De Neufville's Bespiegelingen is remarkable for two reasons. First, she was one of the few writers in the Dutch Republic who used the Voltairean deductive method in order to prove the immortality of the soul. Second, her position as a woman philosopher was unique, as only few women possessed such a thorough knowledge of contemporary philosophy and natural sciences. Amongst them were Petronella Johanna de TIMMERMAN, wife of the Utrecht professor Johann Friedrich HENNER, and Elizabeth WOLFF-BEKKER, one of the most famous Dutch novelists of the eighteenth century. Wolff-Bekker deeply admired De Neufville, whose influence can be traced in Wolff-Bekker's Bespiegelingen over het genoegen (1763).

De Neufville was also praised by other contemporaries. Jean des Champs, a propagandist for Wolff's philosophy and translator of his writings into French, called her "la Sapho d'Amsterdam" and "grande Wolffiana". Positive reviews of her Bespiegelingen appeared in periodicals such as De Nederlandsche-Letter-Courant, VADERLANDSCHE Tijdschriften, and De Denker.

Further Reading

Christina Leonora de Neufville, in Met en zonder louter werkzaam: Schrijvende vrouwen uit de vroeemderde tijd 1550-1850; van Anna Bijn tot Elise van Calcar, ed. by Riet Schenk-van der Dussen (Amsterdam, 1997), pp. 557-60.