Amanda C. Pipkin, ***Dissenting Daughters: Reformed Women in the Dutch Republic (1572-1725)*** (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022, 288 pp., ISBN 9780192857279).

Amanda Pipkin's *Dissenting Daughters: Reformed Women in the Dutch Republic (1572-1725)* is an essential contribution to the scholarship on the histories of both religion and women. It will be of interest to readers focused on topics of gender, literature, theology and politics, as Pipkin demonstrates that lay women writers played an essential role in religious reform that was deeply intertwined with patriotism. In addition, this book is of interest to art historians, since Pipkin examines images depicting domestic prayer and contextualizes the familiar sources of iconography within art history, including the writings of Jacob Cats and emblem books, within a broader religious tradition.

Because of the significance granted to the home as a site of both spiritual and patriotic development, the implications for wider analysis are substantial. Ultimately, alongside older volumes, such as Danielle van den Heuvel's *Women and Entrepreneurship: Female Traders in the Northern Netherlands, c. 1580-1815* (2007) about the economic role of women, and recent edited volumes including *Women and Gender in the Early Modern Low Countries, 1500-1750* (Sarah Joan Moran and Amanda Pipkin, 2019) or *Women Artists and Patrons in the Netherlands, 1500-1700* (Elizabeth Sutton, 2019), Pipkin's work is a valuable addition to any bookshelf of a reader interested in the history of women and gender. It is not unusual for 'women's history' or 'feminist scholarship' to be perceived as a niche subfield disconnected from 'real history'. Pipkin implicitly argues something more complex, and perhaps more accurate: women's history, and the history of the home and the education (spiritual or otherwise) that happens there, is central to a society and the foundation on which social structures are built. To position this volume only within the subfield of women's history is to do it a disservice and to disregard the more abstract work done by feminist-informed scholarship. What emerges is not only a clearer understanding of women's spiritual labor but the entangled natures of religion, politics, gender, the home, and the developing Dutch Republic.

Dissenting Daughters examines the role of six female writers who were part of the reform movements of the *Nadere Reformatie* (Further Reformation) during the long seventeenth century. Some of these women – like Anna Maria van Schurman – are more familiar, while other women such as Cornelia Teellinck may be less commonly known. Pipkin traces a history of women writers throughout the century, tying their work to social networks, increased

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confessionalization, and political tension. Despite the patriarchal nature of Protestantism in the emergent Dutch Republic, there was still substantial space for women to both possess and express religious authority and to benefit from their labor. Supported by an appendix documenting the religious writings of women and a rich bibliography of primary sources, this well-researched volume provides many starting points for further investigation.

The introduction and first chapter establish the mechanisms by which women were granted access to religious authority, and the cultural systems that make such a role possible within a patriarchy. Because of the essential role of the domestic sphere and women's role in creating and maintaining that space, women's domestic work as nurturer and instructor within the home easily grew into highly-valued contributions to religious life. Women wrote and disseminated devotional texts and songs, educated children, funded church projects, provided spaces for spiritual and intellectual communities, and cultivated friendships through the exchange of religious poetry. The significance of the home as a space away from the visible public sphere is emphasized by the connections Pipkin draws between moments of increased activity by lay women writers and particularly fraught moments in the fight for independence from Catholic Spain. The early persecution of Protestants contributes to the value placed on secrecy and the significance of the domestic sphere as a site for spiritual education. Pipkin effectively argues for prayer at home being such an important part of both spiritual health and patriotic duty that it was preferable to have women engaged in leading spiritual education when men were unavailable than for it to happen at all. The lack of trained ministers in the wake of the Spanish Fury, the growing mercantile culture that took men away from home, and the number of men lost in battle or at sea make space for an essential role filled by women. In addition, the domestic nature of spiritual labor at the time means increased female literacy rates. In framing her argument for women as significant spiritual forces within this narrative – as well as within a narrative of private academies and salons – she convincingly rebalances a reader's understanding of gender roles and agency in the seventeenth-century Dutch Republic. This argument is based in careful reading of primary sources by both men and women and interpretations of visual material such as title pages.

Subsequent chapters are dedicated to individual women or pairs of women, creating a lineage of female spiritual authority while examining the details of each case. Each chapter also implicitly examines another type of social network. Sisters Cornelia and Susanna Teellinck form the focus of the second chapter, where the author frames their religious fervor as explicitly anti-Spanish. The role of female networks is not an anomaly, argues Pipkin, but rather an essential component of how women participated in devotional practices. The third chapter focuses on the understudied religious poetry and songs of Anna Maria van Schurman, arguing for the essential connection between her spiritual and more strictly 'intellectual' pursuits. Scholarship on

Van Schurman has expanded significantly in recent years, addressing not only her writing but also her artistic activities. However, that scholarship tends to separate her artistic and intellectual labor from her more explicitly spiritual labor, which is the focus here. Together with her brother, she cultivated a center of Calvinist study within their home in Utrecht, presenting another example of how women could actively contribute to religious life from within the safety of the home and appropriate family networks. Chapter 4 looks at Sara Nevius, wife of a minister and student of Van Schurman. Like many of the female painters who were professionally successful, it becomes clear that women in positions of spiritual authority emerged from within existing ministerial family, friendship, and marriage structures. Further, Nevius uses the specifically female 'Bride of Christ' mechanism to emphasize women's suitability for positions of spiritual authority. The fifth chapter addresses late-seventeenth century writers Cornelia Leydekker and Henrica van Hoolwerff, whose friendship and correspondence promoted female spirituality but also spread the aims of the *Nadere Reformatie* beyond the more limited geographic reach of the women from previous chapters.

Within the context of this study, the women writers emerge as socially, religiously and intellectually well-connected, yet it remains unclear to this reader how much of an impact they ultimately had during their lifetimes. Certainly the numbers of editions of their texts and their circulation support an argument for some wider recognition at the time, but impact remains hard to gauge. However, the study of individual ego-documents and small networks is both a critical methodology within feminist scholarship and an important addition to other modes of historical writing. While the author addresses a topic that initially seems to be somewhat niche, she effectively makes the case for central role of women's work in furthering religious reform. Examining how women were involved in perpetuating Calvinist spiritual instruction and reform illuminates how central both religion and women were to the patriotic and economic engines that drove seventeenth-century Dutch life. The implications of family networks and female agency that emerge from Pipkin's text will reverberate long after reading.

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