposal was submitted by Anna Barbera van Meerten-Schilperoort (1778–1853) and her husband minister and school inspector Hendrik van Meerten. Public funding was needed for a building and scholarships.

nineteenth century, women as school owners, directors, or teachers could be found in all regions: Froukje Herbig (1781–1857) started a school for girls in the Frisian town of Harlingen *c.*1810, Alberdina Woldendorp (1799–1835), who wrote a guide for female elementary school and needlework teachers, set up a needlework school in the town of Zwolle in 1832, Anna Louisa Antoinetta Büchner (1808–1860) was a teacher in Enschede and head of a French (boarding) school for girls in Zwolle, and Jacoba van Heijningen (1821–1900) was a director of schools in Velp and Zaandam (Korevaart 2014; Essen 2014; Los 2014; Parren 2014). After 1860 the number of female teachers increased considerably as a consequence of rising demand following the Freedom of Education Act of 1857. More public and private training colleges were established, including colleges for females, and more women were appointed at schools (see Essen 2006: 103–32).

Women were visible at elementary schools and secondary French schools, and they received proper training and were appreciated, but did they participate in discussions on education or contribute to the flow of schoolbooks published in the nineteenth century?[12] The education discussions in journals and teachers' societies were dominated by school inspectors and head teachers or directors of large schools who were often also authors of the most popular schoolbooks. We are not familiar with female authors, apart from Anna Barbera van Meerten-Schilperoort (1778–1853), whose long list of children's books include booklets for letter writing and for learning French and English.[13] It is not even clear whether women became members of the teachers' societies which offered useful training and discussion. Apart from a single reference, we also do not know whether separate societies existed for female teachers.[14] Returning to the grammatical tradition, to date we have not found any female-authored books on the principles of Dutch orthography, on grammar, or on logical analysis, the new linguistic parsing approach of the second half of the nineteenth century.

8.4.2 'A long and winding road': Women in academia

In 1914 the well-respected and influential Groningen Professor of German, Barend Sijmons (1853–1935) published a paper on 'Women and the Study of

[12] In 1830, school inspector H. Wijnbeek, for instance, highly praised Anna Büchner, a teacher at a French school for girls in the town of Enschede. She was said to have both excellent teaching skills in German, Dutch, French, English, arithmetic, history, and geography, and a fine character; in particular her gentleness and virtuous conduct made her most suitable for the education of decent girls (Los 2014).

[13] See her *Woord-oefeningen op de letterkas, of De letterplanken voor jonge kinderen die nog niet schrijven, benevens aanleiding tot oefeningen voor meergevorderden in den briefstijl en het maken van schriftelijke opstellen* (1830), *Premier Vocabulaire hollandais et français pour la jeunesse, suivi d'une journée de trois enfants, ou Petites conversations à la portée de la première enfance* (1813; various reprints), and *First Dutch and English Vocabulary for Young Beginners: Followed by Dialogues of Three Children.*

[14] Alberdina Woldendorp (1799–1835) is said to have played a lively role at the meetings of a society of female teachers in the town of Groningen (Essen 2014).

Language and Literature'. In the wake of *Die Psychologie der Frauen* (*The Psychology of Women*; 1910), written by his friend and colleague Gerard Heymans (1857–1930), Professor of Philosophy and Psychology at Groningen, Sijmons concluded that women were definitely no less talented than men with respect to the study of language and literature. However, their talents were to be found at a different level. Due to their feminine 'emotionality' and lively 'imagination reality', women students were certainly not inferior to their male colleagues; they were just 'different'. Women did not show the qualities required for doing pure linguistics (*taalwetenschap*) and philological research proper. Thus, Sijmons argued, women were lacking not so much the talents as the truly scholarly interest, the passion for doing independent research without any thoughts of a concrete practical purpose, whereas the average male student showed a greater capacity to think strictly logically and analytically. Sijmons did not use, as Heymans did, questionnaires to collect data for his hypothesis about gender-based psychological differences; instead he based his ideas on his experience with about a hundred female students with whom he had been in contact during the previous thirty years. It has indeed been remarked that his lectures attracted 'a crowd of young ladies'.[15]

Undoubtedly, this high number of female students resulted from the fact that, due to various educational reforms in the nineteenth century, Dutch women had gained the opportunity to apply themselves to the study of modern foreign languages. In the new Higher Education Act of 1876, it was stipulated that 'French, English and High German' were to be taught at 'at least one university'. Before the introduction of this Act, the study of modern foreign languages at Dutch universities was regarded as just a practical skill. In the hope that its small university would draw a larger number of students, the Groningen city council promptly made funds available to appoint lecturers in modern foreign languages, one of them being the versatile Sijmons who was to take charge of both German and English in 1878. Thus, Groningen was the first Dutch university to have chairs for French, English, and German (for details, see Essen 1993).

It is important to note, however, that there was neither a Master's degree nor a doctorate that could be obtained in these fields. Thus, modern languages was not yet a fully-fledged academic subject, as Bosch (1994: 74) rightly argues. The courses in the Groningen department of modern languages were mainly followed by students who sought to qualify for a full-grade teacher's certificate; they had to sit for the national teacher examinations held once a year. This 'strange situation' (de Wilde 1998: 110) lasted until 1921; then the University Statute was introduced, and it became possible to take academic exams in French, English, and German.

There were many women among these Groningen students, and the study of modern languages was therefore considered to be a typically female subject

[15] On Barend Sijmons, see the biography by Inge de Wilde (2007).

(Bosch 1994: 74). Although they did follow courses in philology and historical linguistics, they were meant to become schoolteachers, not scholars. Be this as it may, the number of students in the Groningen arts faculty did increase, from ten in 1877 to ninety-three in 1921 (Essen 1993: 92). After 1900, lecturers were appointed for modern foreign languages, charged with teaching practical language skills.[16] Among them was Dr Marie Elise Loke (1870–1916), the first female lecturer in any Dutch university. She was appointed as a lecturer in Modern French at the University of Groningen in 1907 (de Wilde 1993; 1998: 134–60). Having attended a teacher-training college first, Marie Loke had taken various lower-grade teacher certificates. While working as a full-time teacher she took the intermediate certificate for French (*MO-A*) in 1897 and in 1900 the full-grade certificate (*MO-B*). In *c.*1903 she decided to prepare a doctoral dissertation, but as her *MO-B* certificate did not give access to a Dutch doctoral degree, Loke left for the University of Toulouse. Following an unpaid sabbatical leave in France and a supplementary examination in Modern French literature, she defended her doctoral thesis on *Les Versions néerlandaises de Renaud de Montauban* (*The Dutch Versions of the Renaud de Montauban*; 'mention très honorable', 'with highest honours') on 23 June 1906. Loke was the first Dutch woman to take a doctoral degree in a modern language and the first female promovenda in the Faculty of Arts in Toulouse.

It was a long and winding road that had brought Marie Loke to her position as a lector. The lector's salary was rather low, which caused three male scholars to refuse to accept the appointment (de Wilde 1993: 15; Bosch 1994: 461). Evidently, for the unmarried Loke, the salary was no problem. As the *ordinarius* of French, Professor A. G. van Hamel (1842–1907), saw it, the task of a lector was limited to leading oral exercises and translating written exercises in order to familiarize the students with the practical use of the foreign idiom. To that end, 'a modest salary will do' (Hamel 1887: 250). He stressed that the real scholarly part of the courses, such as historical-comparative grammar, was to be presented by the professors themselves. So, in line with his Groningen colleagues, he had no objection to the appointment of Loke as a lector of French (de Wilde 1993: 14). He was right, for as it turned out, 'notre Mlle Loke' did a fine job.

In Dutch academia, Loke was to be followed by other female language scholars. For many years, however, these scholars continued to be seen and treated as women. This meant that many of them remained unmarried, voluntarily or involuntarily, and had to work for a relatively modest salary. There was still a

[16] We leave aside the category of the 'privaatdocent', the external unsalaried lecturer, here. In 1916 Dr Maria Elisabeth de Meester (1886–1966), who had studied in Groningen and had taken her doctorate in Heidelberg in 1915, was admitted as a *privaatdocent* in Groningen to teach Modern English literature.

long way to go, in particular for the 'pioneer generation' (1890–1935). Many a striking example is to be found in the overview given by Baranelli et al. (1990).

8.5 Conclusions

Surveying the Dutch linguistic tradition, it is striking that hardly any women seem to have been involved in linguistic codification. In order to explain this lack of female contribution, we focused on the context in which linguistic publications came into being. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, women played no role or a very marginal one in the chambers of rhetoric, which were the cradle of codification activities such as the compilation of a Dutch grammar. Women remained also a small minority in the late-seventeenth- and eighteenth-century literary societies, which were a meeting place of culture and study of literature, linguistic norms, and grammatical issues. Furthermore, in the early and late modern period, women did not take part in the network of well-educated people, mainly clergymen and men of leisure, who encouraged one another to publish on the Dutch language. In these unfavourable circumstances, the linguistic activities of two *femmes savantes* stood out: Anna Maria van Schurman and Johanna Corleva.

It is in the field of education that women became increasingly visible during the period of our present chapter, from the sixteenth to the early twentieth century. Women taught at so-called Dutch and French schools, and some of them directed or even started their own schools. Women maintained and improved their position under the nineteenth-century national school system. In all regions of the Netherlands, they were to be found as school owners, directors, or teachers at elementary schools and secondary French schools. After 1860 the number of female teachers increased considerably, but they hardly participated in discussions on education in journals or teachers' societies. Furthermore, schoolbooks were usually written by male authors and this practice continued well into the early twentieth century. The few exceptions are the manuals by Maria Strick and Magdalena Valery, and the booklets for letter writing and for learning French and English by Anna Barbera van Meerten-Schilperoort. In academia, women such as the first female lecturer, appointed for Modern French, Dr Marie Elise Loke and others of the 'pioneer generation' (1890–1935), followed a long and winding road to obtain the equal opportunities of their male colleagues.

Apart from a few remarkable exceptions, Dutch women appear for a long time to have played just a modest role in the study and teaching of language, due to their position in contemporary Dutch society. It was only in the course of the nineteenth century, due to educational reforms, that women were given the opportunity to become independent language professionals, holding such

positions as schoolteacher or school director, for example, and from the first decade of the twentieth century onward, university lector. However, because of opinions based on the then prevailing 'psychology of women', recognition of the fact that women could be serious scholars who contributed to the field of linguistics and participated in linguistic discussions would take many more years.[17]

[17] For further reading we would like to refer to the extensive study by Mineke Bosch (1994). Baranalli and Poelstra (1990) present an overview of the vicissitudes of *doctorandae* at the University of Amsterdam from 1890 to 1990. An interesting case study is *Scholarship as a Vocation*, dealing with the classical scholar Christine Mohrmann (1903–1998) and written by Marjet Derks and Saskia Verheesen-Stegeman (1998).