“Parks magnificent as paradise”: Nature and Visual Art among the Mennonites of the Early Modern Dutch Republic

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Paintings, prints, and drawings from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries document interests and assumptions about nature that had currency among Dutch Mennonite circles of collectors, intellectuals, and artists.[1] Archival records and biographies indicate that dozens of Dutch Mennonites of the early modern period were artists.[2] Some of them catered to the taste for landscape art, and the demand for botanical illustration elicited by the increased popularity of amateur horticultural collecting and gardening beginning in the mid-sixteenth century. The well-to-do Mennonites who had amassed fortunes in trade or manufacturing often invested money in art, including artwork with nature themes. The wealthiest families purchased country estates where they had the opportunity to cultivate vast pleasure gardens, and collect rare natural treasures, including exotic fruits and flowers. Families that owned such properties and plants often documented their enjoy-

ment of nature by ensuring that their estates and gardens were depicted in the family portraits that they commissioned. Imagery to be considered here offers evidence of some key ways that Dutch Mennonites perceived the natural world and documented their place in the land. Examples drawn from portraiture, landscape imagery, and devotional literature, such as emblem books, demonstrate that Mennonites were conversant in the social, moral, and theological systems of meaning that were often bound up in nature itself and in depictions of nature in art that were produced in the early modern Dutch Republic. The garden, in the context of a country home, presented the opportunity for leisure activities, practical handiwork, botanical study and even theological revelation. Land in art could be documentary, but it could also be enjoyed for its beauty and considered in a context of moralizing and theological contemplation.

Land Ownership: Documentation in Painting and Print

Dutch Mennonites, in rural and urban settings alike, lived and worked alongside neighbours of many faiths. As a result, the cultural and theological insularity that is often noticeable in Mennonite communities and colonies of other regions and eras did not develop in the same way among the Dutch.[3] A contingent of Mennonites in the Dutch Republic worked as farmers – particularly in the areas of Groningen, Friesland, and Noord Holland. [4] Others were involved in manufacture which required rural land for things like milling or linen production. However, many Mennonites opted to make their livings in city centres. Despite some restrictions due to their membership in a religious minority, Mennonites from Flemish, Frisian, Waterlander, and High German branches, as well as other smaller branches, benefitted from, and contributed to, the economic and artistic innovations that are hallmarks of the Dutch Golden Age.[5]

The wealthiest circles of Mennonites, such as the members of the De Neufville, Van Lennep, De Flines, De Wolff, Rutgers, De Clerq, Leeuw, and Van Eeghen families, among others, were often interconnected through marriage and business investments among themselves.[6] This further bolstered their financial standing and propelled them into the strata of the elite merchant classes. These families could afford to spend money on luxurious properties including homes in the most expensive urban areas, such as the "Golden Bend" on the Herengracht of Amsterdam's then brand-new canal belt, and they could invest in development of vast coun-

try estates, particularly along the Vecht River near Utrecht and the Spaarne River near Haarlem.[7] Due to the large concentrations of Mennonite-owned country homes and pleasure gardens in these areas, they came to be known as *Mennistenhemels* ["Mennonite heavens"] by the early-eighteenth century.[8]

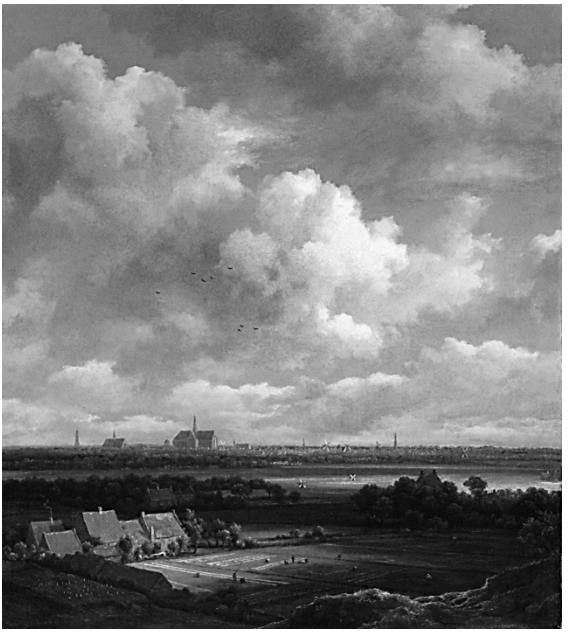

Figure 1. Jacob Isaacksz van Ruisdael, *View of Haarlem with the Bleaching Fields in the Foreground*, ca. 1650 - ca. 1682, oil on canvas, 43 cm × 38 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

The country estates are often documented in topographical imagery and artworks commissioned by the Mennonite property owners themselves. Among the iconic landscapes of the Dutch Golden Age, Jacob Isaacksz van Ruisdael's (ca. 1628–1682) two nearly identical paintings of the landscape near Haarlem are notable since they include the bleaching fields of the Mennonite brothers-in-law, Lucas van Beeck and Lucas de Clercq, as well as their country home *Clerck-en-Beek*, which is visible in the wooded area at the right (Figure 1). The cityscape painter Jan van der Heyden (1637–1712), a member of the Flemish Mennonite church in Amsterdam, painted various estate scenes for Mennonite patrons. This included the country home of the silk merchant and amateur horticulturalist Pieter de Wolff, which was called *Wolfenhoeck* in the Purmer and a property which has convincingly been identified as

the Mennonite-owned estate *Spruytenburg*.[9] Illustrations of views around Haarlem by members of the Mennonite Waterlander Van der Vinne family of artists provide examples of relevant topographical prints and drawings: these include Laurens Vincentsz van der Vinne's (1656–1729) views of estates on the Spaarne River, where many Mennonites owned country homes.[10] Jan Vincentsz van der Vinne's (1663–1721) illustration of the *Menniste bosje* [little Mennonite forest], which was a colloquial name for a part of a forested area known as the *Haarlemmerhout*, also highlights the extent to which Mennonite presence was felt in this area.[11] Country properties along the Vecht River are also documented in collections of topographical prints; most notably, those by Daniel Stoopendael, which are published together in *De zegenpraalende Vecht* [The Triumphant Vecht] (1719). This book includes ninety-eight prints highlighting forty-four different properites, among which are many Mennonite-owned estates and gardens.[12]

Portraits offer particularly personal documentation of specific properties in use by the people who owned them. The portraits of Mennonites on their country estates are generally from the later decades of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth century. This reflects both shifting portraiture conventions in preference for more glossy and classicizing colours, dress, and background within Dutch society in general and the fact that it was from the 1660s forward that Mennonites increasingly began to invest time and money in establishment of country gardens. While some leisure properties were owned by Mennonites in the early-seventeenth century, these country homes were more often in and around agrarian lands. The portraits from the second half of the seventeenth century and the eighteenth century reflect a later phase in property development: families increasingly invested in manicured gardens, statues, and classicizing pavilions.[13] Some portraits focus primarily on documentation of family lineage and present property first and foremost as an indication of wealth and social standing.[14] However, several particularly lavish portraits emphasize the families' attention to their gardens through the portrait sitters' poses and the level of detail devoted to the representation of plants they have cultivated.

The estate *Vijverhof* appears in several portraits that depict the Mennonite Agnes Block (1629–1704), who was widely celebrated for her botanical gardens and aviary. Block purchased the estate in 1670, after the death of her first husband, Hans de Wolff. She had more than four hundred plant species in her garden and among her many horticultural innovations, she is known for successfully growing the first pineapples in the Netherlands.[15] In a portrait

from approximately 1694 by Jan Weenix (1640–1719), Block is shown beside her second husband, the Mennonite silk merchant, Sybrandt de Flines (1623–1697) – cousin to fellow Mennonite silk merchant and avid art collector and botanist Philips de Flines (1640–1700) – who is standing next to selections from their large art collection. Block sits at the centre with her aviary and garden behind her, with a cactus and pineapple among other plants, in the foreground (Figure 2)[16] Pendant portraits of Block and De Flines by Adriaen van der Werff (1659-1722) likewise display their property in the background.[17]

Figure 2. Jan Weenix, *Agnes Block (1629-1704), Sybrand de Flines (1623-1697) and two children in the country estate Vijverhof*, ca. 1694, oil on canvas, 84 cm x 111 cm, collection Amsterdam Museum

Michiel van Musscher's (1645–1705) portrait of the De Neufville family includes the estate *Meer en Berg*, near Heemstede, in the background. The estate was purchased by the family in 1696, the same year that this painting was commissioned.[18] The painting displays successful Flemish Mennonite silk merchant David de Neufville (1654–1729) with his wife Agneta (ca. 1658–1719) – who was a niece of Agnes Block – and their daughter Catharina (1683/4–1729, Figure 3). Catherina holds a drawing she has made of the flower her mother holds, while the father gestures proudly at the daughter's botanical sketch. The poses link the family visually and highlight the family's interest in art and nature.

After the death of David and Agneta, Catherina inherited *Meer en Berg*. Shortly after her own death, her second husband Dirck

van Lennep commissioned a portrait of all of Catharina's children.[19] While this portrait acts to document the family line, the portrait, which even features two of the children playing a racquet sport, is dynamic and playful – emphasizing the enjoyment that the family found in outdoor leisure Not long after the completion of this portrait, due to Dirck van Lennep's financial difficulties, Catharina's sister Petronella de Neufville, who had also married into the Van Lennep family, purchased the property.[20]

Figure 3. Michiel van Musscher, *Portrait of David de Neufville, Agneta de Neufville, and their daughter Catharina*, 1696, oil on canvas, 149 cm x 167.5 cm, collection Amsterdam Museum

Nicolaas Verkolje's (1673–1746) opulent portrait of the Van Mollem family at Zijdenbalen likewise documents family lineage, but this portrait is more dynamic in its representation of the interaction between generations and emphasis is placed on the family's enjoyment of the nature and art that they have amassed in the context of their renowned country property (Figure 4). David van Mollem was primarily responsible for the development of the gardens on the estate, which had been established by his father next to the family silk manufacturing plant; he purchased additional land, and installed garden features such as a large sun dial and statues.[21] The expanse of this garden is further documented in two series of twenty-three drawings by Jan de Beyer (1703–ca. 1780) from about 1645.[22] In Verkolje's portrait, fruits and plants are dispersed

around the veranda, and a painting leans against the ballustrade at the left. David van Mollem is showing his grandson a print or drawing featuring the story of the Good Samaritan; this detail implies collecting interests are being instilled in the next generation.[23]

Figure 4. Nicolaas Verkolje, *David van Mollem with his Family*, 1740, oil on panel, 63.5 cm × 79 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

The Mennonites who had themselves portrayed in ways that emphasized their outdoor property overwhelmingly elected to highlight their leisure land despite the fact that these owners of leisure properties supported their lifestyles via success in manufacturing and trade. Portrait elements, like country houses, gardens, and collections of art and *naturalia* indicated the families' education, social status, and financial success, and they pointed to participation, or aspirations to participate, in the genteel collecting culture of the elite and intellectual circles in Dutch society; however, the emphasis on gardens and nature could also take on devotional and moral significance. The inclusion of well tended gardens highlighted amateur botanical successes but also pointed to theological connotations regarding creation, morality, and mortality.

In the Garden: Devotion, Wealth and the *Mennistenhemmels*

Renaissance humanism had raised awareness of texts from antiquity such as Pliny's *Natural History* and Virgil's writings such

as the *Georgics*, which extoled the virtues of rural living. In the Christian tradition, the garden was a symbolically-laden site, bringing to mind the Garden of Eden, the fall from grace and necessity of toil on the land for food production, the Garden of Gethsemane, and heavenly Paradise.[24] In the context of "country house" poetry, and more practical treatises on gardening, Dutch writers brought these classical and biblical sources together to emphasize the devotional and moral benefits of cultivating and contemplating nature in the context of the country estate.[25]

The country house and garden also enter into writing by Mennonites, where opinions range from articulation of concern regarding worldliness and vanity to strongly-voiced praise of the devotional and moral potential to be found in the garden. Many Mennonite writers and minsters treated the subject of wealth and luxury among Mennonites of the Dutch Golden Age, among them Pieter Pietersz (1574–1651), Jan Philipsz Schabaelje (ca. 1585–1656), and Thieleman Jansz van Braght (1625–1664). [26] Van Braght's introduction to the *Martyr's Mirror* of 1660 provides a particularly specific admonition regarding the grandeur and excesses of the country estates, like those enjoyed by the richest Mennonite families. He argues that many "glorify and praise God…with their mouth," but:

> show nevertheless (to the seduction of the simple) that the world is their dear friend, yea lies nearest to their heart, since most of their works are directed to its service, that they may thereby partake of its glittering but deceptive reward… Numerous large, expensive and ornamented houses, country-seats of splendid architecture…provided with towers, parks magnificent as a paradise, and other embellished pleasure-grounds… indicate this [worldliness] in no small degree." [27]

Van Braght's preface was published in 1660, just as the surge of interest in country houses and estates among Mennonites was becoming more pronounced, but preceding the height of the trend for country estate portraits. His words highlight the tensions between the pleas of Mennonite voices advocating for humility and simplicity and the performance of social success and integration among the wealthy Mennonites of the age.

In 1685, Jan Westerhoven, who served as a deacon in the Flemish Mennonite church and then as a deacon and minster in the Haarlem Waterlander congregation, wrote a devotional book entitled *Den Schepper Verheerlijckt in de Schepselen…* [The Creator Glorified in the Creations…] (1685).[28] This text, which was also republished several times throughout the eighteenth century, is arranged in the format of seven dialogues between Johannes

Rogans, Paulus Verus and Petrus Novus. Over the course of characters' journeys and dialogues, which take place in the Haarlem area, the book explores aspects of creation, including earth and the heavens, animal life, plant life, agriculture, and cultivation of nature in the context of the garden and country estate.[29] In the discussion of country homes, Johannes Rogans expresses his sense that such a country estate as they have just seen can lift the mind to God ["*en dese Hof…is…seer aenleydelijck om't gemoet tot Godt op te beuren*"].[30] Paulus Verus agrees with John in principle, but he laments that worldly lusts and pleasures have overtaken these devotional aspects of the garden as a site for prayer and seeking out God. He suggests that while it may seem as though the property owner seeks out a heaven on earth through artful gardening techniques meant to improve uncultivated nature, such earthly endeavors are as the work of children ["*kinder-werck*"] by comparison to the majesty of God's creation. He also emphasises the temporality of such gardening achievements, pointing out that gardens, plants, livestock, and the landowners themselves, are subject to the ravages of pests, disease, and the passage of time.[31]

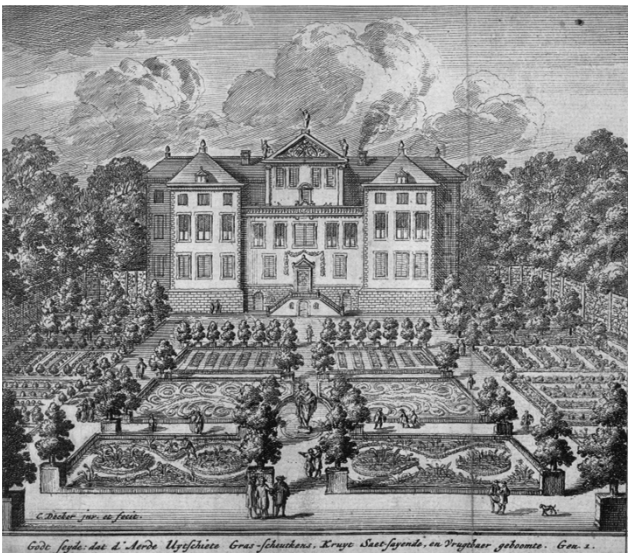

Figure 5. Cornaert Decker, *Country House*, in Jan Westerhoven's *Den Schepper Verheerlijckt in de Schepselen (1685),* opposite page 426, Special Collections, University of Amsterdam, OTM: OK 62-8541

The image of the country house and garden enters into the devotional reading process, since one of Cornaert Decker's six illustra-

tions for this book is a detailed view of a country house and garden (Figure 5). It bears an inscription drawing from Genesis 1, in which God commands the earth to bring forth plants, spices and fruit-bearing trees.[32] This image of a country house is intended to bear biblical and spiritual associations, which suggests that the inclusion of the country house and garden in family portraits could also function this way.

While Westerhoven expresses chagrin at the potential for prideful misuse of country estates, there is nonetheless language of the earthly garden as a model of the heavenly garden and emphasis on enjoying the garden as a site for contemplating God's creative acts. Elsewhere, he also emphasizes the notion that creation leads us to the Creator and the earthly estates to the heavenly.[33] The eighteenth-century papercutting titled *De toegang tot de hemel* [Entryway to heaven] by the eighteen-century Doopsgezind preacher Jan de Bleyker offers further evidence for such a reading of the garden as an earthly model of heavenly paradise.[34] The delicately cutaway image depicts an archway framing a straight path through a garden.

The garden also evidently had metaphorical value as an outer reflection of inner spiritual life. Achior van Abeele, who was a preacher to the United Flemish and Frisian Mennonites in Haarlem from 1712, published *Den Uyterlyken Boogaard, bestaande in Hof- en Landgezigten, Overgebracht op de inwendige Gestalten des Gemoeds* ["The outward orchard...considered in relation to the internal forms of the mind"] in 1730.[35] This collection of poetry, which includes writing about nature and working the land, demonstrates the utility of physical nature imagery for the exploration of the interior devotional state. The frontispiece features an illustration of an orderly garden: a man in the foreground is seated near gardening tools. He points to both a gardener at work behind him, and the fruit that the garden has already yielded in a basket in front of him. The accompanying poem, meant to clarify the meaning of the symbol-laden image, makes the metaphor plain: the goal is "to make the inner garden ready through the tool of the orchard's matters so that each one's 'Life Orchard' is desirably finished/completed."[36]

The physician and amateur gardener Nicolaas Bidloo (ca. 1674–1735), who came from the Zonist Mennonite milieu, takes an altogether positive position on gardens in a short introduction to a series of drawings that he made of the garden that he designed for himself near Moscow.[37] Bidloo took up a post as as the personal physician to Tsar Peter the Great in 1702, and he ended up settling permanently in Russia. The Tsar granted him land along the Jauza

River where he cultivated a Dutch-style pleasure garden. Bidloo produced twenty illustrations of his property in approximately 1730.[38] The accompanying document, which is "an explanation of the drawings as a reminder for my children and family," provides a careful account of the meaning the garden has had for him: he acknowledges the garden as a good gift from God, and highlights the superiority of garden work in comparison to all other "crafts and sciences," with regard to its ability to afford joy and both physical and spiritual benefits to the gardener.[39] He echoes the country house poets by discussing the appeal of country living for those of even the highest ranks and stations, noting that this has been explored by Virgil and others.[40] Bidloo's concluding comments reveal his motivations for drawing illustrations of his garden; namely, to create a record of that which is transient for his own enjoyment, and to provide a didactic tool to highlight for future generations the benefits that he found in gardening. In his own words:

> I decided to draw this my beloved hermitage, so that wherever I may be, these views could help me conjure up the image of the place which had given me so much pleasure. … I have been constantly aware that worldly goods, this garden included, were not of lasting value, that I had not always owned it and that Fate could well remove it from me, and that on dying I must leave it and the world. …[I]f it should chance that I end my days here and keep my comforts, then , my children preserve at least my handiwork , and you will always be able to see what simple pleasures refreshed your father. And should you not have the opportunity of owning this garden, then wander through these drawings of your father, and if you feel so inclined follow his footsteps in seeking such as useful, honest and pleasing diversion.[41]

A combination of these metaphorical, scriptural, and practical meanings of Dutch gardens are likely intended in the country estate portraits of Mennonites, as well as some additional portraits of Mennonites, which do not display country homes, but do focus on the garden. The painting of the Mennonite Gerard van der Rijp (d. 1735) in his city garden makes use of an unusual composition for a portrait since he stands to the side at the left while his carefully tended geometrical flower beds dominate the canvas space (Figure 6).[42] The sitter clearly takes pride in his garden and it is likely that he is aware of the cultural values associated with gardening.

Figure 6. Unknown artist, *Gerard van de Rijp in his stadstuin [city garden]*, late-seventeenth-century, oil on canvas, 81 cm x 98 cm, Collection of the Amsterdam Mennonite Church (Doopsgezind Amsterdam)

Jan de Bray's (1627–1697) double portrait from 1663 of the Haarlem Mennonite printer Abraham Casteleyn (d. 1681) and his wife Margarieta van Bancken (d. 1693) also demonstrates creative thinking regarding the allusion to garden space and its meaning. In the painting at the Rijksmuseum, the couple, who were members of the joint Flemish-Waterlander congregation, are shown sitting on a veranda: the painting highlights Casteleyn's profession and scholarly interests through the inclusion of the books, prints, globe, and bust of Laurens Jansz Coster, who was thought to be the inventor of printing at the time.[43] Margarieta gestures to leafy greenery at the right of the canvas, in a pose that suggests that this couple could at any moment leave the veranda and stroll outdoors. In the final painting a full garden view is not visible; however, a preliminary drawing for this portrait (Figure 7) presents a much larger scene featuring an archway with two additional figures bearing baskets, and a view overlooking an extensive garden. This more elaborate scene must have been discussed between the artist and patrons as one of the original compositional possibilities.[44] In the end, it seems the couple preferred to make themselves the clearer focal point of the portrait. They nonetheless chose to retain Margarieta's energizing gesture toward the – albeit truncated – view of greenery: here even the glimpse of shrubbery is enough to bring to mind garden property and its meanings.

Figure 7. Jan de Bray, *Sketch of Abraham Casteleyn and his wife Margarieta van Bancken*, Pen and brush, 102 mm x 203 mm, Fondation Custodia, Paris, Photo RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague

Landscape: Mennonites as Collectors and Practitioners

In medieval and sixteenth-century painting, landscape typically played a decorative and contextualizing role for genres such as history painting, in which landscapes were intended primarily as backdrops for classical heroes, Biblical stories, and depictions of saints in the wilderness. As the seventeenth century progressed, landscape art was increasingly produced as a genre emancipated from history painting and enjoyed in its own right. Some scenes persist in incorporating biblical or classical narrative elements, while others celebrated the pastoral Dutch landscape or showcased sun-drenched Mediterranean views. The pastoral imagery often provided either idealized, caricatured, or moralized depictions of rural life, which were intended for the enjoyment, contemplation, and moral betterment of (usually urban-dwelling) art collectors.

Artists from Mennonite milieus specialized in, or made contributions to the genre of landscape painting and illustration. In the realm of art theory mention should be made of Karel van Mander (1548–1606) – a member of the Old Flemish congregation in Haarlem. Although he was not a landscape painter, he wrote about landscape art in the eighth chapter of his writing on the foundations of painting, *Den Grondt der edel vry schilder-const*, which formed part of his extremely influential *Schilderboeck* (1604).[45] There are extant landscape paintings featuring atmospheric northern European views by Flemish-born Mennonite, Jacob Savry I (ca. 1566–1603).[46] Other members of the Savry family also produced landscapes and still lifes.[47] Many beloved views of the Dutch country-

side were painted by members of the Ruysdael/Ruisdael family. The most remembered today are those by Salomon van Ruysdael (ca. 1603–1670) and his nephew, Jacob Isaacsz van Ruisdael (ca. 1628–1682). While Jacob, the more famous of the two, arranged to be baptized as an adult in the Dutch Reformed church, the family was within the Flemish Mennonite milieu in Haarlem and Salomon was certainly a member of the Mennonite congregation there.[48] Also worthy of mention is Rembrandt's pupil, Govert Flinck (1616–1660), who was from a Waterlander Mennonite family, though not baptized as a Mennonite himself. He is best known as a portraitist; however, he produced some landscape paintings using a style so closely resembling his teacher's that they have often been misattributed to Rembrandt. Jan van der Heyden (1637–1712), already discussed, was celebrated for his work in the related genre of cityscape painting and members of the Van der Vinne family produced many nature views and topographical prints. The Amsterdam print maker Jan Luyken (1649–1712), who was baptized in the Amsterdam Mennonite church *Bij't Lam*, is now best known in Mennonite circles for his illustrations in the second edition of Thieleman Jansz van Braght's *Martyr's Mirror* of 1685; but he also produced many emblems and illustrations that include landscape and nature themes. The Amsterdam-based draftsmen Cornelis Pronk (1691–1759), who was a member of the Old Frisian congregation, and his pupil Hendrik de Winter (1717–1790), a member of the Zonist congregation, also made topographical views, and illustrations of Mennonite churches.[49]

Artists working in the Dutch Republic were generally pragmatic in their aim to produce artwork that could appeal to the broadly Christian but multi-denominational, marketplace within which they worked.[50] There was not a particular "Mennonite" approach to depicting or interpreting the landscape in art; rather, the *oeuvres* and interests of Mennonite artists demonstrate that the makers engaged with and contributed to the widely understood iconographical conventions for landscape art in that time.

Household inventories demonstrate that Mennonites – except for the strictest of groups – collected art much in the same way as other Dutch citizens of similar financial means. This included landscape art, which was a popular genre for collectors across income brackets and faith traditions.[51] A portrait from 1663 by Hendrick Sorgh (1610/1611–1670) offers visual evidence of a Mennonite family's interest in landscape art and its meanings, as the painting depicts the Bierens family working together in their kitchen with three large landscape paintings hanging on the back wall (Figure 8). The choice to be portrayed in the kitchen, busily

preparing food, is unusual, and it reflects the family's emphasis on values of humility and hard work. These themes are paired with the imagery of family harmony via the inclusion of the viola da gamba being played by the Bierens boy. [52] The inclusion of landscape paintings is also intentional and laden with meaning. Whether or not these paintings were actually in the Bierens' kitchen, their inclusion emphasizes the family's interest in art collecting and suggests that they are familiar with various devotional and moral meanings attached to landscape imagery.[53]

Figure 8. Hendrick M. Sorgh, *Jacob Bierens with his wife Cornelia Haeck, their three children and a maid*, 1663, oil on panel, 52.5 cm x 71 cm, collection Amsterdam Museum

Nature in art could be admired simply for its beauty, and a landscape painting could be admired purely for the virtuosic skill of the artist.[54] However, Mennonites, like other Christian groups in the Dutch Republic, were well versed in the scriptures, which include an abundance of stories, metaphors, similes, proverbs, parables, admonitions, and poems that explore creation, use nature imagery symbolically, extol the majesty of the universe, and reflect upon the place of humanity in relationship to God. These models for thinking about creation and understanding nature metaphorically could shape the experience of viewing nature in art. A landscape could prompt reflection on theological themes, including God's revelation through nature, the pilgrimage of the soul through earthly life, and *vanitas*, that is, the transience of all earthly things.

Devotional and Moralizing Meaning in Landscape Art: Creation, *Vanitas* and Pilgrimage

In Christian tradition, nature has long been understood as "God's first book of revelation," as per Romans 1:20, which states, that "…since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse."[55] Seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century Mennonites would have been familiar with the Pauline concept from scripture itself and from the prevalence of this theme in the writings of co-religionists and reknowned Calvinist thinkers. The idea was expounded by Jean Calvin in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*[56] and echoed in the second article of the *Belgic Confession* (1591), which was a key confession for the Dutch Reformed throughout the Republic.[57] It also recurs in writing by Dutch Reformed intellectuals, such as Petrus Hondius, Constantijn Huygens and Jacob Cats.[58] Among writings of Mennonite theologians, the Flemish Mennonite intellectual and preacher Adriaan van Eeghem (1631–1709) discusses the creator's revelation through creation as part of his *Verhandelinge van de Wet der Nature* [On the Laws of Nature] (1701).[59]

The theme of creation glorifying the Creator is the overarching theme of Jan Westerhoven's *Den Schepper Verheerlijckt in de Schepselen* of 1685. It is also the central theme of a concluding poem in Westerhoven's book, which is by the Rotterdam-based Waterlander Mennonite deacon and Collegiant, Joachim Oudaan (1628–1692).[60] Like the country house illustration by Decker (Figure 5), the other illustrations in the book emphasize theological readings of nature by pairing the images with scripture. The frontispiece includes a pastoral view and the inscription from Psalm 103: "Praise the Lord, all his works everywhere in his dominion. Praise the Lord, my soul." The other five illustrations, which are all set around Haarlem, draw their inscriptions from the Genesis creation account or the verses in Psalms 147 and 148, which call upon the elements, land forms, and creatures to praise God.[61]

Decker's print images are recognizably set in Haarlem as per Westerhoven's narrative. This reinforces possibilities for viewers to engage in devotional thought built upon familiar scenery. It seems reasonable to consider that devotional and moralizing connotations so comfortably applied to the print form by author and readers could have passed relatively easily from the context of print to the contemplation of the actual landscape around Haarlem

and the study of landscape paintings that were encountered in day-to-day life.

The *vanitas* theme, a reminder of the vanity and transience of earthly life and material things, is another theme frequently evident in both landscape and still life genres. Elements in nature scenes – like water pouring over rocks that slowly erode or trees standing tall next to others that are fallen and rotting – highlight cycles of growth and decay. Landscape features such as homes, fences or barns, which are subject to the weathering of time, likewise point to the transience of human structures and achievements, and church steeples, which act as a reminder of devotional life and moral living, also often dot the horizons.[62] Still life, the other key art genre focused on nature, explores similar themes of transience with imagery like the bloom and wilt of flowers and the ripening and rotting of fruit.

The age-old Christian theme of pilgrimage was an important religious motif in early modern landscape art as in literary culture. Particular features in landscape art, such as dilapidated cottages, dovecots, and lazing peasants, were widely understood to take on iconographical associations with worldly temptations, such as sloth and lust. Individuals or small groups of pilgrims shown journeying through the landscape therefore, made reference to the journey of the eternal soul through earthly trials and tribulations.[63]

The visual record demonstrates that such themes were widespread in art at this time and found purchase among Mennonite circles of artists, authors, and collectors.[64] Pilgrimage imagery, which is common in the *oeuvres* of many renowned landscape painters, notably Van Goyen (1596-1656) and Van der Velde (1587-1630), is also evidenced by the work of Salomon van Ruysdael and Jacob van Ruisdael; these painters all often incorporate lone figures or small groups making their way through the wilderness or wandering along paths through small towns.

Govert Flinck got his initial start in the Amsterdam art marketplace through patronage from his networks of Mennonite relatives.[65] Among his earliest commissions are portraits of his cousin Dirck Leeuw (1614–1652), who later became a Remonstrant, and a boy who is thought to be his Mennonite nephew, David Leeuw (1631–1703). [66] Both Leeuw relatives are shown in an outdoor landscape setting. David, in particular, looks as though he is on a journey, with a travel cloak and walking stick in hand. Both of these are symbols that may intentionally allude to pilgrimage.

Many similar examples also exist in print culture. For instance, the Waterlander Mennonite Jan Philipsz Schabaelje's (ca. 1585–1656) *Lusthof des Gemoets* (1635), which follows the journey and

dialogues of the "Wandering Soul," was widely read by Mennonites, along with many others.[67] The earlier mentioned Amsterdam printmaker Jan Luyken illustrated a later edition of Schabaelje's text and produced a variety of emblems that include pilgrimage motifs, and reflections on nature and landscape. [68] An example of this motif is the frontispiece he produced for a translation of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.[69]

Frans Hals' pupil and Waterlander Mennonite Vincent Laurensz van der Vinne also worked with the poet and fellow Mennonite, Adriaan Spinneker, to provide the images for Spinneker's *Leerzaame Zinnebeelden* (1714).[70] While best known as a painter of still lifes, Van der Vinne produced a variety of landscape and nature images for this emblem book, a form of devotional literature pairing symbolic images with scriptural quotes and edifying text. Recurring morals of the images include reminders to seek out the right path, drawing upon the imagery of the narrow way (Matthew 7:13–14), as in the illustration *Wel zwaar, doch zeker* [Hard yet certain] with a pilgrim gesturing toward a narrow bridge in the landscape. Pathway imagery is likewise used in *Het heilzaam ongemak* [Healing discomfort], an illustration of a man trudging through a storm, with verses on misleading paths and the process of finding level paths.[71] There are also several illustrations with nature scenes or landscapes featuring biblical metaphors of sowing and reaping,[72] and warnings against pride among the rich, supported by verses stating that human life is as brief as the flourishing of a blade of grass or a wild flower.[73] One expansive landscape vista includes scripture on the breadth of God's creation, and God's revelation through creation (Psalm 104:24; Romans 1:20).[74] This emblem book provides evidence of Mennonite engagement with a whole range of theological and moralizing associations that were typically applied to imagery of nature in painting and print at this time.

Tulipmania and the Collection of *Naturalia*: Amateur Botanical Study and Innovation

Throughout the early modern period, trade brought new and interesting natural plant specimens into the Lowlands. Rare vegetation and exotic fruits were expensive goods to be treasured, cultivated and shown off. The collecting culture of the early modern period typically involved the gathering of both natural curiosities and art. The family and visitors alike could gather to look at these collections, which were marvels of nature, evidence of the

majesty of creation, and examples of artistic virtuosity. Mennonites who were art collectors and moved among the circles of the wealthy merchant class and elite also collected or cultivated treasured and exotic specimens of *flora* and *fauna*, often including fruits, vegetables, flowers, spices, and other plants, as well as birds and insects.

The seventeenth century was a time of scientific revolution with the development of new tools, such as the microscope invented by the Dutchman Antonie van Leeuwenhoek (1632–1723), and the spread of scientific philosophies focused on gathering empirical evidence, as embodied by the philosophy of René Descartes (1596–1650), who also lived and worked in the Dutch Republic for much of his life. Therefore, Renaissance humanist interest in classical natural history text was paired with the production of many new studies of nature attempting to offer encyclopaedic categorizations of natural specimens. At the same time, all this was shaped by a broadly Christian worldview which situated humans in a God-given position of control over plant and animal life. This interpretation of the relationship between humans and nature is expressed in the creation account, particularly in Genesis 1:26, which reads: "then God said, 'let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'" Such beliefs on humanity in relationship to nature are evident in Dutch Mennonite confessional statements on creation in the *Thirty-Three Articles* (1617) and the *Jan Cents Confession* (1630).[75]

Some artists opted to specialize as botanical illustrators, catering to the interests of wealthy collectors willing to spend money on prints and drawings of various types of flowers, or commission illustrations of their own collections. The Mennonite Crispijn van de Passe II (1594–1670) produced one particularly lavish book of flower illustrations, titled *Hortus Floridus* (1614), with the assistance of his father and other members from this Mennonite family of printmakers.[76] Members of the Haarlem Waterlander Mennonite Van de Vinne family, in particular, Laurens Vincentsz van der Vinne (1658–1729), the son of Vincent Laurensz van der Vinne, and his grandson, Laurens Jacobsz van der Vinne (1712–1742), also succeeded as botanical illustrators.

In the 1630s, tulips were traded for exorbitant prices in what has come to be known as "tulipmania." Large networks of wealthy Mennonite merchants, including members from the families De Clercq, Moens, Wynants, Bosch, Wanscher , and others, were involved in the trade, cultivation and collection of rare and expensive

tulips that had been introduced to the Lowlands from Turkey and Asia in the sixteenth century. The networks among Mennonite traders extended across the Republic, with particular concentrations in Haarlem, Amsterdam, Utrecht, and Rotterdam.[77] These Mennonite tulip traders had made their fortunes in trade and other professions, and invested and lost large sums in what has often been considered the first speculative bubble in the history of European capitalism. Because tulip bulbs were frequently traded for large sums of money while they were still being cultivated – and therefore, often, no actual bulbs changed hands at the time of the transaction – this tulip mania was also referred to cynically as the "*windhandel*" [wind trade], that is, a trade in nothing at all. The trade in tulips came to a spectacular halt with the crash of inflated bulb prices in February1637.The entire affair sparked many moralizing and satirical responses. Some Mennonite hymnals included critique of the tulip "windhandel," such as the *'t Gheestelijck Bloem-Hofken* (1637), published in the year of the crash in bulb prices, and in later editions of *Gheestelijck Kruydt-Hofken,* and *Ryper Liedtboecxken*.[78] There were also many satirical responses in painting and print, such as the print *Floraes Gecks-kap* [Flora's Fools Cap][79] and Jan Brughel the Younger's painting of tulip traders as monkeys in human clothes;[80] Hendrick Gerritz Pot's painting of Haarlem tulip traders, titled *Wagon of Fools*,[81] and Crispin van de Passe II's related print, *Flora's Mallewagen* (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Crispijn van de Passe II, *Flora's Mallewagen*, 1637, engraving, 315 mm × 391 mm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam

A direct reference to Mennonite involvement in the tulip trade occurs in both Pot's painting and Van de Passe II's print illustration; however, the Mennonite connection is made most evident in the print version, since Van de Passe II incorporates inscriptions throughout the scene to clarify aspects of the satire.[82] The painting and print depict citizens who have foolishly dropped everything to chase a wagon with sails presided over by Flora. The wind-propelled wagon makes clear reference to the "wind trade" in tulips; it also draws upon visual associations with familiar satirical tropes such as the "ship of fools," the "wagon of excrement," and Carnival, where such wagons with sails could be used in parades. This last reference reinforces the notion that speculation in tulips displayed a "topsy-turvy" inversion of morality and common sense.[83] Van de Passe, erstwhile illustrator of *Hortus Floridus*, finds a different application for his knowledge of flower names and types here: tulips are scattered across the ground and throughout the scene, all labeled with names of real tulips that were collected at the time. For instance, Flora holds three extremely expensive tulips: the *Semper Augustus*, *Generael Bol* and *Admirael van Horn*. In both Pot's painting and this print there are crests on the side of the wagon; Anne Goldgar notes that these refer to inns and taverns that were important locations for tulip trading.[84] Script is written above the symbols in van de Passe's print, making it possible to identify specific names of inns and taverns: *Doellen*, *Myniste Bruylo* […], *Witte Wambis*, *Bastart Pyp.*, *'t Vlyes*,*'t Haentien*, and *Doellen tot Horn*. The text above the second crest, which reads "*Myniste bruylo* […]" – though cut short by equipment from the wagon – is clearly a reference to the Amsterdam inn *Os in de Bruyloft*, also known as the '*Menniste Bruyloft*' [Mennonite Wedding]. This establishment was owned by the Waterlander Jan Theunisz, a collector and trader of art and curiosities.[85] His inn was counted among those where tulip traders commonly met and where tulip auctions took place.[86] The *Menniste Bruyloft* recurs in seventeenth-century polemical imagery against Mennonites, but this seems to be the earliest example.[87]

In contrast to the negative reception received by tulip traders, the Mennonites who excelled as amateur gardeners later in the century have a generally positive legacy in print and in art. In many cases these individuals took pains not only to collect and cultivate nature, but to commission artwork documenting their collections, thereby taking the legacy and visibility of their collection into their own hands. Agnes Block was very intentional about the documentation of her nature collection at Vijverhof. She commissioned botanical illustrations of her collection from artists and nat-

uralists among her networks of friends, whom she would invite to visit her estate.[88] After Block's death, the books of drawings were initially purchased by Valerius Röver. The catalogue of his collection from 1730 provides insight as to the specimens in Block's collection, even though the pages were subsequently dispersed and collected separately.[89] A variety of extant loose illustrations from these books are preserved in art galleries around the world and these provide a picture of the high quality work she commissioned.[90]

Many of Block's portraits also self-referentially emphasize her endeavors to document her nature collections in art. The design for the title page to one of her books of botanical illustrations features her in her gardens holding a book of drawings for which the drawing at hand is likely the intended titlepage.[91] In the Weenix portrait she holds a drawing of a bird, and in the pendant portrait by Van der Werff she holds an illustration of a flower.[92] Garden specimens are even highlighted in a commemorative medal that Block commissioned in 1700.[93] The coin, designed by J. Boskam bears the inscription, "Agneta Block *Flora Batava*," identifying her as "flower goddess" of the Netherands. Her portrait is displayed in profile on one side and on the other, a depiction of her as *Flora* holding a flower and standing before her garden. [94] The latter side bears the inscriptions "Vijverhof" and "*Fert Arsque Laborque Quod Natura Negat*" [Art and labour bring about what nature cannot achieve].[95] Copies of the commemorative medal itself were evidently circulated beyond her immediate circles, as is apparent by German scholar and travel writer, Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach's (1683–1734) discussion of the coin in his account of his travels in Amsterdam. He describes it alongside other medallions in porcelain dealer Andreas Schoemaker's collection and explains her title of *Flora Batava*, noting that it is "because she had been such a great connoisseur of flowers and plants."[96]

Poems, biographies, botanical texts, and travel journals also praise the horticultural accomplishments of Pieter de Wolff, Agnes Block's step-son. In Jan Commelin's *Nederlantze Hesperides (1676)*, which is a book about the cultivation of lemons and oranges in the Netherlands, he is lauded for his success with growing these fruits in his *winterplaats* [greenhouse] at *Wolfenhoeck*. Commelin describes the appearance of the greenhouse, including the measurements, the placement of the windows and door and the placement of the heating stoves to guard against cold in the winter; he goes on to say that this greenhouse has no equal in Holland with regard to its size or the quality of its construction.[97] The book also includes illustrations of the greenhouse exterior and interior.

The Mennonite Philips de Flines (1640–1700), like Agnes Block, his cousin-in-law, was diligent about commissioning botanical illustrations of artwork to preserve and show off the array of flora and fauna in his collection. He had established the country estate Spaarenhout on the Spaarne by Haarlem with his wife Suzanna Rutgers (1641–1679) in 1676, and the fruits of his labour were praised by the botanist Paulus Herman in his book *Paradisus Batavus* (1698). He was also praised by Mennonite writer Govert Bidloo (1649–1713), the celebrated anatomist and uncle to Nicloaas Bidloo, in *Mengel Poëzy* (1719) because of the range of the exotic spices, plants, flowers, trees, and animals that De Flines had cultivated and collected there.[98] Constantijn Huygens also notes De Flines' interest in art, architecture, and gardening.[99] Due to his patronage connection with fellow Mennonite Laurens Vincentsz van der Vinne, the diversity of De Fline's collection is also mentioned by the eighteenth-century artist and art biographer Arnold Houbraken in his 1718 biography of artsits. As Houbraken recounts, Laurens Vincentsz spent most of his time painting flowers for the *Floristen* in oil and in watercolour, and "especially for Mr. Philips de Flines, who brought forth all the strangest and rarest plant species from the East and West Indies for him to illustrate."[100] Illustrations that still exist today attest to Van de Vinne's skill as well as the diversity of De Flines' collection.[101]

Such paintings and illustrations commissioned by celebrated amateur botanists ensured that prized fruits and flowers – surely the most ephemeral of all Dutch Golden Age collectors' items – would be preserved long after the original plants withered. These were visual documents that at once acknowledged and combated the transience of nature, and they evidenced the combined impulses of the gardener, collector, art lover, and natural scientist that came together in the realm of amateur gardening. Art and literature together provide a valuable picture of Dutch Mennonites' botanical achievements, gardening interests, property investments and the existing schemas for understanding the natural world in the early modern period. Portraits of Mennonite families on their properties continue to provide clear pictures of specific Mennonite-owned gardens and they offer insight into the ways that these families wished to be perceived in relation to the culture of genteel country life. Poetry and emblem books, together with evidence of the collection and production of landscape painting, demonstrate that Mennonites were conversant in the iconographical vocabularies associated with land, plant life, and gardens.

Notes

[1] All images of artworks in this article are printed with permission from the organizations to which they belong.

[2] Ruud Lambour, "Het doopsgezind milieu van Michiel van Musscher (1645–1705) en van andere schilders in zeventiende-eeuws Amsterdam: een revisie en ontdekking," *Oud-Holland* 125, no. 4 (2012): pp. 193-214.

[3] On integration of Dutch Mennonies, see Alistair Hamilton, Sjouke Voolstra, and Piet Visser, eds., *From Martyr to Muppy*: *A Historical Introduction to Cultural Assimilation Processes of a Religious Minority in the Netherlands - the Mennonites* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 1994), 67-82.

[4] Nanne van der Zijpp, "Farming Among Mennonites in the Netherlands," *Global Anabaptist Mennonite Encyclopedia Online* (hereafter *GAMEO*), 1956, http://gameo.org/index.php?title=Farming_Among_Mennonites_in_the_Netherlands&oldid=118179.

[5] The less conservative and confession-bound Dutch Mennonites preferred the name *Doopsgezind*. See Piet Visser, "Mennonites and Doopsgzinden in the Netherlands, 1535–1700," in *A Companion to Anabaptism and Spiritualism, 1521–1700*, eds. John D. Roth and James M. Stayer, (Leiden: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2007), 299.

[6] See, for example, Kees Zandvliet, et al., *De 250 rijksten van de Gouden Eeuw: kapitaal, macht, familie en levensstijl* (Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, 2006), 430-431.

[7] On urban Mennonite properites, see, Wietskenel de Jong and Johan Pennings, *Het doopers wandel-boek: Twee wandelingen door Amsterdam* (Amsterdam: Verenigde Doopsgezinde Gemeente Amsterdam, 2011), 11-43.

[8] Erik de Jong , "Flora Batava: Agnes Block op haar buiten Vijverhof," in *Kunstlicht: Informatief subfaculteitsblad van de Afdeling Kunstgeschiedenis en Archeologie van de Vrije Universiteit*, no. 14 (1984): 23; Yme Kuiper, "*Van blekerijen naar Mennistenhemels. Doopsgezinden en hun buitenplaatsen rond Haarlem*," *Arcadië* 8, no. 16 (2016): 12-15.

[9] Jan van der Heyden, *Wolfenhoeck in the Purmer*, oil on panel, 33.8 cm x 39.7 cm, Private Collection, Photo RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague, https://rkd.nl/explore/images/185294. See, Bikker, "The Town Bookkeeper and Fellow Mennonites: Notes on Some of the Original Owners of van der Heyden's Paintings," *Jan van der Heyden (1637–1712)*, Peter C. Sutton, ed. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2006), 86 and notes 18-20.

[10] Kuiper, "*Van blekerijen naar Mennistenhemels*," 15. See: Laurens Vincentsz van der Vinne, *De hofstede Sparenhout bij Haarlem [The Country Estate Sparenhout near Haarlem]*, 1682, pen, 236 mm × 400 mm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.63742.

[11] Jan Vincentsz van der Vinne, *Bij't Menniste bosje [At the little Mennonite forest]*, 1690, etching, 158mm × 188mm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.190569.

[12] See: Klaas van der Hoek, et al., *Gedoopt: vijf eeuwen doopsgezinden in Nederland* (Oostzaan: Doopsgezinde Historische Kring, 2011), 8-9.

[13] De Jong, "Flora Batava," 22-24; Erik de Jong, *Natuur en Kunst: Nederlandse tuin- en landschapsarchitectuur 1650–1740* (Amsterdam: Thoth, 1993), 160-167.

[14] Frans Decker's particularly formal portrait of the Mennonite merchant Willem Kops (1695–1756), his wife, Johanna de Vos, and their children provides such an example. For the illustration and details, see: Kuiper, "Van blekerijen naar Mennistenhemels," 14.

[15] Cornelia Catharina van de Graft, "Agnes Block en haar liefde voor tropische gewassen," *Jaarboekje Oud-Utrecht* (1962): 117-124.

[16] Eddy de Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw*, cat no. 64, 265-267. See also: Claudine Majzels, "Mennonite Women and Seventeenth Century Dutch Art: A Feminist Analysis," *Journal of Mennonite Studies* 17 (1999): 88-89.

[17] Adriaen van der Werff, *Portrait of Agnes Block* (1629-1704), 1675 – 1699, oil on canvas, 48 cm x 39 cm, Private Collection, Photo RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague, https://rkd.nl/explore/images/ 136885

[18] Robert E. Gerhardt and Francis Griep-Quint, *Michiel van Musscher (1645–1705): De weelde van de Gouden Eeuw,* eds. Robert E. Gerhardt, Tonko Grever en Francis Griep-Quint (Zwolle : Wbooks, 2012), 53, 55, illustration on 56; Zaal, *Het huis aan de Bocht*, 25-39, esp. 26.

[19] Attributed to Jacob Appel, *The Children of Catharina de Neufville*, ca. 1730, oil painting, Photo RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague, https://rkd.nl/explore/images/131733. Zaal, *Het huis aan de Bocht*, 30-31.

[20] Ibid., 32; I. H. van Eeghen, "Het drama van Meerenberg," *Amstelodamum* 59, no.9 (1972): 196-197, 199-200.

[21] Erik de Jong, "De Lusthof Zijdebalen," in *Zijdebalen-lusthof aan de vecht: tuin- en tekenkunst uit het begin van de 18de eeuw* (Utrecht: Centraal Museum Utrecht, 1981), 3.

[22] Erik de Jong, "Virgilian Paradise: a Dutch Garden near Moscow in the Early 18th Century," *Journal of Garden History* 1, no. 4 (1981): 305.

[23] Paul Knolle, et al., *Nicolaas Verkolje, 1673–1746: De fluwelen hand* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2011), 109.

[24] De Jong, "Virgilian Paradise," 308.

[25] Among the many notable examples, see Petrus Hondius' *Dapes Inemptae, of de Moufe-schans, dat is, De soeticheydt des bvyten-levens* (1621). De Jong, "'*Nederlantze Hesperides*': The Anglo-Dutch Garden in the Age of William and Mary," *Journal of Garden History* 8, nos. 2, 3 (1988): 17.

[26] See: Karl Koop, "Dangers of Superabundance: Pieter Pietersz, Mennonites, and Greed during the Dutch Golden Age," *Journal of Mennonite Studies*, 27 (2009): 61-73.

[27] Thieleman Jansz van Braght, "Preface," in *The Bloody Theatre, or, Martyr's Mirror: Of the Defenseless Christians who Baptized only upon Confession of Faith, and who Suffered and Died for the Testimony of Jesus, their Saviour, from the Time of Christ to the Year A.D. 1660*, 15th ed., trans. Joseph F. Sohm (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1987), 9.

[28] Jan van Westerhoven Jr., *Den Schepper Verheerlijckt in de Schepsele, Ofte Choor-gesang, Aller geschapene dingen, daer in den Mensch de Bovensangh heeft* (Haarlem: Jan Gerritsz Geldorp, 1685).

[29] Westerhoven, "Zesde Reis; Handelende van de Hoven, Thuynen, de gemene Wegen; en de Bloemen, Kruyden, en Gewassen, die sig daer vertoonen. &c.," in *Den Schepper Verheerlijckt in de Schepsele*...(1685), 423 ff.

[30] Ibid., 484.

[31] Ibid., 484-486.

[32] "Godt Seyde: dat d'Aerde Uytschiete Gras-Scheutkens, Kruyt Saet-Sayende, en Vrugtbaer geboomte. Gen 1," in ibid., ill. opposite p. 426.

[33] Ibid., 552.

[34] Jan de Bleyker, "De toegang tot de hemel," papercutting, eighteenth century, Westfries Museum, Hoorn. René Dessing, unpublished symposium lecture, *Doopsgezinde Buitenplaatsen,Voorjaarsbijeenkomst 2016*, Doopsgezinde Historische Kring, (Haarlem, March 19, 2016), web. *http://www.dhkonline.nl/bijeenkomsten/2016/2016-03-19-haarlem-dhk-dag/*.

[35] Achior van Abeele, *Den Uyterlyken Boogaard, bestaande in Hof- en Landgezigten, Overgebracht op de inwendige Gestalten des Gemoeds* (Haarlem: Izaäk Enschedé, 1730).

[36] "*Op het zinnebeeldig vertoog van de titelplaat*" [On the allegorical meaning of the titlepage], trans. Nina Schroeder, in Achior van den Abeele, *Den Uyterlyken Boogaard*,unpaginated, preceding the frontispice, lines 22-24.

[37] De Jong, "Virgilian Paradise," 305-345.

[38] De Jong suggests this date based on biographical details and analysis of the images. Ibid., 306.

[39] Nicolaas Bidloo, "A rough explanation of the drawings as a reminder for my children and family," at Leyden State University Library, BPL 2727, 2 r,v. (27 cm x 42.5 cm). For image reproductions, see David Willemse, *The Unknown Drawings of Nicholas Bidloo, Director of the First Hospital in Russia* (Voorburg: s.n., 1975). Bidloo's written introduction is translated to English by De Jong, "Virgilian Paradise," 338, 340.

[40] De Jong, "Virgilian Paradise," 338, 340.

[41] Ibid., p. 340.

[42] Erik de Jong and Marleen Dominicus-van Soest, et al., *Aardse paradijzen: de tuin in de Nederlandse kunst*, cat. no. 78, (Ghent: Snoeck-Ducaju & Zoon, 1996), 113.

[43] Jan de Bray, *Haarlem Mennonite Printer and Publisher, Abraham Casteleyn and his wife Margarieta van Bancken*, 1663, oil on canvas, 83 cm × 106.5 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.6225. Piet Visser, et al., *Menno Simons: Places, Portraits and Progeny*, trans. Gary K. Waite (Krommenie, etc.: Friesens with the University Library Amsterdam and Eastern Mennonite University, 1996), 148; Majzels, "Mennonite Women and Seventeenth Century Dutch Art," 81-82.

[44] Eddy De Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw. Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Zwolle and Haarlem: Uitgeverij Waanders and Frans Hals Museum, 1986), 181-183.

[45] Karel van Mander, "Van het landschap," in *Schilder-boeck* (Haarlem: Passchier van Wesbusch, 1604), 34r-38r.

[46] For an example, see *Jacob Savery (I), Landscape with the Story of Jephthah's daughter, 1580 –1589,* Gouache on vellum laid down on panel, 18.5 cm × 31 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

[47] Jacob Savry's brother, Roelent Savery (1576–1639), is the most famous artist from this family; it is not clear whether Roelant was also a Mennonite. Lambour, "Het doopsgezind milieu van Michiel van Musscher," 235, fn 20.

[48] See: Christopher Richard Joby, *Calvinism and the Arts: A Re-Assessment*. (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), 176-178 and notes 33-42.

[49] See: A. W. Gerlagh, et al., *Pronk met Pen en Penseel: Cornelis Pronk (1691–1759) tekent Noord-Holland*, eds. L. Kooijmans, et al., (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1997). On De Winter, see 163-166. The text incorrectly states that he was baptized two years after his birthdate. The 1734 date is shown in the Amsterdam Municipal Archives, Archief 877, inv. nr. 37,

Archief van de Doopsgezinde Gemeente de Zon; Lidmaten doopsgezinden: NL-SAA-32640001.

[50] For one approach to this subject, see: Volker Manuth, "Denomination and Iconography: The Choice of Subject Matter in the Biblical Painting of the Rembrandt Circle," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 22, no. 4 (1993–1994): 235-252.

[51] Alan Chong, "The Market for Landscape Painting in Seventeenth Century Holland," *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting*, ed. Peter C. Sutton (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1987), 104-120, on the open marketplace and landscape, see esp. 112-113; and, Piet Visser, et al., *Menno Simons: Places,Portraits and Progeny*, 132 and note ix.

[52] De Jongh, *Portretten van echt en trouw. Huwelijk en gezin in de Nederlandse kunst van de zeventiende eeuw* (Zwolle and Haarlem: Uitgeverij Waanders and Frans Hals Museum, 1986), cat. no. 58, 248-250. See also Arjan de Koomen, "Muziek in verf: Harmonisatie in het Hollandse groepsportret," *Kunstschrift* no. 4. (2014): 38.

[53] Harold S. Bender, "Mennonites and Art," *Mennonite Quarterly Review*, 27, no. 3 (1953): 194.

[54] John Calvin condones as much in his *Instutitutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge, vol. I (Grand Rapids: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983), 135.

[55] Romans 1:20. See: Eric Jorink, *Reading the Book of Nature in the Dutch Golden Age, 1575–1715* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[56] Jean Calvin writes that God "revealed himself and daily discloses himself in the whole workmanship of the universe. As a consequence men cannot open their eyes without being compelled to see him…" John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, vol. I.5.1, 51.

[57] Second article of Guido de Bres, et al., "Belgic Confession (1561)," *Ecumenical Creeds and Reformed Confessions* (Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids: CRC Publications, 1987), 77.

[58] Sutton, "Introduction," in *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting*, 13.

[59] Adriaan van Eeghem, *Verhandelinge van de wet der nature* (Middelburg: Michiel van Hoekke, 1701), 21, 24-26.

[60] Joachim Oudaan, "God En't Goddelijke Gekent, en doorzien, uyt de Schepslen," in Westerhoven, *Den Schepper Verheerlijckt in de Schepselen* (1685): unpaginated [end of text].

[61] Westerhoven, *Den Schepper Verheerlijckt in de Schepselen* (1685), 42, 208, 320, 356, 396, 426 (illustrations).

[62] Josua Bruyn, "Toward a Scriptural Reading of Seventeenth-Century Dutch Landscape Paintings," *Masters of 17th-Century Dutch Landscape Painting*, 84-101. Reindert Falkenburg, "Calvinism and the Emergence of Dutch Seventeenth-Century Landscape Art: A Critical Evaluation," in *Seeing Beyond the Word. Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition*, ed. Paul Corby Finney (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 343-368; Boudewijn Bakker, *Landscape and Religion from Van Eyck to Rembrandt* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012).

[63] See note 62, above.

[64] Reindert Falkenburg, "Landschapschilderkunst en doperse spiritualiteit in de 17de eeuw—een con-nectie?," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 16 (1990): 129-153.

[65] Arnold Houbraken, "Govert Flinck," in *De Grote Schouwburg der Nederlandse kunstschilders en schilderessen*, (Amsterdam: 1718–1721), 58-61.

[66] For more on the Leeuw family and art see Robert Wenley, *Flinck in Focus: A Question of Identity in 17th-century Dutch Portraiture*, exhibition booklet (Birmingham: Barber Institute of Fine Arts, 2015); Margriet van Eikema Hommes, et al., "The Hidden Youth of Dirck Jacobsz Leeuw: A Portrait by Govert Flinck Revealed," *The Rijksmuseum Bulletin*, 64 (2016):5-61.

[67] See Piet Visser, "Jan Philipsz Schabaelje, A Seventeenth Century Dutch Mennonite, and his *Wandering Soul*," in Hamilton, Voolstra and Visser, eds., *Martyr to Muppy*, 99-109.

[68] Piet Visser, "De pelgrimage van Jan Luyken door de doopsgezinde boekenwereld,"*Doopsgezinde Bijdragen*, 25 (1999): 167-195; Irvin B. Horst, "De geestelijke pelgrimstocht van Jan Luyken," *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen*, 9 (1983): 113-124.

[69] Jan Luyken, *Pelgrim klopt aan bij een poort*, 1687, etching, 115 mm × 65 mm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. Title page of John Bunyan, *Eens Christens Reyse na de Eeuwigheyt*, 5th ed. (Amsterdam: Johannes Boekholt, 1687).

[70] Adriaan Spinneker, *Leerzaame Zinnebeelden* (Haarlem: Izaak van der Vinne, 1714). See illustrations on 10, 14, 46, 76, 188, 200, and 212.

[71] Accompanying verses are Proverbs 14:12 and Hebrews 12:12-13. Ibid., 76.

[72] The emblem *Rusten doet roesten* [Rest creates rust] is paired with Luke 9:62 and Galatians 6:9; *Let op het einde* [Be aware of the end] is paired with Matthew 3:12. Ibid., 10, 212.

[73] *Kies rust voor moeite* [Take a rest before making an effort] is with Romans 12:16 and James 1:9-10; *Door volheid geboogen* [Bent by plenitude] includes Romans 11:20, 1 Corinthians 4:7, and James 1:9-10 (again). Ibid., 46, 188.

[74] "How many are your works, Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures" (Psalm 104:24); and, Romans 1:20, see note 55. *Van hier naar de oorzaak* [From here to the source] in Ibid., 200. Thanks to Piet Visser for his assistance with the translation of these emblem mottos.

[75] See: "Thirty-Three Articles (1617)" and "Confession of Jan Cents (1630)," in ed. Karl Koop, *Confessions of Faith in the Anabaptist Tradition (1527–1660)* (Kitchener: Pandora Press, 2006), 179, 270-271.

[76] Ilja M. Veldman, *Crispijn de Passe and his Progeny (1564–1670). A Century of Print Production* (Rotterdam: Sound & Vision Publishers, 2001), 205-212.

[77] Anne Goldgar, *Tulipmania: Money, Honor, and Knowledge in the Dutch Golden Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), esp. 149-153.

[78] Piet Visser, *Broeders in de geest: De doopsgezinde bijdragen van Dierick en Jan Philipsz. Schabaelje tot de Nederlandse stichtelijke literatuur in de zeventiende eeuw* (Deventer: Sub Rosa, 1988), vol. 1, 230-238, vol. 2, note 183, 109. See *Gheestelijck Bloem-hofken* (1637), 9.

[79] Frederik Muller, *De Nederlandsche geschiedenis in platen: beredeneerde beschrijving van Nederlandsche historieplaten, zinneprenten en historische kaarten*, vol. 1 (100-1702), cat. no. 1756, (Amsterdam: Muller, 1863–1870), 240.

[80] Jan Brueghel II, *Satire on Tulip Mania,* ca. 1640, oil on panel, 31 cm x 49 cm, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem.

[81] Hendrik Gerritsz Pot, *Wagon of Fools,* 1632–1642, oil on panel, 61 cm x 83 cm, Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem.

[82] Muller, *De Nederlandsche geschiedenis in platen*, vol. 1, cat. no. 1758, 240.

[83] Goldgar, *Tulipmania*, 297.
[84] Ibid. 174.
[85] Keith Sprunger, "Jan Theunisz of Amsterdam (1569–1638): Mennonite Printer, Pamphleteer, Renaissance Man," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* (Oct. 1994): 437-460.
[86] Goldgar, *Tulipmania*, 173.
[87] Anonymous, "Satire or Renewed Rememberance of Purgative Beans (ca. 1680)" in Visser & Sprunger, *Menno Simons. Places, Portraits and Progeny*, 122.
[88] Marloes Huiskamp, *Block, Agneta*, in *Digitaal Vrouwenlexicon van Nederland,* http://resources.huygens.knaw.nl/vrouwenlexicon/lemmata/data/Block.
[89] Ibid.
[90] See: Dirck de Bray, *Vase with morning glory, garden anemone, columbine, peony, daisy and boxwood*, 1674, drawing and wash on paper, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.29750 .
[91] See, Philip Tidemann, title page design for Agnes Block's Florilegia, ca. 1690–ca. 1700, brush, 355 mm × 222 mm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.60748
[92] See note 17.
[93] J. Boskam, commemorative coin of Agnes Blok and *Vijverhof*, 1700, Centraal Museum, Utrecht.
[94] See: Albert van Spiers, *Title page with floral motifs and the portrait medallion of Agnes Block*, black crayon and coloured brush on paper, 438 mm x 322 mm, Private Collection, Photo RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History, The Hague, https://rkd.nl/explore/images/115322
[95] English translation by Erik de Jong, "For Profit and Ornament: The Function and Meaning of Dutch Garden Art in the Period of William and Mary (1650–1702)," *The Dutch Garden in the Seventeenth Century*, vol. 12, ed. John Dixon Hunt, (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks Trustees for Harvard University, 1990), 19.
[96] Nina Schroeder trans. from German, Z. C. von Uffenbach, *Merkwürdige Reisen durch Niedersachsen, Holland und England*, vol III (Ulm: Johann Friedrich Gaum, 1754), 612.
[97] See Jan Commelin, "*Winterplaats van d'Heer Pieter de Wolff in de Purmer*," in *Nederlantze Hesperides* (Amsterdam: Marcus Doornick, 1676), 39.
[98] De Jong, "Flora Batava," 25.
[99] De Jong, *Natuur en Kunst*, 172, note 84.
[100] See:Arnold Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, 2nd ed., vol 3. (The Hague: J. Swart, C. Boucquet, and M. Gaillard, 1753), 379.
[101] There are many examples Laurens Vincentsz van der Vinne's botanical drawings to be seen in the Rijksmuseum collection, for example, *Blooming Mesembryanthemum pugioniforme*, 1668–1729, brush, 530 mm × 370 mm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, https://rkd.nl/explore/images/115322 .