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

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Chapter 2: Growing tension

In this chapter I will analyse how the discourse of the Leiden humanists gradually changed under the growing pressure of the (orthodox) Calvinist discourse in the second decade of the seventeenth century. In the first section the discourse of the orthodox Calvinists will be discussed in connection with the opposition between Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants. The second section will discuss two memorial poems by Daniel Heinsius and Hugo Grotius, showing different reactions to the death of one of the protagonists, Jacobus Arminius, both hiding and revealing their positions and views in an uncertain time. The third section shows the reactions of Petrus Bertius and Franciscius Gomarus to the death of Arminius in 1609. Both of them felt no need to hide any part of their views on the conflict and made them overt to the reading public. Sections 2.5 and 2.6 focus on several poems by Daniel Heinsius that illustrate how Heinsius changed his poetical writing in the second half of this decade, shifting from Latin, Greek, and sometimes Dutch pagan poetry to poetry with a heavy Christian signature, in both Dutch and Latin. Finally the Proteus, sive Silenus Alcibiadis by Jacob Cats will be discussed. Cats can be considered an epigone of Heinsius in particular, and at the same time seems to embody the discursive change described in this chapter, from predominantly humanist to Calvinist.

2.1 Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants

As has been said, there was from the very beginning a continuous tension at Leiden University between the more and less orthodox factions. Although Janus Dousa and Jan van Hout were dedicated patriots and Protestants,\(^\text{87}\) they often clashed with the stricter Calvinists. Here already can be seen how the humanist discourse, as it functioned at this time within the context of Leiden University, became not only an intellectual discriminator but also a social and religious one. It came to be connected to the patrician class, with influential members in the States of Holland, but also on the board of directors of the university, and in local

\(^{87}\) Jan van Hout at least is known to have been Protestant, Dousa remains an uncertainty.
administration. As Van Deursen has shown, the Calvinist faction also had sympathizers in upper-class circles, but its main support base was among the regular churchgoing public. 

It is important to notice that the Calvinist discourse had a completely different frame of reference. Central to this discourse was the text of the Bible and the opposition to Roman Catholicism. In the eyes of the orthodox Calvinists, the Revolt was a religious struggle against the oppressive tyranny of Spain. As one of the pillars of Protestantism is the use of the vernacular in the Church, it stands to reason that use of the vernacular is an important characteristic of this discourse. This does not imply that Latin was not used or known; theologians wrote and spoke Latin in academic and international contexts. But Latin was used as a means of expression when required, not as the expression of cultural, political, and religious ideals, as it was within the humanist discourse. Another important point of reference within the Calvinist discourse was, of course, the work of Calvin. Often doctoral disputations within the Faculty of Theology were simply defences or explications of sentences from Calvin’s *Institutiones*. In this chapter I wish to show how the humanist discourse as described in the previous chapter gradually had to change under pressure from the Calvinist discourse.

Although there had been tensions between Calvinists and humanists in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, the conflict really erupted with the installation of Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609) in 1603 as second professor of Theology in Leiden, alongside Franciscus Gomarus (1563-1641). These two theologians became the protagonists of the two discourses in the theological field. Arminius advocated a more tolerant

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89 According to Rabbie, ‘[...] the authority of the Genevan patriarchs had gradually acquired the force of *res judicata*, so that resistance against it was no longer tolerated.’ De Groot, *Ordinum pietas*, 3. Den Tex: ‘Het was namelijk zó, dat confessie en catechismus sinds vele jaren beschouwd werden als de fundamenten des geloofs. Wel was iedereen het er in theorie over eens, dat beide documenten mensenwerk waren en aan revisie onderhevig, maar de praktijk was anders. Het kerkvolk beschouwde beide geschriften als onaantastbaar, [...]’ (‘As it happened, both Confession and Catechism were since many years regarded as the pillars of faith. In theory all agreed that both documents made by men and could be revised. However, in reality, the churchgoing people regarded both documents as sacrosanct.’ – translation DK) *Oldenbarnevelt: III. Bestand 1609-1619*, 71–72.

vision on the question of predestination and the ability of mankind to enhance its own salvation. In the strict interpretation of Calvin’s teachings by Gomarus and others this was impossible. God had decided at the beginning of time which souls would be rescued. These souls would receive faith and grace and there was nothing to be done about it. All man could do was hope his soul was one of the elected and live accordingly. This was the dominant view in Calvinist circles, as formulated in the Heidelberg catechism.

In 1609 Arminius died, but his ideas were continued by such figures as Wtenbogaert. This preacher wrote down the five major objections of the ‘Arminians’ as they were called in the so-called Remonstrantie (Remonstrance) and presented them to the States General in 1610, thus asking them for intervention. Hence they were called the Remonstrants. The Remonstrants were asking not necessarily for general acceptance of their views, but rather for room for their own views within the Dutch Reformed Church. As it had become clear that this would not happen within the bodies of administration of the Church itself, the Remonstrants asked the government to intervene. This was not, of course, what the Counter-Remonstrants wanted, and much of the conflict in the following years would centre on the question of who had ultimate, decisive power in Church matters. The fact that the Remonstrants appealed to the States of Holland shows their connection to the government. It confirms the relationship between the upper-class humanist discourse and the preference for Remonstrant religious views.

2.2 Remembering Arminius: Grotius and Heinsius

The dynamics of the conflict and the interaction of the two discourses can be illustrated well by the events following the death of Arminius. As was more or less the custom, the memory of the deceased was honoured with an oration and poetry. The oration was written and

performed by Petrus Bertius on 22 October 1609. Apparently Grotius had been asked to obtain a poem from Daniel Heinsius. Grotius therefore wrote him a letter and asked him to compose a poem in commemoration of Arminius. Heinsius, however, had fled the Southern Netherlands and, as many refugees from the South, he felt himself to be more akin to Gomarus and the orthodox Calvinists. What is interesting and important to note is, of course, that Heinsius had always been an orthodox Calvinist. Yet until now this had never been particularly apparent. Heinsius simply blended in with the discourse of the Leiden humanists, even became one of the central authorities therein, as was shown in the previous chapter. In his writings hitherto, Heinsius had been indistinguishable from any other Leiden humanist, Arminian or otherwise. Indeed, he had been writing about love and pagan gods in Arcadian settings. His highest ideal had been the revival of antiquity within the contemporary Dutch context. He had kept his Calvinistic feelings to himself or revealed them only in a more private context.

Grotius had an altogether different approach to the conflict of predestination. For him, it was above all an obscure theological debate that ought to be solved at an administrative level, either within the Church, or else by government authorities. As many patricians he probably held a general Christian belief and felt reluctant to join intricate theological debates. It was only when it became his job to solve this conflict between the two opposing parties from a governmental angle that he could no longer maintain his distance and eventually had to take sides. Grotius sided with the Remonstrants, who were in favour of the State making final decisions in religious matters and held a more tolerant view on predestination itself, which dovetailed most neatly with Grotius’s own views as advocated by him later on, for example in his *Ordinum pietas* (1613).

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92 Petrus Bertius (1565-1629) was regent of the States College; his oration was published as *Petri Bertii oratio in obitum reuerendi & clarissimi viri d. Iacobi Arminii, ... habita post exsequias in auditorio theologico XXII octobr. anno MDCIX*.


In the aforementioned letter to Heinsius, Grotius praises the late Arminius for his erudition and moral uprightness. He writes about his own intention to compose a memorial poem for Arminius and exhorts Heinsius to do the same. Nonetheless, he also shows that he knows how Heinsius regarded Arminius and how he felt about his views. The arguments Grotius uses to counter Heinsius’s potential objections provide some degree of insight into the field of tension in which Heinsius found himself. Grotius makes clear that he thinks Arminius was both morally and intellectually a good man who deserved a poem by Heinsius’s hand. At the same time even Grotius saw that he was running the risk of being accused of bearing ‘false witness’ if he praised Arminius too profusely. Yet Heinsius, apparently, had to be even more careful – although there had been no animosity between him and Arminius (quem vivum nunquam odisti), he ran the risk of becoming either associated with the Remonstrants, or being accused of inconsistency for not refusing to write this poem. Grotius’s advice is to praise the man for his general good qualities and not get mired in other debates. Apparently a discriminating tension had arisen, within the compass of which it was, particularly from the side of the dissentientes, of vital importance not to be associated with the wrong party, which could easily be the case, even by virtue of a memorial poem. Heinsius solved the problem by writing a short and

96 Scio tibi non placuisse ipsius in quibusdam capitis aut et horodoziem, aut, ut dicere tu solebas, ἀσαταληψιαν. Ego, etsi quartana ita premor ut necessariis rebus meis superesse vix possim, constitui tamen ex animi sententia viro eximio et mihi dum vixit amico, carmine aliquo, puto epigrammate, ut meus est mos, id praebere testimonium in quyo spero me γενομοιρεῖαις οὐχ ἐμπεσείν δίκην. Tu quid facturus sis apud te constitues. Puto, poteris sine ulla nota inconstantiam, mortuum laudare quem vivum nunquam odisti: praesertim cum multae illi laudes tribui possint extra τὰ ἀμφισβητούμενα. (‘Although I have such a fever that I hardly manage to do all the necessary work, I nonetheless decided to compose in accordance with the feelings of my heart a poem for a great man, whom I considered as a friend when he was still alive, and I think I will make an epigram, as I usually do, which will prove a testimony [of his character – DK] which hopefully will not give any cause for accusations of me being beside the truth. You should decide for yourself. I suppose you could praise a dead man whom you never hated when he was alive, without [displaying - DK] any signs of inconsistency or even [of running the risk of meeting with - DK] irritation from the side of the dissenters: especially as you can praise many sides of his character without mentioning his disputed views.’) Hugo Grotius to Daniel Heinsius. 21 October 1609.
neutral poem for the memorial service; however, the poem did not appear in the publication of Petrus Bertius’s funeral oration and Heinsius did not publish it in his own *Poemata.*

It is interesting to see which themes Heinsius chooses to address in his poem. Heinsius compares Arminius to the famous German leader Arminius, who led the uprising against the Romans in 9 BC and defeated Varus’s legions in the so-called Battle of the Teutoburg Forest. Both Arminii had defeated Rome. It is clear how the German chieftain had defeated the Roman legions, but how had the professor Arminius defeated the Romans? Apparently Heinsius regarded Arminius’s greatest virtue as being his opposition to the Roman Catholic Church. It is interesting to see how Heinsius tries to find his way out of a tight spot here. He could not praise Arminius for his qualities as Protestant preacher or theologian — that would alienate him from Gomarus. But at least Heinsius felt that Arminius was on the right side in a larger-scale conflict: — he was a Protestant and he was as such opposed to the Roman Catholic Church. Arminius’s name and the fact that they had a common enemy gave Heinsius material for his poem. In fact, Heinsius seems much more inclined to praise the German chieftain than the Protestant preacher! But at least Heinsius had fulfilled his social duty.

Grotius wrote a different poem. Here, the beginning of Grotius’s involvement in religious questions is clearly visible. What seems remarkable after the poems discussed in the previous chapter is that

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100 This is also the view of Van Oosterhout: ‘In retrospect, the scazontes can be characterized as a manifesto, since the poem was Grotius’ first public statement on Christian theology. In this poem, Grotius first presents a vision of peace among Christians that he was to repeat later on in his life.’ Van Oosterhout, *Hugo Grotius ’Occasional Poetry,* 177. The poem, and the ‘mistakes’ made by Bertius, have been discussed in detail by Van Oosterhout in *Hugo Grotius’ Occasional Poetry,* 175–185. Personally, I think the poem can only be read as a manifesto insofar as it is an expression of his irenic views on religion. Grotius still refrains from publicly taking sides in the Arminian – Gomarist conflict: this may be inferred from the letter written by Vossius to Grotius on 2 November 1613, in which Vossius describes the frustration of many readers after Grotius’Grotius’s apparent volte-face with the publication of his *Ordinum pietas.* Discussed by Rabbie in: De Groot, *Ordinum pietas,* 61–62. Apparently the public still thought of Grotius as someone occupying centre ground.
Grotius makes almost no references to classical themes. The reason for this could be the fact that Arminius had been a preacher and a theologian and Grotius felt these themes could be seen as inappropriate as Arminius’s orthodoxy was already being questioned by the Calvinists. In terms of form and language the poem belongs to the humanist discourse. But it differs in terms of its content. It mirrors Grotius’s stance within the contemporary situation, i.e. in the early phase of the escalation. It is well known that he was not immediately a vehement Arminian. In fact, he tried for some time to stay out of the conflict as he felt, like many others, that it was a matter for quarrelling theologians. Only when the conflict became a problem in the public sphere did Grotius take sides, and there were many reasons for him to choose the Remonstrant side.  

Grotius convinces the readers he does not know for sure whether or not Arminius was right, nor does he feel competent to judge in this matter. Only Arminius himself, now he has died, knows what the Truth really looks like. But Grotius is worried that obscure theological quarrels may destroy the unity of the Church and will ultimately weaken Christianity relative to other religions. The common people need a *religio simplex*, where bad is punished and good rewarded and God as a real judge will bend the laws if necessary. And this is what Arminius deserves praise for. He was a diligent student of the Bible, he was kind and forgiving to his adversaries, and he strove for ecclesiastical unity. The poem ends with Grotius’s wish that Arminius may inspire unity and concord from above.

The poems show us two different types of reaction to the discursive change of the oncoming event. Both Heinsius and Grotius had been inhabitants of the Batavian Arcadia. Whereas Heinsius seems reluctant to leave this discourse, however, Grotius immediately tries to adapt. This seems paradoxical, as Heinsius was the orthodox Calvinist and could be expected to join the Calvinist discourse sooner. However, it was impossible for Heinsius to respond to the death of Arminius from a religious point of view, so he responded with a safe option from the

101 Among them the fact that Grotius preferred one Church in which a few basic Christian dogmas were formulated and individuals were free to exercise their religion as they wished within the confines thereof, see Rabbie, “Grotius’ denken over kerk en staat”.

102 *Tu nunc ademptus saeculo tenebroso / Et semicaecae palpitantium turbae / Claros beatae lucis incolis campos.* (You, taken from the dark world / And the half-blind tampering crowd / are now living in fields, bright with blessed light.) Bertius, *Oratio in obitum Arminii*, 47.
humanist discourse. In fact, Heinsius would continue this discourse for quite some time. It was only with his publication of his *Hymn of Christ* and his *De contemptu mortis* that we can see the discursive change taking place. If anything, this reluctance to leave the Batavian Arcadia shows how deeply Heinsius had been rooted in this discourse – by his poetical talents, by his loyalty to the late Scaliger, and, of course, his job as a professor in the field of Classical Studies at Leiden University. By contrast, Grotius was, by virtue of his position, forced to react immediately to changes in the public sphere.

2.3 Remembering Arminius: Bertius and Gomarus

The funeral oration in commemoration of Arminius was delivered by Petrus Bertius (1565-1629), former regent of the States College, the then professor of ethics and fervent supporter of Arminius. His oration is actually more a defence of Arminius’s orthodoxy than an account of Arminius’s life and virtues. As such, it is an informative text for the modern reader as it shows clearly where the problems were being felt. Bertius suggests that Arminius’s thinking was influenced by Theodore Beza (1519-1605), as he listened to his lectures on Paul’s *Epistle to the Romans*. Later on in Amsterdam Arminius would reveal his own ideas

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103 Unfortunately, Grotius’s intention to strike a moderate chord in these explosive circumstances was not respected. Bertius changed (inadvertedly, he himself claimed) a minor word in the poem which opened up the possibility of reading the poem as proclamation of Arminius being the only true interpreter of the Divine World. This misunderstanding has been discussed in detail by Bosch, Nellen, and Van Oosterhout. For the purposes of the present discussion, only Grotius’s own poem is of interest. For a full account of the misunderstanding and subsequent corrected editions, see Van Oosterhout, *Hugo Grotius’ Occasional Poetry (1609-1645)*, 175–185.

104 On Bertius, see Bosch, “Petrus Bertius 1565-1629”. The oration has been discussed in some detail in Bosch, “Petrus Bertius 1565-1629”, 85–89; Nellen, *Hugo de Groot: Een leven in strijd om de vrede 1583-1645*, 114–115; Van Itterzon, “Franciscus Gomarus”, 176.

105 *Quo quum venisset, audivit Reverendum & beatae memoriae senem D. Theodorum Bezam explicantem epistolam ad Romanos, cum ingenti omnium hominum admiratione.* ‘When he arrived there [= Geneva], he heard Beza explain to everyone’s admiration Paul’s *Epistle to the Romans*. [...] And he decided to take him as his main example.’ *Petri Bertii oratio in obitum reverendi & clarissimi viri d. Iacobi Arminii, ... habita post exsequias in auditorio theologico XXII octobr. anno MDCIX*, 14. Bertius leaves tacit the aspects of Beza’s example that Arminius chose to imitate. After all, it was Beza who had formulated that ‘the
about predestination in a series of lectures on Paul’s epistle.\textsuperscript{106} This would, of course, become the primary topic in the conflict and Bertius explains the case in some detail. However, it is remarkable to see that he spends at least as much time on clearing Arminius’s name from the allegations that he would have kissed the feet of the Pope while in Rome and sought contact with Jesuits there!\textsuperscript{107}

The funeral oration was published not only in Latin, as was common practice, but also in Dutch in the same year.\textsuperscript{108} By publishing the oration in Dutch, the oration left the discourse of the university. This becomes apparent in the typesetting, by the use of Gothic instead of humanist type font, as well as in the omission of classical imagery. As the oration in commemoration of a theologian was held by the regent of the States College, the characteristics of the humanist discourse were mostly limited to language and style. However, when Bertius speaks about Arminius’s return from Marburg to his home town Oudewater when it was sacked by the Spanish troops, the Latin reads: \textit{Ubi venit, nihil offendit praeter rudera, cives plerosque, matrem, sororem, fratres, consanguineous, misere interemptos, Et campos ubi Troia fuit}, and later on the same page: \textit{Roterdamum igitur venit, quo cives plerique Oudevvaterani, (reliquiae Danaum atque immitis Achilleï) & fideles multi Amsterdamo exsules concesserant.}\textsuperscript{109} The Dutch translation omits these references to Virgil and has for \textit{Et campos ubi Troia fuit} ‘ende het lant altemael verwoestet’ and for \textit{reliquiae Danaum atque immitis Achilleï} ‘die uyt de wreethyet der Spaengiaerden overghebleven waren’.\textsuperscript{110} These differences may seem minor and irrelevant, but we shall see in the case of

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\textsuperscript{106} Van Deursen, Bavianen en Slijkgeuzen, 249.
\textsuperscript{107} Petri Bertii oratio in obitum Arminii, 16–18.
\textsuperscript{108} Petri Bertii Liück-Oратie over de doot vanden Eervveerdighen ... Jacobvs Arminivs ... / dewelcke by hem is ghedaen inde Latijnsche tale ... op den xxij. Octobris Anno 1609. Ende namaels door een liefhebber verduyst.
\textsuperscript{109} ‘Upon his arrival he found only ruins, most of the citizens, his mother, his sister, his brothers, relatives killed, \textit{And the fields where Troy used to be.} and later: Therefore he went to Rotterdam, where many citizens of Oudewater (\textit{the leftovers of the Greeks and the harsh Achilles}) and many faithful exiles from Amsterdam had gone to live.’ Both references stem form Virgil’s \textit{Aeneis}. Petri Bertii oratio in obitum Arminii, 22.
\textsuperscript{110} ‘and the country was completely devastated’ and ‘who had escaped the cruelty of the Spanish’. Petri Bertii Liück-Oratie over de doot vanden Eervveerdighen ... Jacobvs Arminivs, [B1r].
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Cats that it is precisely these elements that constitute the borderline between the orthodox Calvinist and the humanist discourse.

This assumption is underscored by Gomarus’s reaction to Bertius’s oration. Gomarus had, of course, been present at the oration, but did not react until it was published both in Latin and in Dutch. We cannot know what he would have done if Bertius had published the oration in Latin only, but this double affront was enough to make Gomarus publish his *Bedencken over de Lijck-Oратie M. P. Bertii.* 111 Gomarus’s *Bedencken* is helpful in finding the distinction between both discourses even in the case of Bertius, where characteristics of the humanist discourse are not as evident as in Grotius’s or Heinsius’s works. First of all, Gomarus responds to Bertius in Dutch, using only the Dutch version of Bertius’s oration; if Gomarus uses (other) Latin sources, he quotes them in Latin, followed by a Dutch translation. But more telling are the accusations Gomarus levels at Bertius and Arminius. He finds them both purposely misleading. Bertius in particular is accused of speaking as an ‘Orateur’:

> Daer toe sijn oratie gheen cleyne stoffe van nadencken en levert: schijnende / niet soo seere uyt de borst ghesproten / als na de conste der Orateuren beschreven. Dewelcke meer pleghen op de saecke / die sy verhooghen ende blancketten willen / acht te nemen / dan op den regel der waerheyt te passen. 112

This passage is very important, as it not only shows us that Bertius belonged to the humanist discourse (according to Gomarus), but also addresses the main objection the orthodox Calvinists levelled at the Leiden humanists, many of whom were (future) Remonstrants: they were, to

111 *Nadien het M. Petro Bertio / Regent int Collegie van de EE. Heeren Staten van Hollandt ende Westvrieslandt / belieft heeft / sijn Lijckoratie / in dier voege / niet alleen in d’Universiteit te laten hooren / maer oock voor alle de weereldt / in Latijn ende Duysch / in drucke uyt te gheven: soo achte nuttich / Jae noodich te zijn / dat ick mijn cort bedencken daerover mededeyle. (As it has pleased M. Petrus Bertius, Regent of the States College, not only to hold his funeral oration in the university, but also to publish it before the whole world, I deem it useful and necessary to communicate in short my concerns.) Francisci Gomari Bedencken over de Lijck-Oратie M. P. Bertii, 41.*

112 ‘Concerning which his oration gives food for thought, as it seems not so much to have come forth from the heart, but has been written according to the Orators’ art. Who tend to pay more attention to the cause they wish to elevate and praise than to heed the rule of the truth.’ *Bedencken*, 44–45.
orthodox eyes, deceitful and untrustworthy. He proves this point by showing how Bertius had moved from strict orthodoxy to Arminianism and how Arminius had consequently avoided adopting an explicit position.\(^{113}\) Here, Gomarus helps us to identify Bertius as belonging to the humanist discourse even though Bertius did not use much classical imagery in his oration. But the language and the form of the oration were enough for Gomarus to be able to identify the oration as having been made in accordance with the rules of classical oratory, hence to identify Bertius as belonging to the humanist discourse. However, as Gomarus’s reactions were directed solely at the Dutch translation of the oration, he apparently felt he had to point out the characteristics of oratory style to his readers. This may be due to the fact that Gomarus thought that the rhetorical elements would be overlooked in a Dutch version, or, perhaps more likely, Gomarus assumed that a sizeable proportion of the Dutch readership had no or hardly any knowledge about rhetoric.

Gomarus’s own position can best be inferred from his objections against Bertius and Arminius. He strongly opposes the disputations held in the university under Arminius and Bertius on subjects that could endanger the students’ orthodoxy, especially when (parts of) the *Confessio Belgica* and the *Heidelberg Catechism* are questioned:

If only the late and now lamented upright Regent of the College Cuchlinus would rise: how surprised would he listen, how diligently would he educate and punish his son-in-law, who is trying to break down what his father-in-law built on several vital points (such as the election, the perseverance in faith) and tries to seduce his right-feeling disciples: and gives their parents and friends ground for complaints: that the once blossoming College is now seduced by its own Pastor, who receives the payment of his works when the disciples start to disagree and argue about his teachings: yes, when he, who should have been the Prophet of Truth and should have strengthened his disciple, who hides under his wing, in disputing in Truth, tries to tear [him] away: and who

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\(^{113}\) Apparently, this was an oft-voiced complaint against Arminius, see Van Deursen, *Bavianen en Slijkgeuzen*, 249; De Groot, *Ordinum pietas*, 3.
is punished, as was Bileam by his turning ass: and also was recently contradicted and refuted.  

And:

Surely the students still remember who induced them to doubt the truth of the generally accepted teaching of the Confession and the Catechism: and that they disputed against them and harmed several vital points of our religion.  

He even compares Bertius to the biblical Bileam, who was called by the King of Moab to curse the people of Israel and who was chastised by his own talking ass. These elements make manifest where Gomarus sees himself. The community of orthodox Calvinists is the true people of Israel. The people of Israel are guided by ‘Prophets of Truth’, presumably the preachers, theologians, administrators belonging to this community. The Truth in this sense is specified in these Bedenckinge as the Confessio Belgica and the Heidelberg Catechism. Questioning this Truth is reason enough to be placed immediately outside the camp of Israel and to be equated with the heathen sorcerer Bileam.

Stephen Greenblatt’s own summary of the most common characteristics of self-fashioning illustrates and underscores the


115 De studenten en sullen oock niet licht vergheten hebben / van wien dat het ghesproten is / datmen heeft begonnen onder hen te twijfelen van de waerheydt der ghemeyne leere der Confessie end Catechismi: ende datmen daer teghen heeft begonnen te disputeren / ende verscheyde hoofdstucken der religie aen te tasten. Francisci Gomari Bedencken over de Lijck-Oratie M. P. Bertii, 48–49.

importance of the opposition discussed here. To summarize the most relevant parts here, according to Greenblatt:

Self-fashioning […] involves submission to an absolute power or authority situated at least partially outside the self […] . Self-fashioning is achieved in relation to something perceived as alien, strange or hostile. This threatening Other […] must be discovered or invented in order to be attacked and destroyed. The alien is perceived by the authority either as that which is unformed or chaotic (the absence of order) or that which is false or negative (the demonic parody of order). Since accounts of the former tend inevitably to organize and thematize it, the chaotic constantly slides into the demonic, and consequently the alien is always constructed as a distorted image of the authority. One man’s authority is another man’s alien.¹¹⁷

Gomarus’s authority can be described as what he calls himself the Truth, and which can be characterized as the Calvinist doctrine, formulated especially in the Confessio Belgica and the Heidelberg Catechism. Gomarus believes that this authority has vested in him the power and the obligation to fight anyone challenging this authority. His aliens in the present case are Arminius and Bertius. The perception of the chaos of the alien in the eyes of the authority mentioned by Greenblatt is very clear here. Gomarus is annoyed at the fact that Arminius remained vague about his ideas on predestination for quite a long time. But Bertius too is unclear, using his oratory techniques, according to Gomarus. Besides, acceptance of Arminius’s views would destabilize the authority to which Gomarus submitted, and Gomarus believed this would cause chaos.

The authority of the Arminians is not as easy to define, which may be another reason why they would become less successful. Nonetheless, it may be summarized as the ideals of the Leiden humanists as described in the previous chapter, elements of which are the authority of classical sources, the importance of humanist learning, the authority of the regent class, identification with the Batavian myth. Their alien is easier to find, however. Both Grotius and Bertius accuse the orthodox Calvinists of

¹¹⁷ Greenblatt, Renaissance Self-Fashioning, 9.
creating unrest and division in Church and society. Just as for Gomarus the threat of chaos was situated in the challenging of basic Calvinist doctrine, Grotius and Bertius saw the threat of chaos as residing in the destabilization of the public order and the public Church.

The next step in this exercise would be to analyse the strategies of self-fashioning of both Bertius and Gomarus. But here I part ways with Greenblatt, as I am not sure how consciously these men created their personas. Greenblatt speaks of ‘a sense that they [the selves] could be fashioned’ and ‘a calculated distance between the public persona and the inner self’. In the case of More in particular, one of Greenblatt’s case studies, it was the inner self that was at stake. More had to forge a persona to survive in a dangerous public environment. That is not really what is at stake here. However, I do think that this analysis shows very clearly how the literary actions of these men can be seen as temporal (and partial) embodiments of specific discourses, Bertius of the humanist and Gomarus of the orthodox Calvinist discourse. The clash of the authorities in their representatives can actually be seen as the collision of these discursive fields. Nonetheless, I do agree with Greenblatt when he says that such a conflict often becomes internalized and as such works as a self-destructive force. It is hard to say in which cases the opposition really is self-destructive, but it seems to create in hindsight incongruency in the intellectual biography of the subject. In what follows, I wish to delve deeper into these intellectual incongruities that seem to arise under the effect of the stress of the oncoming event of the coup d’état of Maurice and the Synod of Dordt.

2.4 Heinsius’s Bacchus and Christ hymns

The repercussions of the changing intellectual climate and the growing tension had a strong influence on the literary field. Humanist literary production would suffer under the prevailing criteria of the orthodox Calvinist discourse. It is my strong impression that one of the main problems in this field lays in the importance attached to the literary personae. Within the humanist discourse, a poet could very well be a

truthful Christian in his daily life, either Protestant or Roman Catholic, and yet at the same time adopt a pagan persona as a poet. Within this discourse, it was clear to all participants that the persona belonged to a fictitious literary world and should not be interpreted as corresponding to the actual opinions and beliefs of the poet. It is, of course, impossible to say what the importance of these personae and poems was within the personal world of the members of this discourse; it is perfectly possible that they were experienced as some sort of temporal or psychological escapism. However, it was clear to all members of this discourse that the poet in daily life could not be judged according to the opinions and beliefs expressed by his persona.

This was unacceptable in orthodox Calvinist eyes. The orthodox Calvinist discourse demanded that every expression of the poet, either in daily life or within a literary realm, should be compatible with orthodox belief. This does not mean that personae did not exist within this discourse, but rather that every expression, even of the poet’s persona, had to be in concordance with Calvinist doctrine. In fact, we shall see in the next chapter that poets not only had to refrain from pagan imagery, but also that poetry should preferably treat religious themes, e.g. the expression of religious feelings and beliefs, or the struggle of the persona in the light of certain Christian beliefs, especially the opposition of corporeality and spirituality, or sin and salvation.

A good example of this change taking place in the years before the event of 1618-1620 are the two large hymns written by Daniel Heinsius in the vernacular, namely the Hymn of Bacchus (1614) and the Hymn of Christ (1616). The poems have been studied and edited with a commentary by L. Rank, J. Warners, and F. Zwaan in 1965. To start

120 See De Bruijn, Eerst de waarheid, dan de vrede, 242–243.
121 Heinsius, Bacchus en Christus. The Hymn of Bacchus is also discussed by Somos in his Secularisation and the Leiden Circle, Chapter 3.6. Somos particularly emphasizes the oft-felt relationship between Dionysus and Jesus Christ, which, according to Somos, led Heinsius to ‘raise some serious doubts about the persuasive potential of several cardinal tenets of Christianity, from the merits of faith and the saving power of grace to the unique attraction of Christ’s promise of immortality. […] Heinsius’s[…] Heinsius’s full utilisation of the possibilities offered by these rival and overlapping schematisations of divine frenzy [i.e. Pauline, Erasmian, and Dionysian – DK] enable him to shift several versions of Christian piety, including the Erasmian variety, from a benign into a suspicious epistemic category’. Somos, Secularisation and the Leiden Circle, 177. Although I am impressed by the materials and interpretations of Somos, I am not convinced of the programmatic nature
with the first hymn, it was written, according to the poem itself, on the occasion of ‘Vastenavond’, the eve of the forty-day fast before Easter. It was usually a feast of heavy drinking and even dressing up, and this provided Heinsius, the poem states, with an opportunity to sing the praise of Bacchus. The full title reads: *Hymn or song of praise of Bacchus in which the uses and vices of Wine are described.*\(^{122}\) Although it is introduced as a sort of joke on the occasion of ‘Vastenavond’, a closer look reveals that the poet has invested much time and energy in composing this occasional poem. It consists of 664 lines and describes the mythological biography of the god Bacchus / Dionysus. The text seems to have several intellectual ancestors, not least Ronsard, who had written a *Hinne de Bacus* in 1554, but probably more important, Nonnus Panopolitus’s *Dionysiaca.*\(^{123}\) As we shall see more elaborately in the next chapter, Heinsius had been a great admirer of Nonnus’s poetry and it seems that most of the mythological content stems from this lengthy epos.

At first sight, the poem seems to fit in well within the humanist discourse. We saw in the previous chapter that *imitatio* and *aemulatio* in the vernacular was one of the characteristics of the humanist discourse and was intensively practiced by the poets of the *Pléiade*, and others. The poem is clearly intended for a learned audience. Although written in Dutch, it is brimming with learned references and would be hard to appreciate for anyone not conversant with classical mythology, especially the many names of Bacchus himself! At first sight it might seem that Heinsius was aware of this fact and had wanted to make the text more accessible by adding a commentary at the back, again in the vernacular.\(^{124}\) However, the commentary is possibly even less accessible than the poem itself! It is more a learned counterpart to the poem than an explanation of

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\(^{123}\) Becker-Cantarino reads the poem primarily as an imitation of the Pléiade, see Becker-Cantarino, *Daniel Heinsius*, 42–48.

\(^{124}\) Heinsius, *Nederduytsche poemata: Faksimiledruck nach der Erstausgabe von 1616*, 29–65.; the edition of Rank et al. has placed the commentary under the text.
the more complicated passages. Nonetheless, whatever Heinsius’s intentions may have been, *Hymn of Bacchus* fits in well within the humanist discourse.

However, Daniel Heinsius himself seems to have felt it necessary to take some precautions before publishing the work. He had sung Bacchus’ Bacchus’s praise in Latin before and had apparently seen no harm in it. But as the poem had now been published in Dutch, he added an extensive disclaimer in the preface. This seems to be in accordance with the case of Bertius discussed above, where the author apparently could speak and write in relative freedom as long as it remained in Latin, but was vehemently attacked by Gomarus for the Dutch edition of his funerary speech. By now, in the second decade of the seventeenth century, it was wise to be circumspect with regard to what one wrote, especially in the vernacular. Heinsius acknowledges this fact and accommodates to it. Heinsius goes to great lengths in his preface, a letter to Scriverius, to prove that writing pagan poetry and especially poetry about pagan gods should not be read as a sign of admiration for the pagan gods, but as defamation! According to Heinsius, this was already a habit of the more enlightened under the ancient Greeks:

[…] not because they knew the truth, but because they saw the foolishness, which was visible to anyone.125

And later:

And others [voiced their criticism - DK] more covertly, and while writing the praise of the Gods, also wrote openly about their disgraces and ugliness, as I intended to do as well. Many of them (which seems of greatest importance here) intended with the names of Vulcan, Bacchus, Venus, and others nothing else than fire, wine, and love and their powers, good and evil, and their use and abuse […].126

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125 [*[…] niet om dat zy de waerheyt kenden, maer de dwaesheyt sagen, die voor yeder openbaer was […]*. Heinsius, *Bacchus en Christus*, 99.
126 *Ander hebben dat bedeetelicker gedaen, ende schrijven de lof vande Goden, der selver schanden ende leelichheden ontdeect, als ick meyne dat wy oock gedaen hebben. Vele onder haer, (het welcke hier bysonder plaetse sal grijpen) en hebben met de name van Vulcanus, bacchus, Venus, ende andere namen, […] niet dan het vier, de wijn, de mine,*
And:

[Many have written about the nature of the wine – DK] as there is the Dionysiaca of Nonnus, who compiled in 48 books all that others had left about Bacchus: being a Christian, as can be understood well enough from what he wrote about the holy Gospel of Saint John. Which means that the same author has praised this one, and the true God, and wrote a hymn on both. That the unlearned and the fools may learn this to remain quiet, who find the same thing new and strange in us.\(^\text{127}\)

The passages cited show that Heinsius probably had already met with some criticism concerning his poetry, or else expected his poetry might be received badly. Heinsius’s line of defence can be summarized as follows: 1. The foolishness of the pagan gods and religion becomes more evident by describing it openly; 2. The pagan gods were read allegorically anyway by most respectable thinkers of antiquity; 3. Even Nonnus wrote about Bacchus, and he was a good Christian. Of these arguments, the first seems hardly convincing – would Heinsius, or any poet, spend so much time and energy on writing a mythological poem merely to highlight the folly of the pagan gods? The second point is more convincing and at least constitutes an easy answer to anyone questioning Heinsius’s orthodoxy. It is embraced by the editors of the 1965 edition, who read Heinsius’s introduction as the central key to understanding the humanist use of pagan imagery – it is all only allegory.\(^\text{128}\)

However, I am not convinced by this argument, especially as Heinsius wrote many such poems and never seems to have found it necessary to make this allegorical interpretation manifest, which he could

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easily have done in paratexts or the poem itself. Does this mean that Heinsius’s poetry expresses a personal belief in the pagan gods, as is offered as the only alternative by the editors? That seems unlikely; rather, I would say that the third strand of Heinsius’s defence, namely that Nonnus Panopolitus had also written about Bacchus, gives us a clue as to the nature of Heinsius’s poetry, and here to the hymns in particular. As will be discussed more extensively in the next chapter, Heinsius had been a great admirer of Nonnus Panopolitus. He wanted to imitate Nonnus, Christian or otherwise, to show how well he knew Nonnus and to see how far he could bend the Dutch language in imitation of the rich poetry of Nonnus. This was part of the humanist practice, as Heinsius also makes clear in the introduction when he mentions other humanists who have deigned to tackle the subject of Bacchus.129 This conclusion may seem to render this whole discussion redundant – the humanist discourse, the importance of imitation in Greek, Latin, and the vernacular and the use of classical imagery have been discussed already in the first chapter. However, what this introduction makes important to notice is the fact Heinsius feels he has to give an explanation for a well-known practice within the Republic of Letters! It is the apologetic character of the preface that shows the pressure on the humanist discourse.

Heinsius’s youthful admiration of Nonnus (and Ronsard) may have inspired him to write a hymn on Bacchus. It may also have been an inspirational factor in the creation of his Christian hymn, the Lof-sanck van Iesus Christus. However, it seems that this last poem has also been inspired, perhaps to an even greater degree, by the changing atmosphere in the Dutch Republic. By now, the days of writing pagan humanist poetry were over. A cynical reader might say that Heinsius interpreted the signs of his time correctly and adjusted his course to the changing wind in a timely manner. Whatever the case may have been, a quick glance at the work immediately shows the reader that this is a completely different kind of poetry in comparison to what Heinsius wrote before. Already the dedication of the work to Jacob van Dyck gives a good impression of the changes. It discusses the history of biblical hymns, both in the Bible itself and in the early Church. However, it is not an academic discussion in Heinsius’s usual fashion, but a religious work in itself, full of citations

129 Heinsius, Bacchus en Christus, 102.
from Psalms and biblical hymns. The only reference to the pagan classical world is in an oblique remark about Synesius, ‘who, after having spent a significant proportion of his life reading books of the Heathens, at last decided to leave some excellent hymns on the Lord his Saviour for posterity’.

Heinsius ends his dedication with the following sentence:

[One of my purposes for writing this work has been – DK] finally to keep myself occupied praising, jubilating, and exalting him, until we will be there where he is and we shall praise him with perfect voices, following the new voice of the heavenly powers, and all the Saints, who call there continuously, Holy, holy, holy, is God Almighty, who was, who is, who shall be.

If, purely for the sake of argument, we compare these sentences with a line from the ‘young’ Heinsius, we can see the enormous difference: ‘Father Bacchus, here I place for you ever-remaining altars: / Posterity shall know that I am your prophet’.

The hymn features the classical gods as well, but in an altogether different context. When Jesus is born, the world has already been divided under the pagan gods: ‘The earthly realm has been divided: every one has his lot: / And everyone has left outside their God. / Neptune has full power in the sea, / His brother Jupiter took possession of the heavens: / Another one is in hell. The world is polluted / By Bacchus and Pan, and occupied everywhere. / The blindness cannot be told with any mouth: / They celebrate their lust, they pray to their vices. / For Bacchus loves the wine, the gluttony, / And Venus is a whore, Mercury is a thief. / The highest of all was busy all his days,

130 [...] die een groot deel van zijn leven in de boecken van de Heydenen versleten hebbende, heeft the lesten oock uytneemende Lof-sanghen op den Heere zijne Saligmaecker willen na laten. Heinsius, Bacchus en Christus, 197.

131 Te lesten, om mijn selven besich te houden, met hem te loven, te prijsen, ende groot te maecken, tot den tijt toe dat wy komen daer hy is, ende dat wy hemt met een volmaeckte stemme sullen prijsen, volgende den nieuwen toon van de hemelsche heyrkrachten, ende al de Heyligen, die daer gestadig roepen, Heylig, heylig, heylig, is de Heere God almachtig, die was, die is, die wesent sal. Heinsius, Bacchus en Christus, 198.

132 Bacche pater tibi mansuras hic sistimus aras: / Posteritas vatem me sciet esse tuum. Heinsius, Danielis Heinsi Gandensis Elegiarum Lib. III, 146.
Finding, following and chasing after women, / Full of disgraceful lust. […]  

As said before, I do not intend to say that Daniel Heinsius was less (orthodoxly) Calvinist in his younger years and later became a leading voice of the Gomarist faction. I think it is important to be very careful in making a clear difference between the persona of the poet and the person in daily or professional life. It is not my intention, and I think it is almost impossible, to say anything definite about Daniel Heinsius’s personal religious life. However, it is perfectly possible to say something about the evolution of Heinsius’s poetical persona. There is a clear hiatus in Heinsius’s work between both the hymns discussed here. Heinsius himself explains the change in a liminary poem: ‘The fruits of the youth, the sweetness of love, / A true form of sorcery, of ourselves and our senses, / Has been with us now. I let Venus go, / And with her I leave the blind child and its blind works. And the end: [It is] the end of my youth, the beginning of this year’.  

Heinsius explains here the change in his poetical work by relegating his earlier poetry to the realm of his youth. It is the same excuse Cats would use in his Sinne- en minnebeelden. And although the argument of love poetry belonging to the (extended?) youth should not completely be discarded, as it was some sort of a topos in the humanist discourse too, I think the timing and complete reorientation in Heinsius’s intellectual career are convincing arguments to place more emphasis on the discursive change occurring during these years.

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133 Het aertrijk is verdeelt: een yder heeft zijn lot: / Een yder heeft daer uyt gesloten zynen God. / Neptunus heeft in zee de volle macht bekomen, / Zijn broeder Jupiter den hemel ingenomen: / Een ander is in d’hel. de werelt is besmet / Met Bacchus ende Pan, en over al beset. / De blintheyt en is niet met monden uyt te spreken: / Zy vieren haren lust, aenbidden haer gebreken. / Want Bacchus heeft de wijn, de gulsigheden lief, / En Venus is een hoer, Mercurius een dief. / Den oppersten van al is besch gansche dagen, / Om vrouwen op te doen, te volgen en te jagen, / Vol schandelycke lust […] Heinsius, Bacchus en Christus, 249–250.


135 Somos writes more boldly: ‘In L[of-sanck van] B[acchus] Heinsius drew strongly suggestive parallels between Bacchus and Christ, and hinted at the superiority of the pagan divinity. As the fortunes of the Leiden Circle were reversed, and the Calvinist reaction and purge began, Heinsius wrote L[of-sanck van] I[esus] C[hristus] to repair the damage that LB did to his image as a Calvinist’. Secularisation and the Leiden Circle, 96.
In conclusion, these two hymns can be seen as a turning point in the work of Heinsius and as a representation of the changing discourse in Leiden humanist circles. The first phase is the text of the *Hymn of Bacchus* itself. This poem describes the main events of Bacchus’s life in the tradition of classical imitation. The poet adopts a pagan persona, there is no sign of inconvenience or inappropriateness of dwelling in a pagan context. The second step or phase is the paratexts of this hymn, discussed above. They show an apparent need felt for justification of this pagan context. The poems have to be read as an allegory, meant for a festive occasion. Whether Heinsius himself believed in his explanation or not is not what is at stake here; it is the apparent need to write this justification down that shows a changing wind. The last phase is the *Hymn of Christ*, where Heinsius openly changes his pagan poetical persona for a conservative Calvinist one. Although this step can partly be explained by his admiration for Nonnus Panopolitus, the depreciation of the pagan classical world is voiced with such vehement words that it is clear that Heinsius makes it a definitive departure.

It is interesting to see that the editors of the 1965 edition of the hymns chose to interpret them from the point of view of Heinsius’s own justifications. Rank, Warners, and Zwaan seem to assume that the persona of the poet of the *Hymn of Christ* is the true Heinsius.136 Both poems should be read as belonging to the humanist tradition where both the study of the Early Church and the study of classical antiquity received equal attention and importance.137 Study of classical sources was a way of following in the footsteps of the Fathers of the Church, some of whom had acquired great knowledge of classical sources themselves and knew how to appreciate these pagan fruits themselves. If understood thus, there is of course no other option than to interpret Heinsius’s older poetry as

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136 See Heinsius, *Bacchus en Christus*, 51: *De geschiedenis heeft voor de christen, zoals Heinsius er een was, slechts één middelpunt, […]* (‘History has for a Christian as Heinsius was, only one centre […]’). Becker-Cantarino reads the text along the same lines, though emphasizes however Heinsius’s moderated stance in the Gomarist camp: ‘Heinsius’s presentation of Christ is based on the writings of the Church fathers and the early Christians. His interest in the Church fathers, while omitting more recent theologians, is shared by such famous Dutch contemporaries as Grotius and Vondel and reflects the beginnings of the ecumenical trend of the time especially in the Low Countries’. Becker-Cantarino, *Daniel Heinsius*, 51. Personally, I would hesitate to place Heinsius in a proto-ecumenical trend.

allegories. However, in my view this interpretation does not do sufficient justice to Heinsius’s older poetry. Why would Heinsius put so much effort into writing endless allegories without even explaining them as allegories in paratexts or commentaries? And what can be the reason for the sudden change in the subjects of his poetry?

What is more, the notion of a changing discourse in the Leiden humanist universe as a possible reason for Heinsius’s modification of his poetical persona, solves one of the questions raised by Rank, Warners, and Zwaan, the editors of this edition:

Scriverius has always been known to have been a sympathizer of the Remonstrants; Heinsius was, as we have seen, a follower of the Counter-Remonstrants. Today it seems odd that a Remonstrant makes a commentary on a hymn to Christ, written by a Counter-Remonstrant. Many conclusions could be drawn from this fact, without ever knowing which is closest to the truth. For example, the distance between both groups was not as considerable as is usually assumed, especially in the world of scholars, who took little or no part in actual politico-religious life. It is probable that the differences between Remonstrants and Counter-Remonstrants were not that considerable when more moderate protagonists are compared. It is of course also possible that Heinsius was not as Counter-Remonstrant as he made himself seem to be from time to time. However, this point of view contradicts Heinsius’s very upright testimony in his Christ hymn, which we would be sad to assume to be a piece of work without deeper worth and meaning.138

138 *Scriverius heeft steeds bekend gestaan als een aanhanger van de remonstranten, Heinsius was, naar we zagen, een aanhanger van de contra-remonstranten. Merkwaardig lijkt het nu dat een remonstrant aantekeningen maakt bij een lofzang op Christus, door een contra-remonstrant vervaardigd. Men zou vele conclusies uit dit gegeven kunnen trekken, zonder te weten welke de meest juiste is. Bijvoorbeeld: het verschil tussen deze twee groeperingen was minder groot dan men meestal aanneemt, als men zijn blik richt op geleerden, die aan het actuele politiek-godsdienstige leven weinig of geen deel hadden. Wellicht was het verschil tussen remonstrant en contra-remonstrant niet zo groot, als men gematigden van beide richtingen met elkaar vergelijkt. Ook is het natuurlijk mogelijk dat Heinsius minder contra-remonstrant was dan hij soms deed voorkomen. Maar tegen dit standpunt strijd het zeer rechtzinnig getuigenis van Heinsius in zijn hymne op Christus,
It is, of course, the last sentence that sheds a singular light on the edition and Heinsius’s poetry. If we hate to read one work of a poet as ‘a piece of work without deeper worth and meaning’, what about the rest of his oeuvre? However, I think the problem of Scriverius commentating on Heinsius’s *Hymn of Christ* can be adequately explained by seeing them both as members of the Leiden humanist circle. The discourse changed and its members changed with it. Both Heinsius and Scriverius had taken part in the original classical discourse. Both felt the growing pressure of the oncoming event and adjusted to the changing reality. In fact, Scriverius did not have to make as big a step as Heinsius did. Scriverius continued doing what humanists did best, i.e. editing and commentating on texts! Scriverius did not have to express his own beliefs; he only had to clarify Heinsius’s words.

### 2.5 *De contemptu mortis*

The *Hymn of Christ* is probably the work where Heinsius appears most adapted to the format of the orthodox Calvinist discourse. It is one of the two works mentioned by Revius when he refers to Heinsius as the greatest poet. The other poem Revius mentions is his *De contemptu mortis*, published in 1621.\(^{139}\) As Bloemendal shows in his introduction, *De contemptu* is a didactic poem, inspired in particular by Lucretius’s *De rerum natura* and Virgil’s *Georgica*, but also by more recent Renaissance poets.\(^{140}\) However, Revius’s enthusiasm was not stirred by Heinsius’s imitation of these examples as much as it was by the content of the poem, which teaches the public with the aid of Christian-Platonic doctrine not to fear death. Whereas in the *Hymn of Christ* Heinsius showed the transformation of his vernacular poetry from the pagan *Hymn of Bacchus* to the *Hymn of Christ*, in *De contemptu mortis* Heinsius shows a transformed Latin poetry. The work is all the more interesting as it is quite

\(^{139}\) A modern edition with a commentary has been issued by Jan Bloemendal: Heinsius, *De verachting van de dood. De contemptu mortis*. I discuss the work in this chapter as I assume that most of it had been written before the ending of the synod.

\(^{140}\) Heinsius, *De verachting van de dood*, 17–24.
unique amongst works of its kind. Although the content is perfectly in accordance with the new dominant discourse at the Leiden University, it is the vernacular poetry that would dominate the literary field in the second half of the seventeenth century. Even the reception and continuation of classical themes and imagery – the pastoral theme, for example – would particularly be in the vernacular. From this perspective, the Hymn of Christ is much more of a forerunner to the new discourse than Heinsius’ De contemptu mortis.

In his De contemptu mortis Heinsius seems to stretch the boundaries of the humanist discourse as far as possible in the direction of the orthodox Calvinist discourse, as if he wants to show its possibilities and acceptability to the orthodox Calvinist discourse or redefine the humanist discourse in such a way that it would fall within the limits of the orthodox Calvinist discourse. Apparently, however impressive Heinsius’s own poem has become, he did not succeed in this aspect, supposing he had such a motive. We could tentatively infer that, although the content had been adapted to orthodox Calvinist tastes, the form was still profoundly humanist and as such remained suspect or strange in orthodox eyes. Because although Heinsius is here clearly writing a Christian book, he does at times stretch the possibilities of language and metaphor to Calvinist limits and probably beyond.

First of all there is, of course, the language. The poem has been written in Heinsius’s rich Latin style. As Bloemendal shows, Heinsius imitates his examples in words and style: ‘De contemptu mortis is Virgilian in its form, but its content is anti-Lucretian and contains Lucretian elements in order to counter Lucretius’s doctrine.’ It is the same principle of imitatio and aemulatio, discussed in Chapter 1. As such, it had its place within the context of the humanist discourse and was ipso facto suspect in orthodox Calvinist eyes. Nonetheless, probably even more disquieting in orthodox Calvinist eyes are the pagan metaphors Heinsius uses in this poem.

For example, when Heinsius says to the dedicatee, his brother-in-law Janus Rutgersius, that he will look out for him, he describes the place

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141 Smits-Veldt and Luijten, “Nederlandse pastorale poëzie in de 17de eeuw”.
142 Heinsius, De verachting van de dood, 22. Bloemendal here cites Sacré, “Heinsius’ De contemptu mortis”. Sacré particularly pays attention to Virgilian and Lucretian influences, as well as to possible contemporary examples from the respublica litteraria.
where he will wait for him in almost the same fashion as had been done in the wedding poems discussed in Chapter 1:

I will find you there, where magnificent Father Mosa runs and embraces Linge and Waal in one current, a place on the shore, surrounded by trees and plenty of grass, free from the wind and burning Phoebus. Here the Athenian Muses and, most dear to me, the great Aristocles are waiting for you and the local green Nymphs are preparing themselves to welcome you upon your return from the high North.¹⁴³

It is, of course, clear to any modern reader, and supposedly also to any contemporary reader, that the classical references in this passage are to be read metaphorically. I suppose no one thinks or thought that Daniel Heinsius really believed in a river god of the River Meuse. The same can be said of the burning Phoebus: it is and was an almost proverbial instance of metonomy for the sun. Both the use of these metaphors and the description of the *locus amoenus* are *topoi* of the humanist discourse. So far, there is no difference between this and Heinsius’s other Latin poetry.

However, Heinsius seems to stretch the boundaries when he comes to the description of typical Christian doctrine – at the beginning of the fourth book, for example, which has been devoted to Christian doctrine in particular:

Only beneficient faith has conquered the face of death and the wild recurrent fears of punishment, after she has embraced the immense offspring of the great Thunderer, who had been brought forth by the ever inward-turned and self-contained genitor of life, who is sublime above the temporal, like the Titan brings forth beams flaming high in the ether from the beautiful light.¹⁴⁴

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¹⁴³ *Ipse tibi, qua Mosa pater pulcherrimus errat, / Et Lingam et Vahalimque uno complectitur amni, / Arboribus cinctam et foecundo gramine ripam / Dispiciam, vento expertem Phoeboque furente. / Heic te Cecropides Musae et mea maxima cura, / Magnus Aristocles iam nunc expectat et aurae / Indigenae viridesque parant occurrere Nymphae / Extremo Borea redeunti et finibus Arcti.* Heinsius, *De verachting van de dood*, 44–46. On this description as *locus amoenus*, see Heinsius, *De verachting van de dood*, 295–297.

¹⁴⁴ *Prima adeo leti faciem caecosque tumultus / Corde recursantes dubio poenamque trahentes / Subdidit alma fides magni complexa Tonantis / Immensam sobolem assidue,*
The description of the sun as a Titan is of the same category as the other examples cited above, but calling God Tonans must have been uneasy in the eyes of orthodox Calvinistic readers. Of course, biblical parallels can be found, where God is associated with thunder, for example when the people of Israel receive the Law at Mount Sinai, the manifestation of God is accompanied with lightning and thunder. Nonetheless, the adjective tonans is far better known as the description of Jupiter tonans! Again, I do not think anyone misunderstood Heinsius in thinking that he wanted to equate the Christian and Roman gods, but I do think that the sheer association must have been discomforting to orthodox readers.

The arguments presented in the preceding section may seem far-fetched. There must be many examples of the use of classical imagery in Christian Neo-Latin poetry. On the one hand this is true, and a good example of this is Grotius’s religious Latin poetry. On the other hand it is important to see that the discursive change, which is described here, had not yet reached its end. In the years after the Synod of Dordt, the orthodox influence on the literary field would continue to grow to the point that even naming classical deities would be avoided by some poets as it could be regarded as sinning against the first commandment. The influential orthodox theologian Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1679) is a good example of this view. In his collected disputations of 1648, two disputations explicitly deal with the use of classical (heathen) imagery.145 Voetius is very explicit in his condemnation of any reference to the Greek and Roman gods, whether in imitation of the ancients or in a comical setting (…circa res divinas non est jocandum)146. He explicitly names Hugo Grotius as one of the authors who tried, unconvincingly in his eyes, to allow the use of classical and heathen imagery in poetry.147 The names of heathen gods

quam protulit aevi / Impatiens semperque in se conversus et haerens / Aeternus vitae genitor, velut aethere in alto / Flammantes radios formosae e lumine Titan. Heinsius, De verachting van de dood. De contemptu mortis, 138.

145 De gentilismo et vocatione gentium in: Gisberti Voetii selectarum disputationum theologicarum pars prima, 580–659, and De idololatria indirecta et participate in: Gisberti Voetii selectarum disputationum theologicarum pars tertia, 234–386. Both have been mentioned by Enny de Bruijn in her Eerst de waarheid, dan de vrede, 568, n. 264.

146 ‘No fun should be made of subjects pertaining to religion.’ Gisberti Voetii selectarum disputationum theologicarum pars prima, 610.

147 Hugo Grotius cacoethes hoc poetarum Gentilizantium excusare conatur in praefatione ad fratrem, poëmatum primaee editioni in 8. praefixa. Sed frustra. (Hugo Grotius tried to
should only be mentioned to denounce them, or in a very strict educational setting.\textsuperscript{148} The works of Heinsius have a place in this changing discourse. Heinsius would to a certain degree adapt to it, but as we will see, this will become especially visible in his scholarly work. As far as Heinsius’s literary work is concerned, it seems that his \textit{Christ Hymn} and his \textit{De contemptu mortis} are a terminus.

Thus far in this chapter I have shown how the literary discourse among the humanists of Leiden University was influenced by the changing discourse. Firstly, the poems of Grotius and Heinsius at Arminius’s memorial service were discussed and the funeral oration of Petrus Bertius, and Gomarus’ reaction on the publication of the oration in Dutch. Together, they give a good impression of the tensions in the literary field at the time of Arminius’s death. Secondly, the influence of this changing discourse on the literary field was discussed, exemplified in three longer poems by Daniel Heinsius. In the following section of this chapter I wish to adduce Jacob Cats and his \textit{Silenus Alcibiadis sive Proteus} as an additional example of this process. Jacob Cats seems to have undergone a similar development to that of Heinsius. However, whereas Heinsius practically ceases to write poetry, Cats continues to write until he dies in 1660. This makes him an interesting example, as we can learn from him how the literary discourse evolves over the course of the seventeenth century. The other important aspect of Cats is that on the one hand he is a follower of and clearly admires and imitates Heinsius, and on the other hand he serves as an example for the poet and preacher Jacobus Revius. It is hardly coincidental that we have here three Counter-Remonstrant poets, each in their own way negotiating the tension between their humanist examples and their more or less orthodox belief – today, at least, all three are usually seen as sincere Counter-Remonstrants.

\textsuperscript{148} \textit{Nulla enim idola unquam sunt nominanda, [...]}; only with odium, hate and disgust of them, or when it is necessary for a grammatical explanation, a scriptural explanation, a confession of faith, an abjuration of sins, a historical tale, or a theological refutation.) \textit{Gisberti Voetii selectarum disputationum theologicarum pars tertia}, 259–260.
2.6 Cats as epigone

Jacob Cats\textsuperscript{149} was born to a wealthy family in Brouwershaven, Zeeland in 1577. His mother died when he was still young and Jacob Cats was raised by his mother’s sister and her husband. He attended the Latin school in Zierikzee and studied Law and some Greek at Leiden University. In 1598 Cats continued his Law studies in Orleans, where he defended his thesis in Roman Law and then spent some time in Paris. He returned to Holland in the same year and started his career as a lawyer in The Hague. After some success, Cats fell quite ill and could not be cured by Dutch physicians, so he went to England in the hope of finding relief there. During his stay in England, he also had the opportunity to visit the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. It was apparently at Oxford that he became deeply influenced by Protestant Pietism. Cats, still not cured, returned to Zeeland, where an otherwise unknown alchemist seems to have found the right cure for his illness. His friends from Zeeland and Middelburg convinced him to stay there and give his career a new start in Middelburg.

In 1605 Cats married Elisabeth van Valkenburgh, daughter of a wealthy Amsterdam patrician family. The marriage seems to have worked out well, as Cats always referred to his wife with the utmost love and reverence. Elisabeth van Valkenburgh was already Calvinist and Cats followed her in her denomination, becoming a member of the Dutch

\textsuperscript{149} For the purposes of this biographical introduction I have drawn on: Ten Berge, \textit{De hooggeleerde en zoetvloeiende dichter Jacob Cats}. 

Ill. 9: \textit{Frontispiece of Cats’s Proteus, sive Silenus Alcibiadis, by Adriaen van der Venne (1618)}
Reformed Church himself in 1607. During these years he starts making his fortune with land reclamation projects. Having earned enough money to spend some time on more leisurely pursuits, he composed his *Silenus Alcibiadis sive Proteus*, a collection of emblems. In his own words, this book was an edition and adaption of the love poetry he had written earlier, expanded upon with more moral poetry. The edition of these emblems marked Cats’s entry into the literary world. During his busy life, he would continue writing emblem collections, although only his first book was in both Dutch and Latin (and French, to a lesser extent). All his other books were written in Dutch.150 Throughout the rest of his life, Cats would remain quite successful in both his political life and his literary career. He held several high positions, such as *pensionaris* of the cities of Middelburg and Dordrecht, *raadpensionaris* of Holland and West Friesland and *pensionaris* of the States General. He would also lead several diplomatic missions to England, although he seems to have been less successful there. In the Dutch context he is generally described as a person who was very able when it came to finding compromises in difficult situations. He died at Zorgvliet in 1660.

In 1618 Jacob Cats published his remarkable collection of emblems, *Silenus Alcibiadis sive Proteus*.151 The book was an immediate success and was reprinted numerous times during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its structure was tripartite, each part related to the same set of engravings, but with texts from different angles. The first part was addressed to the youth and contained poems pertaining to the nature of love; the second part presented a general moralistic interpretation of the same engravings for married couples; and the third part provided an outright Calvinistic one for the elderly. Three poems accompanied the engraving in each part, which means that Cats wrote nine poems to accompany each engraving. Every engraving has in each part a poem in Dutch, in Latin, and a shorter French one. The three poems in each part


151 The most recent and most elaborate study of Cats’s *Silenus Alcibiadis sive Proteus* is Hans Luijten’s *Sinne- en minnebeelden; Studie-uitgave met inleiding en commentaar*, The Hague: Constantijn Huygens Instituut, 1996. Special attention to the position of this work in the Dutch emblem tradition is paid in: Porteman, *Inleiding tot de Nederlandse embleemataliteratuur*, especially 91-92 and 129-133.
are closely interrelated, though they often differ too much to be read as translations of each other. The second and third parts of the book also feature explanations in prose, in both Latin and Dutch. Apparently, Cats felt that his moral and religious lessons required more explanation than his lessons in love.

The seventh emblem, for example, depicts a young man in rich clothes against the background of a sky illuminated by lightning, holding the hilt of a broken sword in one hand and the scabbard of his sword in the other. At his feet lay the remaining parts of his sword. All three parts concentrate on invisible imperfections or fractions, just as lightning was believed to destroy hidden metal objects. The poems in the first part, intended for the youth, complain about wounds inflicted by love, which are invisible from the outside and cannot be healed by a regular doctor, but only by a maiden’s kiss. The second part, devoted to adults, explains the same engraving as a contrast between outward power and splendour and inner weakness. A tyrant may appear strong and fearsome – nonetheless he often has to fear for his own life. The Latin poem ends: ‘The boot that seemed excellent to the traveller, often turns out to hurt the foot with a hidden pain’. In the third part, Cats explains the engraving again from a completely different perspective – here the sword broke because it did not bend to the power of the lightning. The scabbard remained unscathed, as it was capable of complying. Only when we bend before the will of God do we stay unharmed. Humility is the first virtue a Christian should learn.

Ill. 10: *Pictura from Emblem VII: Sine vulnere laedor, by Adriaen van der Venne (1618)*

152 *Calceus, egregium quem judicat esse viator, / Afficit occult saepe dolore pedem.* Cats, *Silenus Alcibiadis*, B4v.
Later editions would rearrange the poems and the work would become famous under its Dutch title: *Sinne- en minnebeelden* (*Book of Moral and Love Emblems*). The *Silenus* has two introductions, one in Latin and one in Dutch. Both introductions contain Cats’s general pedagogical programme, namely that he tries to seduce the youth into reading his book, first by way of an attractive frontispiece, secondly by means of the beautiful engravings and the sweet subject of love. Cats assumes that once the youth has started reading and appreciating the first part of the book, they will continue reading, eager to learn more moral lessons. The introductions seem partly to be literal translations of each other. However, there are also large parts where the two are completely different and it is here that they seem to be most interesting for us with regard to the interplay of the humanist and the Calvinist discourses in this work. The general line of thought is as follows:

a. Address to the reader  
b. What are emblems?  
c. Why has the author added love emblems to moral and religious lessons? Tripartite division of the work.  
d. Genesis of the first part, the love emblems as youthful sin, recently accidentally recovered.  
e. Description of the ideal human development, from natural being, to moral, to religious character.  
f. As the youth can hardly be interested in reading moral and religious works, it was necessary to entice them by means of an inviting frontispiece. Description of the title page.

This is the general line of thought that can be found in both introductions. But the elaborations on these thoughts are quite different in both introductions. The longer Dutch introduction to the *Silenus Alcibiadis sive Proteus* has many examples of parables from Scripture. The shorter Latin introduction contains an anecdote about Demosthenes. Noticing that his audience’s interest was waning, this famous Athenian orator started to tell a parable. However, besides using the parable as a metaphor for the case he was defending, it also served as a metaphor for the situation in which
he and his audience found themselves. As this parable appears at the end of the Latin introduction, it seems that Cats himself is also using the parable as a warning, to admonish his readers not only to enjoy his *emblemata*, and then perhaps his love emblems in particular, but also to heed the moral lessons of the emblems. That is also the reason why he ends his Latin introduction with the words: *Non esse separandam caudam a capite* (‘Do not separate the head from the tail!’). The Dutch introduction ends typically with a prayer: ‘We give ourselves and all that is ours, in a quiet and peaceful mood, to the same gracious God and Father, and finally we pray dearly that these, our exercises, may serve continuously the glory of His holy name, the amelioration of the Author, and the edification of the Readers’.

Another interesting element in both the Latin and the Dutch introductions is the description of the title page. It presents the reader with a synoptic outline of the programme underlying Cats’s work. According to the Latin introduction, the frontispiece (and some other pictures) depicts (depict) Cupid and some other figures connected to the subject of love emblems. According to the Dutch introduction, the picture shows a

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154 Then he [Demosthenes] said: ‘Is the story about the donkey’s shadow of such interest to you, [but] do the serious matters not seem worthwhile?’ […] *itane, inquit, narratio de asini umbra vobis cordi, seria audire operae pretium non videtur?* ] C a t s, *Silenus Alcibiadis, sive Proteus*, **v.

155 Again, this is ostensibly a warning with two objectives: first, as before, not to forget the moral lessons that have been hidden in the emblems; but more importantly, in this first edition of the *Sinne- en minnebeelden*, the three different interpretations of the emblems had been placed in three different parts. The first part contains the love emblems, the second part encompasses the moral interpretations of precisely the same pictures, and the third part presents the religious interpretations of those same pictures. Separating the head from the tail would mean only paying attention to the love emblems and ignoring the second and third parts. The fact that Cats’s misgivings about his readership were not unfounded is something that is evident from the later editions, where he positioned the three different ‘readings’ of the same emblem contiguously with the relevant picture, ensuring the moral and Christian lessons were seen before proceeding to the next emblem.


child, carrying the world, with a bow and arrow in his hand, in such a composition that it could be hailed as the God of Love by blind antiquity in earlier times or by the foolish youth in the present time; adding to it real courtiers that serve such a court, consisting of all sorts of young people, swarming around it in pairs, offering themselves and their services to their Lord. As is stated in both versions, the picture serves to mislead the youth and makes them think the book consists only of love emblems. As they are too spoiled to digest moral and religious lessons at once, they have to be seduced by means of the delights of Adonis and Venus in order to reach the more serious lessons in due course.

Cats leads us to believe he has a clear pedagogic programme: to impart moral lessons to the youth by concealing them in a work that seems at first sight to contain only love emblems, a genre apparently prized by young people in particular. However, when we see a book written by Cats – one third of which comprises love emblems, beautifully adorned with pictures, translations, and citations, preceded by a frontispiece depicting Cupid as the God of Love, surrounded by seventeenth-century courtiers – the question that presents itself most readily is whether or not Cats’s explanation here is too quick to dispense with the prominent place Cupid seems to take in this work. It would probably be an overstatement to assert that Cats created this pedagogical work as a pretext for publishing his erotic poetry. Nonetheless, the work gives Cats an opportunity to adopt different personae, and he elegantly plays with the language and imagery of both the humanist and the Calvinist discourse.

Cats dedicated this book, in a famous poem, to the maidens of Zeeland. It clearly elaborates on the Ovidian love theme, but within a nationalist Zeelandic context. Immediately in the first lines, it compares the maidens of Zeeland to Venus, for both sprang from the sea. After a

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158 [...] een naeckt kint, de weerelt dragende, met pijl en booch inde hant, ende voorts in alles so afericht, dat uyt desselfs gestaltenisse eertijts de blinde Outheyt, ende ten huydigen daghe de malle ionckheyt het selve voor der Minnen-God soude begroeten; daer by voegende de rechte hovelingen tot soodanigen hoff diendende, te weten alderley slach van Ionghe-lieden, al by paren daer ontrent swermende, als manschap ende trouwe haren overheer aenbiedende. Cats, Silenus Alcibiadis, **4r.

159 Luijten has shown that Cats’s dedication is strongly reminiscent of Heinsius’s dedication in his Quaeris quid sit amor? of 1601. Cats, Sinne- en minnebeelden, vol. 2, 138.
long eulogy on these maidens, it mentions the Cupid from the frontispiece, coming to tell them ‘in the clear Zeelandic language, what is happening in Venus’s palace’. Over the following three pages (ca. 100 lines) Cupid complains about the lack of poetry written in Zeeland, particularly love poetry. During the war, Zeeland was known for its popular songs. They were uncultivated, but still poetry. Would Venus’s child not be able to do what Mars can? It becomes clear then that, according to the Cupid in this poem, love poetry has a clear and distinct function: it should arouse lust in order to fill the land with new offspring! The angry god subsequently mentions Daniel Heinsius, Pieter C. Hooft, and Gerbrand A. Bredero as examples from Holland who have been able to fulfil their duty, but rebukes Anna Roemers Visscher, who, although she is the flower of the maidens, has until now failed to pay tribute to Cupid. In his anger, the god confiscates Cats’s poetry and takes it to the printing press. Inadvertently, however, Cupid has picked up more than he thought and has mistakenly also taken the moral and religious poems to the printing press.

It is here in these last 40 lines that the themes of Cats’s introduction reappear. Again he mentions the tripartite nature of the book, corresponding to the different stages of man’s life and development. And once more Cats seems to contradict or to be willing to undo the things he said previously in his poem. Cats suggests that it was only by accident that he had left some love poetry on his table and Cupid took it against his will, but no harm had been done, as the love poetry will be neutralized by

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160 ... Het (Kint DK) coomt u segghen aen, in ronde Zeeusche tael, / Wat datter omm-gaet in Venus gulden sael. Silenus Alcibiadis, ****r.
161 ’t Ginck soo wat rau, ’t is waer, maer soo ginck doen de tijt. / Als d’oorloch was in swanck, doen waren hier Poeten; / En, nu m’er sit in rust, is al ’t ghedicht vergheten. / De weerelt is verkeert : daer Mars verweckt een liet, / Vermach de soete min, vermach daer Venus niet? / [...] Off sal den bloet-hont Mars meer in dit lant vermoghen, / Als ’t soete Venus Kint? Silenus Alcibiadis, ‘Aen de Zeeuwsche Ionck-vrouwen’, ****v.
162 See Een soet ghedicht behoort in tijt van pays te wetten, / de schicht van Venus Kint, om ’t uyt-gheputte lant, / Van nieuws, met jonck ghewas, rontsom te sien beplant’and ‘Let op ’t na-buerich volck, dat heft al beter grepen, / Als wel uw’ Zeeuwen doen, siet, Hollant is gheslepen, / Om groot ghetal van volck te queecken over al, / En van haer burghery te meerderen ’t ghetal. Silenus Alcibiadis, ‘Aen de Zeeuwsche Ionck-vrouwen’, ****2r.
163 On the relationship between Cats and Anna Roemers Visscher, see: Visscher, Gedichten van Anna Roemersdochter Visscher, 23-24.
the moral and spiritual poems that Cupid mistakenly took as well. Again, it ends with a warning: read either all of it or none of it at all!\footnote{Ghy dan, off leestet niet, off leestet al-te-mael. Silenus Alcibiadis, ‘Aen de Zeeusche Ionck-vrouwen’, [***3]v.}

If we accept Genette’s thesis\footnote{Genette, \textit{Seuils}, chap. Introduction.} that an introduction is primarily meant by the author to ensure his text will be read as he intended it to be, we can only say that Jacob Cats chose the second part of his title, \textit{Proteus}, excellently. Just as the god Proteus can shift his appearance, Cats plays with various roles and various audiences, and his introductions in particular make it very hard to say how he wanted his text to be read. Probably the only thing that can be said about Cats’s intentions is that he wanted to be read and appreciated by different readers with different levels of cultural understanding and different opinions about sexuality and religion.

The first group of readers Cats seems to address are the humanists. They are addressed in Latin, first in one of the introductions, later by the Latin poems and the many citations from and references to the humanist cultural canon. Cats’s references to the humanist discourse are recognized and responded to by Heinsius and Liraeus in their liminary poems.\footnote{Justus Liraeus, Joost or Josse van Liere (ca. 1578-1646), was a fellow student of Heinsius and one of Scaliger’s pupils. Cats, \textit{Sinne- en minnebeelden}, vol. 2, 146.} The characteristics of this discourse are, as we have seen with Heinsius and Grotius, implicit knowledge of the humanist canon and apparently the virtual absence of religion. Apparently the humanist discourse allowed poets to create an alter ego that was not bound by the formal rules of Christian conduct, but could function in a virtual classical environment. It allowed the poet to write erotic poetry and to write eulogies on the gods of the classical world. Most important in this discourse is, of course, the erudition of the poet. He will be judged by his fellow humanists on his erudition and his appliance of the rules of classical poetry to his own verses. In the first part of his \textit{Silenus}, Cats showed that he was entitled to a place among the Dutch humanists. His claim was acknowledged by Heinsius, who honoured the work with a short poem.

The second group of readers Cats addresses are young men and women. They are not necessarily addressed in Latin, although Cats refers to them both in his Latin and in his Dutch introduction. As upper-class
boys were often sent to Latin schools, it could be argued that the less religious Latin introduction was directed at boys or men and the more severe and religious Dutch introduction was directed at girls and women, as they usually knew no Latin, but this seems otherwise hard to prove. It is generally thought that at least the first edition of this book had been directed towards an upper-class public, as the book was expensive with its many engravings. It is here that Cats appears to us as an instructor, but as we have seen, it is not completely clear what kind of instructor and for what public. It may be assumed that the readership intended comprises, as a minimum, those people that have to be enticed by the engravings and the love emblems. From the fact that Cats later complains, and here already warns, that the first part is not the only one that should be read, we can see that this particular public were indeed responsive to the love emblems! Probably it is this part of Cats’s readership that is being addressed in his dedication to the maidens of Zeeland. It is peculiar that Anna Roemers Visscher responds on behalf of the maidens of Zeeland, as she was from Amsterdam. What is more, why would Cats write a book, half of which is in Latin, for the maidens of Zeeland, who could not understand half of it! Unless Cats simply wanted to impress his readership, we should have our reservations about designating Anna Roemers as ideal reader. Probably it would be better to see her as representative of one of Cats’s designated readerships.

The last group of Cats's possible readers that we can discern from his introductions and dedications is the group that does have a problem with erotic poetry and imagery. It is the more orthodox Christian discourse. Characteristic of this discourse seems to be the use of the Dutch language, in combination with many citations from and references to the Bible. It appears that Cats needs to justify his use of love emblems in the eyes of these readers and can only make them acceptable as a necessary step towards reaching as many young men and women as he can in order to lead them towards salvation.

It is attractive for a modern reader to think Cats actually only wanted to write love emblems, but felt he needed to keep the Calvinists at bay. It could inspire ideas that Cats’s true opinions are formulated in Latin, and that the Dutch is only meant to deceive the less learned.

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orthodox public. But in the end it seems hard to maintain this point of view. First of all, it would appear that Cats had put a lot of work into the second and third parts of the work which would only have been made to deceive a proportion of his readers. More important is the fact that all of his later work seems to fit in better within the more conservative discourse. Ostensibly Cats’s work reflects the contemporary state, where the Calvinist discourse is becoming dominant at the cost of the humanist discourse.

The *Silenus Alcibiadis sive Proteus* is such a great representation of Dutch culture in the second decade of the seventeenth century (and beyond), as it comprises several discourses and shows the tension between them. Where Heinsius apparently felt he had to choose and in one period adjusted to humanist discourse and in later to the Calvinist discourse, Cats displays the different discourses simultaneously.\(^{168}\) In Cats’s work, the dynamic between the Calvinist and the humanist discourse intersects with the dynamic between Latin and the vernacular in a peculiar way. In the introductions, the Latin seems reserved for the humanist discourse and the Dutch for the Calvinist discourse. However, in the poems and the prose explanations in the second and third parts of the book, both languages have been used indiscriminately, which illustrates nicely how hard it is to make definite statements about the connection between the languages and the discourse.

### 2.7 Conclusion

This chapter shows how various humanists from the Leiden circle responded to the changes in the political sphere between 1608 and 1620. Perhaps the first and most obvious conclusion is that the discourse changed. This can be concluded from the fact that the kind of poetry written by Scaliger, Heinsius, and Grotius and others within the context of Leiden University was no longer written within these walls at the same scale and level. This does not mean that no Neo-Latin poetry was written

\(^{168}\) It is, of course, perfectly possible that Cats *had* written his humanist poetry and introduction earlier in the seventeenth century and the Dutch parts later, i.e. closer to the events of 1618. In that case Cats would have undergone a process similar to that of Heinsius. But still, the printed work shows both discourses side by side in one book.
any more. However, it would never again be the expression of a commonly shared intellectual ideal of humanist learning and education. To men like Dousa, Lipsius, and Van Hout, writing poetry was an integral part of their enthusiasm for the humanist enterprise. To Grotius and Heinsius, writing humanist poetry was a self-evident part of their education and scholarship, as has been explained in the previous chapter. Part of this discourse was the possibility of writing pagan poetry. Writing a poem to Dionysus, singing the beauty of Aphrodite, was part of the imitation and emulation curriculum. While imitating poets of ancient times, the present-day Calvinist or Catholic or Lutheran poet could adopt the persona, the identity of a random classical Greek or Roman poet. As these poets wrote to honour their pagan gods, it was self-evident that their imitators could do the same. There was no confusion of identities between the imitating persona and the individual donning this mask. When questions of this nature arose, the easiest solution was to explain these poems allegorically. On the other hand, I am not completely convinced that this pagan persona did not function as a viable escape from strict Calvinist moral expectations. It may very well be that this was exactly the point that irritated the orthodox Calvinists.

Wearing two masks was not acceptable in orthodox Calvinist eyes. The only proof of an upright life in their eyes was if every part of someone’s life was an expression, a representation of basic Calvinist values. It was their clearly defined authority in a Greenblattian sense of the word that made it easy to single out opponents and attack them.169 A good example of such an attack is Gomarús’s Bedencken, discussed in 2.3. Standing on the authority of the Bible and the Heidelberg Catechism, Gomarus and his companions could easily condemn the humanist discourse, even without the possible connection with Remonstrantism. The humanist discourse did not, as we have seen, have as its primary authority the Bible, its main examples were the great authors of the classical world. It is interesting to see that the orthodox Calvinists came to completely different conclusions than another group of fervent Christians, the Jesuits.170 Whereas the Jesuits embraced and disarmed the classical

169 Greenblatt, Renaissance Self-Fashioning, 9.
170 O’Malley, “How Humanistic is the Jesuit Tradition?: From the 1599 Ratio Studiorum to Now.”
world, the orthodox Calvinists rejected it. It may be possible that this rejection was even enhanced by the very Jesuit and Roman Catholic appropriation of the classical world.