

# *The Doctrine, Life, and Roman Trial of the Frisian Philosopher Henricus de Veno (1574?-1613)\**

by CHRISTOPH LÜTHY AND LEEN SPRUIT

*This paper retraces the life of Henricus de Veno, professor of philosophy at the Frisian University of Franeker, summarizes his teaching, and documents the trial that was conducted against him by the Roman Inquisition in 1597-98. De Veno was probably the most innovative Dutch teacher of philosophy in the first years of the seventeenth century, as he combined the new Protestant metaphysics with a cosmology and physics inspired by Girolamo Cardano. Instead of admitting before his Calvinist colleagues that he had been in prison and had converted to Catholicism before the Roman Inquisition, he claimed to have obtained various university degrees abroad. His philosophical views and religious interests correspond to the Arminian demand for a libertas prophetandi and a certain doctrinal open-mindedness.*

## INTRODUCTION

Among the key elements that separate the scholastic understanding of nature from that of modern science, our history books routinely single out matter theory for its importance. The difference between the two views of nature lies in this: According to Aristotelian hylemorphism, natural substances are in the last analysis understood as composites of prime matter and of substantial forms, where the latter inhere in the former only transitorily. When, for example, the element water (which is characterized by cold and wet) loses its wetness and becomes instead hot, it simply transmutes into air. Elements as well as all higher substances are thus exclusively defined by their (transient) qualities. By contrast, the atomic and corpuscular models that have been developed from the late sixteenth century onward suggest something very different, namely the existence of immutable physical corpuscles the properties of which remain intact even when they enter into higher-order molecular structures.

Although the hylemorphic and the atomic understanding of matter are diametrically opposed to one another, it would be misleading to assume — as has sometimes been done — that there was a precise moment in the history of early modern science when a paradigm shift from the first model to

\*The authors wish to thank the editor of *RQ*, Professor Paul F. Grendler, and the referees, Professors Joseph S. Freedman, John Tedeschi, and Jan Papy, for their insightful comments on earlier versions of this paper. The research of C.H. Lüthy has been made possible by a fellowship of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

the second occurred.<sup>1</sup> Three different reasons militate against such an assumption. First, the atomic theory never entirely replaced hylemorphism, some version of which survived in chemistry (and also in natural philosophy) until the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>2</sup> Second, beginning in fifteenth-century Italy there existed some currents within Aristotelianism itself which took chemical mixtures to possess a corpuscular structure and which therefore combined atomic and hylemorphic notions.<sup>3</sup> Finally, early modern atomic and corpuscular modeling was a phenomenon of such heterogeneity that it would be quite implausible to call it a paradigm. Giordano Bruno's ensouled monads, René Descartes' (divisible) particles of *res extensa*, Pierre Gassendi's (indivisible) atoms with their hooks and eyes, and the chemical atoms and corpuscles that were proposed in the period between Daniel Sennert and Robert Boyle have very little in common with one another.

Already Kurd Lasswitz, whose *Geschichte der Atomistik* of 1890 remains to this day the standard work on the topic, has drawn attention to the heterogeneity of the atomic revival and the motives that lay behind it. One of the figures that most puzzled him was a Dutch author by the name of David Gorlaeus (*vulgo* David van Goorle), of whose identity Lasswitz was completely in the dark. All he knew were the two posthumously published books by this author, the anti-Aristotelian *Exercitationes philosophicae* (1620) and the *Idea physicae* (1651). Both works contain a fully worked-out atomist doctrine, which according to Lasswitz's chronology makes Gorlaeus the earliest professing atomist after Giordano Bruno (1548-1600). What intrigued Lasswitz about Gorlaeus' atomism was that its foundations were metaphysical and quite unlike anything he had found in the writings of either Bruno or such other early modern atomists as Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), Daniel Sennert (1572-1636), or Joachim Jungius (1587-1657). Unable to obtain any information about this author, Lasswitz made an appeal to future historians: "A monograph on Gorlaeus and on this important decade would be most desirable."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Kuhn, xi-xiii, has described his experience ("One memorable [and very hot] summer day") of managing to break into the logic of Aristotelian physics, interpreting this experience as a return beyond the *gestalt* switch of the Scientific Revolution. While the personal experience is fully credible, the attempt to apply it to an historical situation is not.

<sup>2</sup>As late as 1875, the chemist Thomas Sterry Hunt writes that mixture is no "juxtaposition, as conceived by the atomistic chemists," but has to be "interpenetration," and he invokes Aristotle's and Hegel's arguments to buttress his case (428, 450).

<sup>3</sup>This tradition is briefly analyzed in Lüthy, 2001b. As shall be seen below, de Venó is indebted to that tradition.

<sup>4</sup>Lasswitz, I:482.

Such a monograph has recently been published.<sup>5</sup> However, its findings render Gorlaeus (1591-1612) by no means a less mysterious figure, chiefly because it shows that this pioneering atomist was a theology student who died at age twenty-one. These findings obviously implode the distinction drawn by the historian of chemistry J.R. Partington between the philosophical "speculations" of Giordano Bruno and the "scientific" atomism of David Gorlaeus.<sup>6</sup> They also make it inevitable to look over the shoulders of this very young author so as to verify whether he was not simply following in the footsteps of a more mature thinker whose theory he copied.

An enquiry into his intellectual background must begin with the University of Franeker, where Gorlaeus had been an undergraduate. When examining the ranks of his teachers, one will eventually encounter a very unusual teacher by the name of Henricus de Veno (fig. 1). As it turns out, this professor of ethics and physics not only supplied Gorlaeus with several notions that were crucial to the latter's work, but was a fascinating figure in his own right.

Today, de Veno is very much a forgotten figure, even among historians of Dutch philosophy and science, this lack of *fortuna* being due to the fact that he is not known to have published any works. However, a number of (hitherto unanalyzed) philosophical disputations which accompanied de Veno's lecture courses are extant in European libraries. They suggest that he was the least scholastic and most modern Dutch natural philosopher during the opening decade of the seventeenth century. His philosophical approach is at once theologically grounded and heavily indebted to Italian naturalism *à la* Girolamo Cardano (1501-76) and Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484-1558). Although his precocious student Gorlaeus was to exceed him in productivity, coherence, and intellectual force, de Veno's unorthodox views were a necessary precondition for Gorlaeus' metaphysics and physics.

If one adds to his unusual doctrines the equally unusual fact that, before becoming a professor at Franeker, de Veno spent more than a year in the Roman prison of the Inquisition, there seem to exist sufficient reasons for erecting for this forgotten character a small monument in the form of a monograph. For the historian of Dutch intellectual history, much about de Veno is noteworthy with respect to the debate over the admissibility of a *libertas prophetandi* and *philosophandi*, which erupted in the Dutch Provinces in the very years in which de Veno was teaching at Franeker. For the historian of philosophy and of science, he is furthermore interesting as one of the first institutional non-Aristotelians, without whom the breakaway from Aristotle and the development of the new sciences would not have been possible.

<sup>5</sup>Lüthy, 2001a.

<sup>6</sup>Partington, 260-61.

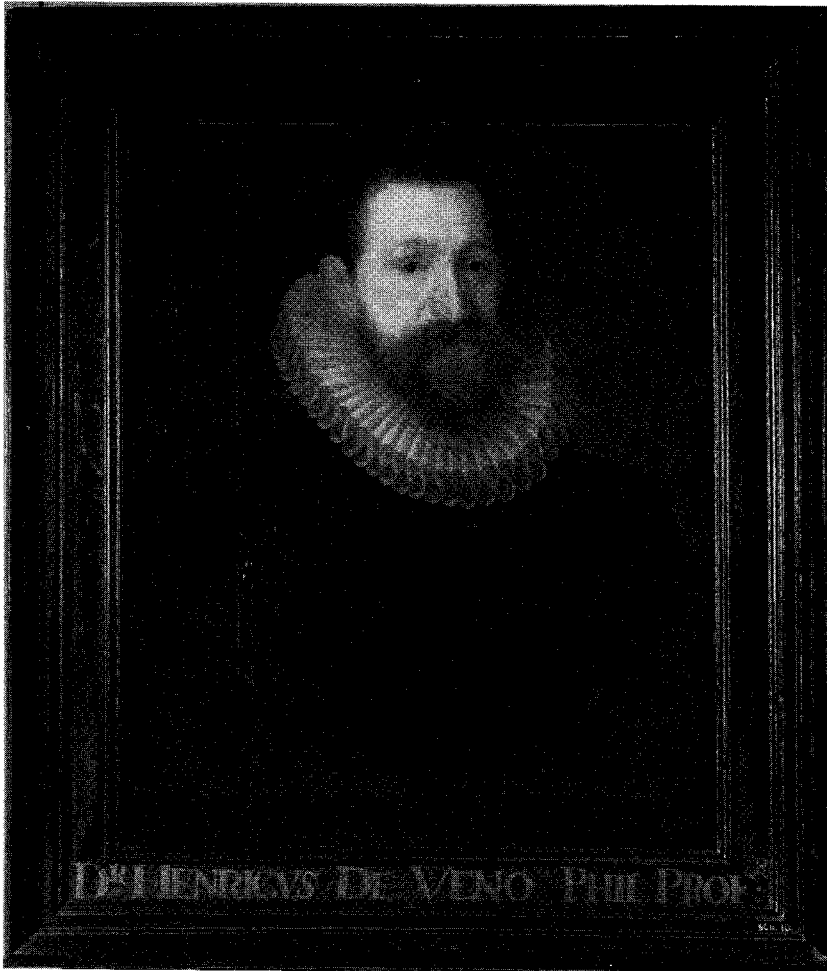


FIGURE 1: Henricus de Veno. Portrait by an anonymous painter, originally hung in the Senate Chamber of the Academy of Franeker. Courtesy of the *Stadelijk Museum 't Coopmanshûs*, Franeker. This portrait is analyzed in Ekkart, 74-75.

#### DE VENO'S EARLY LIFE

Henricus de Veno (who also wrote his name as de Veen and Van der Veen) was born in the Frisian capital Leeuwarden around 1574.<sup>7</sup> He was the second son of Jantje Gerrits Mammainga and of Laurens de Veno, who was secretary of Leeuwarden's city council and town magistrate. Henricus' three

<sup>7</sup>Usually, de Veno's dates are given as ca. 1570-1613. We believe instead that he was born in 1574, first, because de Veno told the Roman inquisitors in 1597 that he had formally stopped adhering to the Calvinist faith when he was twenty-three. Given that in 1596 he was

brothers were to obtain influential positions in the army, trade, and at the courts, while his sister married Johannes Rhala, the receptor of religious properties in Frisia (*ontvanger van de geestelijke goederen*).<sup>8</sup>

After having finished the Gymnasium at Leeuwarden, de Veno enrolled at the University of Franeker on 13 May 1591. The university register (*Album studiosorum*) lists him during the rectorate of Alardus Auletius (1544-1606) as a student of "philosophy, languages, and theology."<sup>9</sup> The University of Franeker, founded in 1585 as the Dutch Republic's second university (after Leiden, 1575), was at that point only six years old and still an extremely small institution with an uncertain future. De Veno was in fact only the 130<sup>th</sup> student since its foundation, and the rolls mention a total of eighteen students for the calendar year 1591.

What makes that small Franeker institution interesting for the intellectual historian is the fact that, in contrast with the other Dutch universities, its statutes did not prescribe the teaching of Aristotelian philosophy.<sup>10</sup> The only non-negotiable requirement for its teachers was that they regard themselves as an integral part of the Reformed Church and did not violate its doctrines. Indeed, Franeker's first professors of theology made sure everyone understood the link between theology and the rest of the sciences. In Frisia, the Reformation had gained the upper hand as recently as 1580, and the foundation of the university was intended to provide an intellectual Calvinist elite for the province. Philosophy, which was viewed as subordinate to theology, was expected to give a hand in this enterprise, but divergent views soon developed as to how this should best be done. Rivalling proposals as to how to reconcile philosophy with Calvinist theology were made, and not all of them relied on the Aristotelian corpus. In fact, the Ramist logician Frederic Stellingwerff (d. 1623) spoke in 1610 of Aristotle as of "that pope of nebulous opinions."<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, outspoken anti-Aristotelianism was not the rule. Lollius Adama (1544-1609), with whom de Veno studied natural philosophy, was still proud of following in the "footsteps of the Preceptor"

---

still a student of theology at Franeker, his conversion, if there was one, must have taken place between 1596 and 1597 so that in 1597 de Veno was either twenty-three or twenty-four. Second, most Franeker students enrolled at their *alma mater* at the age of fifteen or sixteen. (David Gorlaeus, for one, was born in 1591 and enrolled at Franeker in 1606.)

<sup>8</sup>Vriemoet, 113; Boeles, 1:75; Galama, 77.

<sup>9</sup>Fockema Andreae and Meijer, 16: "Henricus de Veno, phil et ling et theol."

<sup>10</sup>See Galama, 17-18, who compares the Franeker Statutes with those of Leiden, Utrecht, Groningen, Deventer, and Harderwijk.

<sup>11</sup>Stellingwerff, preface (sine pagina): "fumosarum opinionum Pontifex ille."

Aristotle, although he concomitantly displayed a certain weakness for the logic of Ramus (1515-72).<sup>12</sup>

As Vriemoet, the eighteenth-century biographer of the Franeker professors, tells us, de Venó did not content himself with what the little regional university could offer, but "aspired to universal erudition."<sup>13</sup> How exactly he went about obtaining this goal was, however, unclear to Vriemoet, as to all later historians. From the sources we know that on 18 August 1593, de Venó was awarded a master's degree in philosophy at Leiden, where he publicly defended both *Theses logicae de categoriis* and *Theses physicae de principiis* under professor Antonius Trutius, one of those early Dutch professors "whose names are not found in the history books." Both sets of theses are inconspicuous and unsurprising in their contents. They have, in fact, even been cited to illustrate the "dogmatism" and the textual Aristotelian teaching at Leiden in the first years after its foundation in 1575.<sup>14</sup>

In 1596, de Venó reappeared in Franeker as a theology student and on 22 May defended a disputation under Professor Henricus Antonii Nerdenus (1546-1614), which was published under the title *Disputatio theologica de usuris*. At that time, de Venó simply signed as "magister," that is, with the title he had acquired three years before in Leiden.<sup>15</sup>

But, instead of finishing his theology degree, de Venó embarked on a *peregrinatio academica*. Usually, such tours took Frisian students to leading

<sup>12</sup>Adama, 1609, 16: "vestigia Praeceptoris." On Adama's interest in a Ramist reinterpretation of logic, see Galama, 39-47. The subordination of philosophy to theology was defined in the Statutes of the University as follows: "Cum philosophicus coetus etiam pars esse debeat Ecclesiae Dei, omnes philosophiae professores puram doctrinam Evangelii, quam Ecclesia nostra profitemur, amplectuntur: et ita philosophiam docent, ne traducant publice vel privatum doctrinam Ecclesiarum nostrarum: nec serunt, aut probant, aut defendunt profanas opiniones: sed tuentur pacem publicam Ecclesiae, amando eam et ministros ejusdem" (articulus 18; quoted from Dibon, 130). On the general history of the teaching of philosophy at Franeker, see Galama; also Dibon, 127-63. On Franeker's theological approach to all knowledge, see also Jensma, 1985a, 11-14. On Franeker's (limited) appeal to foreign students, see de Ridder-Symoens; for its specific importance to New England Puritans, see Sprunger.

<sup>13</sup>Vriemoet, 114: "ad universalem aspirans eruditionem."

<sup>14</sup>For de Venó's theses, see Trutius, Meursius, 351: "quorum nomina in historia non habentur." On Trutius and the philosophical teaching of the first decades of Leiden University, see Dibon, esp. 12-57. On de Venó's disputations under Trutius, see Galama, 78. Sassen, 39: "L'enseignement philosophique à Leyde était d'un dogmatisme exclusif."

<sup>15</sup>From the 1590s there exists an undated letter by de Venó to Johannes Saeckma (1572-1636), who had asked de Venó about his views regarding the appropriateness of performing and watching theater plays in Christian schools, churches, and public places. If the date of 1597, which has been suggested by the editor of the Saeckma correspondence (Engels, 1:254-59), is correct, this would mean that de Venó stayed on at Franeker for some time after the date of his theological disputation.

Protestant universities such as Heidelberg, Marburg, Basel, or Geneva, where they would try to obtain their higher degrees.<sup>16</sup> When de Venó returned to Frisia in early 1599, he claimed to have done just that, to be in possession of doctorates in the disciplines of law, medicine, and philosophy, and to be also an expert theologian, albeit without the doctor's hat in that discipline. He would sign with his three titles and did not prevent students from calling him "thrice great" for this triple qualification.<sup>17</sup> Oddly enough, none of his colleagues seems to have doubted his claims, although the chroniclers of Franeker University were unable to specify the places where he had obtained his sundry qualifications.<sup>18</sup>

However, on the basis of recently found evidence, it appears that de Venó's "universal" qualification was, at least partly, a sham. The first piece of evidence is an entry in the register of the Faculty of Theology of Basel University of November 1598 (fig. 2), which states:

Henricus of Venó, Frisian. Declares that after becoming doctor of law in France, he furthermore wished to finish his study of theology. He was detained for an entire year in Rome in the prison of the Inquisition,<sup>19</sup>

In late 1598, then, de Venó had still not completed his theological studies, but claimed to possess at least a doctorate in law. When and where he obtained this degree is unclear. However, de Venó was from a family of lawyers, practiced law for two years after returning to Frisia in 1599, and identified himself as a "doctor of law" already to the Roman inquisitors. So we must not dismiss the idea that he had done sufficient coursework for a doctorate in law, either between 1593 and 1596, when he resurfaced at Franeker, or after his theological disputation of 1596.

However that may be, the most startling aspect of the Basel entry is surely the assertion that our Calvinist theology student had wished to pursue

<sup>16</sup>For the universities visited by Frisian students during their *peregrinatio academica*, see the statistics in Zijlstra, 19-59.

<sup>17</sup>The *Album* of the University states, for example: "Anno 1609 rectore magnifico Henrico de Venó iuris utriusque, medicinae et philosophiae doctore, ethices ac physices professore" (Fockema Andreae and Meijer, 43). Vriemoet, 114, accepted these titles: "unde factus, ut triplici ornatus laurea, Iuris utriusque, Medicinae? and Philosophiae doctor." The "thrice great" occurs in a student disputation; see de Venó, 1604e, dedication: "D. Henrico de Venó, Phil. M. and I.V. D. Trismegisto, theologo insigni, liberalium artium magistro, ac in eadem academia physices ethicesque professori pectatissimo."

<sup>18</sup>Galama, 77: "Waar de titels behaald zijn, is niet bekend."

<sup>19</sup>*Matricula facultatis theologiae, 1597-*, fol. 43: "Henricus de Venó Frisius, Iuris Doctor in Gallia creatus, sed deinceps studium Theologiae se amplexurum profitens. Integrum annum Romae in carcere inquisitionis detentus fuit." De Venó also signed the general register of Basel University (during the rectorship of Caspar Bauhin, 1598-99) as "Henricus de Venó, Frisius." See Wackernagel et al., 2:469, no. 54.

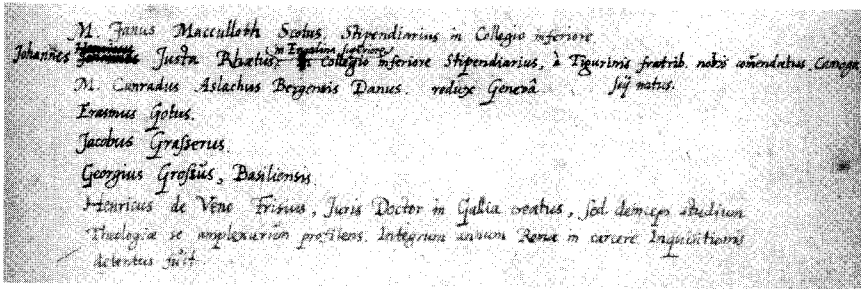


FIGURE 2. De Veno's entry in Basel University's *Matricula facultatis theologiae*, 1597-, fol. 43. Courtesy of the Universitätsbibliothek Basel.

his theological studies at the center of Catholicism, in Rome, and that he had been arrested and jailed by the Inquisition. This is all the more surprising, because studying at Rome was forbidden to Dutch students by the States-General. Nor do we know of any another Frisian Protestant who after the Reformation tried to study theology in Rome.<sup>20</sup> Yet, as it turns out, the Basel entry is correct. On the basis of the “Decrees of the Congregation of the Holy Roman and Universal Inquisition,” we may reconstruct the following chain of events.<sup>21</sup>

#### DE VENO'S TRIAL

On 3 June 1597, the Congregation of the Holy Office in Rome examined a confession that had presumably been made only a few days before by one Robert Brown, a twenty-two-year-old Scotsman from the Orkney Islands. The cardinals decided that Brown should abjure “ut formalis haereticus.” This phrase implied that the crime of heresy had been proved. Brown was made to abjure and in so doing returned to the fold of the Catholic Church. During the same session, the cardinals decided that Henricus de Veno, who had been denounced by Brown and had subsequently been arrested, should remain in the prison of the Holy Office.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>20</sup>For statistical tables of the foreign universities at which Frisian students enrolled, see Zijlstra, 33; Bots and Frijhoff, 59.

<sup>21</sup>The transcription of the documents preserves original spelling and punctuation throughout. Pointed brackets <> indicate integrations; square brackets [sic] indicate comments. The Archive of the Holy Office is today held at the Roman *Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede* (henceforth: ACDF), together with the Archive of the Congregation of the Index.

<sup>22</sup>ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, fol. 475r: “Roberti Brunei Scoti de Insula Norcadiensi filij quondam Ioannis aetatis suorum annorum 22 vel circiter audita eius spontanea comparitione in hoc S. Officio facta ac lecta errorum suorum confessione, et omnibus mature consideratis Illustrissimi et Reverendissimi Domini Cardinales generales Inquisitores praedicti decreverunt



We do not know what Robert Brown's motives for denouncing de Veno might have been, although some conjectures are more reasonable than others. First of all, the Inquisition usually pressed defendants to denounce their accomplices and offered a more moderate verdict in exchange for such information. It is also possible that Brown had offered hospitality to de Veno. Hosting heretics was by itself viewed as favoring heresy and was therefore liable to punishment. Under these circumstances, it was preferable to confess hospitality before being discovered.<sup>23</sup>

One month later, Brown's case was submitted to the pope, who asked the Jesuit Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), who had only recently begun to work for the Inquisition,<sup>24</sup> to check whether Brown could be confined to a monastery in Avignon.<sup>25</sup> In the following week, Brown obtained the pope's permission to leave the ecclesiastical territory.<sup>26</sup> Concerning de Veno, however, it was decided that he should be brought to trial for heresy.<sup>27</sup> In the

---

et ordinaverunt quod dictus Robertus recipiatur in gremium S. matris ecclesiae facta abiuratione ut formalis haereticus apposita clausula citra poenam relapsus artenta eius juvenili aetate. Henrici Venus [*sic*] Phrisij denunciati à supradicto Roberto ex causis de quibus in actis Illustrissimi audita dicta denuntiatione decreverunt quod dictus Henricus <deti>netur in sancto officio."

<sup>23</sup>This was one of the motives which led the Venetian nobleman Giovanni Mocenigo to denounce Giordano Bruno; see Firpo, 143-47.

<sup>24</sup>The Jesuit Robert Bellarmine had been appointed member of the Holy Office at the beginning of the same year, and took his oath on 5 February 1597. On 3 March 1597, he became a cardinal.

<sup>25</sup>Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office of 10 July, in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, fol. 502r: "Pro Roberto filio quondam Ioannis Bruni Scoto ex Insulis Orcadis, qui nuper sponte comparvit personaliter in hoc s. officio lecto memoriali per eum exhibito Sanctissimus D N praedictus ordinavit, et mandavit quod Pater Robertus Bellarminius unus ex consultoribus dicti Sancti officij ibidem in eadem congregatione interessente se informet an adsit Collegium in Civitate Avenionis ut ibi collocari possit quia Sanctitas sua aliquid impendet."

<sup>26</sup>Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office of 17 July, in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, fol. 510r: "Pro Roberto Bruno Scoto nuper sponte comparente in hoc. S. officio, facta relatione per P. Bellarminium etc. Sanctissimus D. N. praedictus annuit dare eidem Ruberto Viaticum ut possit se conferre Lovanium." A contemporary copy is in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, 1598, 1599, 42: "Roberti Bruni Scoti nuper sponte comparentis in Sancto Officio, facta fuit relatio per P. Bellarminum quod dictus Robertus contraxit sponsalia pro uxore ducenda infra biennium, nec est admodum constans, nec idoneus literarum studiis, posset tamen ei dari viaticum pro itinere Lovanium. Sanctissimus annuit."

<sup>27</sup>Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office of 10 September, in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, fol. 553r: "Henrici filij quondam laurentij de Veno de Civitate Leovardie in actis Inquisitionis et in actis Illustrissimi Domini Cardinalis generalis Inquisitoris de Venetia et in actis Illustrissimi Domini Cardinalis generalis Inquisitionis cum eo agant ut veritas in hoc casu manifestetur."

autumn of 1597, de Venó confessed that he had embraced Calvinist heresies until the age of eighteen, but that he had relinquished his heretical views by the time he was twenty-three years of age.<sup>28</sup> Given that in the previous year de Venó had still studied theology at Franeker, it is likely that he tried to persuade the magistrates that between 1591, when he enrolled at Franeker, and 1596, when he left Frisia for his *peregrinatio*, he had gradually lost his Calvinist faith, and that by the time he entered Italy he had formally converted to Catholicism.

However, this answer did not satisfy the cardinals, who regarded de Venó's statement as a partial confession.<sup>29</sup> In order to get to the bottom of the truth, they decided to have Dutch priests visit de Venó in prison. In March 1598, they also sent the well-known Flemish theologian and editor of patristic works, Gerard Vossius (1540-1609),<sup>30</sup> so as to bring de Venó to a full confession.<sup>31</sup> It seems that the visits of his fellow countrymen produced

<sup>28</sup>See the contemporary copy of the previous decree, in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, 1598, 1599, 113: "Henrici Veni Leovardiensis Frisii carcerati in sancto officio lecto eius processu in quo fatetur tenuisse hereses Calvini usque ad 18 annum, abinde citra, cum suae sit etatis annorum 23 asserit destituisse hereses. Decretum quod aliqui probi religiosi suae nationis cum eo agant, ut veritatem integrè fateatur, quoniam benignè secum agetur."

<sup>29</sup>See the Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office of 23 December, in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, fol. 609r: "Henricus filius quondam Laurentij de Venó de Urbe Leovardie in Frisia I. U. D. carceratus in carceribus dicti S. officij, ac inquisitus ex causis de quibus in actis eductus è dictis carceribus et in aulam congregationis coram supradictis Illustrissimis et Reverendissimis Dominis Cardinalibus generalibus Inquisitoribus praesentatus, et ab illis Visitatus et auditus fuit super Universis eius necessitatibus et etiam monitus ad dicendam integram omnium veritatem; postea amotus a dicto loco congregationis decretum fuit quod repetantur testes per informatione S. officij examinati, postea dentur ei defentiones." Draft in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597-98, fols. 82r-83r, contemporary copy in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, 1598, 1599, 207.

<sup>30</sup>Gerardus Vossius was born in Borgloon (in the prince-bishopric of Liège) and died in 1609 at Liège. After studying at Leuven, he taught rhetoric at Liège. In 1572, he first went to Rome, where he obtained his doctorate in theology. Under the patronage of the Cardinals Morone, Sirleto (the Vatican librarian), and Carafa, he not only made a considerable career at the papal court, but was also involved in major editorial enterprises. He edited the works of Chrysostomus, Ephraem Syrus, and Theodoretus and was the author of *Rhetoricae artis methodum* (1571), the *Commentarium in Somnium Scipionis* (1575), and the *Gesta Gregorii IX papae* (1586). Thanks to his excellent connections, he was the natural intermediary for Flemish and Dutch Catholics who wished to bring their cases to the attention of the papal curia. See Gysens, 1992; for Vossius' editorship see Gysens, 1994.

<sup>31</sup>Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office of 16 March, in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1598, fol. 242r: "Henricus de Venó de Leovardia Fisticus [*sic*, for Frisicus] fuit visitatus ac decretum quod dominus Gerardus Vossius ad illum accedat, ac secum benignè agat, ut errores integre fateatur. Item dominus Hercules Hessinius familiaris Illustrissimi D. Cardinalis S. Severinae ad eum mittat quendam propinquum suum, ut idem officium prestat. Referatur eius causa in prima congregatione Illustrissimi Domini inclinarunt quod expediatur absque

at least some of the desired results, because in June 1598 the cardinals reached the verdict that de Veno had to abjure as a "formal heretic," which meant, in this case too, that his heresy had been proven.<sup>32</sup> By abjuring, de Veno returned officially to the Catholic fold.

Surprisingly, however, de Veno was released from prison within less than a week. And as he was not yet allowed to leave Rome, he was even granted an allowance for his living expenses.<sup>33</sup> In September, finally, he was given permission to return to his native Frisia.<sup>34</sup>

Unfortunately, the extant documentation of de Veno's trial does not inform us about the reasons for his arrest. As always in such cases, the acts refer for this kind of information to the defendant's personal file.<sup>35</sup> All we know is that he was charged with and condemned for heresy, which in those days was regarded as a serious crime on a par with high treason ("crimen laesae maiestatis").<sup>36</sup> The tribunal of the modern Roman Inquisition, which had been founded in 1542 by Pope Paul III with the bull *Licet ab initio*, did not proceed "ad instantiam partis, sed ex officio" (not at the request of a party, but *ex officio*), although their procedures were usually triggered by a charge — as in de Veno's case. Whenever the preliminary proceedings persuaded

---

tortura, ac benignè secum agatur stante eius origine, et educatione à parentibus haereticis." Contemporary copy in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, 1598, 1599, 278.

<sup>32</sup>Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office of 17 June, in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1598, fol. 291v: "Henrici Veni Phrisij carcerati in Sancto officio ac inquisiti de et super haeretica pravitate rebusque alijs etc. lecto processu contra eum formato et memoriali per eum exhibito ac relato Illustrissimi et Reverendissimi Domini Cardinales generales Inquisitores praedicti decreverunt et ordinarunt quod dictus Henricus abiuret ut haereticus formalis impositis poenis salutaribus arbitrio eorum Commissarius illum expediat." Contemporary copy in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, 1598, 1599, 372.

<sup>33</sup>Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office of 25 June, in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1598, fol. 295v: "Pro Henrico Veno de Leovardia in Phrisia nuper carcerato, ac expedito in hoc s. officio lecto memoriali Illustrissimi Domini decreverunt quod ei dentur scuta duodecim de pecunijs. S. officij [*sic*]. Adeat Illustrissimum et Reverendissimum Dominum Cardinalem Sfondratum et cogitetur de modo subventionis ut maneat per aliquot menses in Urbe." Contemporary copy in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, 1598, 1599, 382.

<sup>34</sup>Decree of the Congregation of the Holy Office of 9 September, in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1598, fol. 332r: "Pro Henrico Veni filio quondam Laurentij de Veno de Civitate Leovardiae in Frisia precante sibi concedi licentiam redeundi Phrisiam lecto memoriali per eum exhibito Illustrissimi et Reverendissimi D. Cardinales remiserunt ad Illustrissimum et Reverendissimum D. Cardinalem Madrutium qui deliberet circa licentiam discessus, seu moram in Urbe." Contemporary copy in ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1597, 1598, 1599, 453.

<sup>35</sup>See, for example, the expression in the decrees of 10 September and 23 December (see above, nn. 27, 29): "inquisitus ex causis de quibus in actis."

<sup>36</sup>Prosperi, 53.

the Inquisition to set up a formal trial, the evidence was collected in a specific file. Unfortunately, most of these files have been lost in the years when the Archive of the Holy Office was in French captivity.<sup>37</sup> For our reconstruction of de Venó's trial we must therefore rely almost exclusively on the so-called *Decreta*, which report the decisions taken by the cardinals during their sessions and recorded by the notary.<sup>38</sup>

The *Decreta* confirm that de Venó's trial developed essentially along the lines of an ordinary inquisitorial trial. It was the task of the Holy Office to establish whether the crime of heresy was committed and, if such was the case, to proceed against the suspect.<sup>39</sup> In an inquisitorial trial, preliminary proceedings and investigations were assigned to the officials (*ufficiali*) of the court: that is, to the friars and priests who assisted the cardinals. The cardinals subsequently weighed the evidence, consulted the pope in demanding cases, and formulated the verdict and the sentence. In the 1590s, the Roman Inquisition generally met twice a week, on Tuesdays (*feria tertia*) and Wednesdays (*feria quarta*). The officials met also on Mondays, but there is no extant documentation of their meetings. The pope was informed after

<sup>37</sup>At the end of the eighteenth century, the holdings of the Archive of the Holy Office were distinguished according to five categories: doctrinal writings; documents concerning the jurisdiction of the Congregation, in particular concerning its juridical competence; a section containing "criminal" records; a civil section; and an economic section. The third and largest section was the one that was most damaged during the years when the archive was in France. For a reconstruction of its contents, see Beretta, 2000, and Cifres. The Archive of the Holy Office was seriously mutilated when Napoleon moved it to Paris; see Tedeschi, 35-46.

<sup>38</sup>However, not all items of discussion were recorded. Lacunae are particularly numerous in the *Decreta* of the end of the sixteenth century, because of the disorder in which the notary Flaminio Adriani, who was in charge from 1575 until his death in October 1600, left the registers. During the session of 8 November 1600, the cardinals asked the new notary that the registers be redacted and the notes of his predecessor be preserved; see ACDF, SO, *Decreta*, 1600-01, 347 (copy). On the basis of the notes and registers of Flaminio Adriani, several volumes were composed, which contain copies of the decrees of the Adriani years. Several of the de Venó documents are contained in such volumes, namely ACDF, *Decreta*, 1597, 1598, and 1599. These copies reproduce the essence of the decisions that were taken, but do not reproduce the formal elements contained in the original register, such as the names of those who were present, the date and precise place of the sessions, and the opinions expressed by the consultants.

<sup>39</sup>To establish the heretical nature of an opinion or proposition requires that one first discern a "propositio de fide definita." The five criteria developed by Alfonso de Castro in *De iusta haereticorum punitione* are certainly of some help: first, Holy Scripture, as long as its sense is "apertus et indubitatus"; second, conciliar decrees, given that the content of several articles of faith is not explicitly given in Scripture; third, the "consensus universalis Ecclesiae," that is, tradition, defined at the Council of Trent as a source of truth; fourth, the opinion of the Holy See; fifth, the opinions of the "doctores." See de Castro, fols. 17r-22v. The fifth criterion was highly controversial during the sixteenth century.

the Wednesday meetings. If necessary, a Thursday meeting was added (*feria quinta*), during which the most demanding cases were discussed with the pope.<sup>40</sup>

The documents show that de Venó's case was mainly discussed on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. There was no intervention by the pope, apart from the final verdict.<sup>41</sup> There is, however, another aspect of de Venó's trial that deserves special attention, namely the role of Dutch priests in general and of Gerard Vossius in particular. Their intervention formed part of the already-mentioned practice of pushing the defendant to a full confession and of convincing him to denounce further partisans of his cause. In fact, the Inquisition did not regard heresy as a private or socially isolated phenomenon. The arrest of de Venó may indeed have led to the arrest of other heretics. The advantage for those who denounced fellow heretics was that they could count on a less severe sentence.<sup>42</sup>

De Venó's trial developed at a comparatively rapid pace. The *repetitio testium* was granted after a few months, before the end of 1597.<sup>43</sup> De Venó was furthermore treated without harshness, with the cardinals recommending several times that he be treated in a friendly manner (*benignè*) and without the use of torture.<sup>44</sup>

Once the charge of heresy had been formally proven and confessed, the conviction consisted generally in an *abiura de formali* and prison term, which could even amount to a life sentence, but which in most cases was substantially shorter. So-called *impenitenti* — defendants whose guilt was proven but who refused to confess or abjure (such as Giordano Bruno) — and *relapsi* — defendants who had been previously condemned — were usually handed over to the secular court (*braccio secolare*) to be executed. In the frequent cases of suspected heresy, there were various courses of action at disposal. Whenever the suspicion was "light," the defendant was sentenced to an *abiura de levi*, while in the case of a strong suspicion, the sentence was

<sup>40</sup>Tedeschi, 93-124. It is worth mentioning that the Inquisition was the only Congregation that was chaired by the pope.

<sup>41</sup>During the trials of other philosophers that took place during the same years, such as the trials of Giordano Bruno and of Tommaso Campanella, the pope's advice was sought several times. See Firpo, 311-39; Spruit and Preti.

<sup>42</sup>In this sense the Inquisition anticipated the practice of *penitenti* and *informatori* in the contemporary Italian administration of justice.

<sup>43</sup>See the decree of 23 December (quoted above, n. 29). It is not at all clear by whom these testimonies might have been given, considering that Brown had left Rome several months earlier.

<sup>44</sup>For *benignè*, see the decrees of 10 September 1597 and 16 March 1598 (quoted above, nn. 27, 31); for the exclusion of torture, see also the latter decree.

an *abiura de vehementi*.<sup>45</sup> Those who presented themselves spontaneously — the *sponte comparentes* — such as Robert Brown in the present case, could abjure *coram congregatione* (before the congregation) and were spared in some cases the *poenas temporales* (secular punishment). Those charged with having favored heresy, which included housing heretics or offering them hospitality, could, when the charge was not dismissed, be condemned either to abjuring, to a *purgatio canonica*, or to a simple admonition.

De Veno was condemned to abjure as a formal heretic, a sentence that in most cases would have involved a rather long prison term. It is therefore quite surprising to see that he was released almost immediately and allowed to leave Rome only two months later. The documents suggest that the Congregation regarded his young age and his education by Protestant parents as mitigating circumstances. The relatively mild verdict must also be understood in the broader context of the Inquisition's policy towards Protestant foreigners.

The Inquisition was supposed to have jurisdiction over all baptized Christians and thus also over Protestants. This meant that all cultural economic exchanges between Italy and the Protestant regions of Europe were nominally under control of the Inquisition. The arrogation of these powers was clearly and uncompromisingly expressed by Pius V's bull *In coena Domini*, which was read in Catholic churches every Holy Thursday. The bull excommunicated all Protestants who happened to be under the jurisdiction of the Roman Inquisition and prescribed their prosecution as formal heretics.<sup>46</sup> To the arrested Protestants the Inquisition offered the possibility of conversion, as happened in de Veno's case. In fact, their choice was restricted in the sense that a refusal of the invitation to convert meant that the unrepentant heretic was handed over to the secular court.<sup>47</sup> According to inquisitorial law, contacts with heretics had to be denounced immediately, and failure to do so entailed prosecution.<sup>48</sup> This policy of protecting the Catholic orthodoxy against heterodox influences culminated in Clement VIII's bull

<sup>45</sup>In the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the condemnation to an *abiuria de vehementi* was inflicted on several philosophers and scientists, including Girolamo Cardano (1571), Tommaso Campanella (1595), and Galileo Galilei (1633). See Baldini and Spruit, 2000, 154; *ibid.*, 2001, 185; Pagano, 154.

<sup>46</sup>See Schmidt, 2000, 366, n. 5, who reports the first version of this sentence: "Excommunicamus et anathematizamus Hussitas, Wiclefistas, Lutheranos, Zwinglianos, Calvinistas, Ugonottos, Anabaptistas, Trinitarios et a Christiana fide apostatas, ac omnes et singulos alios haereticos, quocunque nomine censeantur, et cuiuscumque Sectae existant, ac iis credentes, eorumque fautores et generaliter quoslibet illorum defensores"; see also Schmidt, 2001, 107.

<sup>47</sup>See Beretta, 1998, 93-163.

<sup>48</sup>Carena, pt. 2, title 2; Mirto, 105-08.

*Cum sicut* (1595), which prohibited Catholics from staying in Protestant countries that lacked sufficient Catholic infrastructures.

Had these sanctions been applied with a minimum of efficiency, commerce between Italy and the North would have collapsed, with the peninsula barred off behind an iron curtain. As a matter of fact, however, many foreigners continued to visit Italy without relinquishing their confessional identity. Indeed, the inquisitorial documents frequently mention difficulties in applying restrictive measures.<sup>49</sup> Many foreigners, merchants in particular, were afforded protection by secular powers.<sup>50</sup> In Genoa and Venice, for example, Protestant foreigners were even allowed to settle, provided that they did not openly profess their faith. Moreover, Spain signed pacts with England and Switzerland, which also affected the Kingdom of Naples. Finally, local princes or dukes often granted safe-conducts.<sup>51</sup> To be sure, the Inquisition attempted to undermine such arrangements, but mostly without durable consequences. Thus, protection came in different degrees. Only where the mechanism of contractual, diplomatic, or social protection worked incompletely did the Inquisition represent a real threat. But in such cases there was of course another solution: a mastery of typically Catholic behavior by Protestant foreigners made it virtually impossible to individuate them and much reduced the Inquisition's capacity to intervene.

As for de Veno, it is likely that the question as to his motivation for visiting Rome will remain forever unanswered. Was he really a Catholic convert by the time he had reached Rome, as he explained to the Inquisition? If not — as his trial suggests — what attracted this Calvinist theology student to Rome? It should be kept in mind that the late sixteenth and the early seventeenth century was a period that saw foreign Protestants from every part of Europe streaming to Rome to be reconciled with the Catholic Church. This was clearly the case for Brown, who presented himself “spontaneously.” De Veno, by contrast, was denounced, so that we have no reason to believe that he had decided to convert. His case may be similar to that of the famous Dutch theologian Jacob Arminius, who as a student visited Padua and Rome. “In later years,” the historian of Arminianism, Harrison, explains, “it was asserted by his enemies that [Arminius] kissed the pope's toe in the eternal city, formed an acquaintance with Cardinal Bellarmine, came under the influence of the Jesuits and secretly renounced the reformed religion.”<sup>52</sup>

<sup>49</sup>See Schmidt, 2000, 368-69, who analyzes the file ACDF, SO, *St.st.*, M.4.b, which contains a rich documentation for the period 1617 to 1670 regarding “diversos haereticos de gentes in Italia (various heretics residing in Italy).”

<sup>50</sup>Merchants had to be distinguished from visiting nobles or students on their *peregrinatio academica*.

<sup>51</sup>Schmidt, 2000, 369-70; Schmidt, 2001, 109-10.

<sup>52</sup>Harrison, 22.

While in the case of Arminius, "this was, of course, mere vulgar calumny,"<sup>53</sup> much of this was of course quite true for de Venó — which explains why he preferred to hide it from his fellow citizens back in Frisia.

Fortunately for him, de Venó was a foreigner of Calvinist stock and thus not guilty of his initial heresy, because the contemporary trials of Italian philosophers demonstrate that the Inquisition was incomparably more severe towards born Catholics. At the same time that de Venó stood trial, Tommaso Campanella (1568-1639) was jailed for several years, tortured, and eventually confined to Roman and Calabrian convents. Even more famous is, of course, the trial of Giordano Bruno, who after a seven-year trial (1593-1600) and a fair amount of torture was executed by the secular court, having refused to abjure his heresies.

For the intellectual historian, the fact that de Venó was confined to the same prison as Giordano Bruno is highly suggestive. In fact, there exist at least two separate lists of prisoners visited by the inquisitors in the prisons of the Holy Office that mention Bruno and de Venó side by side.<sup>54</sup> Given how small the number of prisoners was — thirteen in one case and twenty in the other — it is quite likely that the two men met each other, although no such encounter is recorded in the extensive Bruno scholarship. But then, unless de Venó had denounced Bruno from within the prison for his heretical opinions, there would have been no reason for their possible conversations to result in any written record.

This knowledge of their spatial vicinity tempts one to look for possible traces of Bruno's views in de Venó's disputations (see below). However, there are none that leap to the eye. De Venó's scepticism *vis-à-vis* Aristotelian natural philosophy, or his emphasis on primary, divine causation to the detriment of secondary, natural causes, are more easily explained through Cardano, who is acknowledged as a source, than through Bruno. However, we do not know what de Venó taught in his lecture courses, and since a Brunian influence on Gorlaeus has sometimes been suggested, we cannot rule out that de Venó discussed, anonymously or otherwise, the views of the famous, tragic Italian.

#### DE VENÓ'S RETURN TO FRISIA

In contrast to Bruno, then, de Venó was allowed to leave the prison and, on 9 September 1598, also the city of Rome. He did not tarry and speedily removed himself to Protestant lands. We recall that he enrolled at Basel University two months later. However, for reasons unknown, he did not

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> The lists are cited in Firpo, 224 (n. 50c) and 306 (n. 50b).



stay long in Switzerland, nor did he obtain a degree in theology there. For already five months later, in April 1599, we find him practicing as a lawyer (*advocaat*) in the city of Leeuwarden, his hometown.

Back in Frisia, he chose to lie about where he had been during his time abroad and about his Roman trial, conviction, and conversion to Catholicism. Instead, we recall how he bragged about three university degrees obtained abroad. Although, for the reasons specified above, it is hard to decide whether or not he possessed a law degree, it seems clear that his higher qualifications in philosophy and medicine are mere inventions. For when we subtract the time that he spent in the hands of the Inquisition, little remains of de Venó's study time abroad. Between 22 May 1596, when he defended his Franeker disputation in theology, and May 1597, when he was arrested in Rome, he had exactly one year's time, under the favorable assumption that he left Franeker immediately after the date of his theological disputation. Of course, en route for Rome, he may have stopped briefly at Padua — a much more obvious place for Protestants in Italy — but he would not have had the time to obtain a doctorate in medicine.<sup>55</sup>

After practising law at Leeuwarden for two years, de Venó applied to his *alma mater* in 1601 for the position of professor of theology, which had fallen vacant after the death of Martinus Lydius (ca. 1539-1601). But given that de Venó had neither finished his degree nor could in any other way demonstrate his theological skills, the Senate preferred to elect the French theologian Franciscus Junius (du Jon, 1545-1602).<sup>56</sup> However, on 23 October 1601, de Venó was proposed for a new chair in ethics and physics. On 23 September of the following year, his nomination was confirmed by the *Gedeputeerde Staten*, and he began his career as Franeker's *Professor ethices et physices* at a salary of 600 florins per year.<sup>57</sup>

De Venó remained in his chair until his early death on 22 April 1613. As a teacher, he appears to have been quite popular among the students and was later fondly recalled by some of them. The funeral oration in honor of Frisia's state historiographer and Franeker's professor of eloquence, Pierius Winsemius (1585-1644), for example, recalls a physics disputation skillfully

<sup>55</sup>For Frisians studying in Padua between 1550 and 1650, see Zijlstra, 54.

<sup>56</sup>Vriemoet, 115. Boeles, 1:75, and Galama, 77, quote the deliberations of the Senate of 18 September 1601, which give the reasons why Junius was preferred to de Venó: "hoewel zij [the members of the Academic Senate] op de persone van D<sup>o</sup> Venó niet vele hadden te seggen, anders dat hij een jonghman was, die hem principalijcken in jure ende Medicinæ geoeffent, ende noit geen *specimen* in Theologia (. . .) g' exhibeert hadde, ende daeromme soo vruchtbaerlijcken deselve professie niet soude cunnen bedienen, als de vorss. Junius." Like other candidates, however, Junius never came to Franeker.

<sup>57</sup>Vriemoet, 115.

defended by the deceased under the supervision of "that great Henricus de Veno."<sup>58</sup> However, historians of Franeker University record a grave incident that occurred in 1609. After having assumed the rectorate of the university in June, de Veno became involved in serious litigation with a number of his colleagues. The professors Marcus Lycklama, Timaeus Faber, Lollius Adama and his son Augustinus Adama, Adriaan Metius, and Sixtus Arcerius collectively denounced him to the States-General. He was thereupon suspended from his two charges as rector and professor, though at the same time the salaries of Augustinus Adama, Metius, and Arcerius were lowered each by 100 florins as a punishment for their litigiousness.<sup>59</sup>

Unfortunately, the reasons for the scandal are not explained in the records. Vriemoet suggests that de Veno overestimated himself and his universal competence and that his arrogance may have angered his colleagues. He also surmises that de Veno's former teacher, the Aristotelian Lollius Adama, may have taken exception at the novel Platonist hypotheses taught by his pupil.<sup>60</sup> Most subsequent historians, accepting this interpretation, speak of "battles between supporters and opponents of Aristotelianism."<sup>61</sup> It is, however, unlikely that the matter was as simple as that, for de Veno had already been teaching his peculiar philosophy for seven years at the time when he was suspended. From the traces left of that litigation, it is clear that questions of both etiquette and doctrine were involved, for when de Veno was reinstalled in his old chair on 28 January 1611 (incidentally, at the lower salary of 500 florins), this happened on condition that he would always follow

<sup>58</sup>Wybinga, fol. b2v: "in Physica magnum illum Henricum de Veno, I.V. et Medicinae Doctorem. Liberaliumque Artium Magistrum, sub ejus praesidio plurimas quaestiones in publico congressu acute defendit, tanta cum animi alacritate, tanta promptitudine, tanto iudicio, ut ipse [*sic*] Praeses in publica disputatione, Collegam ipsum nominare ac salutare, non dedignatus fuerit."

<sup>59</sup>Register of the Academic Senate of 18 December 1609, and 15 January 1610 (see Boeles, 1:76). For the archival evidence, compare van Nienes et al., 194.

<sup>60</sup>Vriemoet, 117: "Non difficile est collectu ex hisce et praecedentibus, unde natae lites istae, et quantae fuerint. Nocuitque Venoni procul dubio, ex nimia de universali quadam eruditione sua, aliorumque hoc nomine adplausu, praesumptione, nata morosa arrogantia, et animi impotentis effrenatio . . . Philosophiae erat Academicae propugnator; ostentante inscriptione Disputationis mox memorandae. Quod ipsum ei forte, acedente praesertim nimia novarum hypothesin iactatione, apud L. Adamam, praeceptorum aliquando suum, Aristoteli magis addictum, invidiae fuit."

<sup>61</sup>Boeles, 1:76; Galama, 76; Napius and Lindeboom, 41: "twisten . . . die aan de Academie te Franeker woedden tusschen de aanhangers en tegenstanders van de leer van Aristoteles." Compare also van Berkel, 426-27, who links the hasty publication of Frederic Stellingwerff's Ramist dialectics in 1610 to the de Veno scandal and to the death of the philosopher Lollius Adama in 1609. Van Berkel rightly wonders whether this publication might be a sign that Stellingwerff hoped to inherit de Veno's position. Dibon, 135, points out that personal and doctrinal conflicts often overlapped in that period.

the laws of the university, “abstain from subtle *parerga* and *quaestiones*, and also from defamatory acts and words,” and, finally, that he would stop his extracurricular contact with students, who seem to have sided with de Venó during the clash with his colleagues.<sup>62</sup> We shall argue below that de Venó’s removal from his positions is likely to have had also a theological component. A few months before the row broke out, the Arminian dispute had reached Franeker, and de Venó, who considered himself an expert theologian, is likely to have sided with the Arminian faction.

After being reinstated, de Venó taught for two more years. He died prematurely on 22 April 1613, at roughly forty years of age.

#### DE VENÓ’S TEACHING

As de Venó is not known to have published any books, and as almost all of his extant disputations are kept in libraries outside of the Netherlands, it is not surprising that none of the historians of Franeker University has been able to appreciate the unusual nature of his teaching.<sup>63</sup> In particular, the noteworthy disputations of his physics course have never been analyzed. Moreover, because of the fact that in the only extant disputation on a political subject, de Venó is called a “defender of Academic philosophy,” it has been assumed that de Venó was a Platonist.<sup>64</sup> However, once all of the known extant disputations are taken into account — we know today of eleven disputations (nine physical, one metaphysical, and one political) for the sake of training (*exercitii gratia*) and one set of disputations for obtaining a master’s degree (*pro gradu*) — it becomes evident that our Frisian philosopher was by no means a Platonist. We may describe him more

<sup>62</sup>The Records of the Academic Senate of 28 January 1611 mention the condition that de Venó had to “lesen ende doceren *horâ pomeridiana moralem ofte naturalem philosophiam Aristotelis*, ende hem soe in *docendo* als *disputando* wachten van subtile *parerges* ende *quaestiën*, oock van contumeliose daden ende woorden”; and that he had to “holden ende helpen onderhouden *tranquillitatem academicam*, ende hem waachten van eenige correspondentie t’holden met studenten, het sy in de burse ofte daer buijten.” See Boeles, 1:76-77.

<sup>63</sup>Vriemoet, 115 and 118, had only seen the *Dissertatio politica de magistratu* (de Venó, 1606), and he therefore writes: “In qua [professione] quo pacto versatus fuerit, non adeo constat.” Boeles, 1:75-76, in turn, knew only the *Dissertatio politica* and the *Quaestiones illustres* (de Venó, 1606 and 1605), so that his description of de Venó’s teaching is equally inadequate. The same two items were known to Galama, 79 — “Twee van de onder de Venó gehouden disputaties zijn in ons land bewaard gebleven” — although he at least analyzes their contents. Dibon, 136, mentions the two physics disputations held at Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, but says very little about them.

<sup>64</sup>De Venó, 1606, title page: “Academicæ Philosophiæ propugnator ac Professor celeberrimus.” All but one (namely 1604b) of the currently known extant disputations held under de Venó are listed in Postma and van Sluis, 43.

profitably as a philosopher who combined Protestant theology and metaphysics with Italian natural philosophy.<sup>65</sup>

The importance of theology is already evident in de Venó's premise that there can exist only one single truth, which has been revealed in the Sacred Scriptures. Given the uniqueness and unity of truth, it is illegitimate to argue that Aristotle was right philosophically but wrong theologically. By taking this view, de Venó follows in the footsteps of some contemporary German Protestants whom he frequently cites, notably Otto Casmann (1562-1607), Rudolf Goclenius (1547-1628), and Nicolaus Taurellus (1547-1606). These authors had recently begun to stage a battle against the double-truth doctrine of the so-called Averroists, according to whom certain philosophical statements could be philosophically true while at the same time being theologically wrong. In order to remove the tension between philosophy and theology, these writers had, in different ways, tried to align these two disciplines and had, in the process, thoroughly reformulated Aristotelian metaphysics, logic, and natural philosophy.<sup>66</sup> De Venó clearly inserts his efforts into this larger reformist enterprise. Like the German authors he admired, he borrowed many non-Aristotelian doctrines from the Italian medico-philosophers Girolamo Cardano and Julius Caesar Scaliger and from chemical authors of the Paracelsian tradition.

It is typical of this setting that the first disputation of de Venó's physics course opens with the issue of how to reconcile the conflicting authorities of Holy Scripture and philosophy. Since the day of the Fall, de Venó argues, our cognitive faculties have been limited, and all of our knowledge is insecure.<sup>67</sup> Whoever wants to overcome these shortcomings will have to turn to biblical revelation, to experience and observation, and to reason. In this enterprise, physics (or natural philosophy) is a very useful tool (thesis 19). Although de Venó's definition of physics follows the example of contemporary textbooks — "Physics is the contemplative science of natural bodies, insofar as they are natural" — the theological and medical uses to which he directs this discipline make it assume new and often decidedly anti-Aristote-

<sup>65</sup>The problems surrounding the authorship of early modern university disputations are notorious. However, in de Venó's case, the criterion of coherence, both among the doctrines expounded in the various disputations defended under his chairmanship and among the authorities invoked in them, leads us to regard these disputations (with the exception of de Venó, 1604a) as a direct reflection of de Venó's teaching. We assume that he either directly wrote, or at least approved of, the contents of the various disputations. For this reason, our bibliography lists them under his name.

<sup>66</sup>On the development of a specifically Protestant metaphysics, see, above all, Leinsle.

<sup>67</sup>De Venó, 1603, thesis 1. The only known copy of this disputation is held at the British Library, 7306 f. 6 no. 38.

lian overtones.<sup>68</sup> Indeed, as de Venio stresses, it is not Aristotle, but “the sacrosanct word of God,” that must constitute the textual starting point for the natural philosopher (thesis 24), for “as far as its matter is concerned, Aristotle’s physics is imperfect.”<sup>69</sup> The fact that de Venio lists Adam, Noah, Solomon, and other Old Testament figures among the “authors of physics” (thesis 25) reveals that he is one of those Renaissance authors who believed in the existence of a “Mosaic physics.” In this respect, his reference to the prolegomenon of Otto Casmann’s recent *Cosmopoeia Christiana* (1598), which explains why “Aristotle must cede to Moses,” is revealing.<sup>70</sup>

In the subsequent disputation “On the principles and causes of natural things,” de Venio defines three constitutive principles of natural things. These are not matter, form, and privation, as one might have expected, but instead matter, form, and spirit. Spirit, which replaces the Aristotelian privation, is defined as the efficient cause that brings about the merger of matter and form into a substance and which also inheres in the latter.<sup>71</sup> Nor is matter pure potentiality, as most Aristotelians continued to claim, for it possesses its own body, “albeit a most imperfect one.”<sup>72</sup> Its own bodily nature explains why matter does not desire a form (“for it desires nothing of that, which it has”).<sup>73</sup> Although de Venio does not here cite any philosophical authorities in support of the role he attributes to spirit, it will appear from our analysis of later disputations that it is taken from Girolamo Cardano.

The subsequent disputation, which dealt with the “first affections of body” — motion, rest, and time — is no longer extant, but we possess the

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., thesis 18: “Physica est scientia contemplativa corporum naturalium, quatenus sunt naturalia.” On traditional textbook definitions of physics see Reif, 20.

<sup>69</sup>De Venio, 1603, corollaria, no. 1: “Quoad materiam, Physica Arist[otelis] non est perfecta.”

<sup>70</sup>In the prolegomenon of his *Cosmopoeia* (1598), Casmann rebuts the arguments formulated in the sixth century by the Neoplatonic commentator Simplicius against the biblical account of creation. De Venio, 1603, thesis 24, mentions these arguments and states: “Quae autem hic adversus Mosen a Symplicio fabricata sunt, ut impia prorsus et pagana execramur et detestamur. Legi autem potest eorum refutatio apud Orthonem Casman. In proleg. Cosmop.” On Casmann’s principle “Cedat Aristoteles Mosi,” see Mahnke, 330. On Casmann’s relation to the other “mosaic philosophers,” see Blair.

<sup>71</sup>De Venio, 1604b. The only known copy of this disputation is kept at the Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg. §8: “Tria ergo effectiois seu constitutionis rerum statuimus principia, *spiritum*, qui efficiendi vim habet; *materiam*, quae actioni subijcitur, et *formam*, quae tanquam effectio quaedam producitur; quae non modo sunt principia constituendi res ipsas, sed partes etiam illis conjunctae.”

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., §14, question 2: “An materia sit corpus. Nos corpus eam esse asseveramus, sed imperfectissimum.”

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., question 5: “An materia appetat formam? Negat. Quia omnis materia habet formam, nihil autem id appetit, quod habet.”

fourth disputation *De infinito et loco*.<sup>74</sup> There we encounter once more Otto Casmann, whom de Venno follows in denying that any physical object can be infinite in the sense of lacking either limits or a middle (theses 2 and 10). God is the only actual infinite (thesis 4). As far as place (*locus*) is concerned, only created beings (*entia*) have a place, whereas God, whose essence is infinite, cannot be placed (thesis 13). "Place" itself is defined, following the "most learned and subtle Scaliger," as the "space of the thing or body that is placed, and which is contained inside of the surrounding body."<sup>75</sup> De Venno thus accepts Scaliger's well-known rejection of Aristotle's concept of "place" (as a kind of skin that envelops the object) and accepts the alternative proposal of defining the place of a body as the quantity of general space that is occupied by that body.<sup>76</sup> Invoking the arguments of Casmann and of the famous Paduan philosopher Jacopo Zabarella (1533-89), de Venno furthermore argues that the accident of "quantity" cannot be separated from the body itself. Like other Protestant authors, he draws from this the conclusion that the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation can therefore not be true.<sup>77</sup>

With the fifth disputation *De mundo in genere*, we leave the realm of the "affections" and turn to the physical bodies themselves.<sup>78</sup> The disputation begins by defining the world (*mundus*) as a body that contains heaven and earth and all that is in them (thesis 3). There is no world soul, as the Platonists believe, but the world "is governed by God's most noble spirit" (thesis 7). Like other Protestant thinkers, particularly Calvinists, de Venno attributes much that used to be relegated to secondary causes directly to God's agency. Worth mentioning are his rejection of Copernicus' heliocentric model and the argument, *pace* Aristotle, that the world is not eternal, but was created 5561 years ago (theses 15-23).

<sup>74</sup>De Venno, 1604c. The two known copies of this disputation are held at Geneva, Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, Cd. 145-48; and Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, R. 2102.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., thesis 18: "Nos cum doctissimo et subtili Scaligero locum hoc modo definimus: locus est spatium rei locatae, vel locati corporis, quod intra superficiem corporis exterioris ambientem continetur."

<sup>76</sup>The rejection of Aristotle's "place" (*locus*) and its substitution with "space" (*spatium*) is found in Scaliger, 15, in exercitatio 5, sectio 2, "Vacuum quomodo detur": "At nos illud profiteremur vacuum, in quo corpus est. Idemque esse vacuum, et locum: neque differre, nisi nomine. Sane si non esset vacuum, non esset locus. Est enim vacuum, spatium, in quo est corpus." And sectio 3: "Loci definitio": "Non est igitur locus, exterioris corporis ambiens superficies: sed id, quod intra eam superficiem continetur." For the confessional reasons why late-sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Calvinists tended to accept Scaliger's replacement of *locus* by a general *spatium* or *ubi*, see Leijenhorst and Lüthy, 384-95.

<sup>77</sup>De Venno, 1604c, thesis 18, question 3. On the topic of the confessionalization of sixteenth-century physics, see Leijenhorst and Lüthy.

<sup>78</sup>De Venno, 1604d. The only known copy of this disputation is held at Geneva's Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, Cd. 145-41.

Among the extant physics disputations, the eighth, entitled *De elementis*, comes next.<sup>79</sup> Elements are defined, rather traditionally, as “corporeal essences, individuated according to species, subject to change, out of which all mixts are constituted and into which they are resolved.”<sup>80</sup> This definition shows no trace of the atomism that would constitute the basis of the metaphysics and physics of de Venno’s student, David Gorlaeus. Indeed, for de Venno, elements remain “the first generatable and corruptible bodies” (thesis 11) as they had been for Aristotle, which means that they can be transformed into one another and dissolve into higher forms. A clear departure from the Aristotelian view is constituted, however, by the doctrine that there are not four, but only three — or even just two — elements (thesis 9). De Venno excludes fire from the list of elements, arguing that it is a mere “meteoron” (a phenomenon occurring in the stratum of air; thesis 15). The three remaining elements are defined by their respective degrees of warmth (warm, temperate, cold), which are their primary affections, and by three degrees of humidity (wet, humid, dry), which are their secondary, passive activities (theses 11, 24, and 25). These three elements are, however, not on a par, because unlike earth and water, air never enters into the composition of natural bodies, but fills all empty spaces in the universe and functions as the carrier of heavenly heat (theses 15 and 18). In all bodies, it is the element of earth that provides the shape of the substance, sustains the heavenly “signature,” and nurtures the “seeds” (thesis 20).

Similar, though not identical, doctrines are broached in an unnumbered disputation “About air” (*De aëre*) of the same year.<sup>81</sup> This time, air is clearly excluded from the list of elements, though it is defined as a “simple body.” The reason offered by de Venno for its elimination is that in the beginning, God created heaven and earth without needing air as an original ingredient (thesis 5). After considering briefly the views of Scaliger, Goclenius, Taurellus, Justus Lipsius (1547-1606), and Lambert Daneau (Danaeus, 1530-95) on the qualities of air, de Venno concludes that no substantial transmutation of air into either fire or earth is possible (thesis 17). There can be no doubt that this set of theses, which de Venno himself calls “a disputation against the views of many Aristotelians,” is directly inspired by the writings

<sup>79</sup>De Venno, 1604e. The only known copy of this thesis is found at Geneva’s Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, Cd. 145-61.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., thesis 3: “Elementa sunt essentiae corporeae, specie individuae, mutationi obnoxiae, ex quibus, et in quas omnia mixta et constituuntur, et resolvuntur.”

<sup>81</sup>De Venno, 1604g. The only known copy of this disputation is held at Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, R. 2217.

of Girolamo Cardano.<sup>82</sup> In his *De subtilitate* (1550), Cardano had developed a theory that had first been adumbrated in Aristotle's *Meteorology* IV, where it is proposed that natural substances are made up exclusively of earth (the principle of dryness) and water (the principle of wetness), which mixed under the influence of celestial heat. "All recognizable substances in our world contain these two elements," Aristotle says there, "and are to be assigned to one or the other according to the proportion in which they contain earth or water."<sup>83</sup> From the late fifteenth century onward, this theory had attracted the attention of Paduan physicians and philosophers, and commentaries on *Meteorology* IV began to proliferate. Girolamo Cardano, who was a Padua-trained philosopher-physician, developed this two-element model into a veritable cosmology. Like de Venno after him, he defined elements as those bodies that could enter into mixtures. He excluded fire, which was no substance at all, and air, which was certainly a substance but not a mixable body, its function being mainly that of carrying celestial heat down to the natural bodies.<sup>84</sup>

That de Venno was acquainted with Cardano's physics is evident, for he mentions him with approval in another disputation, where the student is asked to defend the following thesis: "Is there any elementary fire existing underneath the lunar sphere? We deny it with Cardano."<sup>85</sup> In yet another disputation, de Venno had also denied that book 4 of *Meteorology* was correctly named and had argued that this book was not about meteorological matters at all, but about perfect homogenous mixtures.<sup>86</sup> In so doing, he sided with Alexander of Aphrodisias (2<sup>nd</sup> cent. A.D.), who had stated that *Meteorology* IV was about perfect mixtures, and with Italian authors such as Agostino Nifo (1473?-1538) and Pietro Pomponazzi (1462-1525), who re-

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., thesis 33: "Haec de aere et ejus regionibus, sufficiens sit contra multorum Aristotelicorum opiniones disputatio."

<sup>83</sup>Aristotle, *Meteorology*, 328a5. Translation by Düring, 41.

<sup>84</sup>See Cardano, 1550, 135: "Tria tantum vere in mistis terra et aqua pro materia, et calor coelestis agens." See also Cardano, 1560, 1301 and 1296: "Tria sunt principia mistorum, sed duo tantum praebent qualitatem, scilicet coelum et aqua," because earth has no quality: "Sola enim terra est expers omnis qualitatis, et tamen non est necessarium elemento ut habeat qualitatem, qui non concurrat ad ullam actionem . . ." See Piccolomini, fol. 108r: "Affirmavit Cardanus in liber de mistione, mixtum non constare ex igne, nec ex aere, sed tantum ex terra, aqua, et celesti calore." On Cardano's natural philosophy and his theory of the elements, see Ingegno, chap. 6, esp. 223-40. On Cardano's and Scaliger's debt to the Paduan commentary tradition on Aristotle's *Meteorology* IV, compare Lüthy, 2001b.

<sup>85</sup>De Venno, 1605, thesis 10: "An detur ignis elementaris sub lunae globo existens? Nega-mus cum Cardano."

<sup>86</sup>De Venno, 1603, thesis 40: "ut videre est in titulo libri 4. Meteorologorum qui vere non est meteorologicus"; corollarium 3: "Subjectum libri 4. Meteorologicorum est corpus perfecte mistum homogeneum."



named this Aristotelian work *liber de mixtis* and *liber de mixtione*, respectively.<sup>87</sup>

The two-element theory constitutes an important bridge to early modern atomism, because if earth is identified with the principle of dryness and water with the principle of wetness, it becomes much more difficult to subscribe to a theory of transmutation. We can see from Cardano and even more so from Scaliger how it became quite natural to think of these two material principles in terms of unchanging particles and to imagine their union as the spacial coming together of small particles. The eminent historian of atomism, Kurd Lasswitz, who was fully aware of this, dedicated a special section to Gorlaeus' two-element theory, which he ended with the words: "It would seem as if Gorlaeus had been the first who denied the transmutation of water into earth."<sup>88</sup> But on this point we may now correct Lasswitz: de Veno was earlier, and it was this Franeker professor from whom Gorlaeus took this theory.

Given the intimate link between the redefinition of the elements and the theory of mixture, it is fortunate that the penultimate extant disputation of de Veno's physics course treats of the generation and corruption of mixtures (*De misti generatione et ejus interitu*).<sup>89</sup> Mixture is here defined as the "mutation of the elements by the spirit for the sake of the production of a mixed body."<sup>90</sup> This definition, which was adumbrated already in the second disputation *De principiis et causis rerum naturalium*, is once again not Aristotle's, but Cardano's. The same is true of the view that the "spirit" — which in the disputation *De mundo in genere* had been identified with "God's most noble spirit," which "governed" the world — is the efficient cause of mixtures, while the instrumental cause is "heavenly heat."<sup>91</sup> De Veno further believes that the quality of cold is never responsible for mixtures, but has limited agency inasmuch as it moderates heat through a reaction (*reactione*).<sup>92</sup> Here, he relies once more on Cardano's two-element theory, for he writes that the material of all mixtures is "the elements insofar as they are humid and dry [that is, water and earth]. For these are the accidents that accompany matter necessarily."<sup>93</sup> Unlike his pupil Gorlaeus,

<sup>87</sup> See Lüthy, 2001b, 544.

<sup>88</sup> Lasswitz, 1:335.

<sup>89</sup> De Veno, 1604f. The only extant copy of this disputation is held at London, British Library, 7306 f. 6 no. 46.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., thesis 3: "Generatio est mutatio elementorum a spiritu ad producendum corpus mixtum." See also theses 5 and 6.

<sup>91</sup> See Ingegno, 234.

<sup>92</sup> De Veno, 1604f, thesis 7.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., thesis 11: "Materia sunt Elementa, quatenus sunt humida and sicca. Hæc enim sunt accidentia materiam necessario comitantia."

who was to defend the view that mixtures are merely *entia per accidens*, that is, accidental conglomerates of indivisible atomic units, de Venno argued in a more traditional manner that in a mixture, new forms arise “out of the potency of matter.”<sup>94</sup> Nevertheless, his position is not strictly Peripatetic, and he rejects both Aristotle’s and Averroes’ idea that the forms (that is, the specific qualities) of the elements are strengthened or weakened in the mixture, as “simply false” (thesis 14). What happens instead is that the “union of the primary qualities, being the product of their mutual action and reaction,” produces a specific temperament (*temperamentum*).<sup>95</sup> As far as corruption is concerned, de Venno offers a technical explanation that is developed in response to Jean Fernel’s (1497-1558) theory of putrefaction.<sup>96</sup> Natural corruption is the “resolution” of the mixture into its elements. It is caused by the influence of ambient heat, which increases the natural heat of the mixture, opens up its outer parts, and thereby leads to the escape of the enclosed humidity. In the case of organic beings, this also leads to the loss of vital heat. What is left behind grows quickly cold and soft — or, if it is organic, dies (theses 24, 25, 36, and 37).

The last extant disputation of the physics course treats of the rational soul and its faculties (*De anima rationali et eius facultatibus*) — traditionally the crowning and concluding topic of natural philosophy.<sup>97</sup> De Venno mentions as a premise that on the subject matter of the soul, all ancient philosophers had been wrong.<sup>98</sup> He relies much on Thomas Aquinas, whom he quotes frequently, and on Thomists such as Crisostomo Javelli (ca. 1470-1538), Thomas Bricot (d. 1516), and Archangelus Mercenarius (d. 1585). Much of the disputation is devoted to a causal account of the soul. As for the efficient cause, de Venno argues that the pagan philosophers have failed to understand that the immediate efficient cause of the soul is God. As far as the rational soul is concerned, our author insists that it has neither a material nor a formal

<sup>94</sup>Ibid., thesis 12: “Haec igitur inter se miscentur, alterantur, ac postremo corrumpuntur, ut nova oriatur forma, non quidem ex formarum elementarium remissione, et in unam quandam specie diversam formam compositione, sed ex materiae potentia genita.” See Gorlaeus, 1620, 24-26, and exercitatio 13: “De atomis,” 225-49.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., thesis 19: “Temperamentum est primarum qualitatum inter se unio, ex mutua earum actione et passione prodiens.”

<sup>96</sup>See Fernel, bk. 2, chap. 10. This theory is also found in Cardano, 1565, bk. 4, controversia 4, where the starting point is incidentally once more Aristotle’s *Meteorology* IV, of which Cardano says: “Philosophus quarto Meteororum definit putredinem interitum calidi nativi in humido ab externo calore.”

<sup>97</sup>De Venno, 1604h. The only extant copy of this disputation is held at Geneva, Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, Cd. 145-97.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid., (sine pagina), i, prior to theorem 1, where de Venno speaks of the “erroneas veterum philosophorum de illa [anima] opiniones.”

cause. Instead, being “the form that informs [the substance of] man it is the substantial form of man.” Its final cause, in turn, “are all the operations of the soul.”<sup>99</sup> De Veno, following the arguments of the Renaissance philosopher and logician Thomas Bricot, insists that the soul has no material or composite aspect, but is a formal being (*ens*) that is incorporeal and yet subsisting (theoremata 16). Unlike many contemporary Protestants, he rejects the view that there are three independent souls in humans (vegetative, sentient, and rational).<sup>100</sup> He follows instead the so-called “unicist” account when he writes that there is only one soul with threefold functions.<sup>101</sup> This one soul can be studied either on its own — as an immortal and self-sustaining immaterial entity — or in conjunction with the body, of which it is the “first act” and the “informing form,” but only the second aspect belongs to the study of natural philosophy (theoremata 26).

Of the three known disputations that are unrelated to de Veno’s physics course, one is a set of seventeen “famous questions” that a candidate for the master’s title in philosophy disputed under de Veno’s presidency in 1605.<sup>102</sup> Although the theses of this disputation are few in number and extremely short, they provide a nice overview of de Veno’s philosophical concerns. The candidate, who begins with ethics, first declares himself to be closer to Stoic and Platonist positions than to Aristotle’s, not least because the former are more compatible with Holy Scripture.<sup>103</sup> Next, he turns to metaphysics, asking: “Is the subject of metaphysics the intelligible inasmuch as it is intelligible, or instead the *ens* inasmuch as it is an *ens*? The first position has been defended by some neoterics, but we defend the latter thesis against them.”<sup>104</sup> The “neoterics” alluded to are the Ramists, who at Franeker had

<sup>99</sup>Ibid., theoremata 1-11, theoremata 12: “Anima rationalis est forma informans hominem.” Theoremata 13: “Anima autem est forma substantialis hominis.” Theoremata 15: “Finalis animae causa sunt omnes operationes ipsius.”

<sup>100</sup>Ibid., theoremata 19: “Potentia animae sunt tres, nempe vegetativa, sensitiva, et intellectiva.” Here again, de Veno refers to Thomas Aquinas and to the Thomist philosopher Javelli.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid., theoremata 20-23. In this argument, de Veno also makes use of Mercenarius, 1590. For a description of the pluralist and unicist view of souls and forms and its relation to early modern matter theory, see Michael, 275-86.

<sup>102</sup>De Veno, 1605. The only known copy of this disputation is held at the Provinciale Bibliotheek, Leeuwarden, A 1669. Incidentally, this is not only the earliest known M.A. degree defended at Franeker, but it is the only extant master’s disputation between 1585 and 1613. See Fockema Andreae and Meijer, 18.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., questions 2-4. De Veno refers here to Plato, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Seneca, Cicero, and Foxius Morzillo’s compendium of ethics of 1561.

<sup>104</sup>Ibid., question 6: “An subiectum metaphysices sit omne intelligibile quatenus tale, an vero ens qua ens? Prius Neoterici quidam, contra quos posterius sustinebimus.” De Veno pre-

strong support, even in the person of de Venó's own teacher, Lollius Adama.<sup>105</sup> In defending Aristotle's traditional definition of metaphysics, de Venó shows his preference for the ontological approach to metaphysics that was developing at the time in Protestant Germany.<sup>106</sup> This preference is also evident in the subsequent question, which takes a stab at the Philippo-Ramist Heizo Buscher (1564-98). Against Buscher, de Venó's candidate affirms that no essential properties can be removed from a body without a concomitant loss of its essence (question 7). Not only Lutherans, but also Catholics, come under attack. Cardinal Bellarmine is shown to have argued wrongly in his *Disputationes de controversiis Christianae fidei* that a body could be in several places at once, without filling space (question 8). It is striking to observe how casually Bellarmine is mentioned here. Nothing about this standard rebuttal of the cardinal's much cited anti-Protestant work could have made the audience suspect that de Venó was personally acquainted with Bellarmine, the famous Inquisitor, and that he had repeatedly faced him as a judge during his Roman trial.

Moving on to physics, the candidate affirms that prime matter is an incorruptible body and, as we have already mentioned, that there exists no elementary fire under the moon (questions 9 and 10). Tycho Brahe (1546-1601) — with whom de Venó's colleague, the mathematician Adrian Metius (1571-1635), had personally worked on the Danish island of Hven — is invoked against Aristotle's view that comets are phenomena generated from and in air (question 12).<sup>107</sup> In the remaining *quaestiones* of the disputation, finally, the candidate postulates that Aristotle was also wrong about creation, about the highest good, about time, and about the matter of the heavens, which is the same as the matter of the sublunary sphere (questions 13-17).

There are, finally, two extant disputations that are entirely unrelated to natural philosophy. The first deals with a subject belonging to public law.

---

sumably counts among these noterics also Clemens Timpler, who (in his 1604 metaphysics textbook, bk. 1, chap. 1, thesis 1) defines the subject matter of philosophy as "omne intelligibile."

<sup>105</sup>Adama, 1606, thesis 21, had maintained: "Res in dialectica considerata est ens et non ens, quod uno vocabulo cum D. Goclenio et Timplero, philosophis clarissimis, πάν νοητόν, id est, omne intelligibile, rectissime significamus. Quicquid enim intellectu humano percipi et comprehendi potest, sive illud habeat essentiam, sive non, id usui logicae rectissime subternitur." See our preceding footnote. On Timpler's metaphysics, see Freedman, chap. 11.

<sup>106</sup>On the development of sixteenth-century Protestant ontology, see Leinsle. On the influence of Ramism at Franeker, see van Berkel. We might wish to add to van Berkel that already de Venó's teacher, Lollius Adama, seems to have been attracted by Ramism (see above, n. 12).

<sup>107</sup>On Metius' work with Brahe, see Jensma, 1985b, 459.

Given that in the Aristotelian university tradition, public law was understood as a political topic which belonged to the realm of practical philosophy, it was natural that de Veno would also have had to cover this field. The *Dissertatio politica de magistratu* of 1606 deals with the powers and functions of magistrates. It asks, among other things, about the personal qualities required of magistrates and their powers in the domains of war, politics, and religion. De Veno relies heavily on Jean Bodin (1530-96), the so-called father of state sovereignty. He defends a type of measured absolutism, stating that the prince stands above the people, but the law above the prince. However, the prince is not bound by any specific law (which he can change), but only by natural law. His powers are derived directly from God (who is the *causa efficiens prima*, in contrast to the society of men, which represent only the *causa efficiens secunda*) — an idea that we find also in Bodin.<sup>108</sup> Particularly noteworthy is de Veno's insistence that the magistrates, not the religious authorities, should watch over the religious practice and doctrine.<sup>109</sup> For, as we shall see, with that position de Veno would have allied himself quite naturally with the Arminian camp, which was forming in the very years in which this disputation took place.

The last of the extant disputations is entitled *De signo et signato*.<sup>110</sup> Its topic, the relation between "sign and signified," is defined in the opening thesis as a subject matter that belongs exclusively to metaphysics, although many of the theses discuss questions that belong clearly to logic. In fact, one of the key works plundered for arguments is the *Problemata logica* of Rudolph Goclenius (1547-1628).<sup>111</sup> The *locus classicus* for discussing the religious relevance of the relation of sign and signified was the fourth book of the *Sentences*. In de Veno's disputation, too, the religious implications come quickly to the fore: "All the Lutherans err gravely when they claim that the sign is always at the same place as the signified."<sup>112</sup> The central issue at stake is, as in so many other disputations of that period, the interpretation of the Eucharist, or, more precisely, the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine, which the Catholics and the Lutherans affirm (albeit with different arguments) and the Calvinists deny.

<sup>108</sup>De Veno, 1606. This disputation is analyzed in some detail by Galama, 80-81.

<sup>109</sup>De Veno, 1606, collaria, question 2: "An religio subditorum seu cultus Dei ad curam magistratus pertineat et an magistratus sit custos utriusque tabulae Decalogi? Affirmatur."

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., 1604a. The only extant copy of this disputation is found at Geneva, Bibliothèque Publique et Universitaire, Cd. 145-34.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid., thesis 1. Compare corollarium 1: "An omne signum sit argumentum? Non. Vide Goclenium erudite hac de re disserentem in 1. parte problematum logicorum problema 10."

<sup>112</sup>Ibid., thesis 3: "Unde graviter errant Lutherani omnes, signum cum signato simul loco semper esse statuentes."

For the Calvinists, the real presence of Christ is not in the consecrated bread and wine, but occurs in the spirit of the believer during the act of consumption. To prove the local separation of sign and signified is thus a central concern for Calvinist theologians. Typically, the defendant in this disputation insists that for a concept to capture the *ens* that is signified by it, it must be spatially separated from it. The ubiquitarians (who maintain that the risen Christ is ubiquitous in the same way as His Father and can thus be equally present at all altars simultaneously) therefore err in assuming that in the Eucharist there exists a double sign, namely the external sign of wine and bread and the inner sign of the body and blood of Christ. Our respondent insists that the latter are merely the signified, but that the signified can never be internal to the sign.<sup>113</sup>

#### THE ARMINIAN ISSUE

This disputation demonstrates exceptionally well how key Calvinist concerns dictated how metaphysics, logic, and physics had to be aligned with theology. Unusual about this disputation is that the theses defended in it were not de Venó's — as would have been the case with all the other disputations he chaired — but Clemens Timpler's (1563/64-1624), as the postscript declares.<sup>114</sup> In his dedication, the defendant, one Augustinus Arnoldi, identifies himself as a student from the Gymnasium Illustre Arnoldinum at Steinfurt (a town close to the Dutch border), and he mentions among his teachers not only the philosopher Timpler, but also the liberal theologian Conrad Vorstius (1569-1622).<sup>115</sup> This Steinfurt link is noteworthy for several reasons. Between its foundation in 1588 and the establishment of the University of Groningen (1614) and the Illustre School in Deventer (1630),

<sup>113</sup>Ibid., thesis 9: "Ergo necessario sequitur omne signum praeter rei conceptum esse ens externum et nullum internum. Hinc patet crassus ubiquitariorum error, qui in Eucharistia duplex signum statuunt, unum externum quippe panem et vinum, alterum internum, ut corpus et sanguinem Christi. Praeterquam enim quod corpus et sanguis Christi in Eucharistia sunt res signatae, male etiam signa appellantur, cum nullum signum praeter rei conceptum sit internum sed omne externum." Thesis 37: "Hinc nullo modo Signatum in signo esse potest . . . Unde porro manifestum evadit, graviter hallucinari eos qui in Eucharistia statuunt, corpus Christi esse in pane vel localiter, vel alio modo. Si enim signatum nullo modo potest esse in signo; neque corpus Christi ullo modo potest esse in pane, cum illud sit signatum. Hic vero signum."

<sup>114</sup>Ibid., postscript (sine pagina): "Atque haec de generali signi et signati doctrina ex reverendo et clarissimo viro M. Clemente Timplero, Praeceptore meo observando, hausta, breviter dicta sunt."

<sup>115</sup>Ibid., dedication (sine pagina). Arnoldi's dedication goes, first of all, to the Count of Bentheim, the founder and patron of the Gymnasium Illustre.

both of which were nearby, Steinfurt's Gymnasium Illustre was one of the foremost institutions to provide the nascent Dutch Republic with Calvinist ministers. In those decades, many Dutch students went to Steinfurt to get a least part of their education from its distinguished faculty. Otto Casmann, whom we have already repeatedly encountered in de Venó's disputations, taught at Steinfurt between 1589 and 1595, and Clemens Timpler, his successor, lectured there from 1595 to 1624. Their combination of a Ramist methodology with a reformed Aristotelian metaphysics and physics influenced the teaching at Franeker in numerous ways.<sup>116</sup>

However, in the second half of the year 1610, this serene relation of mutual benefit turned sour. The reason for this sudden change was the nomination of Steinfurt's theology professor, Conrad Vorstius (whom we have just encountered in the dedication of de Venó's student), as the successor of the recently-deceased Jacob Arminius at Leiden University. This appointment provided the starting point for the ten-year battle between Remonstrants (Arminians) and contra-Remonstrants (also known as anti-Arminians or Gomarists), which ended only in 1619, when the Synod of Dordrecht banned Vorstius from Dutch soil. This episode and its eventual outcome have left deep traces in the evolution of Dutch Calvinism. In this battle, de Venó's colleague, the theologian Sibrand Lubbert (ca. 1555-1625), was the first and possibly Vorstius' most obnoxious adversary.<sup>117</sup> Aggressive by nature, Lubbert had already started a controversy with Johannes Drusius (1550-1616), professor of oriental languages, whom he accused of inclining to the Arian heresy. In 1615, he would also vie against a further colleague of his, the theologian Johannes Maccovius (1588-1644), over what became known as the *causa particularis Frisica*, a controversy between supra- and infralapsarianism.<sup>118</sup> As van der Woude writes in Lubbert's biography:

In all these years, we was engaged in fights on all sides. His campaign against Vorstius had not yet finished when the conflict with Drusius started and he had to defend himself against Grotius. The battle raged inside the sphere of Dutch Protestantism, nay, within the very walls of the Franeker Academy.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup>On the history of the Gymnasium Illustre, see Heuermann and Rübél; on its importance for the Netherlands, see Abels.

<sup>117</sup>For instance, see Harrison, 176: "the north-easterly provinces of Friesland and Groningen were the stoutest supporters of High Calvinism in the Netherlands . . . In this zealous allegiance the University of Franeker led the way, and the mouthpiece of the University was Sibrandus Lubbertus."

<sup>118</sup>See Nijenhuis, 230.

<sup>119</sup>Van der Woude, 127: "Hij is in deze jaren aan alle kanten in strijd gewikkeld. De campagne tegen Vorstius is nog niet ten einde, of hij komt in conflict met Drusius en moet zich verweren tegen Grotius. De strijd woedt binnen de kring van het Nederlands Protestantisme, ja, binnen de muren van de Franeker Akademie zelf."

It is noteworthy that the Arminian issue, though it had been smouldering before, flared up at Franeker during the first weeks of de Venó's rectorate and reached its first peak around the time when he was forced to resign. In June of 1609, Simon Episcopius (1583-1644), Arminius' talented student (and eventual successor in the Leiden chair), had dared to show up at the Frisian university. Against all better advice, he had allowed himself to get entangled in public disputations with Lubbert — and it has in fact been stipulated that he did so on purpose, so as to weaken the reputation and influence of the self-appointed watchdog of Calvinist orthodoxy.<sup>120</sup> It has also been reported that Lubbert protested with the University curators about the Arminian faction within their own university.<sup>121</sup> Although none of our sources mention de Venó in this context, the temporal coincidence is striking. Beginning in 1609, Lubbert, who began to style himself as the anti-Arminian *par excellence*, made sure that what he perceived to be the orthodox view retained the upper hand. The ensuing purification of the student body reached its peak in 1611, when several of Vorstius' former students were expelled from Franeker on the grounds that they were adhering to Socinian heresies.<sup>122</sup>

As for de Venó, it would seem that he was not only under the influence of Steinfurt's philosophers — notably of Casmann — but also nurtured theological sympathies for its theologian, Vorstius. His own agreement with Bodin's call for a strong government watching over a state of confessional tolerance was shared by Vorstius, who in his dedication letter prefaced to his *Anti-Bellarminus* of 1610 called upon the Dutch States-General to keep the churches under their tight control while guaranteeing a *libertas conscientiae*, a *nativa libertas* in doctrinal interpretation, and a *prophetandi libertas* in expounding such interpretations publicly.<sup>123</sup> Although we presently have no direct proof for this affiliation, doctrinal and biographical reasons make it

<sup>120</sup>Ibid., 183.

<sup>121</sup>Van Limborch, 8.

<sup>122</sup>On the early history of Arminianism, Harrison's lively account is still reliable; its chap. 6 analyzes the Vorstius affair. On Lubbert's role in this affair, see van der Woude, 203-26. On the intellectual consequences of Arminianism for de Venó's student Gorlaeus, see Lüthy, 2001a, 272-78. Episcopius' descriptions of his sojourn at Franeker are contained in van Limborch, letters 131 (to Arminius) and 136 (to Corvinus).

<sup>123</sup>It appears to us that the importance of Conrad Vorstius for the evolution of the concept of *libertas philosophandi* has so far been underestimated, although he clearly anticipated distinctions that are often attributed to later Arminians like Philipp van Limborch. For example, in his letter of 13 October 1611 to Isaac Casaubon, Vorstius anticipates the important distinction between essential and non-essential doctrines when contesting Casaubon's demand for synodal restrictions on theological views. Vorstius feels that only scripturally grounded doctrines must be imposed, whereas freedom of interpretation must be guaranteed for all other doctrines: "Et illic quidem assensio stricte semper urgenda: hic vero libertas aliqua inquirendi, aut etiam dissentiendi, doctis omnino concedenda est; ne veritati, magisque



natural to assume that de Venó sided with the Arminians against Lubbert. Like other prominent Arminians, he may even have hoped for an eventual reconciliation of the confessions — a hope that may in fact explain his imprudent visit to Rome. The eminent theologian Johannes Uytenbogaert (the author of the famous Arminian Remonstrance of 1610) wrote as early as 1606 that doctrinal dissent was not dangerous for the Church, but might, if left to itself, eventually result in a greater consensus.<sup>124</sup> For this and related reasons, the English were to call their own Arminians “Latitude-men” later in the century. De Venó’s life and doctrines suggest that he felt the need for much latitude. Admittedly, we know next to nothing of his hopes and aspirations. But his disputations display a greater openness and more desire for doctrinal innovation than a man such as Lubbert tolerated, for whom Aristotle was the philosophical guardian of religious orthodoxy and who thought of freedom of interpretation, notably in matters theological (but by extension also in matters philosophical), as an open door to heresy.<sup>125</sup>

After the Arminian issue had exploded at Franeker, we cannot exclude that de Venó’s extensive use of philosophical liberties came to be associated with the theological liberties demanded by Vorstius and other Arminians. After all, philosophy was understood by Calvinist theologians to be intimately connected to theological concerns, not least because most theological disputes hinged on metaphysical issues. One of the main lines of attack against Vorstius was that he had physicalized God by subjecting his essence to the traditional ten categories of being — a charge that Thomas Fuller’s *Church History* expressed a few years later in these strong words:

For, whereas it hath been the labour of the pious and learned in all ages to mount man to God, (as much as might be), by a sacred adoration (which the more humble, the more high) of the Divine Incomprehensibleness; this wretch did seek to stoop God to man, by debasing his purity, assigning him a material body; confining his immensity, as not being everywhere; shaking his immuta-

---

insinuare se cupienti, ostium occludere velle videamur. Sancta, inquam, atque Christiana moderatio hic, ut in omnibus, servanda est: ne, dum unum praecipitium nimium vitare cupimus, in aliud non minus periculosum incidamus” (van Limborch, letter 175, 288). For the pre-Spinozist history of the term *libertas philosophandi*, see Sutton; for the link between Arminianism, tolerance, and *libertas philosophandi*, see Simonutti, 15-42.

<sup>124</sup>Letter from Uytenbogaert to Johannes Becius of 27 September 1606: “Nos dissensum metuimus. Sed quid si ea tenderet ad majorem consensum?” (van Limborch, letter 94, 176).

<sup>125</sup>See, for example, Lubbert’s negative reaction to Vorstius and Hugo Grotius’ demand for *libertas prophetandi*: “Sed haec libertas non vagabitur in infinitum; alioquin in foedem licentiam transformabitur. Quod igitur? Semper se continebit intra analogiam fidei” (Vriemoet, 14, from Lubbert, 1614, 2, which in turn appears to be a repetition of an argument used in Lubbert, 1611). For Lubbert’s strict adherence to Aristotelianism see Vriemoet, 11.

bility, as if his will were subject to change; darkening his omniscience, as uncertain in future contingents: with many more monstrous opinions, fitter to be remanded to hell, than committed to writing.<sup>126</sup>

Materiality, immensity, ubiquity, immutability, changeability, and future contingents are all philosophical terms. The charge against Vorstius and his followers was indeed that they were applying physical categories to God.<sup>127</sup>

Around 1610, it thus became more dangerous in the Dutch context to apply philosophy to theology, and all the more so if one did it in such a novel manner as de Venó wished. Under the further assumption that this Franeker professor allowed his likely confessional and political *prise de position* in favor of Arminianism to become publicly known, we have a new, or at least an additional, explanation for why his removal from office occurred in 1609. Recall that in 1610 de Venó was readmitted to his chair under the conditions that in his teaching and disputations he would henceforth “abstain from subtle *parerga* and *quaestiones*, and also from defamatory acts and words.” This warning may very well have been aimed at de Venó’s theological extrapolations from strictly philosophical matters.

#### CONCLUSION

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, philosophical textbooks were frequently published by students, and often only after a professor had moved on to a different faculty. But de Venó never stopped teaching ethics and physics. When he died prematurely in 1613, none of his students seems to have wanted to take it upon himself to collect lecture notes and disputations so as to perpetuate the memory of their teacher by publishing his physics course. Nor is it likely that such an initiative, even if it had been proposed, would have met with the approval of the Franeker community. For though de Venó seems to have been liked by his students, he was in conflict with several of his colleagues. The evidence suggests that they took issue either with his presumption or with his doctrinal and confessional views, or with both. As for his presumption, we have shown that he exaggerated his educational credentials. How he managed to persuade his colleagues of the existence of his three doctorates without possessing the relevant pieces of parchment to prove it remains, of course, somewhat of a mystery. While his degree in law may have been genuine, his medical and philosophical doctor-

<sup>126</sup> Fuller, 3:249

<sup>127</sup> See Lüthy, 2001a, 279-80.

ates certainly were not. But then, the medical faculty at Franeker was a very mediocre one, and perhaps there was no one to put de Venno to the test.<sup>128</sup>

Despite this fraudulent aspect of his character, it appears from the extant disputations that de Venno's teaching represented a noteworthy combination of recently-developed philosophical positions. We have seen that, contrary to others at Franeker, he was not interested in Ramism, but was instead attracted by the theologically-motivated ontological concerns of such German philosophers as Goclenius, Taurellus, and the later Casmann. Furthermore, de Venno was the only Dutch professor whose teaching reflected the cosmology and matter theory of Girolamo Cardano and, to a lesser extent, of Julius Caesar Scaliger. We have furthermore seen that de Venno was aware of Tycho Brahe's observations of comets and used them to deny the immutability of the celestial spheres and the existence of a non-elemental ether. Although, a few decades later, it would no longer be uncommon for teachers of natural philosophy to mention the novel results of the empirical sciences, de Venno seems to have been the only Dutch philosopher to have done so in the first years of the seventeenth century.

His historical influence is most visible in the writings of his student, David Gorlaeus. Although there is much about the latter's atomism and its nominalist underpinnings that has no link whatsoever to de Venno's teaching, an entire series of specifically physical doctrines passed directly from the teacher to his gifted student. Notably, Gorlaeus accepted de Venno's (Italian) two-element doctrine and the cosmological view that celestial heat, carried earthward by air, is the chief agent of physical change. Further elements he adopted were the ideas that quantity is inseparable from body and that there is therefore no such thing as purely potential prime matter (*pace* Aristotle) and that the Aristotelian notion of place (*locus*) must be replaced by space (*spatium*). Both of these ideas are necessary preconditions for atomism, which is why de Venno's preparatory role deserves to be known. More generally, however, de Venno introduced Gorlaeus to a way of explaining nature that tried to be independent of pagan Greek systems and in concordance with the Christian religion, while at the same time satisfying metaphysical requirements and empirical observation.<sup>129</sup>

Although Gorlaeus would soon discover other, more powerful, philosophical heroes, his first role-model was clearly his teacher at Franeker. In this respect it is also significant that de Venno either considered himself, or at

<sup>128</sup>For the mediocrity of Franeker's early professors of medicine, see Otterspeer and Aerts-van Bueren, 46.

<sup>129</sup>The details of Gorlaeus' indebtedness to de Venno are discussed in Lüthy, 2001a, 262-70.

least behaved and talked like, an Arminian, because Gorlaeus belonged to an Arminian family, and because his *Exercitationes* can be understood as a philosophical apologia for the embattled Arminian theologian Vorstius. Although Gorlaeus used different metaphysical and physical methods than his teacher, he clearly continued in de Venó's footsteps by accepting the premise that philosophical insight was a necessary precondition for our spiritual health — an assumption that was explicitly denied by the anti-Remonstrants.

De Venó had received a fair trial at Rome, and although he returned to his native Frisia and taught at a Calvinist institution, he had not turned into a fuming Calvinist of Lubbert's kind. The circumstantial evidence presented in this article tempts us to depict him as a "Latitude-man" *avant la lettre*. If this hypothesis is correct, then de Venó's Roman sojourn might possibly be viewed as the sign of a confessional open-mindedness or even as the expression of the hope in a confessional reconciliation. Such a hope inspired several of the irenic Arminians of his age, including Vorstius and Grotius, who balked at the idea that the recent schism was definitive and tried to use reasoned argument — philosophy in general and metaphysics and natural philosophy in particular — to find a way out.

UNIVERSITY OF NIJMEGEN, THE NETHERLANDS [LÜTHY]

UNIVERSITY "LA SAPIENZA," ROME, ITALY [SPRUIT]

## Bibliography

- Abels, Paul. 1988. "Das Arnoldinum und die Niederlande während seiner ersten Blütezeit: Das Verhältnis einer Haßliebe." In *400 Jahre Arnoldinum 1588-1988*, ed. Kreisheimatbund Steinfurt, 78-97. Greven.
- Adama, Lollius. 1606. *Theses logicae, de natura logices*. [Resp.] Liebwertus a Wynshem. Franeker.
- . 1609. *Fortunati Crellii Isagoges logicae, in duas partes tributae, in communem et propriam*. Franeker.
- Baldini, Ugo, and Leen Spruit. 2000. "Cardano e Aldrovandi nelle lettere del Sant'Uffizio Romano all'Inquisitore di Bologna (1571-73)." *Bruniana e Campanelliana* 6:145-63.
- . 2001. "Campanella tra il processo romano e la congiura di Calabria. A proposito di due lettere inedite a Santori." *Bruniana e Campanelliana* 7:179-87.
- Beretta, Francesco. 1998. *Galilée devant le Tribunal de l'Inquisition*. Fribourg.
- . 2000. "L'Archivio della Congregazione del Sant'Uffizio: bilancio provvisorio della storia e natura dei fondi d'antico regime." In *L'Inquisizione romana: metodologia delle fonti e storia istituzionale*, ed. A. Del Col and G. Paolin, 119-44. Trieste-Montereale Valcellina.
- Blair, Ann. 2000. "Mosaic Physics and the Search for a Pious Natural Philosophy in the Late Renaissance." *Isis* 91:32-58.
- Boeles, W.B.S. 1879. *Frieslands Hoogeschool en het Rijks Athenaeum te Franeker*. 2 parts in 3 vols. Leeuwarden.
- Bots, J.A.H., and W.Th.M. Frijhoff. 1985. "De studentenpopulatie van de Franeker academie: een kwantitatief onderzoek (1585-1811). In *Universiteit te Franeker 1585-1811*, ed. G. Th. Jensma, F.R.H. Smit, and F. Westra, 56-72. Leeuwarden.
- Cardano, Girolamo. 1550. *De subtilitate libri XXI*. Nuremberg.
- . 1560. *In calumniatorem librorum de subtilitate, actio prima*. In *De subtilitate libri XXI*. Third rev. ed., 1265-1426. Basel.
- . 1565. *Contradicentium medicorum libri II*. Paris.
- Carena, Cesare. 1655. *Tractatus de Officio Sanctissimae Inquisitionis, et modo procedendi in causis fidei*. Cremona.
- Casmann, Otto. 1598. *Cosmopoeia et Οὐρανογραφία Christiana*. Frankfurt.
- Cifres, Alejandro. 2001. "Das Archiv des Sanctum Officium: Alte und neue Ordnungsformen." In *Inquisition, Index, Zensur: Wissenskulturen der Neuzeit im Widerstreit*, ed. H. Wolf, 45-67. Paderborn.
- de Castro, Alfonso. 1549. *De iusta haereticorum punitione*. 1547. 2nd. ed. Venice.
- de Ridder-Symoens, H. 1985. "Buitelandse studenten aan de Franeker universiteit 1585-1811." In *Universiteit te Franeker 1585-1811*, ed. G.Th. Jensma, F.R.H. Smit, and F. Westra, 73-89. Leeuwarden.
- de Veno, Henricus. 1603. *Disputationum physicarum prima, de physica*. [Resp.] Bernardus Paludanus. Franeker.
- . 1604a. *Disputatio metaphysica de signo et signato*. [Resp.] Augustinus Arnoldi. Franeker.
- . 1604b. *Disputationum physicarum secunda, de principiis et causis rerum naturalium*. [Resp.] Duco a Buvama. Franeker.
- . 1604c. *Disputationum physicarum quarta, de infinito et loco*. [Resp.] PIERIUS H. Winsemius. Franeker.
- . 1604d. *Disputationum physicarum quinta, de mundo in genere*. [Resp.] Gualtherus Zellius. Franeker.
- . 1604e. *Disputationum physicarum octava, de elementis*. [Resp.] Duca a Buvama. Franeker.
- . 1604f. *Disputationum physicarum nona, de misti generatione et ejus interitu*. [Resp.] Bernardus Paludanus. Franeker.

- . 1604g. *Theoremata physica de aëre*. [Resp.] Petrus Theocari. Franeker.
- . 1604h. *Theoremata physica de anima rationali et eius facultatibus*. [Resp.] Petrus Theocari. Franeker.
- . 1605. *Quaestiones illustres ex tota philosophia conquistatae, quas ad summum in philosophiae gradum consequendum publice ventilandas proponit Hieronimus Fredericus Isbrandi*. Franeker.
- . 1606. *Dissertatio politica de magistratu*. [Resp.] Hero a Weerdum et Inhusen. Franeker.
- Decreta Sancti Officii, 1597; 1598; 1599*. MS. Archivio della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede. Vatican City.
- Dibon, Paul. 1954. *La philosophie néerlandaise au siècle d'or*. Vol. 1, *L'enseignement philosophique dans les universités à l'époque précartésienne (1575-1650)*. Paris.
- Düring, Ingemar. 1944. *Aristotle's Chemical Treatise Meteorologica, Book IV, with Introduction and Commentary*. Göteborg.
- Ekkart, R.E.O. 1977. *Franeker Professorenportretten. Iconografie van de Professoren aan de Academie en het Rijksatheneum te Franeker 1585-1843*. Franeker.
- Engels, M.H.H. 1995. *Brieven aan de Curator van de Universiteit van Franeker Johannes Saecckma (1572-1636). Uitgave van de Codex Saecckma en de brieven van 12 overeenkomstige correspondenten uit de verzameling Gabbema*. 2 vols. Leeuwarden.
- Fernel, Jean. 1548. *De abditis rerum causis*. Paris.
- Firpo, Luigi. 1993. *Il processo di Giordano Bruno*. Ed. D. Quaglioni. Rome.
- Fockema Andreae, S.J., and T.J. Meijer. 1968. *Album studiosorum Academiae Franekerensis (1585-1811, 1816-1844)*. Vol. 1, *Naamlijst der studenten*. Franeker.
- Foxius Morzillo, Sebastiano. 1561. *Ethices philosophiae compendium, ex Platone, Aristoteli aliisque optimis quibus auctoribus collectum*. Heidelberg.
- Freedman, Joseph S. 1988. *European Academic Philosophy in the Late Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries: The Life, Significance, and Philosophy of Clemens Timpler (1563/64-1624)*. 2 vols. Hildesheim.
- Fuller, Thomas. 1837. *The Church History of Britain from the Birth of Jesus Christ, until the Year 1648*. 1655. New ed. 3 vols. London.
- Galama, Sybrand Haije Michiel. 1954. *Het Wijsgerig Onderwijs aan de Hogeschool te Franeker 1585-1811*. Franeker.
- Godenius, Rudolph. 1596-99. *Problemata logica*. 5 vols. Marburg.
- Gorlaeus, David. 1620. *Exercitationes philosophicae post mortem auctoris editae*. Leiden.
- . *Idea physicae*. 1651. Utrecht.
- Gysens, Steven. 1992. "Vossius, Gerard." In *Nationaal Biografische Woordenboek* 14:734-40. Brussels.
- . 1994. "Gerardus Vossius, éditeur et traducteur de textes patristiques. L'exemple de la *Vita et encomium Gregorii Thaumaturgi* par Grégoire de Nysse." In *Philohistor: Miscellanea in honorem Caroli Laga septuagenarii*, ed. A. Schoors and P. Van Deun, 553-68. Leuven.
- Harrison, Archibald Harold Walter. 1926. *The Beginnings of Arminianism to the Synod of Dort*. London.
- Heuermann, G. 1878. *Geschichte des reformirten gräflich Bentheimschen Gymnasium Illustre Arnoldinum zu Burgsteinfurt*. Burgsteinfurt.
- Hunt, Thomas Sterry. 1875. *Chemical and Geological Essays*. Boston.
- Ingegno, Alfonso. 1980. *Saggio sulla filosofia di Cardano*. Florence.
- Javelli, Crisostomo. 1552. *Super tres libros Aristotelis de anima quaestiones subtilissimae, in quibus clarissime resolvuntur dubia Aristotelis et commentatoris, eaque ut plurimum decisa habentur iuxta Thomisticum dogma*. Venice.
- Jensma, G.Th. 1985a. "Inleiding." In *Universiteit te Franeker 1585-1811*, ed. G. Th. Jensma, F.R.H. Smit, and F. Westra, 11-39. Leeuwarden.

- . 1985b. "Uit het huis van Arcerius. Acht 'artes'-studenten en hun opvattingen over wetenschap en maatschappij, 1589-1639." In *Universiteit te Franeker 1585-1811*, ed. G. Th. Jensma, F.R.H. Smit, and F. Westra, 452-69. Leeuwarden.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. 1977. *The Essential Tension: Selected Studies in Scientific Tradition and Change*. Chicago.
- Lasswitz, Kurd. 1890. *Geschichte der Atomistik vom Mittelalter bis Newton*. 2 vols. Hamburg and Leipzig.
- Leijenhorst, Cees, and Christoph Lüthy. 2002. "The Erosion of Aristotelianism. Confessional Physics in Early Modern Germany and the Dutch Republic." In *The Dynamics of Aristotelian Natural Philosophy from Antiquity to 1700*, ed. Cees Leijenhorst, Christoph Lüthy, and Johannes M.M.H. Thijssen, 375-411. Leiden.
- Leinsle, Ulrich Gottfried. 1985. *Das Ding und die Methode: Methodische Konstitution und Gegenstand der frühen protestantischen Metaphysik*. Augsburg.
- Lubbert, Sibrand. 1611. *Declaratio responsionis Conradi Vorstii*. Franeker.
- . 1614. *Responsio ad pietatem Hugonis Grotii*. Franeker.
- Lüthy, Christoph. 2001a. "David Gorlaeus' Atomism, or: The Marriage of Protestant Metaphysics with Italian Natural Philosophy." In *Late Medieval and Early Modern Corpuscular Matter Theories*, ed. Christoph Lüthy, John E. Murdoch, and William R. Newman, 245-90. Leiden.
- . 2001b. "An Aristotelian Watchdog as Avant-Garde Physicist: Julius Caesar Scaliger." *The Monist* 84: 542-61.
- Mahnke, Dietrich. 1908. "Rektor Casmann in Stade, ein vergessener Gegner aristotelischer Philosophie und Naturwissenschaft in 16. Jahrhundert." *Archiv für die Geschichte der Naturwissenschaften und der Technik* 5:183-97, 226-40, 352-63.
- Matricula facultatis theologiae, 1597*. MS. Universitätsbibliothek Basel, A II 6.
- Mercenarius, Archangelus. 1585. *Dilucidationes obscuriorum locorum et quaestionum philosophiae naturalis*. Leipzig.
- Meursius, J. 1625. *Athenae Batavae, sive de urbe Leidensi et Academia, virisque claris qui utramque ingenio suo atque scriptis illustrarunt*. Leiden.
- Michael, Emily. 1997. "Daniel Sennert on Matter and Form. At the Juncture of the Old and the New." *Early Science and Medicine* 2:272-99.
- Mirto, Alfonso. 1986. "Un inedito del Seicento sull'Inquisizione." *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres* 7:99-138.
- Napius, W.J., and G.A. Lindeboom. 1985. *Hoogleraren in de Geneeskunde aan de Hogeschool en het Athenaeum te Franeker*. Amsterdam.
- Nerdenus, Henricus Antonii. 1596. *Disputatio theologica de usura*. [Resp.] Henricus de Veno. Franeker.
- Nijenhuis, W. 1985. "De Theologische Faculteit: Inleiding." In *Universiteit te Franeker 1585-1811*, ed. G. Th. Jensma, F.R.H. Smit, and F. Westra, 227-35. Leeuwarden.
- Otterspeer, W., and J.E. Aerts-van Bueren. 1985. *Werkplaatsen van wijsheid, geleerdheid en het ware geloof: of De wisshewerking tussen de universiteiten van Leiden en Franeker*. Franeker.
- Pagano, S.M., ed. 1984. *I documenti del processo di Galileo Galilei*. Vatican City.
- Partington, James Riddick. 1939. "The Origins of the Atomic Theory." *Annals of Science* 4:245-82.
- Piccolomini, Francesco. 1600. *De mixtione*. In *Librorum ad scientiam de natura atinentium partes quinque*. 2 vols. Venice. 2:98r-112v.
- Postma, Ferenc, and Jan van Sluis. 1995. *Auditorium Academiae Franekerensis, Bibliographie der Reden, Disputationen und Gelegenheitsdruckwerke der Universität und des Athenäums in Franeker 1585-1843*. Leeuwarden.
- Prosperi, Adriano. 1991. "Per la storia dell'Inquisizione romana." In *L'inquisizione romana in Italia nell'età moderna: Archivi, problemi di metodo e nuove ricerche*, ed. Andrea Del Col and G. Paolin, 27-64. Rome.

- Reif, Patricia. 1969. "The Textbook Tradition in Natural Philosophy, 1600-1650." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 30:17-32.
- Rübel, Rudolf. 1953. *Das Burgsteinfurter Gymnasium Arnoldinum im Wandel der Zeiten*. Burgsteinfurt.
- Sassen, F. 1941-42. "Grotius, philosophe aristotélicien." *Grotiana* 9:37-52.
- Scaliger, Julius Caesar. 1576. *Exotericarum exercitationum liber XV. de subtilitate, ad Hieronymum Cardanum*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Frankfurt.
- Schmidt, P. 2000. "L'Inquisizione e gli stranieri." In *L'Inquisizione e gli storici: un cantiere aperto*, 365-72. Rome.
- . 2001. "Fernhandel und römische Inquisition. 'Interkulturelles management' im konfessionellen Zeitalter." In *Inquisition, Index, Zensur: Wissenskulturen der Neuzeit im Widerstreit*, ed. H. Wolf, 105-20. Paderborn.
- Simonutti, Luisa. 1984. *Arminianesimo e tolleranza nel Seicento olandese: Il carteggio Ph. van Limborch—J. le Clerc*. Florence.
- Spruit, Leen, and C. Preti. 2003. "I documenti inediti e editi negli archivi romani del Sant'Ufficio e dell'Indice." In [new edition of] L. Amabile, *Fra Tommaso Campanella. La sua congiura, i suoi processi e la sua pazzia*. 5 vols. Paris-Turin, vol. 1: forthcoming.
- Sprunger, K.L. 1985. "William Ames and the Franeker Link to English and American Puritanism." In *Universiteit te Franeker 1585-1811*, ed. G. Th. Jensma, F.R.H. Smit, and F. Westra, 264-74. Leeuwarden.
- Stellingwerff, Frederik. 1610. *De constitutione logicae disputatio scholastica*. Franeker.
- Sutton, Robert B. 1953. "The Phrase *Liber-tas philosophandi*." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 14:310-16.
- Tedeschi, John. 1997. *Il giudice e l'eretico. Studi sull'Inquisizione romana*. Milano.
- Timpler, Clemens. 1604. *Metaphysicae systema methodicum, libris quinque comprehensum*. Steinfurt.
- Trutius, Antonius. 1593. *Theses logicae ex Categoriis; theses physicae de principiis*. [Resp.] Henricus de Veno. Leiden.
- van Berkel, Klaas. 1985. "Franeker als centrum van ramisme." In *Universiteit te Franeker 1585-1811*, ed. G. Th. Jensma, F.R.H. Smit, and F. Westra, 424-37. Leeuwarden.
- van der Woude, Cornelis. 1963. *Sibrandus Lubbertus. Leven en werken, in het bijzonder naar zijn correspondentie*. Ph.D. thesis, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam.
- van Limborch, Ph., ed. 1704. *Præstantium ac eruditorum virorum epistole ecclesiasticae et theologicae*. 3<sup>rd</sup> revised ed. Amsterdam.
- van Nienes, A.P., J. Rinzema, M. Offringa, P.A.J. van den Berg et al. 1985. *De archieven van de Universiteit te Franeker 1585-1812*. Leeuwarden.
- Vorstius, Conrad. 1610. *Anti-Bellarminus contractus: hoc est, compendiosum examen omnium fidei controversiarum*. Hanau.
- Vriemoet, Emon Luius. 1758. *Athenarum Frisiacarum libri II*. Leeuwarden.
- Wackernagel, Hans Georg et al., eds. 1951-80. *Die Matrikel der Universität Basel*. 5 vols. Basel.
- Wybinga, Martinus à. 1645. *Laudatio funebris habita post exequias in templo academico in honorem ac moemoriã . . . D. Pierii Winsemii . . .*. Leeuwarden.
- Zijlstra, Samme. 1996. *Het geleerde Friesland — een mythe? Universiteit en maatschappij in Friesland en Stad en Lande a 1380-1650*. Leeuwarden.