Clashes of discourses: Humanists and Calvinists in seventeenth-century academic Leiden
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Introduction

The inauguration of Leiden University on 8 February 1575 was a moment of great importance in the process of growing self-awareness in the Northern Netherlands. After a troublesome start, the Revolt was finally gaining momentum. It has often been debated whether the Dutch Revolt was a matter of money, government, or religion.\(^2\) The fact is that both nobility and the ruling class and a substantial proportion of the common people were not content with Philip II’s measures pertaining to all these areas. When Philip ascended the throne of his father Charles V in 1555, he faced many challenges, from both within and without the borders of his enormous kingdom. The wars with France in particular had been protracted, expensive, and inconclusive. These expensive wars meant a continuous shortage of money and the threat of national bankruptcy. Philip took several measures to tackle these problems. The most significant of these were more and higher taxes and a more centralized governmental structure. However, these measures ran counter to agreements made by or in the name of his father, Charles V. The provincial States in particular had acquired manifold rights by lending or paying money for the Habsburg wars.\(^3\)

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\(^3\) ‘The virtually incessant and extremely expensive wars with France obliged Charles V and Philip II to call on the provinces to a far greater degree than had previously been the case. The provincial States used their prince’s need for money as a lever to extend their own powers. In exchange for granting financial support they negotiated far-reaching
Introduction

Ill. 1: Pageant at the inauguration of Leiden University, Anonymous (1575)

The inauguration of Leiden University on 8 February 1575 was a moment of great importance in the process of growing self-awareness in the Northern Netherlands. After a troublesome start, the Revolt was finally gaining momentum. It has often been debated whether the Dutch Revolt was a matter of money, government, or religion. The fact is that both nobility and the ruling class and a substantial proportion of the common people were not content with Philip II’s measures pertaining to all these areas. When Philip ascended the throne of his father Charles V in 1555, he faced many challenges, from both within and without the borders of his enormous kingdom. The wars with France in particular had been protracted, expensive, and inconclusive. These expensive wars meant a continuous shortage of money and the threat of national bankruptcy. Philip took several measures to tackle these problems. The most significant of these were more and higher taxes and a more centralized governmental structure. However, Philip’s problems were not merely of a financial nature. Protestantism spread rapidly in the northern provinces. Many reasons have been put forward for this success, often linked to the deplorable moral state of the Roman Catholic Church in the northern countries. Roles within the Church were generally considered to be like any other job – hardly any training was required, and more often than not officials were seen neglecting their vows of both chastity and poverty. The Church demanded and took much from the citizenry in terms of taxation, respect, and the monopoly on salvation, whilst failing to live up to its own standards. Philip was not inclined to let Protestantism fill this moral gap and took stringent measures: he reorganized the provinces and bishoprics of the Roman Catholic Church, demanded stricter observance from the clergy, but also waged war on Protestant heretics, especially after the Beeldenstorm (iconoclasm) of 1566.

It was the combination of these measures that incensed almost all strata of society in the northern provinces. It is not especially clear why William of Orange became engaged as head of the Revolt. He was a Catholic himself and spent the first years of his career as a loyal servant of the Spanish Crown. He may have been seriously affronted by either the annulation of many of the nobility’s rights and privileges or the cruel persecution of all heretics in the northern provinces by Alva. He may also have seen a chance to promote his own esteem and honour among his equals. The fact is that, as soon as William of Orange took the lead of the Revolt, he became embroiled in it for the rest of his life, making the maximum sacrifices, even selling his own cutlery to pay for his soldiers.

However, William of Orange could not have defeated the Spanish forces had he not had the support of the Sea Beggars (watergeuzen). This curious fleet of soldiers, pirates, fortune-seekers, fled nobility, and

control over the collection, administration and expenditure of the tax revenues. In addition, they also discussed all manner of business apart from fiscal matters and they demanded the right to meet as they wanted. In this way the States evolved from being instruments of the prince to become self-conscious representative bodies which could take responsibility for the public administration.’ Van Nierop, “Alva’s Throne”, 35; see also Israel, The Dutch Republic, 132–135. A book completely dedicated to the financial aspects of the Revolt is: Tracy, The Founding of the Dutch Republic.

4 Israel, The Dutch Republic, 76.
Protestant enthusiasts would become the special task force of the Revolt. Although the Spanish had well-trained armies, they did not have a navy that could compete with the Sea Beggars, who knew the waters around the North Sea coast well and were able to take advantage of the peculiar local situation, where lands could easily be flooded and used both as a defence and an attack mechanism. Their first success was the capture of Den Briel on 1 April 1572. Although Den Briel was a small town just under Rotterdam, it was symbolically of great importance for the Revolt that a Spanish stronghold could be taken and kept. It turned out that Den Briel could be defended well and serve as a point of departure for raids up the rivers. These raids show that the Sea Beggars were not only noble freedom fighters, but could be veritably cruel bandits as well.

These Sea Beggars would also play a key role in the Relief of Leiden. In 1572 Alva managed to drive the Revolt back into Holland and occupy large parts of the country there. Alva wanted to conquer the rebels by attacking Haarlem and Leiden. If these cities were to fall, Holland would be divided into two small parts that were hard to defend. Alva did conquer Haarlem after a long siege, something of a pyrrhic victory. In October 1573 the Spanish troops laid siege to Leiden. The city was well defended and equipped to sustain the siege. However, when Alva’s successor led his troops away to the battle at the Mookerheide, the city was not quick enough to replenish its supplies or break down the Spanish fortifications. The upshot of this was that when the Spanish forces did return, the city was inadequately prepared for a second siege and the shortages were soon felt.

William of Orange promised relief, but had no army available. As a last resort, he decided to cut the dikes along the rivers and inundated the lands around Leiden. When the wind turned and drove the water

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towards the city, the Sea Beggars were able to relieve the city on 3 October 1574.\(^7\) It appears that Leiden was soon rewarded for her hardship by the Prince of Orange with the foundation of a university.\(^8\)

The importance of the inauguration of the new university was felt by all participants and underscored by a pageant for which Janus Dousa, one of its founding fathers, had written the texts.\(^9\) The pageant owed much to the traditions of the rhetorician chambers, where colourful display of allegories was a common feature. It was a living manifesto of the new university and showed clearly the ideals its founding fathers had in mind. The procession was headed by the armed guard of the city, immediately followed by Holy Scripture, who was accompanied by the personifications of the four Gospels, namely the Eagle, Lion, Bull, and Man (upper row, in front of the gate). After them came Iustititia, Medicina, and Minerva, each accompanied by four famous representatives of these disciplines. Minerva was accompanied by Aristotle, Plato, Cicero, and Virgil. As such, the pageant showed the faculties of the new university: Theology, Law, Medicine, and the Arts. The faculties were followed by faculty staff and public officials.\(^10\) The procession, impersonating the new university, was hailed by the pagan gods Neptune and Apollo and by the Muses. It rendered immediately visible the tension between the different expectations regarding the new *academia*. For although a peaceful coexistence between Apollo and Holy Scripture may have been readily conceivable in the minds of accomplished humanists, it is not hard to guess that many orthodox Calvinists had strong objections to these pagan elements.

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\(^7\) Israel, *The Dutch Republic*, 180–182; Moerman, “Korte kroniek van Leiden en omstreken: oktober 1573 - oktober 1574”.

\(^8\) *Waarom hij [Willem van Oranje] aan Leiden dacht, is niet bekend. Algemeen verondersteld wordt dat het doorstane beleg van het jaar ervoor de doorslag gegeven zal hebben. De universiteit was dus een vorm van dank voor de dapperheid en een vergoeding van de schade.* (Why he [William of Orange] had Leiden in mind, is unknown. It is generally assumed that the withstood siege of the previous year has been decisive. In that case, the university was a token of gratitude and a compensation for the damage.) Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 62.


\(^10\) For a complete identification of the participants in the procession, see Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 12–13.
This tension was not only apparent in the pageant, but would resurface on many occasions and would remain a moot point for a considerable time. On the one hand, there were the orthodox Calvinists. In their opinion, the Revolt was a religious struggle either for religious freedom or, better still, for Calvinist supremacy. They felt that the new university was primarily founded to train preachers for the Dutch Reformed (Calvinist) Church. Their main concern was the intellectual and spiritual formation of their future preachers for whom the State College was to be founded, a college for bursary students in theology. On the other side stood Janus Dousa and Jan van Hout, two poets who were dedicated to the humanist ideals of the Republic of Letters and the imitation of the French and Italian humanist tradition in particular. In their eyes, one of the primary obligations of the new university was to provide its students a thorough humanist training.\(^{11}\) They are representatives of a segment of Dutch society that felt the Revolt was against political and financial oppression. It is the tension between these two visions that I describe in this thesis as the clash of two discourses, especially at Leiden University.

**Primary question**

In this thesis I analyse the coup d’état of Maurice of Orange in 1618 in terms of a Foucauldian event, or événement, resulting from the clash of the two aforementioned discourses, namely the discourse of the Leiden humanists and the discourse of the orthodox Calvinists. I have been led to this description by Keith Baker. Baker links an historical event to a Foucauldian événement in a very convincing way. The following sentences in particular have been inspiring in terms of encouraging me to situate my research within a Foucauldian framework. Whereas the texts of Foucault can be difficult to adept to individual case studies, Baker emphasizes the importance of the individual subject as the stage of discursive tensions:

> It follows from this deconstruction of the social as a global ground of explanation that a Foucauldian account of the French

\(^{11}\) Otterspeer, *Het bolwerk van de vrijheid*, 64–66.
Revolution would place it in the context of heterogeneity of discourses overlapping and/or competing in their constitution of a world, and of a political struggle over the hierarchization of these discourses. [...] So the more a Foucauldian analysis moves in the direction of emphasizing heterogeneity, contingency, and eventuality, the more it must find a place for (historically constituted) individuals and groups as agents (conscious or unconscious) of a political transformation that could have been otherwise. [...] Rather than simply assuming the existence of the acting subject, Foucault argued, we should try to account historically for his/her/its/their production and character. One can allow that the subject position occupied by any individual (or shared by any group of individuals) is the consequence of a particular discursive formation. But this is also to say that discourse is articulated and acted out as a form of practice in human lives – individually and in the aggregate. In positing that there will be a heterogeneity of discourses in any given situation, then, one must also allow that individuals become the site of the heterogeneous subject positions constituted by these competing discourses. The resulting tensions, expressing themselves both within and among individuals and groups, may also at times become so intense as to propel these latter into conscious action to resolve them through a politics of rehierarchization, recodification, or transformation of discourses.¹²

I do not intend to focus on the event itself. I am primarily interested in the question of how this discursive change affected the Leiden humanist circle. I am firmly of the opinion that this discursive change was felt strongly, especially in the vicinity of Leiden University. Describing the changes within this cultural and literary field as taking place within the wider cultural frame of discursive change heading towards an événement could help to find plausible explanations for certain cultural phenomena among the Leiden humanists. Many of these phenomena can be connected to the person and the career of Daniel Heinsius (1580-1655), which is why much attention will be paid to his work and that of his colleagues.

The change I describe can best be characterized by an example from the work of Heinsius. Although some of the poems will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters, they may serve here to clarify the central problem of my book. In 1603, Daniel Heinsius published his *Elegiae libri tres*, which contained his *Monobiblos*. The last poem of this book had been dedicated to the Greek god Dionysus, or Bacchus. It is a long, ecstatic poem in which the poet expresses his dedication and gratefulness to the god of wine. The poem clearly imitates pagan classical, especially Roman, poetry. A good example is the opening sentence: ‘Father Bacchus, here I build for Thee ever remaining altars. / Posterity will know me as your prophet and priest’.\(^{13}\)

Nowhere does the poem reveal Heinsius as a dedicated Calvinist, whose family had to flee Ghent before the Spanish forces. Nor does the poem give any suggestion that Heinsius might become a Counter-Reformed who would show his allegiance to the orthodox Calvinists by fulfilling an official role during the Synod of Dordt (1618-1620), where his former colleagues and friends would be ostracized for their views.\(^ {14}\) In fact, there is no reason to suspect the poet of having any Christian background at all; he could have been a Roman pagan as well, as far as the language and contents of the poem are concerned.

The poem poses various questions for the present reader. These questions are obvious and have been answered differently. Most interpreters, modern and pre-modern, are keen to reveal Heinsius’s true opinions and convictions. As Heinsius was a refugee from the Southern Netherlands and later sided with the Counter-Remonstrants, the common view is that Heinsius must have been an orthodox Calvinist himself. But why would an orthodox Calvinist put so much effort into writing pagan poetry? It would have been interesting to find statements to the contrary, namely that Heinsius was a secret pagan worshipper of Dionysus, but evidence of such a view is not forthcoming and so I will refrain from proposing it here. Nonetheless, if it is taken for granted that Heinsius belongs among the orthodox Calvinists, it seems that his pagan poetry can only be interpreted either as extended exercises in the classical imitation

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\(^{13}\) *Bacchus pater, tibi mansuras hic sistimus aras: / Posteritas vatem me sciet esse tuum.* Heinsius, *Elegiarum Lib. III*, 146.

\(^{14}\) Heinsius was secretary to the Lay Commissioners at the Synod, see Becker-Cantarino, *Daniel Heinsius*, 19–20.
Heinsius wrote many poems of this kind, until the middle of the second decade of the seventeenth century. He then abruptly changes subject and writes two long Christian poems, his *Hymn to Jesus Christ* (1616) and his *De contemptu mortis* (1621). His *Hymn* has been written in the vernacular, *De Contemptu* is a Latin epideictic poem in the Lucretian and Virgilian tradition. These poems show the reader an altogether different side of the poet, a side that was hitherto invisible. They also complicate the already turbid situation described in relation to Heinsius’s pagan poetry. Are these the poems that finally show us the true Heinsius, then? Can we say, for the same reasons as above, that these Christian poems reflect Heinsius’s Counter-Remonstrant beliefs? If, however, we are to accept these two poems alone as reflecting the real Heinsius, would that not leave us with a strange imbalance? Do two poems serve as a sufficient counterpoise to what is an enormous oeuvre of Latin and vernacular pagan poetry?

Another interpretation, offered by him and others in similar situations, is that (erotic) poetry belongs to the youth. Now that the poet has reached a certain age, it is time to start writing serious works. Although there is some plausibility in this argument, it only partly

15 Heinsius, *Bacchus en Christus*.
16 Heinsius, *De verachting van de dood. De contemptu mortis*. Both poems will be discussed extensively in the second chapter.
17 See Grotius in the introductory letter to his brother in his *Poemata: Pueros etiam balbutientes amamus, quia in ea aetate semen ingenii spectare satis est, frugem ab ipsa exigere importunum. At viro silere quam balbutire est satius. Adde, quod quae nunc est hominum severitas, non mala tantum poesis displicet, sed ipsa poesis ut mala: multoque gravius videtur et πολιτικοτέρον, forum aleatorium calfacere, quam libera verba vinculis includere non necessariis. (‘We love it when we hear boys stammer, as it is sufficient to see the possibility of talent in that age and it is importune to expect results. For a grown man, on the contrary, it is better to stay silent instead of stammering. What is more, these days not only bad poetry is ill befitting to a man’s dignity, but any poetry at all: it is considered much more dignified and civilized to engage in gambling and games, rather than waisting time by putting free words in a metrical frame.’) De Groot, “441. 1615 Dec. 15. Aan Willem de Groot”; De Groot, *Poemata collecta*, [()8v]. And Heinsius: *De vruchten van de jeucht, de soetheyt van het minnen, / Een rechte toovery, van ons en onse sinnen, / Is nu met ons geweest. Ick late Venus gaen, / En met het blinde kint zijn blinde wercken staen*. (‘The fruits of youth, the sweetness of the senses, / A true enchantment of us and our senses, / is past for us. I let Venus go, / And leave with the blind child its blind works behind.’). Heinsius, *Bacchus en Christus*, 199.
answers the questions already asked: why did Heinsius write these pagan poems in the first place and why does he quit writing poetry altogether after 1620, both pagan and Christian? After all, Heinsius wrote this argument as an explanation for his Christian poetry, not for abandoning poetry completely. Another explanation for Heinsius’s change of subject was that he was simply afraid and wanted to show his allegiance to the Counter-Remonstrant cause. Petrus Cunaeus, for example, portrays him as an opportunist, who simply chose the winning side and had no strong religious opinions:

However, I think these things [i.e. the investigation against Cunaeus - DK] have been suggested in Dordt by the man who has joined a drunken hymn to Bacchus with a hymn to Christ; who used to visit Flandria and Brabantia yearly and used to have conversations with Jesuists and other pontifical satellites, and held a regular correspondence with them; who deleted and changed in the latest edition of his Poemata whatever he had previously written to the Pope and the Jesuit fathers; […].

The Remonstrant preacher and historian Gerard Brandt (1626-1685) sees Heinsius in more or less the same light. When he describes Heinsius’s appointment as Secretary to the Lay Commissioners, he states that the Remonstrants objected to this appointment, as they considered him highly antagonistic towards them; indeed, some of their teachers had rebuked him several times for his behaviour [lit.: life], and for the fact that he had, in their opinion, hardly any knowledge regarding theological matters, being very fickle on the matter of religion, twisting and turning everything,

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This view has been enthusiastically accepted by Heinsius’s biographer Ter Horst:

Heinsius, who was always and everywhere looking for influential friends, was […] suspected of having Roman Catholic inclinations. However, his Protestant brothers accused him falsely. Although he had no principles to speak of, a semblance of Roman sympathies emerges from his desire to play a double game and to set his sail according to the wind.²⁰

In fact, Ter Horst interprets Heinsius’s *Christ Hymn* purely as a tactical move:

This *Christ Hymn* is Heinsius’s last Dutch poem that has been published separately and we have to ask ourselves the question: did he not have any ulterior motives with it? Was he truly only interested in showing his dedication to his Saviour in his art? A German scholar has openly declared that writing this hymn signified nothing more than a clever move in the theological and political arena. […] Heinsius was, as always, keen on joining the strongest party […]²¹

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¹⁹ Doch de Remonstranten hielden, dat hij tegens hen seer was ingenomen, omdat eenige van hunne Leeraren hem ter sake van zijn leven meermaelen hadden bestraft, hebbende, seidense, seer weinig kennis van Theologische saecken; seer onbestendig in’t stuk van Religie, alles keerende en wendende, prijsende en laeckende, naar den windt der voorspoedt, en naar dat hij met desen of dien hoop te volgen eenigh voordeel wist te doen. Brandt, *Historie der Reformatie. Het tweede deel*, 23.

²⁰ Heinsius, die steeds en overal invloedrijke vrienden zocht, werd […] ervan verdacht, neigingen tot het Roomsch Katholicisme te koesteren. Zijn Protestantsche broeders beschuldigden hem echter ten onrechte. Hij bezat weliswaar allerminst een principiêelen geest, doch de schijn van Roomschgezind te zijn ontstond slechts door zijn verlangen, van twee walletjes te eten, tengevolge waarvan hij steeds bereid was, de huik naar den wind te hangen. Ter Horst, *Daniel Heinsius*, 73.

²¹ Deze Lof-sanck is het laatste Nederduitsche gedicht van Heinsius, dat zelfstandig uitgegeven werd en we moeten ons afvragen: had hij hiermede geen bijoogmerken? Was het hem werkelijk alleen maar te doen om in zijn kunst te getuigen van zijn innige liefde tot den Heiland? Een Duitsch litterator heeft het openlijk uitgesproken, dat het schrijven van
Others feel that Heinsius is not portrayed fairly here, and emphasize that, as a refugee from the Southern Netherlands, he must have been an orthodox Calvinist from the very beginning. Sellin, for example, asserts that:

The picture of religious beliefs which emerges from Heinsius’ career and literary work is that of a cultured and enlightened but consistently orthodox member of the Reformed Church.22

In my eyes, none of these arguments do full justice to Heinsius’s authorship, both pagan and Christian, Latin and vernacular.

If this development took only place in Heinsius’s career, it would have been worthwhile to describe these phenomena from the point of view of personal development or intellectual growth. Another popular way of describing an author’s career is in terms of economic and social advantages: how did a certain kind of poetry help a poet’s career? These tools are valuable for investigating poetical and other careers. However, they are designed for the investigation of a single poet’s career, whereas I have the impression that the developments described above in Heinsius’s creative career are not limited to his personal development, but reflect an important cultural process in the Dutch seventeenth century, especially in circles of the Leiden humanists.

Many scholars have already illustrated in detail the developments in the Northern Netherlands during the second decade of the seventeenth century. However, few of them have emphasized sufficiently the enormous influence of these developments on the humanist cultural climate of the day. Usually the historical events as well as the effects these had on individual lives are presented in great detail. Yet the significance of these events for the intellectual atmosphere has not yet been adequately described. It is this lacuna that the present work will endeavour to fill. One exception to this rule should be mentioned, namely Somos’s book

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22 Sellin, Daniel Heinsius, 21.
Secularisation and the Leiden Circle. Somos identifies the Leiden Circle as the humanists working at or around Leiden University in the years 1575-1618, a period I take to be synchronous with the time during which the humanist discourse prevailed at Leiden. I concur with Somos that the Leiden humanists can and should be identified as a separate circle. Separate from other humanists, though they certainly participate in the international scholarly discourse, but also separate from other universities in the Northern Netherlands, as their intellectual mindset differed considerably from their colleagues. I agree with some of his conclusions; I find interesting and plausible his idea that the humanist scholarly enterprise unintentionally contributed to the process of secularization. However, I am not convinced by his idea that humanist scholarship was driven by a desire for peace. In many cases, Somos finds traces of true intentions on the part of his protagonists that do not always seem completely convincing. In the case of Heinsius’s Bacchic poetry, Somos comes close to making Heinsius worship Dionysus for the sake of his argument.

Nonetheless, I do agree with Somos that the literary and scholarly output of the Leiden humanists can and should be described as a unique cultural phenomenon. It turned out that the conceptual frameworks of Stephen Greenblatt and Michel Foucault were very helpful in terms of identifying and describing this particular discours as well as for the purposes of describing and explaining the changes it underwent. In the first place, Greenblatt’s ideas of cultural representations helped me to identify the discourses I describe. According to Greenblatt, every artifact can been seen as a representation of a certain (sub)culture. A painting, a note, a plate, or a letter – they all allow us to describe the cultural background they represent, as long as we are aware of the fact that it is only ever a part of that culture that can be described. Literature functions as a particularly strong representation, as it both reflects a certain culture and its values and comments upon them. Although in theory every scrap of paper is as good a representation as any literary work, Greenblatt makes an exception for great works of literature. Works of esteemed and

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23 Somos, Secularisation and the Leiden Circle.
24 Somos, Secularisation and the Leiden Circle, 198–199.
25 Or, as I understand it, of a certain discourse.
highly valued authors have a higher representative value. The fact that they were esteemed by a substantial part of a given culture shows that a substantial part of that culture recognized itself in these works, hence their greater representativeness.

I have used this premise of Greenblatt in choosing my material. It was impossible to use all the relevant work. In an ideal situation I would have read and used many more books written in the seventeenth century. I would have loved to include more authors and more material than I presently have. However, though I am sure that this book would have increased in length, I am convinced that it would essentially have been the same book with the same argumentation and the same conclusions. For that reason I have accepted Greenblatt and based my argumentation on a limited amount of representative works.

Even before I read Foucault, I was struck by the vehement contrast between orthodox Calvinist and humanist irenic views. How was it possible that Grotius (1583-1645) actually believed he could persuade James I that he would win his case against the Counter-Remonstrants? Even before reading Foucault, I had the impression that above all else it was about ideas and world views opposing each other in this ongoing debate. A certain mindset produced certain ideas (or vice versa?) and these ideas became independent voices and forces in the public debate. These voices were probably first spoken, then written down, printed, and disseminated. Once released into the public arena, these forces grew out of control and resulted in physical clashes. Unsurprisingly, it turned out that Foucault had created a formidable conceptual framework that expressed my own vague ideas much better than I ever can or could.

In my own archaeological excavation, to use in Foucault’s imagery, the best starting point was the Synod of Dordt and the coup d’état of Maurice of Orange in 1618. Clearly, whatever tensions had arisen in the discursive field during the previous period reached their climax here and came to a head in violent acts that included the beheading of Van Oldenbarnevelt and the purgation of governmental institutions. Joost van den Vondel’s *Palamedes*, another great literary work of art, confirmed my identification of these confrontations with Foucauldian *événements*. The

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26 It may be noted that for the scope of this research I am employing a simplified version of Foucault’s elaborated ideas about *changement* as described in Foucault, *L’archéologie*
fact that a well-known author in the post-Synod period made this conflict the subject of a play shows that the event was already in its own time regarded as an event of major importance.

However, working backwards from the event, it was not that easy or straightforward to describe or define the oppositions in the discursive field. It is well known that the conflict shows several oppositions that are related yet not always identical. There is the opposition Van Oldenbarnevelt vs Maurice of Orange; the opposition Remonstrants vs Counter-Remonstrants; Church vs State, etc. There are also other oppositions: using Latin vs vernacular, orientation on the Bible or (pagan) antiquity. I have the impression that these oppositions became more and more interlinked in the years between 1600 and 1620. This led me to the hypothesis that the événement of the coup d’état of Maurice of Orange and the Synod of Dordt of 1618-1620 constitute the final outcome of an opposition between what I call a humanist discourse and a (orthodox) Calvinist discourse. I will characterize these discourses briefly here and discuss them in detail in the following chapters.

The humanist discourse is the discourse of the humanist scholars linked to Leiden University. It is connected to the discourse of the Republic of Letters and largely shares the same values. Great emphasis is placed within this discourse on knowledge of the classical world, and the intention and ability to imitate and emulate Roman authors in particular. Members of this discourse saw themselves as the legitimate inheritors of the classical world, as living and working in the same intellectual space (Republic) as Cicero and Virgil. Imitating classical authors could also mean writing pagan poetry, as has been shown above in Heinsius’s laudatory poetry to Bacchus. In my opinion, an author could within this discourse create a poetical persona that allowed him to write pagan, or any, poetry as long as it was in emulation of his classical examples, without being held responsible for the pagan content.

In opposition to this humanist discourse stood the Calvinist discourse. I wish to make very clear here that by naming this discourse Calvinistic I do not intend to say that members of the humanist discourse

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*du savoir*, 216–231, and Foucault, *L’ordre du discours*, 55–62. In my research I focus on the aspect of the événement being a discursive change that becomes visible in the material world. This concept gives the opportunity to see a given discourse as not only a possible reflection of a given (sub)culture but also a force that generates historical phenomena.
opposed Calvinism as such or that members of either side were more truly
Christian than the other. Nonetheless, I have chosen the term Calvinist
discourse, as the members of this discourse were in their writings
primarily orientated towards the maxims of Calvinist doctrine, namely the
text of the Bible, the Confessio Belgica and the Heidelberg Catechism.
This discourse offered little room for poetical personae that were not in
accordance with these religious maxims. The Calvinist discourse is more
strongly linked to the vernacular for two reasons: firstly, this discourse is
rooted in the religious community of the Dutch Reformed Church. As
most of its members hardly understood any Latin, it was easier to use the
vernacular. Secondly, the Calvinist discourse identifies itself as being,
amongst (many) other things, in opposition to Roman Catholicism. As
Latin was of course the language of the Roman Catholic Church, it comes
as no surprise that Latin was not that important to the members of this
discourse. Nonetheless, all learned members of this discourse knew and
used Latin when necessary, especially in academic circles.

It is my impression that in the course of the period 1575-1620 the
humanist discourse – at least in the vicinity of Leiden, but possibly also in
a broader context – became associated with concepts that were not
necessarily part of the discourse of the international Republic of Letters.
There were strong ties between the university, the patrician class of
Holland, and the States of Holland. Patrician families were often
represented both on the board of directors of the university and in the
States of Holland. They were more inclined to an irenic view of religion
and were likely to send their sons to this university where they would be
educated in the humanist tradition envisioned by Dousa and Lipsius.
However, when the States of Holland appointed Arminius as Professor of
Theology, this discourse of the Leiden humanists became subject to the
members of the Calvinist discourse, who mostly sided with Gomarus. It is
also possible that this identification of the Leiden humanist discourse with
irenism existed already from the days of Dousa. It is well known that Jan
van Hout, a close friend and colleague of Dousa who played a major role
in the early administration of the new university, strongly opposed
religious fanaticism. Of Dousa himself, nothing certain is known about his
religious views.
Method and material

The present study describes the change in the intellectual climate among the Leiden humanists in the period leading up to the Synod of Dordt and after the Synod. My hypothesis was that the study of these discourses could shed some light on the use of Latin and the vernacular in this same period, as my research took place within the project “Dynamics of Neo-Latin and the Vernacular: The Role of Self-Representation, Self-Presentation and Imaging in the Field of Cultural Transmission, Exemplified by the German Reception of Dutch Poets in a ‘Bilingual’ Context”. Within this project, my research was originally titled “Self-Representation and Self-Presentation by Four Major Poets from the Netherlands” and was to focus on the strategies and conventions of self-presentation. However, during the first year of my research, the impression grew that these conventions could be described well as representations of very particular discourses. I became increasingly convinced that Hugo Grotius and Daniel Heinsius and, to a certain extent, Jacob Cats were impressive representatives of a typical Dutch humanist discourse, the discourse of the Leiden humanist circle. Consequently, I have been looking for representatives of the other dominant discourse, what I call the Calvinist discourse, and I believe I have found important representatives who either had immediate contact with the protagonists of the humanist discourse or in some other way were connected to the Leiden humanist circle.

The book follows the development of the intellectual climate among the Leiden humanists. This means that the first chapter describes the origin of the humanist discourse in Leiden in 1575, how it functioned with the international Republic of Letters, and in what aspects it differed from the discourse of the Republic of Letters. I describe this development by representative material from the work of Heinsius and Grotius. These cases I discuss could easily be replaced by other poems, letters, and works of these authors and probably many other authors. Although I have of course been looking for material that would support my theses, I am sufficiently confident that the same book could have been written with that other material. On the other hand, I would like to cite Greenblatt here again, who states that every scrap of evidence is a representation of a
given culture (read: discourse) and conversely, that any description of a given culture (discourse) remains incomplete.\textsuperscript{27}

The same text applies to the second and third chapters. The second chapter describes the gradual change of the humanist discourse under the growing pressure of the Calvinist discourse in the period 1609-1618. The memorial service of Arminius seemed to be a moment, as many funerals are, where underlying tensions and oppositions surfaced, which is why much attention has been paid to this occasion. It would also turn out to be the starting point of Grotius’s involvement in the Remonstrant cause. The other cases in the second chapter each exhibit the same opposition, albeit each in a different way. Heinsius’s hymns to Bacchus and Christ, his \textit{De contemptu mortis} and Cats’s introductions to his \textit{Proteus} each show how the opposition between the two discourses became visible in the work of separate authors, how these authors ‘become the site of the heterogeneous subject positions constituted by these competing discourses’.\textsuperscript{28}

The final chapter, about the period after 1620, was most difficult to define. I would preferably have used material from the same authors as in the earlier chapters, as that would probably constitute the best proof of my thesis. However, Heinsius wrote no more poetry after 1618, Grotius hardly did and had left the Republic. This meant that I was able to describe Heinsius’s research program after the Synod well, which is about half the chapter. However, to describe the literary side of this discourse, I had to look somewhat further and found Jacobus Revius (1586-1658) to be the best candidate. As he lived and worked in Deventer for a significant proportion of his life, his connection with the Leiden humanists is less apparent than it is for others. However, his connection with Heinsius and the Leiden Hebraists Ludovicus de Dieu (1590-1642) and Constantijn l’Empereur (1591-1648), as well as his dedication to Heinsius, not unlike Cats, made him a suitable candidate. Finally, I added Cats’s \textit{Twee en tachtig-jarig leven}. This work was written long after the Synod and might seem to fall outside of the period of this particular discursive change. I have nonetheless included this poem for two reasons. In the first place, Cats’s development seems to have moved more markedly towards the Calvinist side of the new discourse. The poems Cats produced later on in

\textsuperscript{27} Gallagher and Greenblatt, \textit{Practicing New Historicism}, chap. 1.

\textsuperscript{28} Baker, “A Foucauldian French Revolution?”, 193.
life show him in his strongest Calvinist vein. The second reason is that Cats reflects in this poem on the period when he was growing up and studying in a profoundly humanist environment. It is also the period in which he, in his own words, wrote (some of) the Latin love poems of his Proteus.

Conspicuously absent in this study is the Amsterdam literary circle. Although I would greatly have enjoyed studying these poets as well, I soon had the impression that the Amsterdam literary discourse differed considerably from that of Leiden. This impression was confirmed by Koppenol’s Leids heelal, in which he describes how on the one hand the Leiden poetical landscape was strongly influenced by the Leiden humanist circle and on the other hand in Amsterdam the literary scene was dominated by the poets of the Chambers of Rhetoric. As my research had already been defined by the key authors of our project, I have decided to concentrate primarily on the Leiden context.

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29 Koppenol, Leids heelal, 162-168.