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From "the Radical Reformation" to "the Radical Enlightenment"?

The Specter and Complexities of Spiritualism in Early Modern England, Germany, and the Low Countries

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Abstract

This Special Issue arises from a symposium held at the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam in July 2019. That symposium was part of the "Amsterdamnified" research program funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (2015–2022). In this essay, the editors introduce the scope and themes of the Special Issue, provide a brief historical overview of some key aspects of sixteenth-century Protestant spiritualism, outline a series of historiographical questions that are important for this subject's past and ongoing study, and highlight how the essays that follow relate to these questions and to one another.

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Keywords

spiritualism – radicalism – anticlericalism – reforming movements – confessionalism – polemics – Enlightenment – heuristics

1 Two Unconventional Primary Sources, and the Objectives of the Special Issue

The polemical illustration in Figure 1 is striking. The text in Dutch that accompanies it adds ambiguity—and encourages questions. This Special Issue of *Church History and Religious Culture* is starting with this broadsheet, because we think the issues it raises are thought-provoking and important.

Sometime in the second half of the sixteenth century, likely in the 1560s when the conflict between Reformed Protestant rebels and their Catholic overlords was heating up into open warfare in the Netherlands, a printer produced a single-page image with text, roughly 14 cm by 21 cm. At first glance, this broadsheet (Figure 1) appears to be a conventional Catholic work showing how "the Church"—represented by a barefoot friar—was under attack from the devil shooting heresies at it. The dangers that are billowing from the canon of *Perfidia* include some general threats (schisms, sectaries, Manicheans, and Anabaptists), some ancient and medieval enemies of orthodoxy (Arius, Muhammad, John Wyclif, and Jan Hus), and some more recent "weapons of the devil" (Martin Luther, John Calvin, Martin Bucer, Johannes Brenz, Philip Melanchthon, and David Joris).[1]

But, when we look more closely and carefully at the text below the image in Figure 1, we are encouraged to consider the complexity and ambiguity of early modern portrayals of heterodox Christians. On the one hand, it is important to note that the text does not mention any one of the specific (or general) devilish dangers to the Church. But on the other hand, the text is a faithful translation of chapters 38–40 from a work ascribed by the Dutch editor to Augustine of Hippo (354–430), but which might have been composed by the African Bishop Fulgentius of Ruspe (467–533).[2] By including this ancient work

1 David Joris's name in the image is recorded as "Da: Geo:"—that is "David George," a form of his name used commonly in early modern English polemics.

2 Augustine of Hippo, "De fide ad Petrum sive de regula verae fidei," in *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Hipponensi episcopi opera omnia* [Patrologiae cursus completus 32–47], ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, 16 vols. (Paris, 1841–1849), 6: 753–780, there 776. *De fide ad Petrum* is available online

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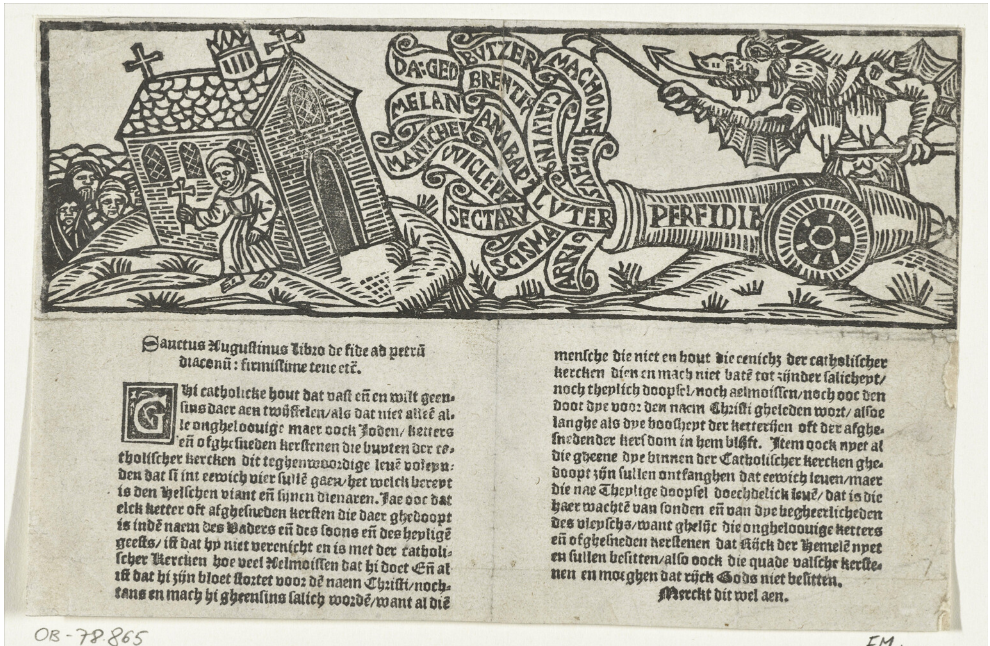

FIGURE 1 Anonymous, *The Devil Shoots Unbelief at the Church*, ca. 1560
PRINT, RIJKSMUSEUM, AMSTERDAM, RP-P-OB-78.865

in a slightly modified Dutch translation, the editor has turned the broadsheet from a Catholic polemic against all heresies into a much more ambiguous one that suggests a critique of external religiosity, as well as claims of confessional exclusivity:

> You Catholics hold it firmly and will in no way doubt that not only all unbelievers, but also Jews, heretics and schismatic Christians who complete this present life outside of the Catholic Church will go into eternal fire which is prepared for the hellish enemy and his servants. Yes, also that each heretic or schismatic Christian who is baptized in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit but who has not yet been united

in the *Documenta Catholica Omnia*, https://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/04z/z_0354-0430__Augustinus__De_Fide_Ad_Petrum_Sive_De_Regula_Verae_Fidei_%5bIncertus%5d__MLT.pdf.html. For more on this ancient text and its attribution, see Sarah Hamilton, "The Manuscripts of the *Contra Patarenos*," in Hugo Eterianus, *Contra Patarenos*, trans. and ed. Janet Hamilton (Leiden, 2004), 103–108, particularly 108.

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> with the Catholic Church, however many alms he does, or even if he sheds his blood for the name of Christ, nevertheless he may in no way be saved, for all people who do not maintain the unity of the Catholic Church will not benefit from its salvation, not even through holy baptism, nor alms, nor also the death that they have suffered for the name of Christ, as long as the evil of heresy or schism of Christendom remains in them. Item, also not all who have been baptized inside the Catholic Church will receive the eternal life, but only those who after holy baptism live a virtuous life, that is, those who guard against sin and from the lusts of the flesh, for just as the unbelieving heretics and schismatic Christians will not possess the Kingdom of Heaven, so will the evil, false Christians not possess the kingdom of God. Mark this well.[3]

It is the opening and closing phrases—"You Catholics" and "Mark this well"—that stand out for us. These are the only significant departures from the Latin original, and with it the translator makes clear that this message, especially its last sentences with the warnings aimed at "evil, false Christians" as distinct from heretics, is intended as a critique of all who assume that external rites and confessions are on their own sufficient for salvation, when in fact, all must continue to live lives of virtue and guard against the lusts of the flesh, regardless of confessional identity or proper reception of the sacraments. Because the image demonizes Luther, Melanchthon, and Calvin, as well as the Anabaptists and their ilk, and because the text also seems to provide an admonition to Catholics, we suspect that the editor may have been skeptical of the confessional allegiances that were hardening by the middle of the sixteenth century.

Our second primary source is a short pamphlet from London in the middle of the seventeenth century. When in the 1640s the English experienced their own uncontrollable wave of new religious groups with the start of the British Civil Wars (also known as the English Revolution), the Thames waterman and poet, John Taylor,[4] published a pamphlet diatribe against Catholics and sectarians entitled *Religions Enemies* (1641). It was one of many he would write. In it he complained that

3 "De duivel beschiet de katholieke kerk met ketterij," Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, RP-P-OB-78.865: https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-OB-78.865.

4 Bernard Capp, *The World of John Taylor the Water-Poet, 1578–1653* (Oxford, 1999). One of the contributors to this Special Volume, William Miller, is completing a book, *The Enthusiast: The Life and Times of a British Daemon*, which will give close consideration to Taylor's polemical imitations of religious radicals.

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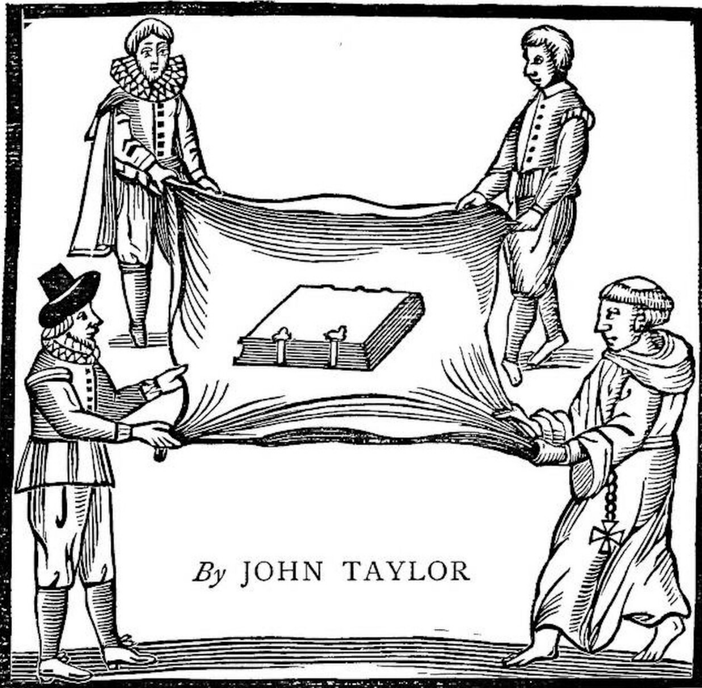
RELIGIONS
ENEMIES.

WITH A BRIEF AND INGENIOUS
Relation, as by *Anabaptists*, *Browniſts*, *Papists*,
Familists, *Atheiſts*, and *Fooliſts*, ſawcily
preſuming to toſſe Religion in
a Blanquet.

The Anabaptiſt. The Browniſt.



The Familiſt. The Papiſt.

Printed at *London* for *Thomas Bates* in the Old-baily. 1641.

FIGURE 2 A slightly modernized titlepage from John Taylor, *Religions Enemies* (London: Thomas Bates, 1641); from the 1870 edition of *Works of John Taylor* HTTPS://ARCHIVE.ORG/DETAILS/CU31924013126259/PAGE/N213/MODE/2UP, AND CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

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> The Arians, Anabaptists, Brownists, Donatists, Erticheans, Familists, Marcianists, Montanists, Nicholaitans, Pelagians, Papists, Puritans, Nonatians [sic], and all other sorts of Heresies and Sects do stiffly hold and maintain to their uttermost power that every one (in his own opinion) in each of their Sects are the true Church, and under the colours of a feigned piety they are all in violent opposition against each other, in a disunion and diversity among themselves, and all in a general malignant inveterate hatred against the Government, the Governors, and of the true Church indeed.[5]

At the conclusion of his short pamphlet, he also complained that

> (amongst mutable and contentious spirits) Religion is made a Hotch potch, and as it were tost in a Blanquet, and too many places of *England* too much *Amsterdamnified* by severall opinions; Religion is now become the common discourse and Table-talke in every Taverne and Ale-house, where a man shall hardly find five together in one minde, and yet every one presumes hee is in the right.[6]

The author's lament that ordinary folk were asserting their opinions on theology authoritatively, turning England into another Amsterdam, gets at the heart of the themes that this collection of essays addresses. Early modern commentators with "orthodox" allegiances ranging from artists, to popular pamphleteers, to theologians and territorial police were preoccupied deeply with religious differences that they felt were threats to the supposedly unitary and unified *corpus christianum*. Scholars today have to try to make sense of both the religious differences and conflicts of the so-called confessional era, and also of the bewilderment these caused for people in the past—and sometimes still cause today. This is especially the case with a form of religious expression that resists easy categorization in confessional terms—which is the subject of our collection of essays.

5 John Taylor, *Religions Enemies: With a Brief and Ingenious Relation, as by Anabaptists, Brownists, Papists, Familists, Atheists and Foolists, Sawcily Presuming to Tosse Religion in a Blanquet* (London: for Thomas Bates, 1641), 4. Note that in the 1870 edition of *Works of John Taylor* [Publications of the Spenser Society 7] (Manchester, 1870) there are two systems for numbering the pages; we are using the numbers at the top of the pages, which conform to the 1641 original.

6 Ibid., 6.

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We are introducing the Special Issue with these two unconventional sources for a few further reasons. We will list four reasons here, and then develop them in the text that follows in the rest of this Introduction:

- The first reason is that this collection has emerged from the work of a research project named "Amsterdamnified"—a name inspired by Taylor's use of it in his diatribe. Why "Amsterdamnified"? We are starting from a recognition that most current knowledge about "deviant," nonconforming, dissenting, heterodox, minority religious groups in the early modern era were shaped fundamentally and in the first instance by their opponents—writers like John Taylor, or artists like the creator of the woodcut in Figure 1. Many of these writers identified Amsterdam as the crucible in which such dissent germinated and spread. It is thus appropriate that most of the essays in this collection started as contributions to a symposium in Amsterdam in 2019 organized by the Amsterdamnified Research Group.[7]
- A second reason is that these two sources hint at important historiographical issues, when we think "against the grain." From the current perspective of professional historians of early modern Europe, one of the issues for debate is the issue of normativity—or "confessionality"—in the study of religious groups. Here is the central question for researchers: What role should confessionally defined collective identities—and the definitions of outsiders and enemies that often go with them—play in our current frameworks for making sense of the early modern past? In short, this second reason raises questions about using apologetic and polemical concepts from early modern churchmen to study church history and religious culture. One important way to consider these issues is to focus on the early modern men and women who themselves challenged early modern confessional norms, sometimes even as these norms were taking form in the sixteenth century.
- A third reason is a response to the second, that is, that the goals of our group's research project are to make fuller sense of the lives and ideas of the people that polemicists like John Taylor (and so many others in the early modern era) tried to stigmatize as heretical and deviant. Thanks to such polemics, many of these nonconformists remain stigmatized and misunderstood, and their contribution to early modern culture and idea-formation disparaged, even to this day.[8] Of course, this Special Issue in no way tries to further the

7 For more on this research project, visit its website at http://amsterdamnified.ca/. The Amsterdamnified Project is part of the research network EMoDiR (Early Modern Religious Dissents and Radicalism) (https://emodir.hypotheses.org/).

8 A recent example is the popular, polemically inspired portrayal of Thomas Müntzer and the Anabaptists of Münster as religious madmen in William J. Bernstein, *The Delusions of Crowds:*

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polemical goals of either of the two unconventional primary sources that we highlight above. Quite the contrary! While both of these sources attempt to warn against what David Loewenstein has called "the specter of heresy,"[9] our goal is to reveal more about the complex lives, experiences, and ideas of those early modern Christians we are calling "spiritualists"—and that their opponents often derided as sectarians, fanatics, mystics, freethinkers—or worse! We hope our collection makes it harder to repeat old, tired, and questionable preconceptions that are grounded in confessionally partisan, polemical literature.

– A fourth reason for introducing this Special Issue in this way is that we want to highlight the importance of a long-term view in studies of early modern religious cultures in general, and spiritualism in particular. The two idiosyncratic sources are, to the best of our knowledge, separated by approximately 80 years, and they fall into a middle-point in the chronological period examined by the essays in this collection. Those essays address topics that range from about the 1520s to the 1720s. While many of the unusual theological arguments made by the subjects of these essays may seem obscure to the modern reader, they were important, at the very least, as indicators of the limits of innovative thinking in sixteenth-century Christian Europe. Many of these ideas, moreover, were taken up and adapted or opposed in the long seventeenth-century. As such, they are becoming critical—and little appreciated—components of the new approaches to religion and philosophy in early modern studies.

There are, of course, important limits in our collection. We are aware that European diversity and complexity, especially regarding spiritualistically inflected religious expression and lived experience, predated the eras of sixteenth-century reformations, or the later trends of the Enlightenment. One of the reference points for our collection is another Special Issue from *Church History and Religious Culture*: the 2019 collection edited by Sabrina Corbellini and Sita Steckel on "The Religious Field during the Long Fifteenth Century."[10] While sev-

Why People Go Mad in Groups (New York, 2021), particularly ch. 1 ("Joachim's Children"), and ch. 2 ("Believers and Rogues").

9 David Loewenstein, *Treacherous Faith: The Specter of Heresy in Early Modern English Literature and Culture* (Oxford, 2013). For more on intolerant thinking in early modern Europe, see John Marshall, *John Locke, Toleration, and Early Enlightenment Culture: Religious Intolerance and Arguments for Religious Toleration in Early Modern and "Early Enlightenment" Europe* (Cambridge, 2006).

10 *Church History and Religious Culture* 99: 3–4 (2019). Also see Steven Ozment, *Age of Reform, 1250–1550*, 2nd ed., with a new forward by Carlos Eire and Ronald Rittgers (1980; New Haven, 2020).

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eral decades ago scholars of Anabaptism were exploring in considerable detail roots of that sixteenth-century movement in late medieval mysticism, historical attention since shifted to other concerns. It is now time to reconsider, as Nicholas Terpstra has recently suggested, our traditional chronological categorizations, and to see reform and dissent in their broader contexts.[11] We should carefully examine early modern forms of dissent in comparison with their medieval—and global—variants, but not in ways that parrot our sixteenth- and seventeenth-century polemicists who saw all of these as examples of the devil's work in the world. Instead, we can explore them as case studies of how people at various times sought to dissent from the orthodoxies approved by the authorities, and the possible ways in which these precedents helped shape dissent in the era of reformations. We are also aware that most of our contributors have focused geographically on subjects from England, the Low Countries, and German-speaking territories; and that most have also focused on Protestant individuals and groups. We hope that the essays in this collection will help spark further discussions that extend beyond the two centuries and the particular individuals and groups that our contributors examine.

Considered as a whole, these essays do not offer a single interpretative perspective. However, as a whole, we hope that readers will consider them 1) in light *less* of the questions of "church history" and *more* in light of "religious culture" over the longer term of European historical trends; and also 2) in light *less* of a definitive, authoritative connection between "the Radical Reformation" and "the Radical Enlightenment," and *more* in light of open, thoughtful, and critical discussions that consider this relationship—but do not take the proposed connection between these two historiographical constructions as a statement of historical fact. For this (or these) reason(s), we have added a question mark to our main title. While there were other currents, both religious and philosophical, our collection focuses on the approach to religious identity called spiritualism because it has been relatively neglected in the story of how thinking changed from the fifteenth and sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries.[12]

11 Nicholas Terpstra, *Religious Refugees in the Early Modern World: An Alternative History of the Reformation* (Cambridge, 2015). For an even broader, global view, see Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, *Religious Transformations in the Early Modern World: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston and New York, 2009).

12 In addition to the 2019 Special Issue of *Church History and Religious Culture* that we have already highlighted (see above, n. 10), we also wish to recommend at least two further collections of essays to readers, since they also address themes that relate closely to our Special Issue. See Bridget Heal and Anorthe Kremers, eds., *Radicalism and Dissent in the World*

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2 A Brief Introduction to Early Modern "Spiritualism"

Early modern spiritualism was an organizing theme of the Amsterdam symposium at which most of the authors gathered originally, and it is helpful to say more about this trend in European religious cultures. We use the terms "spiritualist" and "spiritualism" first and foremost to refer to an approach to religious identity that privileged the Holy Spirit's work within an individual over external confessions and rites, and which emphasized the Spirit within as the main (or even sole) authority in interpreting Scripture. Furthermore, we will not capitalize "spiritualism" or "spiritualist" in this Introduction, since to do so might imply a denominational identity that went against the fundamental beliefs of most practitioners.

Spiritualism is often studied under the framework of "the Radical Reformation," and we are choosing a chronological starting point for the Special Issue that is conventional in so-called Radical Reformation Studies: the tumultuous events of the "people's reformation" of the first half of the 1520s, which culminated with the violent repression of the first Anabaptists in the Swiss Cantons in early 1525 and reached a bloody apex in the crushing of the so-called German Peasants' War of 1525. In reaction to these developments, reformers such as the Silesian gentleman Caspar von Schwenckfeld (ca. 1490–1561) and the German humanist Sebastian Franck (1499–1543) abandoned efforts to reform the church in any outward fashion, seeing the obsession with doctrinal precision and proper ritual as barriers to true Christian behaviour.[13] They were also deeply influenced by the writings of the late medieval mystics of the Lower Rhineland and the more popular movement of piety known as the *Devotio Moderna* of the Low Countries. Some of the writings of these mystics, in particular the anonymously composed *Theologia Deutsch*, were printed and widely disseminated by sixteenth-century reformers, including Martin Luther (1483–1546).[14] The epitome of this mildly mystical tendency came in the writings of the famed humanist Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466–1536), whose

of Protestant Reform (Göttingen, 2017); and Joke Spaans and Jetze Touber, eds., *Enlightened Religion: From Confessional Churches to Polite Piety in the Dutch Republic* (Leiden, 2019).

13 For more on these subjects, see R. Emmet McLaughlin, "Spiritualism: Schwenckfeld and Franck and Their Early Modern Resonances," in *Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, ed. John D. Roth and James M. Stayer (Leiden and Boston, 2007), 119–161; and Geoffrey Dipple, "The Spiritualist Anabaptists," in ibid., 257–297. Also see the soon-to-be-published essays by Gary Waite, Geoffrey Dipple, James Stayer, and many others in Brian Brewer, ed., *T&T Clark Handbook of Anabaptism* (New York, forthcoming).

14 Bengt Hoffman, ed. and trans., *The Theologia Germanica of Martin Luther* (Ramsey, NJ, 1980).

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Philosophia Christi privileged interior piety and devotion over dogma and ritual; it was the inner reception of the Eucharist that was most important, rather than its outward observance.[15] Many of those in the Low Countries found this approach attractive, so that early reforming movements there depreciated the doctrine of the Real Presence that had been so important to Luther himself.[16] A focus on an interior piety profoundly infiltrated the urban and urbane culture of the Low Countries, helping its residents to promote forms of theological compromise uncommon in England, France, Spain, many of the German territories, and elsewhere—wherever clergymen made alliances with territorial rulers to demand their subjects conform to confessionally defined orthodoxies.[17]

An important feature of the spiritualist approach was that it was anathematized by Catholics as well as the new, emergent Lutheran and Reformed confessional blocs of the sixteenth-century reformations—and then also by later confessionalist Mennonite groups. Of course, the roots of Holy Spirit-oriented religious expression trace back to the very beginnings of Christianity in the ancient Mediterranean. Similarly, the foundations of the official anathematization went back to early orthodox Christian attacks on Valentinians, Pelagians, and other groups charged with heresy in the late Roman Empire in the era of Augustine of Hippo and Fulgentius of Ruspe.[18] As the image in Figure 1 suggests, opponents of the new Protestant groups could and sometimes did lump followers of Luther and Calvin in with Anabaptists and other "sectaries." One strategy that the emergent Lutheran and Reformed (and Mennonite) confessional blocs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries used to respond to this anti-Protestant propaganda was to go on the offensive against the weaker enemies in their own ranks. In the 1520s, when he too was charged with fanaticism by

15 Peter G. Bietenholz, *Encounters with a Radical Erasmus: Erasmus' Work as a Source of Radical Thought in Early Modern Europe* (Toronto, 2009).

16 Samme Zijlstra, *Om de ware gemeente en de oude gronden: Geschiedenis van de dopersen in de Nederlanden 1531–1675* (Hilversum, 2000), 59–71.

17 The scholarship on confessionalization is vast. For readers who are not familiar with it, we suggest Heinz Schilling, "Confessional Europe," in *Handbook of European History, 1400–1600: Late Middle Ages, Renaissance and Reformation*, ed. Thomas A. Brady Jr., Heiko A. Oberman, and James D. Tracy, 2 vols. (Leiden, 1995), 2:641–681; and further discussions and references in C. Scott Dixon, *Contesting the Reformation* (Malden, MA, 2012). For the Dutch scene, see Gary K. Waite, "The Chambers of Rhetoric as Agents of Communication and Change in the Sixteenth-Century Netherlands," *e-Humanista: Journal of Iberian Studies*, 39 (2018), 436–446, Monographic Issue 3 (http://www.ehumanista.ucsb.edu/volumes/40), on Drama and the Reformation, ed. Javier Espejo Surós.

18 See Brent D. Shaw, *Sacred Violence: African Christians and Sectarian Hatred in the Age of Augustine* (Cambridge, 2011).

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defenders of the Papacy,[19] Martin Luther charged opponents of the Papacy who refused to follow his lead with *Schwärmerei* (fanaticism). Furthermore, sometimes propagandists called their opponents "Nicodemites," after the secret disciple of Jesus (John 3:1–21).[20] John Calvin called them instead "Libertines," implying that these spiritualizers were in truth merely seeking complete liberty from religious and secular standards of behaviour.[21] Another label, that of "freethinker," was similarly thrown about with great abandon in the early modern era.[22] It was intended as a slur, for thinking freely, or contemplating new ideas unbound by orthodox constraints, was—from an orthodox point of view—something only those inspired by the devil would do. All of these theological attacks—not to mention secular edicts against "the Anabaptists," "the Sacramentarians," "the Socinians," and other supposedly seditious groups—were useful rhetorical and theological weapons that Lutheran and Reformed authorities could use in defending themselves against Catholic charges of fanaticism.

Such labels imply a coherence and organization to individuals who were for the most part privately dissenting from orthodox dogma and strictures so as to avoid censure or arrest. One strategy for dealing with polemical attacks in an increasingly confessionalized era was to try to avoid them. In the Low Countries, this avoidance might not have been a consequence of philosophical or theological principles alone but also what Willem Frijhoff has called *omgangsoecumene* (the ecumenism of everyday life).[23] Benjamin J. Kaplan has noted that by 1600 a very large minority of the Dutch populace did not belong for-

19 See M. Patrick Graham and David Bagchi, eds., *Luther as Heretic: Ten Catholic Responses to Martin Luther, 1518–1541* (Eugene, OR, 2019); and David Bagchi, *Luther's Earliest Opponents: Catholic Controversialists, 1518–1525* (Minneapolis, 1991).

20 The standard work on Nicodemism remains Carlo Ginzburg, *Il nicodemismo: Simulazione e dissimulazione religiosa nell'Europa del '500* (Turin, 1970). Also see Jean-Pierre Cavaillé, "Nicodemism and Deconfessionalisation in Early Modern Europe," *Les Dossiers du Grihl* (Groupe de Recherches Interdisciplinaires sur l'Histoire du Littéraire) (May 30, 2012) (http://journals.openedition.org/dossiersgrihl/5376).

21 See Perez Zagorin, *Ways of Lying: Dissimulation, Persecution, and Conformity in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 1990). In the Dutch context, see Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Calvinists and Libertines: Confession and Community in Utrecht, 1578–1620* (Oxford, 1995).

22 In 2013 Martin Mulsow organized a conference with the title "Exploring the Early Modern Underground: Freethinkers, Heretics, Spies" (https://socialhistoryportal.org/news/articles/307492). Also see Martin Mulsow, *Enlightenment Underground: Radical Germany, 1680–1720*, trans. H.C. Erik Midelfort (Charlottesville, 2015).

23 For more on the ecumenicity of everyday life, also see Willem Frijhoff and Marijke Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity* [Dutch Culture in a European Perspective 1] (Assen, 2004); and Christine Kooi, "Religious Tolerance," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Geert H. Janssen and Helmer J. Helmers (Cambridge, 2018), 208–224.

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mally to any of the region's denominations.[24] It was in the Dutch Republic in particular where mysticism, distaste over confessional conflict and persecution, a merchant's ethic to trade with any and all, and Erasmian humanism, collided with the spiritualism developed and propagated by people like David Joris (1501–1556), Obbe Philips (1500–1568), Hendrick Niclaes (1501–1580), and Dirck Volkertsz Coornhert (1522–1590) to encourage residents to see formal church membership as unnecessary. The orthodox worked hard to convince the populace that these individuals were leading underground seditious sects in league with the devil, but since one of the particular specialties of Joris's variant of spiritualism was the denial of the existence of the devil external to the human mind, such propaganda fell on partly fallow ground.[25] While Reformed orthodoxy was never absolute in the young Dutch Republic, Reformed churchmen did try to impose it again and again. Two noteworthy examples are the reaction against Remonstrantism in the 1610s that is associated with the Synod of Dort, and the reaction against Socinianism in the 1650s that is associated with the Grand Council.[26] Faced with occasional waves of repression, Dutch spiritualists and other dissenters who valued their safety had to watch what they said and wrote in public.

Despite the fulminations of Lutheran, Calvinist, Catholic, and Mennonite polemicists, a spiritualizing approach proved popular in the Low Countries and elsewhere, but it is an approach that cannot be quantified. Some spiritualists communicated with other like-minded individuals or risked publishing their ideas in print, often anonymously. Many did not. A few, such as Schwenckfeld, David Joris (aka, David George), and the Westphalian / Dutch merchant and prophet Hendrick Niclaes, had organized followings, although Joris's deteriorated into a loose network of correspondents when he departed the Low Countries for Basel in 1544. Niclaes's following, on the other hand, retained

24 Benjamin J. Kaplan, *Reformation and the Practice of Toleration: Dutch Religious History in the Early Modern Era* (Leiden, 2019), 27–30. Also see Willem Frijhoff, "Religious Toleration in the United Provinces: From 'Case' to 'Model,'" in *Calvinism and Religious Toleration in the Dutch Golden Age*, ed. Ronnie Po-Chia Hsia and Henk van Nierop (Cambridge, 2002), 27–52, there 47; and Gary K. Waite, "Conversos and Spiritualists in Spain and the Netherlands: The Experience of Inner Exile, c. 1540–1620," in *Exile and Religious Identities, 1500–1800*, ed. Jesse Spohnholz and Gary K. Waite (London, 2014), 157–170.

25 See Gary K. Waite, "Knowing the Spirit(s) in the Dutch Radical Reformation: From Physical Perception to Rational Doubt, 1536–1690," in *Knowing Demons, Knowing Spirits in the Early Modern Period*, ed. Michelle D. Brock, Richard Raiswell, and David R. Winter (Basingstoke, 2018), 23–54.

26 On these subjects, we recommend Frijhoff and Spies, *1650: Hard-Won Unity* (see above, n. 23).

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a loose, largely literary group identity as "the Family of Love" that gave it a coherence lacking in most other spiritualistic networks.[27] His was, however, the exception that proved the rule. Many spiritualists hid successfully within mainstream communities, making it impossible to determine their connections.

There is yet another factor that makes the study of spiritualism complex and challenging. Those individuals labelled fanatics, freethinkers, Nicodemites, or Libertines by their opponents were in many respects merely taking the spiritualizing motif inherent within Protestantism itself to its logical extreme, given its anticlerical, anti-materialistic rejection of Catholic sacramentalism, saints, relics, and pilgrimages.[28] This was why spiritualism proved so difficult for Reformed leaders to root out, for to condemn any hint of spiritualism as heresy implied that their emphasis on the Holy Spirit's role in salvation and Scripture interpretation was wrong. Spiritualists simply took that position seriously. Their opponents feared the depreciation of confessional identity would result in individualism. These opponents were likely correct, which is perhaps a reason to connect the history of spiritualism with that of the Enlightenment.

3 Framing Religious Change beyond Traditional Paradigms (*Redux*): An Introduction to the Essays

From one point of view, the Amsterdamnified Project might be about the connection between the Radical Reformation and the Radical Enlightenment. This is not an incorrect or unfair way to characterize the Project. In fact, one of the Project's early, influential contributors was Ruben Buys. His 2013 essay in *Church History and Religious Culture* about the influence of the sixteenth-century spiritualist Coornhert on the Collegiant-Mennonite Peter Balling (d. 1664) looked at both men in the framework of the Radical Enlightenment.[29] Furthermore, readers of the essays in this Special Issue might see evidence for

27 On Niclaes and his network, see Andreas Pietsch, "Prophecy as a Religious Language in the Radical Reformation: The Prophetic Role and Authorial Voice of HN and His Family of Love," *Études Épistémè: Revue de Littérature et de Civilisation* (*XVIe–XVIIIe Siècles*) 31 (2017) (https://doi.org/10.4000/episteme.1713); and Andreas Pietsch and Sita Steckel, "New Religious Movements before Modernity?" *Nova Religio* 21:4 (2018): 13–37.

28 See McLaughlin, "Spiritualism" (see above, n. 13).

29 Ruben Buys, "'Without Thy Self, O Man, Thou Hast No Means to Look for, by Which Thou Maist Know God': Pieter Balling, the Radical Enlightenment, and the Legacy of Dirck Volckertsz Coornhert," *Church History and Religious* Culture 93 (2013), 363–383. We also especially recommend Ruben Buys, *Sparks of Reason: Vernacular Rationalism in the Low Countries, 1550–1670* (Hilversum, 2015).

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a linking of Radical Reformation and Radical Enlightenment in several of its contributions. However, it is worth highlighting that the editors of this Special Issue prefer not to exaggerate the value of these terms nor the links between them. This is the reason why we have included a question mark in the main title of this essay, and also why we have borrowed the subtitle to Corbellini and Steckel's 2019 Introduction for the Special Issue of *Church History and Religious Culture* that they edited as the current title for this subsection of our own Introduction.[30]

Our reservations about a conceptual linking of "the Radical Reformation" and "the Radical Enlightenment" require some explanation. In a nutshell, we understand both to be crude interpretative concepts—"heuristic devices" or "ideal types"—that can help organize massive amounts of historical evidence. Max Weber (1864–1920) provided one of the most influential articulations of the ideal-type methodology in an essay from 1904 on "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy,"[31] and the writings of both Weber and Ernst Troeltsch (1865–1923) on the sociology of religion, particularly on "the Protestant ethic,"[32] are examples of this method in practice. However, while Weber argued that ideal types were essential tools for good research into the human past, he also recognized that they could be "procrustean beds"—preconceived ideas into which scholars simply forced evidence unreflectingly or which they even tried to "prove."[33] Ideal types are mere "heuristic devices," tools for thinking, and not themselves the ultimate objects of study.

Therefore, while we highlight possible links between ideal types of the Radical Reformation and the Radical Enlightenment, we do not want to allow them

30 Sabrina Corbellini and Sita Steckel, "The Religious Field during the Long Fifteenth Century: Framing Religious Change beyond Traditional Paradigms," *Church History and Religious Culture* 99:3–4 (2019): 303–329. In their essay, Corbellini and Steckel warn against "'methodological nationalism' and 'methodological modernism' inherent in older paradigms" (303). These are certainly also dangers in early modern studies of religion.

31 Max Weber, "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy," in *The Methodology of the Social Sciences*, trans. and ed. Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch (1904; New York, 1964 [1949]), 49–112.

32 For example, see Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons, intro. Anthony Giddens (1904–1905; English trans. 1930; Abingdon and New York, 1992); as well as Max Weber, "The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism," in *From Max Weber*, ed. and trans. Hans H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (1906; New York, 1958 [1946]); and Ernst Troeltsch, *Protestantism and Progress: A Historical Study of the Relation of Protestantism to the Modern World*, trans. W. Montgomery (1906; Boston, 1958). Also see Stephen Berger, "The Sects and the Breakthrough into the Modern World: On the Centrality of the Sects in Weber's Protestant Ethic Thesis," *Sociological Quarterly* 12 (1971), 486–499.

33 For more on Weber's methodology and its problems, see Patricia M.Y. Chang, "Escaping the

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to become procrustean beds. In other words, we do not wish to reduce the reality of massive and complex evidence to the terms of either of these concepts. Instead, we hope that by linking them, but at the same time raising questions about and alternatives to these artificially clear, historiographical models, we will spark further fruitful discussion and debate. We will outline some more of these reservations, as well as potential advantages of the heuristic linkage, while at the same time introducing the collection's contributions.

3.1 *Radicalism, Reformation, and the Essays of Part 1: To 1600*

We have divided the Special Issue's essays chronologically into two parts. The division has a historiographical purpose. The essays in Part 1 can be seen to address—and often complicate and problematize, or at other times support and strengthen—the category of "the Radical Reformation."

This concept is mostly closely associated with George Huntston Williams's famous book by that name.[34] The book was first published in 1962, and in the form of its 1992 third edition it remains a standard reference work on the sixteenth-century dissenting Protestants who, for the most part, were excluded from territorial churches that allied themselves with secular authorities. We call it a "reference work," because few have read its 1,000 plus pages. Nonetheless, its proposal for interpreting the pan-European interconnectedness of all those critics of the Roman Church who also rejected (and were rejected by) the newly forming Protestant territorial churches is influential to this day. Using his framework of a pan-European Radical Reformation, Williams combined the history of spiritualists from the era of early reforming movements of the 1510s until the 1570s with the histories of Anabaptists and "evangelical rationalists" such as Socinians (that is, roughly the subjects that contributors analyze in Part 1 of this Special Issue).

Procrustean Bed: A Critical Analysis of the Study of Religious Organizations, 1930–2001," in *Handbook of the Sociology of Religion*, ed. Michele Dillon (Cambridge, 2003), 123–136.

34 George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation*, 3rd ed. (1962; Kirksville, MO, 1992 / 2000). Although Williams's book has been the most influential on the subject, it was not completely original. See the structurally similar model by Roland Bainton, "The Left Wing of the Reformation," *Journal of Religion* 21 (1941), 124–134. In 1962, the same year that Williams published his book, Heinold Fast also published a collection of sources under the rubric of Bainton's category: Heinold Fast, ed., *Der linke Flügel der Reformation: Glaubenszeugnisse der Täufer, Spiritualisten, Schwärmer und Antitrinitarier* (Bremen, 1962). Carlos Eire has proposed a revised typology of the Radical Reformation in *Reformations: The Early Modern World, 1450–1650* (New Haven and London, 2016), ch. 11. We do not think that Eire's revised typology is an improvement on the work of Williams.

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The approach to spiritualism that Williams proposed has several advantages. We will mention only a few. Among the attractions for many scholars in this approach was that it provided a way of connecting multiple research literatures and church-historical traditions under a common, mostly positive framework. This encouraged historians from otherwise separate traditions (for example, Mennonites and Unitarians) to speak with one another, and also encouraged "established" church historians to reevaluate the historical, philosophical, and theological value of groups and individuals who were often—even in the twentieth century—portrayed negatively as "fanatics," apocalyptic hotheads, free spirits, or other negative designations inherited from early modern polemical attacks. This helped destigmatize the outsiders of Reformation historiography, including spiritualists. Instead of promoting these negative stereotypes, Williams proposed that ideas such as the freedom of conscience and religious toleration were fundamental aspects of the Radical Reformation's defining unity. This unity also distinguished the Radical Reformation typologically from "the Counter-Reformation" and "the Magisterial Reformation." These are clear distinctions that have inspired many scholars, research programs, textbook summaries, and popular discussions of the reformation over the last 60 years.

Among the problems with Williams's model is that, despite the incredible diversity he surveyed, he treats "the Radical Reformation" as though it were a typologically cohesive confessional bloc. As a whole, so the thinking goes, this artificial (that is, historiographically imagined) conglomeration can be distinguished in clear, ideal-typical terms from mainstream Protestants using the counter-typology of "the Magisterial Reformation," and also from the Catholics of "the Counter-Reformation," using a related counter-typology—all distinctions that Williams considered essential to his model. Another problem is that, although Williams opposed the negative characterization of radical reformers by their opponents in territorial churches, he nonetheless accepted and reinforced the basic, typological distinctions between mainstream Protestants and excluded, "heretical," "fanatical," "false" opponents of papal authority (that is, nonconforming, "radical" Protestants)—the very distinctions that early modern orthodox Lutheran and Reformed polemicists had propagated. In effect, and even in its positive form, the Radical Reformation tends to be a procrustean bed, or, to use a metaphor borrowed from both the writings of Max Weber and the infamous case of Anabaptist Münster, an intellectual iron cage.[35]

35 For more on the polemical foundations of Williams's ideal-typical thinking, see Michael Driedger, "Against 'the Radical Reformation': On the Continuity between Early Modern

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These problems present historians with challenges in making sense of actual historical cases from sixteenth-century Europe. Amy Nelson Burnett has confronted this problem directly in her 2019 book, *Debating the Sacraments*, which examines the emerging reforming debates over the course of the 1520s in mostly Germanic territories.[36] Instead of assuming that the debates conformed to clear distinctions between Catholic, Reformed, Lutheran, Anabaptist, and spiritualist parties, or between Radical and Magisterial divisions, Burnett takes a different approach, with heuristic categories of her own:

> Use of nonstandard terms allows this study to focus on the understanding of the Lord's Supper and the movement from dissent to division. In other words, it does not examine how members of different confessional groupings understood a particular doctrine; it looks at how disagreements about a particular doctrine contributed to the formation of different confessional groups.[37]

In the study of spiritualism, this approach is very helpful, even when applied to various and quite different historical settings. For example, spiritualists and spiritualizing influences were found in what Williams labels as the Radical Reformation, the Magisterial Reformation, and even the Counter-Reformation—and in many and various generations of Protestant reform.[38] How did particular disagreements in these contexts unfold and what local—and possibly larger—consequences did they have?

Heresy-Making and Modern Historiography" in *Radicalism and Dissent* (see above, n. 12), 139–161; and Michael Driedger, "Thinking inside the Cages: Norman Cohn, Anabaptist Münster, and Polemically Inspired Assumptions about Apocalyptic Violence," *Nova Religio* 21:4 (2018), 38–62.

36 Amy Nelson Burnett, *Debating the Sacraments: Print and Authority in the Early Reformation* (New York, 2019).

37 Ibid., 19.

38 For examples from early modern Lutheran contexts, see Douglas H. Shantz, *An Introduction to German Pietism: Protestant Renewal at the Dawn of Modern Europe* (Baltimore, 2013); Thomas Kaufmann, "Nahe Fremde: Aspekte der Wahrnehmung der 'Schwärmer' im frühneuzeitlichen Luthertum," in *Interkonfessionalität—Transkonfessionalität—binnenkonfessionelle Pluralität*, ed. Kaspar von Greyerz, et al. (Gütersloh, 2003), 179–241; Andrew Weeks, *Valentin Weigel (1533–1588): German Religious Dissenter, Speculative Theorist, and Advocate of Tolerance* (Albany, 2000); and Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *Religiöse Bewegungen in der Frühen Neuzeit* (Munich, 1993). For examples of spiritualism in Italy, see Massimo Firpo, *Juan de Valdés and the Italian Reformation* (Aldershot, 2015); Sarah Rolfe Prodan, *Michelangelo's Christian Mysticism: Spirituality, Poetry and Art in Sixteenth-Century Italy* (Cambridge, 2014); and Dermot Fenlon, *Heresy and Obedience in Tridentine Italy: Cardinal Pole and the Counter Reformation* (Cambridge, 1972).

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One of the most important and best-established alternatives to *The Radical Reformation* is Hans-Jürgen Goertz's concept of the radicalism / radicality of reforming movements. Since at least the 1970s, Goertz has argued that, rather than having a status conceptually separate and distinct from the mainstream of the reformation, the anticlerical goals and actions of radical reformers in the 1510s and 1520s were actually constitutive of reformation movements at their core and from their earliest days. This is because radicalism in Goertz's understanding consisted in the fundamental, principled rejection of dominant socio-religious norms and institutions—in particular, the rights and privileges of the entire clerical estate.[39] A consequence of this heuristic perspective is that reformers who eventually arranged alliances between territorial rulers and the emergent, new churches should nonetheless be recognized to have had early, fundamentally radical careers during which they attacked and replaced the Catholic clerical hierarchy, and reorganized institutions related to its authority, such as the relationship between laymen and -women in civil / secular, ecclesial, economic, and familial life. Martin Luther is a prime example of a reformer who went through a short-lived but significant radical phase.[40] Among its advantages, Goertz's related concepts of "Reformation radicalism" and anticlerical reforming movements have 1) the potential not only to provide an alternative to the more established conception of "the Radical Reformation," and thus to remind scholars of the heuristic character of both understandings; 2) and also have the better potential to encourage thinking about and analysis of dynamic patterns in studies of "the long reformation," "social discipline," and "confessionalization."[41]

39 In 1974 Robert Kingdon made a similar argument about the revolutionary character of Reformation anticlericalism, with a focus on Geneva. Although he did not discuss Williams, Kingdon's arguments have notable parallels with Goertz's model of the radicalism / radicality of the Reformation. Kingdon wrote that "A revolution does not need to be aimed at the power of kings and aristocrats to be a true revolution. It can be aimed at other ruling classes. The class against which the Protestant Reformation was aimed was the Roman Catholic clergy." See R.M. Kingdon, "Was the Protestant Reformation a Revolution? The Case of Geneva," in *Transition and Revolution: Problems and Issues of European Renaissance and Reformation History*, ed. Robert M. Kingdon (Minneapolis, 1974), 53–87, here 57.

40 Hans-Jürgen Goertz, ed., *Profiles of Radical Reformers: Biographical Sketches from Thomas Müntzer to Paracelsus*, trans. Walter Klaassen (1978; Eugene, OR, 2003 [1982]). For a recent, essay-length update of his views, see Hans-Jürgen Goertz, "The Reformation as Revolution: Anticlericalism, Social Movements, and Modern Conceptions of Freedom," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 91 (2017), 541–562. Also see the essays by Goertz and others in Peter Dykema and Heiko Oberman, eds., *Anticlericalism in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Leiden and New York, 1994).

41 Hans-Jürgen Goertz, *Antiklerikalismus und Reformation* (Göttingen, 1995), particularly

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Through several decades of debate and dialogue, Goertz's work has also influenced the work of James Stayer, whose essay immediately follows this Introduction. Stayer's essay is an example of another way scholars can reconceptualize the ideal types we use in Reformation studies. While Williams drew a distinction between Anabaptists and spiritualists as representatives of the Radical Reformation, on the one hand, and most Reformed Protestants as representatives of the Magisterial Reformation, on the other, Stayer proposes an interpretation that places Anabaptists, spiritualists, and Reformed Protestants within the same historical-conceptual framework.

We editors think that Stayer's proposal is important in several regards. First, it helps make sense of the case of Andreas Bodenstein von Carlstadt (1486–1541), who Williams considers an exemplary figure of the Radical Reformation, but who he also recognizes spent most of his career in the Reformed Church in Switzerland.[42] Carlstadt is not an isolated example, for Williams draws attention to the many cases of Reformed spiritualism, "rationalism" or anti-Trinitarianism, and even adult baptism in his large book. Another example that Stayer's proposal helps make sense of is that many seventeenth-century Dutch Mennonites (which authors in this volume sometimes call by their Dutch alternative name as *Doopsgezinden*—the baptism-minded people) developed close connections with English Baptists, as well as with Collegiants and Remonstrants—all of them groups with substantial Reformed roots.

If we look even more closely at Dutch Mennonite culture in the longer early modern and modern eras, the picture gets more complicated still. Not all Dutch Doopsgezinden of the early modern era were "liberal"—by which we mean that not all were willing to associate closely with nominally Reformed groups whose members often expressed many of the spiritualizing, anti-confessional tendencies that we have outlined earlier in this Introduction. Some were "conservative"—by which we mean that, rather than rejecting the confessional trends of "the confessional age," they defined themselves in terms of confessions of faith. Furthermore, like their orthodox Reformed neighbours in the Dutch Republic, with whom they had many affinities and developed many personal and institutional connections, these confessionalist Mennonites held to a strict, creedally

ch. 6: "Zucht und Ordnung in nonkonformistischer Manier: Kleruskritik, Kirchenzucht und Sozialdisziplinierung in den Bewegungen der Täufer."

42 George H. Williams, "Radical Reformation," in *Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand (Oxford, 1996), cited from the 2005 unpaginated online version: "From 1521 to 1528 in Saxony and during his final Reformed phase, 1528–1542, in Switzerland, Bodenstein had embodied or anticipated many features of sixteenth-century radicality in his convictions, thought, strategy, and even temperament and passion."

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orthodox Trinitarianism. If we extend the view beyond the Dutch Republic to the Netherlands as a new constitutional monarchy starting in the nineteenth century, the theme of Dutch nationalism among Mennonites—as well as their collective accounts of Mennonite history—takes on new and still more complicated dimensions.[43]

This background is helpful to know when reading Theo Brok's essay about Adam Pastor (ca. 1500–ca. 1565). This is because Brok highlights the role that later Dutch Mennonite historiography has played in sidelining Pastor from accounts of mid-sixteenth-century Doopsgezind origins. Long ignored by Mennonite scholars because of his eventual unorthodox position on the doctrine of the Trinity, Pastor's theological views changed significantly as he moved gradually into spiritualism. Brok provides a rich and nuanced analysis of this developing thought. It is worth highlighting here that the subject of trinitarian controversies, as well as the complex, changing, emergent character of spiritualist ideas, are both revisited in different contexts by other contributors to this Special Issue.

Anselm Schubert's essay, the third in our collection, provides another fascinating analysis—this time of the theological work of the renowned religious and medical reformer Paracelsus (ca. 1493–1541), in particular, what Schubert calls Paracelsus's concept of "celestial sex," that is, the generation of the Son of God and the nature of the Son's humanity. One of the issues that Adam Pastor and Menno Simons fought over was the Anabaptist doctrine of the heavenly or celestial flesh of Christ, that Christ brought his human nature directly from heaven so as not to share in the Original Sin that he would have received from Mary. Schwenckfeld held to a version of this which likely influenced the Anabaptist prophet Hoffman. Yet Schubert reveals that Paracelsus's perspective was likely also important, if not formative. As early as 1524 he was positing that Christ was generated purely out of the substance of the Godhead and thus possessed an entirely "celestial body." Paracelsus's source for this, Schubert argues, lay in late medieval alchemical tracts, and his interpretation which had God generating from his own heavenly flesh a celestial woman with whom he then conceived the eternal Son is certainly alchemical in its obscurity and mystical imagery. Since Paracelsus saw himself as a spiritualistic religious reformer,

43 For an overview of Mennonite patterns of confessionalization, see Michael Driedger, "Konfessionalisierung (im Täufertum)," in *Mennonitisches Lexikon On-line* (MennLex v, 2012–2013), (http://www.mennlex.de/doku.php?id=top:konfessionalisierung); and Michael Driedger, "Anabaptists and the Early Modern State: A Long-Term View," in *Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism* (see above, n. 13), 507–544.

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his impact on the ideas of the other spiritualists discussed here needs much more attention.[44]

At this point it will be helpful to highlight some important, forthcoming work by Anselm Schubert and colleagues. In 2019 he helped organize a conference in Erlangen on the theme of *Concepts of Reformation*, and essays from that conference are scheduled for publication soon.[45] In addition to organizing the conference and co-editing the resulting volume, Schubert contributes his own essay entitled "Radikale Reformation: Versuch über eine historiographische Kategorie" [Radical Reformation: Musings about a Historiographical Category]. Unlike Stayer, Schubert is a defender more than a critic of "the Radical Reformation" as an interpretative, historiographical category. One useful way of thinking about his essay on Paracelsus in this Special Issue is in terms of Paracelsus's relationship to other representatives of the Radical Reformation.

One of these representatives is Michael Servetus, who Schubert does discuss briefly, but who is the subject of extended analysis by Christine Schulte von Hülse's careful and fascinating essay. Paracelsus was not the only medical reformer who also wrote on theological matters. As Schulte's article on the pneumatology of the freethinker Michael Servetus (1509/1511–1553) makes very clear, Servetus's musings on theology and Scripture deeply shaped his medical and philosophical innovations on human physiology. In the essay Schulte analyzes Servetus's writings on the Holy Spirit, revealing that he expressed two distinct answers to the question of what the Spirit was: first, a movement of God in the human spirit, understood as a divine accident of God; and second, the divine substance itself which was physiologically incorporated by humans, so that the divine Spirit was infused within the individual's corpus to mediate God and creation. This in turn shaped Servetus's understanding of how the Spirit related to the air that infused the body's life-force: blood. How Servetus fits into accounts of the history of science and Enlightenment is worth renewed discussion.[46]

Among the significant trends in the study of spiritualism are the various ways in which spiritualizing individuals forced their contemporaries, including the orthodox, to respond to new approaches to religious identity. Many

44 Charles Webster, *Paracelsus: Medicine, Magic and Mission at the End of Time* (New Haven, 2008).

45 Kaspar von Greyerz and Anselm Schubert, eds., *Reformationskonzepte - Concepts of Reformation* [Schriften des Vereins für Reformationsgeschichte] (Gütersloh, forthcoming 2022).

46 In addition to the literature cited in Section 3.2 below, see also Mirjam van Veen, "Dutch Anabaptist and Reformed Historiographers on Servetus' Death: Or How the Radical Reformation Turned Mainstream and How the Mainstream Reformation Turned Radical," in *Radicalism and Dissent* (see above, n. 12), 162–172.

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responded with condemnation and ire, yet even their attacks could disseminate the very ideas they sought to eradicate; this is particularly the case with the concerted assault on the Dutch spiritualists' depreciation or outright denial of demons. In this Special Issue, this theme of challenges to the idea of demons is more fully developed in the last two essays in Part 1.

The first of these is Hans de Waardt's study of the Dutch physician Johan Wier (Weyer). De Waardt's analysis is extremely important, for it carries within it implications for the history of spiritualism, demonology, medicine, and law. Wier, and his controversial *De praestigiis daemonum* of 1563, became famous for his medical defence of women accused of witchcraft in which he argued that they were deluded by demons thanks to a humoral imbalance leading to the hallucinations of Melancholy. Most interpreters of Wier's treatise have taken literally his statements about the reality of demons, yet, thanks to the Nicodemite tendencies inherent within spiritualism, Wier may instead have merely used those avowals as a means to maintain the attention of readers who would otherwise have been repelled by a Joris-like assertion that the devil has no independent existence. As De Waardt concludes, the clue is in the title of the treatise: *On the Illusions of Demons*.

At first glance, readers might assume that Wier fits well into the framework proposed in *The Radical Reformation*. After all, inspired by the spiritualism of his brother Matthias and David Joris, Wier maintained an impressive network of spiritualist-minded humanists and printers, including Servetus, although as a Galenist Wier opposed the new alchemical medicine of Paracelsus. Wier thus stood as a mediator between the first generation of spiritualists, like Franck and Joris, and the next; furthermore, he was a disseminator of spiritualistic perspectives among learned medical, as well as legal, professionals.

These studies of Paracelsus, Servetus, and Wier are shedding light on the origins of the unconventional ideas of others, such as David Joris, the subject of Waite's essay. While Joris's contemporary opponents and many modern historians tend to view him through the lens of his brief Anabaptist career as the messianic third David, after 1544 Joris gradually abandoned claims of a unique possession of the Holy Spirit, promoting instead a pneumatology in which the Spirit was active within the mind of all true believers. This, Waite argues, was a parallel to Joris's relegation of demons and angels to the inner person which he began disseminating in 1539–1540. Since during his lifetime most readers of Joris had easy access only to his works from the 1530s and 1540s, they seem not to have become aware of Joris's late pneumatology, which indeed shows evidence of influence from Servetus, on whose behalf Joris wrote a letter in 1553 to Geneva. In the Dutch Republic, where spiritualism became a powerful undercurrent, this creative approach to the Spirit's inspiration helped

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shape discourse on religion and philosophy among nonconformists such as the Doopsgezinden and Collegiants as well as among the orthodox. These currents fed eventually into the discussions over the relationship between Spirit, mind, and matter among early Enlightenment philosophers such as Descartes and Spinoza. More than any other essay in Part 1, Waite's links the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

3.2 *Radicalism, Enlightenment, and the Essays of Part 2: After 1600*

Despite our cautions above about relying too heavily on Williams, we do note that three important, senior scholars have already mused about a possible conceptual linkage between the Radical Reformation and the Radical Enlightenment. For example, in 2013, while reflecting on the thinking that led to her 1981 book *The Radical Enlightenment*,[47] Margaret Jacob noted that

> The notion of there being a dialectic between the magisterial and the radical came from my reading of George H. Williams, *The Radical Reformation* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962) where the conflict between Luther, Calvin, and the Church unleashed "lesser folk" who took the Reformation in unprecedented directions. The idea of applying this dialectical approach to the Enlightenment crystalized in conversations with J.G.A. Pocock. My reading of Christopher Hill also made clear that the civil wars had produced a revolution within the revolution, a radicalism that was both religious and political.[48]

More recently, Andrew Weeks has argued that

> Jonathan Israel's *Radical Enlightenment* appears in a different light when read in conjunction with George H. Williams' *Radical Reformation* and Israel's own history of *The Dutch Republic*. The radical dissent of the Reformation and its aftermath extended to Holland, influencing Spinoza's milieu and creating preconditions for his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670). The radical turn attributed by Israel to Spinoza appears less

47 Margaret C. Jacob, *The Radical Enlightenment: Pantheists, Freemasons and Republicans* (London, 1981). Also see her many other publications on the history of the Enlightenment, science, and cosmopolitanism.

48 Margaret C. Jacob, "The Radical Enlightenment and Freemasonry: Where We Are Now," *REHMLAC: Revista de Estudios Históricos de la Masonería*, Special Issue (UCLA and Grand Lodge of California) (2013), 13–25, here 14. Note that there is a second paper by Jacob with the same title in *Philosophica* 88 (2013), 13–29; this second version is not exactly the same as the first and does not include the passage we have quoted.

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> unprecedented when juxtaposed with its extended Reformation background, including the German speculative or mystical dissenters who anticipated his themes.[49]

In his latest book, *The Enlightenment That Failed* (2019), Jonathan Israel has taken up a few of the suggestions made by Weeks and others by adding an entire section with the title "From Radical Reformation to the *cercle spinoziste*."[50]

At first glance, Williams's book does not seem to provide a good basis for research into the long-term history of spirit-oriented believers, since Williams argued that the Radical Reformation lost its cohesiveness after the 1570s. However, as John Coffey has pointed out correctly in a detail- and insight-rich essay about "Anabaptism, Spiritualism, and Anti-Trinitarianism in the English Revolution,"[51] Williams did have a more subtle position. While he did not develop this point in detail himself, he did recognize that the ideas typical of sixteenth-century dissident reformers waned in the later sixteenth century but then did have a new heyday amid the breakdown of ecclesio-political order in England in the middle of the seventeenth century.[52] In light of the recent essays by Coffey, as well as the observations by Weeks, Jacob, and Israel, perhaps "the Radical Reformation" is a useful heuristic model for looking at long-term developments, after all?

Although we certainly do want to encourage studies that link the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, we would again recommend caution in the use of Williams in that project. Coffey repeats Carlos Eire's 2016 statement that "Williams 'devised a classification for the Radicals that still stands largely unchallenged after half a century.'"[53] It is certainly correct to say that the Williams model remains an influential classification system and is perhaps also a (par-

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49 Andrew Weeks, "From Radical Reformation to Mystical Pre-Enlightenment," in *The Radical Enlightenment in Germany: A Cultural Perspective*, ed. Carl Niekerk (Leiden, 2018), 80–111. Also see his many other publications on the history of spiritualism and mysticism.

50 Jonathan I. Israel, *The Enlightenment That Failed: Ideas, Revolution, and Democratic Defeat, 1748–1830* (Oxford, 2019), especially ch. 4. Of course, also see Jonathan I. Israel, *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650–1750* (Oxford, 2001), and his many other publications related to Enlightenment history.

51 John Coffey, "'The Last and Greatest Triumph of the European Radical Reformation'? Anabaptism, Spiritualism, and Anti-Trinitarianism in the English Revolution," in *Radicalism and Dissent* (see above, n. 12), 201–224.

52 A similar point is made in Gary K. Waite, "The Devil of Delft in England: The Reception of Dutch Spiritualist David Joris in Seventeenth-Century English Polemics," *Church History and Religious Culture* 101:4 (2021), forthcoming.

53 Coffey, "Anabaptism, Spiritualism, and Anti-Trinitarianism" (see above, n. 51), 203. The quotation is from Eire, *Reformations* (see above, n. 34), 253.

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tially) productive one. What Eire's statement does not take into account, however, is that there are about four decades of research on German radical reformers or the radicality of the reformation (as opposed to "the Radical Reformation") that have been inspired more by Hans-Jürgen Goertz's model of radical, anticlerical reforming movements (see section 3.1 of this Introduction) and James Stayer's equally influential study of Swiss, German, and Dutch dissenting political thought in the reformation-era, *Anabaptists and the Sword*.[54] As a small but perhaps still significant aside meant to encourage further discussion between scholars of early modern Germany and England, we will remark that both Stayer's book and Christopher Hill's influential study about mid-seventeenth-century England, *The World Turned Upside Down*, were both published in 1972—a year of note in the study of early modern religious radicalism![55]

The early 1960s also stand out historiographically for us. In addition to the work of Hill, Goertz, and Stayer, we will recommend that scholars interested in the further discussion of links between spiritualist ideas and campaigning of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries also devote more attention to the works of two other authors who were also publishing important work around the same time that *The Radical Reformation* first appeared: Leszek Kołakowski and Jürgen Habermas. Among early modern scholars, Kołakowski is best-known for his study of dissenting religio-philosophical ideas and groups in the Dutch Republic of the mid-seventeenth century—for example, the Collegiants and Socinians that are the subject of Francesco Quatrini's essay in this Special Issue.[56] One aspect of Kołakowski's thinking about new, emergent, radical ideas in the seventeenth century is his concept of "the antinomies of freedom."[57] By this he meant the tendency of new, often anti-confessional reli-

54 James M. Stayer, *Anabaptists and the Sword*, 2nd ed. (1972; Lawrence, KS, 1976).

55 Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution* (London, 1972).

56 Leszek Kołakowski, *Chrétiens sans église: La conscience religieuse et le lien confessionnel au XVIIe siècle*, trans. Anna Posner, 2nd ed. (1969; Paris, 1987); Leszek Kołakowski, *The Two Eyes of Spinoza and Other Essays on Philosophers*, ed. Zbigniew Janowski, trans. Agnieszka Kołakowski (South Bend, IN, 2004); and Leszek Kołakowski, "Dutch Seventeenth-Century Anti-Confessional Ideas and Rational Religion: The Mennonite, Collegiant, and Spinozan Connections," trans. and intro. by James Satterwhite, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 64 (1990), 259–297 and 385–416.

57 For more background, see Rubem César Fernandes, The Antinomies of Freedom (On the Warsaw Circle of Intellectual History) (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1976). Also see Jean-Pierre Cavaillé, "Leszek Kołakowski, *Chrétiens sans église*: Histoire paradoxale de la déconfessionnalisation et instabilités méthodologiques," *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 166 (2014): 83–96.

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gious groups to either form new institutions and orthodoxies of the kind they once opposed so that they could survive into successive generations, or to continue to oppose established institutions of all kinds, even if it meant that they themselves would fail to create a lasting institutional legacy of their own. "The antinomies of freedom" seems to us to be a promising ideal type or concept for organizing further research not only about spiritualists but also all other religious groups. This is because 1) it allows for a recognition of patterns of institutionalization that historians often call confessionalization, but 2) it also avoids imposing the assumptions about how institutions should be categorized that we have inherited from confessionalized church histories. In effect, the concept of "the antinomies of freedom" provides a good framework for the study of what Margaret Jacob called the "dialectic between the magisterial and the radical."[58]

Jürgen Habermas's 1962 study of the enlightened public sphere[59] also offers helpful points of reference in thinking about spiritualists in early modern Europe. His work made a historical-typological distinction between conceptions of "the public" that he thought were typical of Old Regime Europe (those absolutist states that allied themselves with territorial churches), on the one hand, and newer conceptions of "the public" that emerged out of the mostly private associations of urban capitalists who increasingly saw their interests distinct from the interests of the absolute states. Some scholars interpret these newer forms of burgher sociability to have been typical or even defining of the Enlightenment.[60] Many scholars who follow Habermas tend also to focus on non-religious associations and clubs that were founded to address artistic, literary, scientific, educational, moral, and economic concerns rather than explicitly religious ones. Despite Habermas's own tendency in the book's first edition to downplay the religious dimension of "new" burgher associations, at least two observations based on the book are worth highlighting here. The first is the possibility, raised in studies by scholars such as Gary Waite, Arjan van Dixhoorn, and Ruben Buys, that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch chambers of rhetoric and other early forms of literary associations—which included many spiritualists in their ranks—functioned like proto-Enlightenment asso-

58 Jacob, "The Radical Enlightenment and Freemasonry" (see above, n. 48), 14.

59 Jürgen Habermas, *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*, revised edition (1962; Frankfurt, 1990); available in English as *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA, 1989).

60 For a good example, see Ulrich Im Hof, *The Enlightenment* (Oxford, and Cambridge, MA, 1994).

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ciations;[61] and the second concerns the possibility that reformation and post-reformation Bible-reading circles and early Pietist *ecclesiola*—private conventicles that were at most only loosely associated officially with territorial, public churches—could count as proto-Enlightenment institutions.[62] The colleges of the Collegiants are worth mention here. Other scholars inspired by Habermas have proposed new ways of conceptualizing early modern religious publics that might be productive in further studies of European spiritualisms.[63]

One way of characterizing the goals of this Special Issue is that we hope to encourage more dialogue and debate across national, chronological, methodological, and argumentative boundaries that seem to separate scholars of early modern "religion"[64]—too often with unproductive or counter-productive results. Topics that would be worthy of discussion toward this goal would be the trend in research on the Radical Enlightenment—advocated especially

61 Gary K. Waite, *Reformers on Stage: Popular Drama and Religious Propaganda in the Low Countries of Charles V, 1515–1556* (Toronto, 2000); Arjan van Dixhorn, *Lustige geesten: Rederijkers in de Noordelijke Nederlanden (1480–1650)* (Amsterdam, 2009); and Buys, *Sparks of Reason* (see above, n. 29).

62 The literature on Pietism is vast. For overviews and more literature, see Shantz, *An Introduction to German Pietism* (see above, n. 38); and Michael Driedger, "Pietism," in *Europe, 1450–1789: Encyclopedia of the Early Modern World*, ed. Jonathan Dewald (New York, 2003). For more on the possible connection between conformist religious institutions and emergent publics, see Jürgen Kocka, 2004. "Civil Society from a Historical Perspective," *European Review* 12 (2004), 65–79; Kocka highlights the role of Quakers, and they certainly deserve more attention from scholars of civil society. Other useful points of reference in further discussions of the role of religion in the emergent public sphere and civil society are found in the publications of Margaret Jacob, particularly Margaret C. Jacob, "The Cosmopolitan as a Lived Category," *Daedalus* 137: 3 (2008), 18–25.

63 We will note another, independent, recent borrowing of Taylor's 1641 term by Jason Peacey, "An 'Amsterdamnified' Public Sphere: English Newsbooks, Pamphleteering, and Polemic in European Context," in *Political Turmoil: Early Modern British Literature in Transition, 1623–1660*, ed. Stephen B. Dobranski (Cambridge, 2019), 189–204. We also recommend Bronwen Wilson and Paul Yachnin, eds., *Making Publics in Early Modern Europe: People, Things, Forms of Knowledge* [Routledge Studies in Renaissance Literature and Culture 13] (New York, 2010); and CBC Radio, *Ideas*, "The Origins of the Modern Public," originally broadcast in 2010, parts 1–14 (https://www.cbc.ca/ideas/episodes/features/2010/04/26/the-origins-of-the-modern-public/).

64 We add quotes to this term here, because we note that there is often a very unproductive conflation of "religion" with confessionally defined religion—especially in Enlightenment studies. This conflation makes it more difficult to make sense of early modern spiritualist(ic) ideas and programs as genuinely religious ideas and programs—which they certainly were. These ideas and programs might also have promoted secularizing trends in European history; but they were nonetheless religious in a deep way and at their root.

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by Jonathan Israel—to study *ideas* and controversies about them.[65] We propose that further research would profit from an examination of sixteenth-, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ideas *in combination with* emergent institutions and associations. Another topic for further discussion would be how different research communities define and investigate early modern "radicalism" and early modern religious and social "movements" and / or "networks."[66]

Instead of trying to provide a full discussion of these kinds of topics here, we will suggest a few questions. In particular, were post-reformation spiritualists radical by definition? Should scholars measure spiritualist radicalism in terms of a set of ideas and beliefs in a broadly proto-Mennonite or proto-Unitarian church-historical tradition (Williams), or in terms of their active campaigning against the ecclesio-political authorities (Goertz)? We note that Goertz's argument that reforming movements were fundamentally radical-anticlerical movements—understood in the sense that they all campaigned against special rights for the clerical estate—was an argument shaped in dialogue with Marxist scholars; and we also note that many scholars of early modern radical ideas—notably Richard Popkin[67]—have tended to focus on radicalism in terms of its

65 See Israel, *Radical Enlightenment* and *The Enlightenment That Failed* (for both, see above, n. 50).

66 The literature on these topics is vast, and we will not repeat citations in this note to others we have already cited elsewhere in this Introduction, nor will we try to be exhaustive in our citations. For literature on radicalism in early modern England, we recommend Ariel Hessayon and David Finnegan, eds., *Varieties of Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century English Radicalism in Context* (Burlington, VT, 2011); Glenn Burgess and Matthew Festenstein, eds., *English Radicalism, 1550–1850* (Cambridge, 2007); and *Cromohs Virtual Seminars: Recent Historiographical Trends of the British Studies* (*17th–18th Centuries*), ed. M. Caricchio and G. Tarantino (2006–2007) (http://www.fupress.net/public/journals/49/Seminar/index.html).

There is also a great deal of current debate and discussion on the definition of "the Radical Enlightenment." See, for example, Guido Vanheeswijck, "The Ambiguity of the Term 'Radical Enlightenment,'" *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie* 80 (2018): 39–71; Steffen Ducheyne, ed., *Reassessing the Radical Enlightenment* (London, 2017); Sonja Lavaert and Winfried Schröder, eds., *The Dutch Legacy: Radical Thinkers of the 17th Century and the Enlightenment* (Leiden, 2017); Sarah Mortimer and John Marshall, eds., *The Intellectual Consequences of Religious Heterodoxy, 1600–1750* (Leiden, 2012); and Margaret C. Jacob, "How Radical Was the Enlightenment? What Do We Mean by Radical?" *Diametros* 40 (2014): 99–114. One of the issues concerns how to interpret the significance of Baruch Spinoza. The work of twentieth-century philosopher Leo Strauss (1899–1973) is playing an increasingly central role in this debate. On Strauss's method, see Neil G. Robertson, "The Closing of the Early Modern Mind: Leo Strauss and Early Modern Political Thought," *Animus* 3 (1998): 211–226.

67 Jeremy D. Popkin, ed., *The Legacies of Richard Popkin* (Dordrecht, 2008); and Richard H. Popkin, *The Third Force in Seventeenth-Century Thought* (Leiden, 1991).

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relationship to philosophical skepticism and atheism. With this background in mind, what was the relationship over the longer term in early modern Europe between religious and philosophical radicalism, and also between spiritualism, anticlericalism, and revolution? Were spiritualists overrepresented in the ranks of protests, rebellions, and revolutions, as compared with institutions of public order? Would it make sense for scholars of post-reformation spiritualists to consider them radical if they were obedient to and even served secular rulers, or participated in established church hierarchies or conformed to their rites? What long-term influences did early modern spiritualism have on later-eighteenth- and nineteenth-century thought and institutions—that is on the modern revolutionary era and the era of the formation of early nation-states?[68] We will leave these as open questions for now.

This brings us to the essays in the second half of this collection. In them, we move on to the subsequent generations of nonconformist thinkers who took up their sixteenth-century predecessors' call for new approaches to religion that would depreciate external confessions of faith, ritual, the letter of Scripture, and clerical authority in favour of the spirit within, the so-called inner Word, Spirit, or Light—which for some seventeenth-century spiritualists came to be identified with the work of their own natural reason. Many were attracted to this approach thanks to the ongoing bloodshed of confessionally-induced violence, such as the Eighty Years' War of the Netherlands, the Thirty Years' War of the German Empire, and the English Civil War.

As noted earlier, the spiritualists' emphasis on tolerating religious diversity was adopted, informally, by the magistrates of many of the cities of the Dutch Republic, with Amsterdam at its centre. Francesco Quatrini's essay focuses on this environment as he examines how Polish Brethren (Socinians) exiles in Amsterdam interacted with other Dutch religious minorities, especially the Remonstrants, Mennonites, and Collegiants. Quatrini reveals that it was the explicit defence of religious tolerance that proved to be the common intellectual ground allowing the good relations between the Brethren and the Collegiants. These in turn fostered even more fruitful intellectual crossovers between the two groups, as the Brethren in Amsterdam were influenced by the Collegiants' emphasis on freedom of prophesying, egalitarianism, and anti-confessionalism. In many respects the Collegiants and liberal Mennonites (Doopsgezinden) were the major carriers of spiritualism through the seventeenth century. Their interactions with the Polish Brethren reinforced the ten-

68 As points of reference, see C.J. den Heyer, *Verlichte voorgangers: De strijd tussen dogma en Bijbel in Nederland* (Zoetermeer, 2011); and Andrew Weeks, *German Mysticism: From Hildegard of Bingen to Ludwig Wittgenstein: A Literary and Intellectual History* (Albany, 1993).

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dency among spiritualists, that began with Franck and continued with the late Joris, to find ways to combine rationalism with spiritualism.

The Dutch Republic's role as a place of refuge and creative interaction among nonconformists from across Europe was not always—or even often—regarded by outsiders as a positive virtue, as the essay by Stefano Villani here reveals. Reconstructing the life of Jean-Baptiste Stouppe (1623–1692), Villani recounts how this Huguenot of Italian origin had served as a diplomat and spy for Oliver Cromwell and then as a soldier in Louis XIV's service. In this latter phase of his career, Stouppe wrote some pro-French propaganda works, including a famous critique of Dutch religious life, published in 1673, which was also notorious for its condemnation of Spinoza's philosophy. Villani discloses that even though Stouppe presented himself as a defender of Protestant orthodoxy, he was in fact a libertine with magical-alchemical interests. Thus, in Stouppe we see "clearly" the obscure and ambiguous nature of religious identities, especially in the complex world of early modern politics. It is worth noting as an aside that Villani is one of the coordinators of the research network EMoDiR (Early Modern Religious Dissents and Radicalism).[69]

How distinctive a religious and cultural environment the Dutch Republic was for religious nonconformists becomes even clearer with Nina Schroeder's essay on the important work by the artist and writer Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* [The Great Theatre of Netherlandish Painters and Painteresses], printed in 1718–1721. Schroeder explores Houbraken's (1660–1719) position among unconventional Christian artists and writers and offers an assessment of his upbringing within the Flemish Mennonite community of Dordrecht (1660–ca. 1685). She highlights the role of his artist biographies in securing the artistic legacy and shaping the reception history of many early modern artists from religious minority groups. For example, Houbraken included Joris and the Mennonite martyr Jan Woutersz van Cuyck within his canon of Dutch artists. Houbraken is already a household name in art history research, but Schroeder makes it very clear that Houbraken's contributions within *The Great Theatre* are also relevant to the history of spiritualism and heterodox theology. His other publications undoubtedly deserve further analysis given his status as an important (albeit little-studied) heterodox Enlightenment thinker.

That such difference has an impact across the English Channel becomes quite clear in William Miller's study of the manuscript of the Anglo-Dutch writer Theodora Wilkin (1668–1733) whose "Wandering Soul" was based on

69 For more on EMoDiR, see above, n. 7.

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the important Mennonite devotional work by Jan Philipsz Schabaelje (1592–1656), *Wandelende Ziele met Adam, Noach, en Simon Cleophas* [Wandering Soul, with Adam, Noah, and Simon Cleophas]. Her adapted translation survives in a manuscript of roughly a thousand pages, shedding light on the state of intellectual history and literary adaptation in the early eighteenth century. Miller highlights especially the ways in which Wilkin's manuscript demonstrates the centrality of women to providential history and reveals, perhaps surprisingly, her knowledge of ancient sources as she sought to portray their role in revealing divine truth; she certainly cites more than Schabaelje had. Miller's essay also returns us to the cross-Channel network of nonconformists, for here a Dutch woman living in England is reading and reflecting on a Doopsgezind work of considerable literary sophistication.

We conclude with the paper that served as the keynote to the 2019 symposium, that by Nigel Smith. It helps us especially to consider the many other unknown paths of transmission and dissemination within these intriguing nonconformist circles. Such fruitful interaction readily crossed the English Channel with religious refugees, merchants, and barrels of clandestinely printed works. When in the 1640s royal oversight of ecclesiastical matters in England ended, there was suddenly even more interest in Dutch nonconformism, something featured in Nigel Smith's essay on literary and artistic motifs in the cross-Channel networks of religious dissenters. He discovers that within English religious radicalism, almost without exception, art or "imaginative literary expression" was either absent or disapproved until the later seventeenth century, whereas it had been a feature of Dutch nonconformist literature, particularly within Doopsgezind-Mennonite circles, for decades before. This gives the lie, Smith notes, to the propaganda of Anglican critics of nonconformism which had portrayed dissenters in general as incapable of the literary arts, and hence as uncivilized. His essay also reveals that the Dutch themselves were also deeply interested in English works, and there was plenty of artistic and literary influence in both directions, as English as well as Dutch nonconformists debated the relationship between the literal word of Scripture and the authority of the spirit or light within. This essay is, indeed, a fitting keynote-capstone for a Special Issue that has been inspired in part by John Taylor's 1641 remarks about the ways that English culture of the seventeenth century was becoming "Amsterdamnified"!

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