

Regius to Descartes [Endegeest]

[14/] 24 January 1642

Vie, II, 142 [A], 146–147 [B], 147–149 [C] (no. 15).
 AT, III, 367–368 [A] (no. 238–II), 488, 490–491 [B, C] (no. 265).

[A] (In continuation of R/D 18D)

Mais ses thèses, quoique corrigées par M. Descartes, à qui il ne donna pas peu d'exercice pendant tout le reste de l'année 1641, ne servirent qu'à augmenter la jalousie qu'on avait de sa réputation, et à aigrir les esprits des autres Professeurs qui étaient déjà mal disposés pour lui. [*I.m.*: Tom. I des Lettr. de Descart. pag. 396, 397, 398, 399, etc.¹ Lettr. 15 MS. de Reg.]

[B]

Ces corollaires, suivis d'une appendice, avec les thèses théologiques sur le Jubilé Romain, devaient être publiquement soutenus les XVIII^e, XXIII^e, et XXI^e jours de Décembre.² Mais le dessein de Voetius était de les faire signer par avance aux autres Professeurs en théologie, et même à tous les théologiens qui étaient
 5 Ministres ou Prédicateurs, et de députer ensuite quelquesuns de ses collègues vers le Magistrat, pour lui donner avis que le médecin, c'est-à-dire M. Regius, aurait été condamné d'hérésie par un Consistoire ou un Concile Ecclésiastique et mis au rang de Taurellus et Gorlaeus; [*i.m.*: Lettr. 15 de Reg. MS.] et que par ce moyen le Magistrat ne pût se dispenser honnêtement de l'ôter de la chaire.³

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[C]

On réforma donc les corollaires; on ôta de leur titre le nom de la Faculté Théologique, et on corrigea ce qui pouvait regarder personnellement M. Regius, et M. Des-

¹ References to D/R 19A, D/R 21, and D/R 24.

² Voetius countered Regius in three corollaries added to his disputation *Diatribè theologica De iubileo, ad iubileum Urbani VIII* submitted on 18/28 December, and in an appendix to these corollaries — a general defence of substantial forms — discussed on 23 and 24 December OS. These texts are briefly discussed in my commentary.

³ NH confirms that the corollaries were to be submitted on behalf of the Theological Faculty (NH, 27/*Querelle*, 97). Because these corollaries attribute both the idea that man is an accidental being and the denial of substantial forms to 'atheists' like Gorlaeus, Taurellus and Basso (see my commentary on D/R 29), they could be seen as a preliminary to a formal accusation of atheism (VERBEEK 1992A, 17). Indeed, had the fellow ministers of the Theological professors subscribed as well, Regius would have found himself in a very difficult position. NH is silent about this — and it may have been just a rumour — but since Descartes mentions it in his *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet* (AT VII 586), there is little doubt that Regius wrote about it in R/D 30.

cartes. Mais comme les endroits des thèses, où l'un et l'autre étaient nommés ou désignés par leurs écrits ou leurs opinions, étaient déjà imprimés, la précaution du
 5 Consul fut inutile pour ce point; et Voetius se crut fort heureux d'avoir ce prétexte pour couvrir sa désobéissance et sa mauvaise volonté.⁴

Les thèses furent soutenues le XVIII^e de Décembre pour la première dispute, continuées durant les deux jours qui précédaient la fête de Noël.⁵ Le répondant, qui était le sieur Lambert Vanden *Waterlaet*,⁶ [*i.m.*: Gemerthanus.⁷] s'y signala autant
 10 que son président, [*i.m.*: Epist. 15 Reg. MS. ad Cart. et Epist. Cart. ad P. Dinet.⁸] par la chaleur qu'on y fit paraître contre les opinions nouvelles, soutenues avec une ardeur égale par les opposants, qui étaient presque tous écoliers de M. Regius.

Le président trouvant qu'on n'y parlait pas assez de Monsieur Descartes chercha sur la fin de la dispute quelque question très difficile, pour embarrasser l'un de
 15 ces opposants dans la réponse, sans avoir néanmoins intention de l'écouter favorablement. C'est pourquoi voyant que l'opposant se mettait en devoir de le satisfaire sur la question par des réponses conformes aux principes de la philosophie nouvelle, il l'interrompit brusquement pour dire que ceux qui ne s'accoutumaient pas de la manière ordinaire de philosopher, en attendaient une autre de M. Descartes,
 20 comme les Juifs attendent leur Élie qui doit leur apprendre toute vérité.⁹

[...]

M. Regius [...] prit le parti de répondre par écrit aux thèses de Voetius. Il en écrivit à M. Descartes le 24^e jour de Janvier de l'année suivante pour l'informer
 149 de tout ce que s'était passé, et lui demander avis sur l'avenir. [*i.m.*: Lettr. 15 MS. de

4 Neither Regius nor Descartes are explicitly mentioned in the corollaries, but Descartes is specifically referred to in the sixth paragraph of Voetius' appendix (NH, 47/*Querelle*, 111–112; the text is also found in AT III 517).

5 An account of the corollaries' discussion on 18/28 December is found in NH, 34–35/*Querelle*, 102–103. For the events on 24 December OS, see below.

6 On the theological student Lambertus vanden Waterlaet, the respondent of all three disputations and Voetius' zealous helper in his battle against Regius and Descartes, see the *Biographical Lexicon*.

7 Gemert, Vanden Waterlaet's place of origin, is a village in the Catholic province of North-Brabant, c.20 km north-east of Eindhoven.

8 '[Voetius] etiam inter disputandum me nominabat, quaerebatque ab opponente mihi nunquam viso, num ipsi argumenta suggestissem; et indignissimâ comparatione utens, ajebat eos, quibus vulgaris Philosophandi ratio displicet, aliam a me expectare, ut Judaei expectant suum Eliam, qui eos deducat in omnem veritatem', *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet*, AT VII 587. Cf. below, II. 13–20.

9 According to NH, the disputation was somewhat uneventful, but it does specify Baillet's 'ceux qui ... philosopher' (II. 18–19): the opponent did not reason the academic way, that is, by way of syllogisms (NH, 53/*Querelle*, 116). SCHOOCK 1643 informs us on the 'difficult problem' posed to Regius' students. When the opponent claimed that everything in nature could be explained without the aid of forms or qualities, Vanden Waterlaet challenged him to explain the magnet or the movement of the tides. The opponent failed to answer either question, but when he tried to defend himself by referring to the future publication of Descartes' physics, Voetius sneered 'similes esse tales philosophos Iudaeis seu Rabbinis, qui quotiescumque aqua ipsis haeret aut nodus insolubilis occurrit, dicere solent "Elias veniet". Interim spem pretio apud nos non emi', SCHOOCK 1643, [LXX]/*Querelle*, 177; cf. *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet*, AT VII 587.

- 25 Reg.] Il lui marqua combien les esprits s'aigrissaient contre lui, et comment le parti
de Voetius se fortifiait de jour en jour; ajoutant que M. le Consul Vander-Hoolck
leur protecteur était d'avis qu'il gardât le silence, ou qu'il calât la voile en traitant
Voetius et les autres Professeurs avec le plus de douceur et de respect qu'il lui
serait possible. Il lui envoya en même temps la réponse qu'il avait préparée contre
30 les thèses de Voetius, afin qu'il l'examinât avec le même droit qu'il avait sur ses
autres écrits.

COMMENTARY

Date

Baillet gives the date of the letter, 24 January 1642, without indication of the calendar used. However, since the letter is indubitably written before R/D 32, which letter we can date [23 January/] 2 February 1642 (see the commentary on R/D 32), the precise date of the present letter is 24 January NS.

Context

The letter is the first of seven letters exchanged between Descartes and Regius within a fortnight. The issue at hand is the composition of a response to Voetius' *Appendix* to his disputations of 23 and 24 December 1641 OS. The liveliness of the correspondence stems from both men's urge to publish the response as soon as possible, if possible before the end of the academic holiday (1/11 February).¹⁰ The *Responsio* finally appeared on 16/26 February.¹¹

¹⁰ See D/R 31, ll. 273–274.

¹¹ NH, 53/*Querelle*, 116.

31
Descartes [Endegeest] to Regius
[late January 1642]

CLE, I, 401–410, 414–415 (no. 89-I).
AT, III, 491–502, 509 (no. 266-I).
AM, V, 111–125, 135–136; RL, 72–86, 98; CSMK, 205–207 (partly); B, 150–164, 180–181.

Vir Clarissime,

Habui hîc toto pomeridiano tempore praestantis(si)mum virum D. Al-
(phonsum)¹ qui multa mecum de rebus Ultraiectinis amicissimè ac pru-
dentissimè disseruit. Planè cum ipso sentio, tibi ad aliquod tempus à
5 publicis disputationibus esse abstinendum, et summoperè cavendum,
ne ullos in te verbis asperioribus irrites.² Vellem etiam quammaximè,
ut nullas unquam novas opiniones proponeres, sed antiquis omnibus
nomine tenus retentis, novas tantum rationes afferres: quod nemo pos-
set reprehendere; et qui tuas rationes rectè caperent, sponte ex iis ea [492]
10 quae velles intelligi, concluderent. Ut, de ipsis Formis Substantialibus
et Qualitatibus Realibus, quid opus tibi fuit eas palam reiicere? Nunquid
meministi me, in Meteoris pag. 164,³ expressissimis verbis monuisse
ipsas nullomodo à me reiici aut negari, sed tantummodo non requiri
ad rationes meas explicandas? Quod idem si fuisses secutus, nemo
15 tamen ex tuis auditoribus non illas reiecisset, cum nullum earum usum
esse perspexisset, nec interim in tantam collegarum tuorum invidiam
incidisses. Sed quod factum est, infectum fieri nequit. Nunc curandum
est, ut quaecumque vera proposuisti, quam modestissimè defendas, et
si quae minus vera, vel tantum minus aptè dicta, elapsa sint, absque ullâ

1 The *Exl* supplies *Alphonsum*, whom Baillet claims to be a military man and a close friend of Descartes', spending his leaves in Utrecht (*Vie*, II, 47 (cf. R/D 10), 149). There is little doubt that the same person is meant in a letter by Renier, in which he announces his intention to send something to Huygens via 'Monsr. Alfonso' (to De Wilhem, 28 February 1638, in DIBON 1990, 217–218). The person in question is probably Alphonse Pollot, a captain in the Dutch army, a friend and correspondent of Descartes' (see the *Biographical Lexicon*). Part of the early correspondence went via Renier (cf. my commentary on R/D 1, *Context 1*). His ties with Utrecht are confirmed by Descartes (AT II 545), who, moreover, also informs us that in January 1642 Pollot assisted Regius in Utrecht: 'Mr de Pollot vous en peut dire des nouvelles, de ce qu'il a vû a Utrecht ou il a aydé a combatre pour moy', Descartes to Huygens, 31 January 1642, AT III 523–524.

2 This is, in fact, what Regius and the professors of theology had agreed upon on 17/27 December 1641 (NH, 31/*Querelle*, 100; also cited in AT III 489–490). Cf. D/R 29, n. 3.

3 AT VI 239. CLE specifies *editionis gallicae*, which addition is obviously Clerselier's because no translation of the *Essais* was available in January 1642. For similar cases in CLE, see my commentary on D/R 45.

20 pertinaciâ emendes, putesque nihil esse in philosopho magis laudandum
quam liberam errorum suorum confessionem. Ut in hoc, *quod homo sit*
ens per accidens, | scio te nihil aliud intellexisse quam quod alij omnes 402
admittunt, nempe illum esse compositum ex duabus rebus realiter dis-
tinctis; sed quia verbum, *ens per accidens*, eo sensu non usurpatur in
25 sc(h)olis, idcirco longè melius est (si fortè uti non possis explicatione,
quam praecedentibus meis litteris suggesseram:⁴ video enim te ab illâ
nonnihil deflectere, necdum scopulos satis vitare in tuo ultimo scripto⁵),
ut apertè fatearis te illum sc(h)olae terminum non rectè intellexisse,
quam ut malè dissimules; ideoque, cum de re planè idem quod alij senti-
30 tires, in verbis tantum discrepasse. Atque omnino ubicumque occurret [493]
occurrit occasio, tam privatim quam publicè, debes profiteri te credere hominem
esse *verum ens per se, non autem per accidens*, et mentem corpori re-
aliter et substantialiter esse unitam, non per situm aut dispositionem, ut
habetes in tuo ultimo scripto (hoc enim rursus reprehensioni obnoxium
35 est, et meo iudicio non verum), sed per verum modum unionis, qualem
vulgò omnes admittunt, etsi nulli, qualis sit, explicent, nec ideo etiam
teneris explicare; sed tamen potes, ut ego in *Metaphysicis*⁶, per hoc,
quod percipiamus sensus doloris, aliosque omnes, non esse puras co-
gitationes mentis à corpore distinctae, sed confusas illius realiter unitae
40 perceptiones: si enim Angelus corpori humano inesset, non sentiret ut
nos, sed tantum perciperet motus qui causarentur ab objectis externis,
et per hoc à vero homine distingueretur.

Quantùm ad tuum scriptum, etsi non videam quid eo facere velis,
mihi videtur, ut ingenuè et candidè fatear quod sentio, nec ad rem
45 propositam, nec ad fortunam huius temporis satis esse accommodatum;
multa enim in eo nimis dura, et non satis apertè rationes explicas,
quibus bona causa defenditur, adeò ut in eo scribendo, ex taedio forsitan
atque indignatione, ingenium tuum languisse videatur. Excusabis, ut
confido, libertatem meam; et quia mihi esset difficilior, de singulis quae
50 scripsisti monere quid sentiam, quam aliquod tale scriptum delineare,
hoc potius | agam, et quamvis multò me alia negotia urgeant, unam 403
tamen aut alteram huic rei diem impendam. Existimo itaque operae [494]
pretium esse, ut ad *Appendicem* Voëtij publico scripto respondeas; quia

4 D/R 29, ll. 4–31.

5 Regius' draft of his response to Voetius' *Appendix*.

6 *Meditationes de prima philosophia*, AT VII 74–76.

si planè taceres, tibi forte tanquam victo magis insultarent inimici;
 55 sed tam blandè ac modestè respondeas, ut neminem irrites, simulque
 tam solidè, ut rationibus tuis se vinci Voëtius animadvertat, et ideo,
 ne saepius vincatur, tibi contradicendi animum deponat, seque à te
 demulceri patiatur. Cursim hic ponam argumentum illius responsionis,
 qualem ego ipsam faciendam putarem, si tuo in loco essem; et partim
 60 gallicè, partim latinè scribam, prout verba celerius occurrent, ne forte,
 si latine tantum scriberem, verba mea mutare negligeres, et stilus nimis
 incultus pro tuo non agnosceretur.⁷

*Henrici Regij, etc. Responsio ad Appendicem; vel Notae in
 Appendicem ac Corollaria Theologico-Philosophica
 65 Domini Gisb. Voëtij, etc.*

Je voudrois apres commencer par une honneste lettre à Monsieur
 Voëtius, en laquelle ie dirois qu'ayant vû les tres-doctes, tres-excellentes,
 et tres-subtiles Theses qu'il a publiées touchant les Formes Substantielles,
 et autres matieres appartenantes à la Physique, et qu'il a particulièrement
 70 adressées aux Professeurs en Medecine et en Philosophie de cette Université,
 au nombre desquels ie suis compris, i'ay esté extrêmement ayse de ce qu'un
 si grand homme a voulu traiter de ces matieres, comme ne doutant point
 qu'il n'auroit usé de toutes les meilleures raisons qui se peuvent trouver,
 pour prouver les opinions qu'il défend; [495]
 75 en sorte qu'apres les siennes, il n'en faudroit plus attendre d'autres. Et
 mesme que ie me suis réjoüy de ce que la plus-part des opinions qu'il
 a voulu deffendre en ces Theses, estant directement contraires à celles
 que i'ay enseignées, il semble que ç'a esté particulièrement à moy à
 qui il a adressé sa Préface, et qu'il a voulu par là me convier | à luy 404
 80 répondre, et ainsi m'inviter, par une honneste émulation, à rechercher
 d'autant plus curieusement la verité. Que ie m'estime bien glorieux de
 ce qu'il m'a voulu faire cét honneur. Que ie ne puis manquer de tirer de
 l'avantage de cette attaque, à cause que ce me sera mesme de la gloire,

⁷ In the remaining part of D/R 31, as well as in D/R 33, ll. 23ff., Descartes frequently refers to or cites from the text Voëtius discussed on 23 and 24 December 1641 OS: *Appendix ad corollaria theologicophilosophica nuperae disputationi de Iubileo Romano, De rerum naturis et formis substantialibus* (NH, 36–51; VOETIUS 1648–1669, I, 870–881). Since the text is available in several modern editions, I have refrained from incorporating it in the footnotes or commentary (*Querelle*, 103–115; AT III 511–519). For a detailed study of Voëtius' *Appendix* and the response by Descartes and Regius, see VAN RULER 1995.

si ie suis vaincu par un si fort adversaire. Que ie luy en rens graces tres-
 85 affectueusement, et mets cela au nombre des obligations que ie luy ay, et
 que ie reconnois estre tresgrandes. *Hic fusè commemorarem quomodo
 me iuverit in professione acquirendâ, quomodo mihi patronus, mihi fau-
 tor, mihi adiutor semper fuerit, etc.*⁸ Enfin que ie n'aurois pas manqué
 de répondre à ses Theses par d'autres Theses, et de faire comme luy
 90 des disputes publiques touchant ces matieres, si ie pouvois esperer une
 audience aussi favorable et aussi tranquille; mais qu'il a en cela beau-
 coup d'avantage par dessus moy, à cause que le respect et la veneration
 qu'on a pour luy, non seulement à cause de ses qualitez de Recteur,
 et de Ministre, mais beaucoup plus à cause de sa grande pieté, de son
 95 incomparable doctrine, et de toutes ses autres excellentes qualitez, est
 capable de retenir les plus insolens, et d'empescher qu'ils ne fassent
 aucun desordre aux lieux où il préside; au lieu que, n'ayant point le
 mesme respect pour moy, deux ou trois fripons, que quelque ennemy
 aura envoyez à mes disputes, seront suffisans pour les troubler; et ayant
 100 éprouvé cette fortune en mes dernières,⁹ ie croirois m'abaisser trop, et
 ne pas assez conserver la dignité du lieu, que notre tres-sage Magistrat
 m'a fait l'honneur de vouloir que i'occupasse en cette Academie, si ie
 m'y exposois d'orénavant. Non pas que ie sois fâché pour cela, ny que
 ie pense devoir aucunement estre honteux de ce qui s'est passé; car, au
 105 contraire, ces faiseurs de bruit ayant tou-jours interrompu nos reponses,
 avant que de les avoir pû entendre, il a esté tres-aisé à remarquer, que
 nous n'avons point donné occasion à leur insolence par nos fautes, mais
 qu'ils étoient venus à nos disputes tout à dessein de les troubler, et d'em-
 pescher que nous ne pussions avoir le temps de faire bien entendre nos
 110 raisons. Et l'on ne peut iuger de là autre chose, sinon que mes ennemis,
 en se servant d'un moyen si seditieux et si injuste, ont témoigné qu'ils
 ne cherchent pas la verité, et qu'ils n'esperent pas que leurs raisons
 soient si fortes que les miennes, puis qu'ils ne veulent pas qu'on les
 entende. Et quand on ne sçauroit pas que ces troubles m'auroient esté
 115 procurez par l'artifice d'aucuns ennemis, *sed à solâ iuvenum aliquorum
 lasciviâ*, on sçait bien que les meilleures choses estant exposées au pu-
 blic, sont aussi souvent sujettes à cette fortune, que les plus mauvaises

8 '[Voetius], quemque ego, ut amicum, fautorem, et patronum meum summum, quam obsequiosissime semper colo', *Responsio*, 4.

9 Regius' disputation of 8/18 December 1641; cf. my commentary on D/R 29.

ou impertinentes. Ainsi on estoit autrefois fort attentif aux badineries
 d'un danceur de corde, là où ceux qui representoient une très belle et
 120 tres-elegante Comedie de Terence, estoient chassez du theatre par de [497]
 tels battements de mains;¹⁰ ainsi, etc. Ces raisons donc me donnent
 sujet de publier plutost cette réponse que de faire des Theses; ioint aussi
 qu'on peut mieux trouver la verité, en examinant à loisir, et de sens
 froid, deux écrits opposez sur un mesme sujet, que non pas en la chaleur
 125 de la dispute, où l'on n'a pas assez de temps pour peser les raisons de
 part et d'autre, et où la honte de paroistre vaincus, si les nostres estoient
 les plus foibles, nous en oste souvent la volonté. C'est pourquoy ie le
 supplie de la recevoir en bonne part, comme ne l'ayant faite que pour
 luy plaire, et luy témoigner que ie ne suis pas si négligent, que de man-
 130 quer de satisfaire à l'honneste semonce qu'il m'a faite par ses Theses,
 de faire voir au public les raisons que i'ay, pour soutenir les opinions
 qu'il a impugnées; et ce, pour le bien general *totius rei litterariae*, et
 particulierement pour le bien et la gloire de cette Université, et que ie
 l'honoraray et estimeray tou-jours *ut patronum, fautorem amicissimum*,
 135 etc. Vale.

Après une lettre de cet argument, ie ferois imprimer, *Domini Gis-
 berti Voëtij praefatiuncula, ad Doctiss. expertiss. Medic.*, etc., usque ad
 Thesim primam.¹¹ |

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RESPONSIO AD PRAEFATIONEM

140 Que ie loüe icy grandement sa civilité et sa courtoisie,¹² de ce que,
 nonobstant le pouvoir que sa Theologie, qui est la principale science, [498]
 luy donne sur toutes les autres, et celuy que sa qualité de Recteur
 luy donne particulierement en cette Academie, il n'a pas voulu traiter
 des matieres de Physique, sans user de quelque excuse envers les Pro-
 145 fesseurs en Philosophie et en Medecine. Que ie suis fort d'accord avec
 luy de ce qu'il blâme les *adolescentes, qui vix elementis Philosophiae*

10 Reference to *Hecyra*, a play by the Roman dramatist and comedy-writer Terence (2nd century BC), the first two performances of which failed because the audience preferred to watch tightrope walkers (Prolog. I, 4–5; Prolog. II, 33–35).

11 Regius adopted the suggestion. The *Responsio* gives Voetius' preface and the theses, each time followed by Regius' reply.

12 'Non possum autem hinc non laudare maximam tuam humanitatem ...', *Responsio*, 6. Regius used the whole paragraph, in his own translation, in the *Responsio*.

imbuti, absque evidenti et validâ demonstrationum evictione, omnem
sc(h)olarum Philosophiam exsibilant, antequam terminos eius intellex-
erint, eorumque notione destituti, authores superiorum facultatum sine
 150 *fructu legant, lectionesque et disputationes, tanquam mutae personae*
*aut statuae Dedaleae*¹³, *audire cogantur*.¹⁴ Sed quia valdè diligenter ip-
 sos hoc in exordio admonet, ne tam facilè id agant, et *comme si c'estoit*
une faute fort ordinaire, laquelle toutesfois a esté inconnuë jusques à
present, non immeritò suspicor hoc de solis auditoribus meis intelligi;
 155 car i'ay déjà sceu que quelques-uns, estant jaloux de voir les grans pro-
 grez que mes auditeurs faisoient en peu de tems, ont tâché de décrier ma
 façon d'enseigner, en disant que ie negligeois de leur expliquer les ter-
 mes de la Philosophie, et ainsi que ie les laissois incapables d'entendre
 les livres, ou les autres Professeurs, et que ie ne leur apprenois que
 160 certaines subtilitez, dont la connoissance leur donnoit apres cela tant
 de presumption, qu'ils osoient se mocquer des opinions communes. Et
 pour ce sujet ie me persuade que Monsieur Voëtius (ou *Rector magnifi-*
cus, etc. Donnez luy les titres les plus obligeans et les plus avantageux
 que vous pourrez) ayant esté averty de cette calomnie, en a voulu toucher [499]
 165 icy un mot en passant, afin de me donner occasion de m'en pur- | ger; ce 407
 que ie feray facilement, en faisant voir que ie ne manque pas d'expliquer
 tous les termes de ma profession, lors que les occasions s'en presentent,
 bien que i'aye encore plus de soin d'enseigner les choses. Et ie veux
 bien confesser que, d'autant que ie ne me sers que de raisons qui sont
 170 tres-evidentes, et intelligibles à ceux qui ont seulement le sens com-
 mun, ie n'ay pas besoin de beaucoup de termes étrangers pour les faire
 entendre; et ainsi, qu'on peut bien plutost avoir appris les veritez que
 i'enseigne, et trouver son esprit satisfait touchant toutes les principales
 difficultez de la Philosophie, qu'on ne peut avoir appris tous les termes
 175 dont les autres se servent pour expliquer leurs opinions touchant les
 mesmes difficultez, et avec tous lesquels ils ne satisfont iamais ainsi
 les esprits qui se servent de leur raisonnement naturel, mais les rem-
 plissent seulement de doutes et de nuages. Et enfin que ie ne laisse
 pas d'enseigner aussi les termes qui me sont inutiles, et que, les faisant

179 faisant AT] fesant CLE

13 The legendary craftsman and inventor Daedalus, whose statues were able to walk and to speak.

14 Quotation from Voetius' *Praefatiuncula*, NH, 38/*Querelle*, 104, also in AT III 512.

180 entendre en leur vray sens, *celerius à me quam vulgò ab aliis discuntur*.
 Ce que ie puis prouver par l'experience que plusieurs de mes auditeurs
 ont faite, et dont ils ont rendu preuve en disputant publiquement, apres
 n'avoir étudié que tant de mois, etc.¹⁵ Or ie m'assure qu'il n'y a per-
 sonne de bon sens, qui ose dire qu'il y ait rien à blâmer en tout cecy,
 185 ny mesme qui ne soit grandement à priser. *Etsi enim saepe hinc contin-*
gat, ut qui mea audiverunt, ea quae ab aliis in contrarium docentur, ut
minùs rationi consentanea, contemnant, vel etiam, si placet, exsibilent,
 on n'en doit pas rejeter la faute sur ma façon d'enseigner, mais plu-tost
 sur celle des autres, et les convier à suivre la mienne autant qu'il leur [500]
 190 sera possible, plu-tost que de la calomnier, *et velle ipsam calumniâ suâ*
obruere.

THESIS PRIMA, etc.
Responsio ad primam Thesim.

Planè hic assentior sententiae Domini Rectoris Magnifici, nempe
 195 quod *innoxia illa entia*, quae formas substan- | tiales et qualitates reales 408
 vocant, *non sint temerè de antiquâ suâ possessione deturbanda*; quin et
 ipsa nondum hactenus absolutè reiecimus, sed tantummodò profitemur
 nos ipsis non indigere ad causas rerum naturalium reddendas, puta-
 musque rationes nostras eo praecipue nomine esse commendandas, quod
 200 ab eiusmodi assumptis incertis et obscuris nullomodo dependeant.¹⁶
 Quoniam in talibus idem ferè est dicere, se iis nolle uti, ac dicere, se non
 admittere: quia nempe ab aliis non aliam ob causam admittuntur, quam
 quia necessariae esse putantur ad effectuum naturalium causas explican-
 das, non difficiles erimus in confitendo nos illa planè reiicere. Neque
 205 id, ut spero, Mag. Rector vitio nobis vertet, quia dudum *sc(h)olarum*
Philosophiam, nominatim *Logicam, Metaphysicam, Physicam, si non*
accuratissimè, saltem mediocriter perdidicimus, et misera illa entia nul-
 lius usus esse percepimus, nisi ad excaecanda studiosorum ingenia, et

185 Etsi CLE (1663), *Responsio*] Et si CLE (1657) 194 Magnifici AM] Magistri CLE 195–196 *innoxia*
 ... *deturbanda emphasis added, cf. Responsio, 8 (indicating a literal quotation)* 195 *quae* CLE (1657)]
 qua CLE (1663) 205–207 *scholarum* ... *perdidicimus emphasis added, cf. Responsio, 9 (indicating a literal*
quotation)

15 Cf. the notice on Regius' student Hayman in my commentary on D/R 13.

16 'Vid. meteora Renati des Cartes 164' (AT VI 238–239), marginal note in *Responsio* (cf. l. 12 above).

210 ipsis, in locum doctae illius ignorantiae, quam Rect. Mag. tantoperè
 commendat, superbam quandam aliam ignorantiam obtrudendum. Sed
 ne parùm liberales videamur, laudo etiam quod Mag. Rect. *adoles-* [501]
centes à feroce contemptu et fugâ studij Philosophici, atque insuper ab
idioticâ, rusticâ et superbâ ignorantia velit revocare, nec ullomodò pos-
 sum suspicari eum hîc respexisse ad illam in meos auditores querelam,
 215 de quâ paulo antè, quod scilicet vulgarem Philosophiam, meâ intel-
 lectâ, contemnant. Neque enim fas puto, existimare tam pium virum,
 ab omni maledicendi studio tam alienum, et mihi privatim summè am-
 icum, tam alienis nominibus uti voluisse, ut cognitionem Philosophiae
 quam doceo, quaeque tam vera et aperta est, ut qui semel ipsam didicit,
 220 alias facilè contemnat, *rusticam, idioticam, et superbam ignorantiam*
 appellet, contemptumque istum opinionum quae falsae existimantur, or-
 tum ex cognitione Philosophiae verioris, vocet *ferocem, et fugam studij*
Philosophici; tanquam si, per studium Philosophicum, nil nisi studium
 earum controversiarum, in quibus nulla unquam | certa veritas habetur, 409
 225 non autem studium ipsius veritatis, sit intelligendum.¹⁷

THESIS SECUNDA, etc.

Responsio ad Thesim secundam, etc.

Duodecim hîc puncta proponuntur, quae optimè paulò antè ab ipso
 Mag. Rectore *praeiudicia et dubia* fuerunt appellata; quia nihil affir-
 230 mandi, sed dubitandi tantum, occasionem dare possunt iis qui magis
 praeiudiciis quàm rationibus moventur, et perfacilè solvuntur ab iis qui
 rationum momenta examinant.

In primo, quaerit an conciliari possit opinio negans formas sub- [502]
stantiales cum sacrâ scripturâ. Qua de re nemo potest dubitare, qui
 235 tantùm sciet Prophetas et Apostolos, aliósque qui dictante Spiritu Sancto
 sacras scripturas composuerunt, de Entibus istis Philosophicis, et extra

211–213 *adolescentes ... revocare emphasis added, cf. Responsio, 9 (indicating a literal quotation)* 212 Phi-
 losophici CLE (1657)] Philosophi CLE (1663) 218 *alienis CLE (1657)] alenis CLE (1663)* 220 *rusticam*
 ... *ignorantiam emphasis added, cf. Responsio, 9 (indicating a literal quotation)* 222–223 *ferocem ...*
 Philosophici *emphasis added, cf. Responsio, 9 (indicating a literal quotation)*

17 With some minor changes Regius adopts Descartes' answer in his *Responsio*, but he adds nearly two
 pages, in which he propounds the Cartesian theory of matter, effectively rejecting the Aristotelian notions
 of prime matter and substantial forms.

sc(h)olas planè ignotis, nunquam cogitasse. Ne enim aliqua sit ambiguitas in verbo, hic est notandum, nomine formae substantialis, cum illam negamus, intelligi substantiam quandam materiae adiunctam, et
 240 cum ipsâ totum aliquod merè corporeum componentem, quaeque non minùs, aut etiam magis quam materia, sit vera substantia, sive res per se subsistens, quia nempe dicitur esse Actus, illa vero tantùm Potentia. Huius autem substantiae, seu formae substantialis, in rebus merè corporalibus, à materiâ diversae, nullibi planè in sacra scriptura mentionem
 245 fieri putamus. Atque inter caetera, ut agnoscatur quam parum urgeant ea loca scripturae, quae à Mag. Rect. hîc citantur, puto sufficere si omnia referamus. Nempe, Gen. 1, vers. 11, habetur: *Et ait: Germinet terra herbam virentem et facientem semen, et lignum pomiferum faciens fructum iuxta genus suum.* Et 21: *Creavit Deus cete grandia, et omnem*
 250 *animam viventem atque motabilem, quam produxerunt aquae in species suas, et omne volatile secundum genus suum, etc.* Je vous prie de mettre tous les autres passages, car ie les ay tous cherchez, et ie ne voy rien qui serve aucunement à son sujet.¹⁸ Neque enim potest dici verba generis aut speciei designare | differentias substantiales, cum sint etiam
 255 genera et species accidentium ac modorum, ut figura est genus, respectu circulatorum et quadratorum, quae tamen nemo suspicatur habere formas substantiales, etc.

Caeterùm in his fui prolixior quam putaram, et quia non certus
 260 sum te hoc meo scripto esse usurum, nolo iam plura scribere; sed si uti velis, rogo ut moneas quamprimùm, et reliqua protinus usque ad finem absolvam; scribasque quâ me linguâ uti malis. Ubi posui *etc.*, intellexi aliquid deesse quod de tuo sit addendum. Omnia autem, si placet, cum Achille ac Nestore nostro Domino V(an der Hoolck)¹⁹ communicabis,

263 Van der Hoolck] V.L. CLE

¹⁸ From Descartes' answer to the first point of Voetius' second thesis, Regius only followed his advice to supply all texts from the Holy Scriptures referred to by Voetius. Descartes cites from the Vulgate.

¹⁹ According to Baillet (*Vie*, II, 153) and a simple reference in *ExI*, the initials 'V.L.' in CLE stand for 'Van Leeuw', but an additional note in *ExI* maintains, referring to R/D 32, that Van der Hoolck is meant (*ExI*, I, 414, *in margine*: 'Van Leeuw // Vander Hoolck. V. le commencement de la lettre 16 de celles de M^r Le Roy a M. Desc. p. 40'). The person in question is almost certainly Van der Hoolck, who repeatedly protected Regius' interests. Clerselier must have misread the initials 'V.H.' in the draft. 'Van Leeuw' is probably Peter van Leeuwen (1592–1652), alderman (*schepen*) in Utrecht since 1640, and in 1652 elected as Burgomaster (VANDE WATER 1729, 185, 193, 197). His connection to Descartes is reported only by

et nihil planè nisi ex eius consilio suscipies; vel sanè, si quid sit quod
 265 ipse nolit scire, Domini Æmilij viri prudentissimi | nobisque amicissimi 415
 consilio uteris; et ipsis multò magis quam mihi credes, quia praevalent
 ingenio, et ibi praesentes de omnibus faciliùs possunt iudicare, quam
 ego absens divinare. Non puto te nimis honorificè de Voëtio loqui posse,
 velimque etiam ut caveas ne quam ea in re ironiae des suspicionem, nisi
 270 quatenus ex bonitate tuae causae nascetur; ut postea si nos cogat mutare
 stilum, tantò meliori iure id possimus, et ipse tantò magis ridiculus
 evadat. Expedit etiam ut tua responsio quamprimùm edatur, et ante
 finem feriarum, si fieri potest.²⁰

COMMENTARY

Date

The letter is the reply to R/D 30 (24 January NS). Not satisfied with Regius' draft of a response to Voetius' *Appendix*, Descartes prepares an alternative version. In doubt whether Regius will actually make use of it, Descartes does not endorse the project after his response to the first point of Voetius' second thesis (ll. 234–258). He asks Regius to inform him as soon as possible of his intentions. Regius' reply, R/D 32, dates from 2 February NS, and consequently the present letter was written between 24 January and 2 February 1641.

Text: the reconstruction of D/R 31 and D/R 33

In CLE and AT, D/R 31 and D/R 33 are patched together as one text (AT no. 266). Adam and Tannery, however, suggest that the text presented by Clerselier consists of two different letters. I arrive at the same conclusion, and additional arguments warrant actually dividing AT no. 266 into two separate letters, D/R 31 and D/R 33.

The key-problem in AT no. 266 is the discrepancy between Descartes' plain support for Regius' plan to publish a response to Voetius in the paragraph *Caeterum in his* (D/R 31, last paragraph), and his strong advice against the same project in the next paragraph (*Miratus sum*, D/R 33). Descartes' change of mind may be explained in two ways: either by assuming that in *Miratus sum* Descartes reacts to a second letter of Regius, which he received after completing his letter, or by considering *Miratus sum* as a separate letter.

Baillet, who states that Van Leeuw and Van der Hoolck submitted a copy of the *Epistola ad Voetium* to the Utrecht magistrates (*Vie*, II, 190; cf. AT VIII B 214). According to Baillet, Van Leeuw figures in a letter by Regius as well (R/D 51). On 5/15 June 1643, the same Van Leeuw was appointed member of a committee to investigate Descartes' claims in the *Epistola ad Voetium* (*Resolutiën*, 182).

²⁰ The winter holiday would end on 1/11 February. The *Responsio* appeared on 16/26 February 1642 (see R/D 36).

Adam and Tannery take the latter stand (cf. AT III 519).²¹ They regard *Miratus sum* as the reply to R/D 32, which in turn seems to respond to *Caeterum in his*, for in R/D 32 Regius writes he has met with Van der Hoolck, just as Descartes had asked him to do in *Caeterum in his*. Moreover, in *Miratus sum* Descartes shows his surprise about Van der Hoolck's warning — related in R/D 32 — that any reply to Voetius would endanger Regius' position at the university.

Adam and Tannery could have presented their case more firmly by pointing out three other elements. First, in R/D 32 Regius recounts his meeting with Van der Hoolck, who disapproved of the whole plan, even if the response would be drawn up along the lines suggested by Descartes. Consequently, when Regius met with Van der Hoolck, he had received Descartes' alternative response. Next, in R/D 32 (ll. 15–18) Regius mentions next to Van der Hoolck's opinion also Æmilius' point of view, thus acting upon Descartes' advice in *Caeterum in his* (D/R 31, ll. 266–267). Finally, despite Van der Hoolck's warning, Regius wishes to pursue the publication of his response, albeit that he considers publishing it under the name of one of his former students (R/D 32A, ll. 26–28). In *Miratus sum* Descartes rejects this idea: Regius should publish the work neither under his own name nor under someone else's (D/R 33, ll. 6–7). The ensemble of these indications warrants the division of AT no. 266, and to consider *Miratus sum* as a separate letter in reply to R/D 32.

The division of AT no. 266 into two separate letters solves the discrepancy between *Caeterum in his* and *Miratus sum*, but it also raises a new question. In *Miratus sum* Descartes promises Regius some *notulas extemporaneas* that occurred to him when he compared Regius' draft with Voetius' theses (D/R 33, ll. 8–10). Obviously, these notes cannot be the material Descartes sent along with D/R 31. Following a suggestion by Adam and Tannery (AT III 520), I maintain that Clerselier incorporated these notes in the text of AT no. 266. In Descartes' work on the response to Voetius in AT no. 266, we can distinguish two parts which differ sharply in their approach. The first part concerns Descartes' own reply to Voetius' theses, with no regard for Regius' draft.²² And this is exactly what Descartes had announced he would do: not try to amend Regius' text but compose an alternative reply (D/R 31, ll. 49–52). In AT no. 266, this plan is suddenly abandoned after Descartes' answer to the first point of Voetius' second thesis. The remaining part as far as the paragraph *Caeterum in his* no longer constitutes a coherent essay, but a collection of remarks with several references to Regius' draft.²³ These remarks concern suggestions, additions and corrections for the benefit of Regius' own response.²⁴ While this is out of line with Descartes' earlier announcement that he will not discuss Regius' draft, it is in accordance with Regius' request in R/D 32 (ll. 24–26) to

21 De Vrijer adopts their view in his article on a rediscovered copy of Regius' *Responsio* (DE VRIJER 1929). Although acquainted with DE VRIJER 1929, Milhaud refrains from separating the texts, but confines himself to outlining the two possible explanations for the discrepancy (AM V, 137, n. 2).

22 This part of AT no. 266 now constitutes D/R 31, ll. 63–258.

23 This part of AT no. 266 now constitutes D/R 33, ll. 23–158.

24 This is clearly shown by the following expressions in D/R 33: *addi potest* (l. 27); *vellem explicare* (l. 48); *ut ais* (l. 53); *non suadeo*, (l. 59); *nollem itaque ut reijceres ... sed ponerem* (ll. 88–90); *et hic subiungi potest quae habes de motu cordis* (ll. 103–104); *pro his verbis ... ponerem* (ll. 129–130).

send him the corrections he needed to publish his response. The *notulas* seem therefore to be this second part in AT no. 266.

If we consider the second part of AT no. 266 we mentioned as the *notulas* referred to in D/R 33, D/R 31 becomes more coherent. In *Caeterum in his* (D/R 31, ll. 259–262) Descartes says that he will complete his alternative response if Regius want him to. If AT no. 266 is a unity, Descartes' promise would be surprising, given the fact that he was almost finished. However, the offer to finish the job and the question which language he should use make sense when read right after the first part in AT no. 266, where Descartes works on an alternative response, which Regius could reproduce, but was still in need of the greater part of the response to Voetius' theses. If my reconstruction is correct, the message of R/D 32 would be that Regius did not wish to take any more of Descartes' precious time in asking him to complete the alternative response; he could adjust his draft himself, provided Descartes would send him corrections, if anywhere necessary. Consequently, I transferred the *notulas* to D/R 33 (ll. 23ff.).

As I pointed out above, the discrepancy in AT no. 266 has been explained differently. The view that AT no. 266 is a single letter, is defended by Rodis-Lewis and Dibon.²⁵ Both authors claim that AT no. 266 is the reply to R/D 30 and to a second letter, in which Regius relates the possible repercussions of any response to Voetius. Rodis-Lewis does not consider the discrepancy between *Caeterum in his* and *Miratus sum* as a prohibitive objection against the unity of AT no. 266, as Descartes seems to acknowledge his dual approach when he writes *notulas tamen extemporaneas [...] mitto* (D/R 33, ll. 8–9).²⁶ While Rodis-Lewis believes that Regius' second letter is R/D 32, Dibon supposes that the second letter is lost. According to Dibon, R/D 32, in which Regius urges Descartes to send him the corrections to his draft, crossed AT no. 266. Both authors, however, leave much unexplained. Rodis-Lewis' observation is correct, but it offers no explanation for the fact that R/D 32 seems to be written in reaction to *Caeterum in his*. Dibon needs to solve the additional question that *Miratus sum* appears to be the reply to R/D 32. In order to uphold his claim that R/D 32 is not in any way connected to AT no. 266, Dibon discredits Baillet by stating that he apparently tampered with the actual course of events, or made things up himself. Like Rodis-Lewis, Dibon fails to supply any substantial argument for his claims.²⁷

²⁵ RL, 100, n. 1; DIBON 1985 (reprinted in DIBON 1990, 551–577).

²⁶ Rodis-Lewis also notices that, as Descartes refers on several occasions to Regius' draft in AT no. 266, the *notulas* referred to in *Miratus sum* need not be distinguished from Descartes' own work in AT no. 266 (contra Adam and Tannery). This is a fine *prima facie* observation, but it leaves Descartes' announcement that he will not discuss Regius' draft unaccounted for.

²⁷ DIBON 1985 is more fully discussed in my commentary on D/R 35.

Regius to Descartes [Endegeest]

[23 January/] 2 February 1642

Vie, II, 150–152 [A], 297 [B] (no. 16).

AT, III, 525–527 [A] (no. 268).

[A]

M. Regius, qui croyait que le projet de réponse qu’il avait envoyé à M. Descartes était un chef-d’œuvre de modération, en ce qu’il s’était abstenu d’y parler avec aigreur, et d’y faire mention des corollaires et de l’appendice des thèses, fut assez surpris de la manière dont M. Descartes lui en expliquait ses sentiments.¹ Il alla trouver
 5 incontinent le Consul M. VanderHoolck, sous prétexte de lui porter les compliments de M. Descartes, et le consulta sur ce qu’il avait à faire. M. Vander-Hoolck, qui s’était trouvé à une délibération faite depuis quelques jours avec les autres Magistrats de la ville pour assoupir les troubles de l’Université et pour
 10 | recommander aux trois Professeurs de théologie² de veiller à la conservation de la religion protestante contre les nouveautés dangereuses, [*i.m.*: Narrat. hist. Acad. Traject. p. 52, 53].³ lui parut fort réservé sur son sujet; et il se contenta de lui dire qu’il courait
 15 [I.m.: Lettr. 16 MS. de Reg.] M. Emilius, Professeur en éloquence et en histoire, à qui M. Regius avait fait voir son écrit avant que de l’envoyer à M. Descartes, jugeait pareillement qu’il était dangereux de faire une réponse, et que rien n’était plus propre que le silence pour calmer l’orage.

Ces avis ne changèrent point la résolution de M. Regius, qui jugea que si sa
 20 réponse n’était bonne pour le public, elle serait au moins de quelque utilité pour ses écoliers. Voyant qu’on en parlait déjà tout publiquement à Amsterdam et à La Haye, d’où M. de Zuytlichem,⁴ M. Rivet,⁵ M. Pollot et d’autres amis et sectateurs

1 D/R 31.

2 Voetius, Meinardus Schotanus and Dematius.

3 *Querelle*, 116. Shortly after Voetius’ disputation of 24 December 1641 OS, the Burgomasters met with the professors of theology, proposing that they define the limits of Regius’ teaching in philosophy. The theologians promised to draw up a memorandum to this effect.

4 Constantijn Huygens.

5 André Rivet (1572–1651), French Calvinist theologian, who accepted a chair of theology at Leiden University in 1620. In 1632, he became the tutor of Prince William II. NNBW, VII, 1051–1052; BLGNP, II, 375–378. The inventory of his correspondence (DIBON 1971) includes letters to and from Van Schurman, Huygens, Voetius, Mersenne, and a letter of thanks to Descartes after receiving several copies of the

de la nouvelle philosophie avaient déjà mandé à Utrecht qu'on leur envoyât cette réponse avec les thèses de Voetius, il en écrivit à M. Descartes le 2 de Février, et le
 25 supplia qu'à telle fin que ce pût être, il voulût la corriger, et la lui renvoyer en l'état qu'il croyait qu'on pourrait la publier. Il lui proposa en même temps de la faire paraître sous un nom étranger, et de prendre celui de *Hornius* ou VanHoorn, qui était celui de l'un de ses anciens écoliers demeurant pour lors à Leyde.⁶ Enfin il le conjura de considérer que, s'il avait fait quelques fautes dans toutes ses démarches,
 30 elles ne venaient que du zèle extraordinaire qu'il avait pour publier et faire recevoir sa philosophie; et que, ne s'étant attiré la haine des autres Professeurs que pour avoir préféré ses principes à ceux de la philosophie ancienne, il était de la justice et de son intérêt même de ne le point abandonner dans des besoins si pressants.

Pour lui faire paraître l'injustice de Voetius dans une plus grande évidence,
 35 il la lui fit considérer dans trois circonstances. Premièrement, Voetius ayant lu la *Physiologie* de Regius et une partie de sa *Physique*, que Vander-Hoolck lui avait conseillé de soumettre à son examen pour voir si tout | était conforme à l'Écriture 152 sainte, loin d'y trouver rien à redire, il avait permis, pendant son Rectorat même, qu'on en fit des disputes publiques.⁷ Secondement, il avait souffert, avant son
 40 Rectorat, et encore depuis, que M. Ravensperger soutint publiquement et en sa présence même le mouvement circulaire de la terre.⁸ En troisième lieu, ayant appris que la thèse où l'on avait disputé si *l'Homme est un Etre de soi, ou par accident*, lui avait déplu, il était allé trouver le lendemain les trois Professeurs en théologie [*i.m.*: Main. Schotanus, Charl. Dematius, Gisb. Voetius.] pour leur faire
 45 des excuses, et les assurer qu'il n'avait eu aucune intention de choquer les vérités théologiques. D'ailleurs, que la thèse avait été insérée par son répondant sans sa participation; mais qu'au reste il était prêt de réparer cette faute en la manière qu'ils jugeraient à propos. Les Professeurs avaient regardé la chose tous trois avec assez d'indifférence. Mainard Schotanus s'était contenté de dire que la chose
 50 n'était pas de grande conséquence. Dematius passant outre avait approuvé même la conduite de Regius en ce point. Et Voetius, quoique déjà déclaré contre lui, avait dit seulement qu'il ne voulait point se mêler de cette affaire.⁹ Cependant on avait vu

Principia (19 January 1645, AT IV 726–727). On Descartes and Rivet in particular, see DIBON 1990, 343–357.

6 On Johannes van Horn, see D/R 24, n. 1.

7 See my discussion of the date of D/R 17.

8 In 1640, Ravensberger defended the Copernican view as a possibility (RAVENSBERGER 1640), proposing it even more carefully the next year (RAVENSBERGER 1641; cf. VERBEEK 1992A, 105). Ravensberger's reservations prevented an open conflict with Voetius.

9 According to NH, Regius apologised to Voetius immediately after the disputation, saying that he had taken the idea from Gorlaeus' *Exercitationes* without realising that it posed a threat to theology (see my commentary on D/R 29). NH continues: 'Idem praestitit die postero, cum Theologum [Voetius] domi suae

paraître peu de jours après, et contre l'intention même du Magistrat, les corollaires injurieux de ses thèses, sans parler d'un autre écrit dont les corollaires furent
 55 suivis, sous le titre d'*Appendix ad Corollaria Theologico-Philosophica nuperae disputationi de Jubileo Romano subjecta, etc.*¹⁰

[B]

Pour M. Pollot, qui était encore l'un des amis de M. Descartes [*i.m.*: Tom. 3 des
 lettr. p. 461, 622.¹¹] qui eussent le plus accès auprès de la Princesse¹² pour les
 sciences, et qui s'était intéressé très efficacement auprès du Prince d'Orange et
 de quelques amis d'Utrecht dans l'affaire de M. Descartes contre Voetius [*i.m.*:
 5 Lettr. MS. de Reg. du 2 Févr. 1642.] ...¹³

COMMENTARY

Date

Baillet gives the date of the letter, 2 February 1642, without indication of the calendar used, but the letter is written before D/R 35 ([6 February]), and consequently its precise date is [23 January/] 2 February 1642.

Text

Text B is not in AT.

super hoc negotio cum eo collaturus, et consilium, uti prae se ferebat, petiturus inviseret; ubi etiam de paradoxa ipsius Philosophiâ in genere, deque ratione et Methodo, quâ eam tradebat per sceleta definitionum et dichotomiarum, absque demonstrationibus, nonnulla obiter dicta sunt. Sed nihil nisi pervicaciam, non sine maledictis, reposuit. Alter ex Theologiae professoribus [Dematius or Schotanus] de eodem paradoxo cum Medico domi suae conferens, et salubre consilium illi suggerens, tantundem ferè abstulit. Quin et postridie, qui tertius erat à disputatione dies, in ordinariâ lectione problematicâ idem paradoxum pro virili astruebat, et auditoribus inculcabat.' (NH, 23–24/*Querelle*, 94).

¹⁰ Cf. D/R 31, n. 7.

¹¹ Descartes to Elizabeth, [November 1643], AT IV 37; to De Wilhem, 15 June 1646, AT IV 435–436. The version of the letter to De Wilhem, published in CLE, mentions 'Monsieur Pollot', but this is a mistake made by Clerselier, because the autograph reads 'Mr Pell'. The mistake led Baillet, in the continuation of the passage quoted above, to the belief that Pollot was appointed professor of philosophy at the newly founded Illustrious School at Breda (1646). On the mathematician John Pell (1610–1685) and the Illustrious School of Breda, see DNB, 44, 261–263, DBPh, II, 638–641 and SASSEN 1962.

¹² Elizabeth, Princess of Bohemia (1618–1680), who lived with her family in exile in The Hague.

¹³ See D/R 31, n. 1.

CLE, I, 410–414, 415 (no. 89-II).

AT, III, 509–510, 503–509 (no. 266-II).

AM, V, 137–138, 125–135; RL, 100, 86–98; CSMK, 207–209 (partly); B, 181–183, 164–180.

Miratus sum admodum quod scribas te de tuâ professione periclitari, [510]
 si Voëtio respondeas; nesciebam enim illum in vestra Civitate regnare,
 magisque liberam putabam; et miseret me eius, quod Paedagogo tam
 vili ac tam misero tyranno servire sustineat. Te, quoniam in eâ vivis,
 5 ad patientiam hortor, atque ut ea tantum facias quae Dominis tuis magis
 placitura esse existimabis. Idcirco non modò non per te, sed ne quidem
 etiam per alium, Voëtio respondendum censeo, quia hoc illum non minùs
 offenderet. Notulas tamen extemporaneas, quae mihi tuum scriptum
 cum omnibus Thesibus conferendo occurrerunt, mitto, ut ipsis utaris
 10 ut lubet. Iniuriam autem facis nostrae Philosophiae, si eam nolentibus
 obrudas, imo si communices aliis quam enixè rogantibus.¹ Memini te
 olim mihi gratias egisse, quod eius causâ professionem fuisses adeptus,
 atque ideo putabam illam Dominis tuis non esse ingratham.² Nam si aliter
 se res habet, et malint te id quod placet Voëtio, quam quod verius putas,
 15 docere, censeo ut morem geras, et vel fabulas Æsopi potiùs legas, quam
 ut ipsis eâ in re displiceas.

Quae habes in fine tuae Epistolae de globulis aethereis, non intel-
 ligo; quia non censeo illos à materia subtilissima moveri, sed à se ipsis,
 cum motum habeant ab exordio mundi sibi inditum. Nec etiam maiores
 20 vehementiùs moveri quam minores, sed absolutè contrarium puto: dixi
 quidem in Meteoris, maiores, cum magis sunt agitati, maiorem calorem
 efficere, sed non ideò faciliùs moveri.³ Vale.

2. Veretur ne, si formas substantiales in rebus purè materialibus nege- [503]
 mus, dubitare etiam possimus, an detur aliqua in homine, illorumque

1 Cf. the last sentence in Regius' *Responsio* (p. 40): 'Non enim illa tam vilia putamus, ut nolentibus, vel etiam non obnixè rogantibus sint obrudenda'.

2 Cf. R/D 1.

3 *Météores*, I, AT VI 234ff.

25 *errores qui Animam Mundi Universalem aut quid simile imaginantur, non tam foeliciter et tutò retundere, quam assertores formarum.*⁴

Ad secundum addi potest, econtrà ex opinione affirmante formas substantiales, facillimum esse prolapsum in opinionem eorum qui dicunt Animam humanam esse Corpoream et Mortalem; quae cum agnoscitur sola esse forma substantialis, alias autem ex partium configuratione et motu constare, maxima haec eius supra alias praerogativa ostendit ipsam ab iis natura differre, et naturae differentia viam aperit facillimam ad eius Immaterialitatem Immortalitatemque demonstrandam, ut in Meditationibus de primâ Philosophiâ nuper editis videri potest; adeò ut nulla excogitari possit, hac de re, opinio Theologiae magis favens.

Ad quintum. Absurdum sanè sit pro iis qui ponunt formas substantiales, si dicant ipsas esse immediatum suarum actionum principium; non autem absurdum esse potest pro iis qui formas istas à qualitatibus activis non distinguunt. Nos autem qualitates activas non negamus, sed negamus tantum ipsis Entitatem aliquam maiorem quam Modalem esse tribuendam; hoc enim fieri non potest nisi tanquam substantiae concipiantur. Nec etiam negamus habitus, sed duplicis generis illos intelligimus: nempe alij sunt purè Materiales, qui à sola partium configuratione, aut alia dispositione, dependent; alij verò Immaterialiales, sive Spirituales, ut habitus fidei, gratiae etc. apud Theologos, qui ab eâ non pendent, sed sunt modi spirituales menti inexistentes, ut motus, aut figura, est modus corporeus corpori inexisteris. [504]

Ad octavum. Vellem explicare, quomodo etiam automata sint opera naturae, et homines in iis fabricandis nihil aliud faciant quam applicare activa passivis; ut etiam faciunt dum triticum seminant, vel mulum generari curant; quod nullam differentiam essentialem, sed tantum à natura inductam affert, valdè tamen facit differre secundum magis et minùs, ut ais, quia paucae illae rotae in horologio cum innumeris ossibus, nervis, venis, arteriis, etc. vilissimi animalculi nullomodo sunt comparandae. Loca autem Scripturae quae citat, essent hîc rursus omnia afferenda, ut calumnia appareat; nihil enim urgent.

Ad decimum. Eodem titulo Geometria et Mechanicae omnes essent reiiciendae; quod quàm ridiculum et à ratione alienum nemo non videt. Nec hoc sine risu possem praetermittere, sed non suadeo.

4 Cf. D/R 13, n. 7.

60 *Ad undecimum.* Non dicimus Terram à situ, positurâ et figurâ moveri, sed tantum disponi ad motum. Nec verò est circulus, unam rem ab unâ moveri, et ab aliâ disponi ad motum. Nec etiam vitiosus est circulus, quod unum corpus moveat aliud, et hoc moveat tertium, et hoc tertium moveat rursus primum, si prius moveri desierit; ut neque est
65 circulus, quod unus homo pecuniam tradat alteri, quam hic alter tradat tertio, qui tertius primo rursus tradere potest.

Ad duodecimum. Qui dicunt per haec principia nihil explicari, legant nostra Meteora, et conferant cum Aristotelis Meteoris; item Dioptricam cum aliorum scriptis, qui de eâdem materiâ scripserunt:
70 et agnoscent opprobrium omne opinionibus à naturâ diversis remanere. [505]

AD TERTIAM THESIM. Rationes omnes, ad probandas formas substantiales, applicari possunt formae horologij, quam tamen nemo dicet substantialem.

AD QUARTAM THESIM. Rationes, sive demonstrationes Physicae,
75 *contra formas substantiales*, quas *intellectum veritatis avidum planè cogere* arbitramur, sunt in primis hae à priori Metaphysicae, sive Theologicae. Quod planè repugnet ut substantia aliqua de novo existat, nisi | de novo à Deo creetur; videmus autem quotidie multas ex illis
80 formis, quae substantiales dicuntur, de novo incipere esse, quamvis à Deo creari non putentur ab iis qui putant ipsas esse substantias; ergo malè hoc putant. Quod confirmatur exemplo Animae, quae est vera forma substantialis hominis; haec enim non aliam ob causam à Deo immediatè creari putatur, quam quia est substantia; ac proinde, cum aliae non putentur eodem modo creari, sed tantùm educi e potentiâ materiae, non putandum etiam est eas esse substantias. Atque hinc patet
85 non eos qui formas substantiales negant, sed potius eos qui affirmant, *eò tandem per solidas consequentias adigi posse, ut fiant aut Bestiae, aut Athei.* Nollem itaque ut reiceres argumentum ab ortu formarum petatum, nec Thersiticum appellares,⁵ quia videtur ad hoc referri; sed

76–77 hae ... Theologicae] haec à priori Metaphysica, sive Theologica CLE

5 Voetius calls the principal argument against substantial forms ‘Achillean’: ‘Ratio, et quidem palmaria ac Achillea, est: quia ortus, seu modus originis formarum non potest explicari, aut ita demonstrari, ut difficultas nulla supersit’ (*Thesis* 4, NH, 43/AT III 515/*Querelle*, 109). Regius may have called Voetius’ counterargument *Thersiticum*, since in posthomerian tradition Achilles (and not Odysseus as in the *Iliad* (2, 212–277)), kills the malicious Thersites. Or perhaps Regius alludes to Voetius’ work *Thersites heautontimorumenos* (VOETIUS 1635). In any case, Regius complied with Descartes’ wish to stick to the matter at hand.

90 ponerem tantùm, ea quae ab aliis eâ de re dicta sunt nos non tangere, [506]
 quoniam ipsos non sequimur. Altera demonstratio petitur à fine, sive
 usu, formarum substantialium; non enim aliam ob causam introductae
 sunt à Philosophis, quam ut per illas reddi posset ratio actionum propri-
 arum rerum naturalium, quarum haec forma esset principium et radix, ut
 95 habetur in Thesi praecedenti. Sed nullius planè actionis naturalis ratio
 reddi potest per illas formas substantiales, cum earum assertores fatean-
 tur ipsas esse occultas, et à se non intellectas; nam si dicant aliquam
 actionem procedere à forma substantiali, idem est ac si dicerent, illam
 procedere à re à se non intellectâ, quod nihil explicat. Ergo formae illae
 100 ad causas actionum naturalium reddendas nullomodo sunt inducendae.
 Contra autem à formis illis essentialibus, quas nos explicamus, manifes-
 tae ac Mathematicae rationes redduntur actionum naturalium, ut videre
 est de forma salis communis in meis Meteoris⁶. Et hîc subiungi potest
 quae habes de motu Cordis.

105 *AD QUINTAM THESIM.* Quod tam saepe iactat de *doctâ igno-*
rantiâ, dignum est explicatione. Nempe, cum scientia humana sit ad-
 modùm limitata, et totum | id quod scitur, ferè nihil sit, comparatum 413
 cum iis quae ignorantur, doctrinae signum est, quod quis liberè fateatur
 se ignorare illa quae re verâ ignorat: et in hoc propriè docta ignorantia
 110 consistit, quia scilicet est peculiaris eorum qui verè docti sunt. Nam [507]
 alij qui vulgò doctrinam profitentur, nec tamen verè docti sunt, non
 valentes ea dignoscere, quae nemo eruditus ignorat, ab iis quae sine
 dedecore vir doctus fateri potest se ignorare, omnia ex aequo se scire
 profitentur; atque ad facilè reddendas omnium rerum rationes (si tamen
 115 ratio ullius rei reddatur, cum explicatur obscurum per obscurius), for-
 mas substantiales et qualitates reales excogitârunt; quâ in re ipsorum
 ignorantia nequaquam docta, sed tantum superba et paedagogica dici
 debet;⁷ in hoc enim manifesta superbia est, quod ex eo solo, quod na-
 turam alicuius qualitatis ignorent, concludunt ipsam esse occultam, hoc
 120 est omnibus hominibus imperscrutabilem, tanquam si ipsorum cognitio
 esset mensura omnis humanae cognitionis.

AD SEXTAM. Non video hominis ratiocinium in iis quae de me

⁶ Cf. *Méteores*, III, 'Du sel', AT VI 249–264.

⁷ In the *Epistola ad Voetium* (AT VIII B 42–46/*Querelle* 351–353), Descartes gives an elaborate analysis of the difference between Voetius' pedantry (*paedagogica ignorantia*) and the 'learned ignorance' of the real *eruditus* or *doctus*. Cf. VERBEEK 1993E.

inserir. Ait me in Dissertatione de Methodo non satis evidenter demonstrasse esse Deum, quod ipse etiam ibi professus sum. Quid autem ad hoc spectans inferri potest ex his verbis, *cogito ergo sum?* Et quam malè hîc citat et mihi opponit tractatum Patris Mersenni et suum, cum suus adhuc in herbâ sit, et Mersennus nullum planè praeter meas Meditationes de prima Philosophia edi curaverit.⁸

AD SEPTIMAM. Pro his verbis: *ipsa tamen, ut verum fatear etc.*,
 130 ponerem: De ipsâ tamen nihil simile opinionibus Taurelli aut Gori- [508]
 laei sustinimus, nihilque omnino quod in re à vulgari et orthodoxâ
 Philosophorum omnium sententiâ dissideat. Asserimus enim hominem
 ex Corpore et Anima componi, non per solam praesentiam, sive ap-
 propinquationem, unius ad alterum, sed per veram unionem substan-
 135 tialem; (*ad quam quidem ex parte corporis requiritur naturaliter situs*
et partium conformatio, sed quae ta- | men sit diversa à situ et figurâ mo-
disque aliis purè corporeis: non enim solum Corpus, sed etiam Animam,
quae incorporea est, attingit). Quantum autem ad modum loquendi, etsi
 140 *fortè sit minùs usitatus, ad id tamen quod significare voluimus satis ap-*
tum fuisse existimamus. Non enim diximus hominem esse ens per
accidens, nisi ratione partium, animae scilicet et corporis: ut nempe
significarem, unicuique ex his partibus esse quodammodò accidenta-
rium, quod alteri iuncta sit, quia seorsim potest subsistere, et id vocatur
accidens, quod adest vel abest sine subiecti corruptione. Sed quatenus
 145 *homo in se totus consideratur, omnino dicimus ipsum esse unum Ens*
per se, et non per accidens; quia unio, qua corpus humanum et anima
inter se coniunguntur, non est ipsi accidentaria, sed essentialis, cum
homo sine ipsâ non sit homo. Sed quoniam multò plures in eo errant,
 150 *quod putent animam à corpore non distingui realiter, quam in eo quod*
admissa eius distinctione unionem substantialem negent; maiorisque
est momenti ad refutandos illos qui animas mortales putant, docere istam
distinctionem partium in homine, quam docere unionem; maiorem
me gratiam initurum esse sperabam à Theologis, dicendo hominem
esse ens per accidens, ad designandam istam distinctionem, quam si, [509]

⁸ The second part of the sentence is usually translated with 'Mersenne has published nothing on first philosophy except my Meditations' (cf. AM V 133; RL, 97; B, 177), which is incorrect, as *Meditationes de prima Philosophia* is, just like a few paragraphs earlier (I. 34), simply the title of Descartes' work edited by Mersenne in 1641. In the *Responsio* Regius rephrased Descartes' remark as follows: 'Denique non satis bene tractatus P. Mersenni hic adversus ipsum [sc. Descartes] citari videntur: cum ille nullum plane contra ipsum, sed tantum ipsas Renati Meditationes hactenus edi curaverit' (p. 32).

155 respiciendo ad partium unionem, dixissem illum esse ens *per se*. Atque ita non meum est respondere ad ea quae in opiniones Taurelli et Gorlaei fuse obiiciuntur, sed tantummodò conqueri, quod tam immeritò ac tam severè mihi aliorum errores affingantur.

COMMENTARY

Date

The letter is in reply to R/D 32 (2 February). In D/R 35, dated [6 February], Descartes refers to the present letter, and consequently it dates from 3 or 4 February 1642.

Text

See my commentary on D/R 31.

Descartes [Endegeest] to Regius

6 February 1642

MS (copy), Library of the Reformed Transtibiscan Church District and the Reformed College,
Debrecen, R 164, f. 259v.

Published in ESZE 1973 and DIBON 1985/DIBON 1990, 551–577.

B, 186–187.

Vir Clarissime,

Nihil jam de Voetio, nec de Philosophia loquar, sed tantum dicam
Dominum Picot mihi amicissimum, et quem, si quem alium in mundo,
maximi facio, aliquamdiu apud vos manere velle, ut experiatur an aura
5 Ultrajectensis amoenior sit quam Lugdunensis;¹ Sed eâ tantum fiducia
ad Vos ire quod putet si tibi per me sit commendatus, te libenter curatu-
rum, ut hospitium aliquod inveniat, in quo ad aliquot hebdomadas aut
menses satis commode possit habitare. Dicit ipse melius quale optet
quam ego possem scribere, sed moneo tantum officia omnia quae in
10 ipsum contuleris mihi fore gratiora quam si eadem in me contulisses.

Vale et amare perge,

Ex asse tuum

Des Cartes

Ex domo Endegeest

6. Februarii 1642.

7 aliquot] aliquott MS 11 perge.] perge. MS

1 For Claude Picot, see the *Biographical Lexicon*. On Picot's stay in Utrecht, see my commentary.

COMMENTARY

Date

The date is found on the manuscript copy.²

*Context**Picot and the Utrecht students of Descartes' Géométrie*

D/R 34 is a letter of recommendation for Picot, who may have handed it over to Regius in person. Regrettably, we have no first hand information on the contacts between Picot and Regius, which would be interesting because Picot witnessed the height of the Utrecht crisis during his stay in Utrecht. According to Baillet — who had no knowledge of Picot's stay in Utrecht — Regius and Picot became quite close (see R/D 44F).

While we have no indication of Picot's occupations during his stay in Leiden and Endegeest, we do know that he spent part of his time in Utrecht to master Descartes' *Géométrie*. It follows from the fact that a second letter of recommendation for Picot, equally dated 6 February 1642, is addressed to a certain Roderich Dotzen, in which Descartes asks Dotzen to act as an interpreter between Picot and Jacobus van Waessenaer, who will introduce Picot to 'le calcul de ma Geometrie' (AT III 736).³ Roderich Dotzen (1618–1670) was a German nobleman and a student of mathematics and philosophy living in Utrecht. On 25 March 1642, Descartes wrote another letter to Dotzen, which shows that Picot is still in Utrecht.⁴

During the late 1630s and early 1640s, Descartes' *Géométrie* was studied thoroughly by a number of people in Utrecht, who all knew Descartes personally. They are Reneri,⁵ Godefroot van Haestrecht, Jacob van Waessenaer, Alphonse Pollot and Roderich Dotzen.⁶ Mention should also be made of the son of a lawyer in Utrecht, a

² For a description of the source, see my Introduction, § 2.4.

³ Descartes' letter to Dotzen is kept in the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek in Hanover. The letter was first published by Heinekamp (HEINEKAMP 1970), who supplies relevant biographical information on Dotzen or Dozen. In 1640 Dotzen went to the Netherlands to join the Dutch army. From early 1642 till November 1643 he stayed in Utrecht — 'der Sammelplatz des Adels und gelehrter Leute' — to study mathematics and philosophy, but he does not seem to have matriculated at the university. In 1649 he returned to Utrecht and this time he matriculated (*Album Stud. Acad. Rhen.-Trat.*, 23) but there is no record that he obtained a degree. Because of financial problems — his father, the Burgomaster of Bremen, refused to support his stay abroad — Dotzen was forced to return prematurely to Germany. See also the following note.

⁴ '[...] i'ay quasi appris en mesme tems de vous et de Monsieur Picot, combien vous vous plaisez en conversation l'un de l'autre. Je ne doute point que le temps n'augmente de plus en plus vostre amitié', AT III 555. The autograph of the letter — Adam and Tannery reproduce a manuscript copy kept at the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek in Hanover — was recently rediscovered by Herbert Breger, the director of the Hanover Leibniz Archives, in the Municipal Archives of Bremen. I am much obliged to Prof. Breger for informing me that the same archives preserve Dotzen's correspondence with Regius and Johannes de Raey as well (Dotzen to Regius, 16 October 1648; Regius to Dotzen, 20 December 1652, 1 Januari 1653; Dotzen to De Raey, 19 July 1649; De Raey to Dotzen, 2 August 1649). A publication on Dotzen's correspondence with Descartes, Regius and De Raey is forthcoming.

⁵ See his letters to Mersenne (AT II 101–102/CM VII 113–117) and De Wilhem (DIBON 1990, 216–218).

⁶ The Utrecht professors of mathematics, Bernardus Schotanus and Jacobus Ravensberger, had a professional interest in the *Géométrie*, but there is no evidence of any personal contacts with Descartes.

gifted mathematician according to Descartes.⁷ One of Descartes' friends in Utrecht, probably Van Haestrecht,⁸ is the author of an 'Introduction à la Géométrie', which is otherwise known as 'Le calcul de M. Descartes'. The plan to publish the work was never realised, but Descartes, who approved of the project, sent at least two copies to Mersenne.⁹ Picot's mathematical studies in Utrecht show that the circle was still active in 1642.

7 '... l'amitié que les Mathématiques m'ont fait autrefois avec Mr votre fils, qui les savait en perfection, et qui eut pu surpasser tous les autres, s'il eut vécu...'. Descartes to a Utrecht lawyer, 17 April 1646, AT IV 390. Descartes wrote to the lawyer of Schoock, in order to be informed of the progress of the lawsuit between Voetius and Schoock. A judicial document of 1645 reveals that Schoock's lawyer was a certain Van Rossum of whom we do not know anything (DUKER 1915, 198).

8 THUISSEN-SCHOUTE 1954, 83–84; AM III, 323–327; COSTABEL 1988, 62–63. For Van Haestrecht, see the *Biographical Lexicon*.

9 To Mersenne, 31 March 1638, AT II 89, 99/CM VII 126, 136, 27 May 1638, AT II 146, 152/CM VII 241, [13 July 1638], AT II 246/CM VII 340, 11 October 1638, AT II 392–393/CM VIII 108. Three copies of the *Calcul* survive: 1. copied for Leibniz, now in the Niedersächsische Landesbibliothek at Hanover, published in AT X 659–680; 2. in the British Library, published in AM III 323–352 (collated with the Hanover manuscript, with an introduction by G. Milhaud); 3. a copy in the Royal Library, The Hague, discovered by F. de Buzon (COSTABEL 1988, 63). Differences between the copies show that the *Calcul* was a work in progress. According to Costabel, the first two copies date from 1638, the third is later than 1641 (COSTABEL 1988, 62–63).

35
Descartes [Endegeest] to Regius
[6 February 1642]

MS (copy), Library of the Reformed Transtibiscan Church District and the Reformed College,
Debrecen, R 164, f. 260r.
Published in ESZE 1973 and DIBON 1985/DIBON 1990, 551–577.
B, 187–188.

Vir Clarissime,

Jam ad te scripseram praecedentem epistolam, cum tuam accepi.¹ Misi autem nuper ea pauca quae tuae responsioni addenda videbantur.² Jam si vel minimum ob responsionem de tua professione possis periclitari, ut
5 nuper scripseras,³ quam maxime author sum ut sileas et servias tempori. Sin minus puto ex iis quae jam scripsisti et notulis quas adjunxi, facile compingi posse responsionem, sub quocunque volueris nomine edendam.⁴ Sed interim non puto tibi valde metuendum esse, ne adversarius triumphet si nihil ipsi respondeatur, neve rursus aliud quid in te scribat,
10 quo enim plura scripserit, tanto ampliorem nobis dabit materiam ad suas ineptias ostendendas, ipsumque Stampione magis ridiculum reddendum.⁵ Si quando ad id vos cogat, nec ulla in re operam meam recusabo, vide tantum ut quae unquam in lucem edidit simul colligas. Sed jam sum aliis rebus occupatissimus. Vale.

COMMENTARY

Date

The manuscript copy does not mention the date, but as it was probably dispatched together with R/D 34 (see below), the date is 6 February 1642.⁶

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- 1 References to D/R 34 and a lost letter by Regius. For the context of the present letter, see my commentary.
 - 2 The *notulas extemporaneas* (cf. l. 6 below) sent along with D/R 33 for the benefit of Regius' response to Voetius.
 - 3 Cf. R/D 32.
 - 4 Cf. D/R 33, ll. 8–10.
 - 5 For the Stampioen-affair, see my commentary on R/D 6. Cf. D/R 38, l. 25.
 - 6 For a description of the source, see my Introduction, § 2.4.

The disputed date of D/R 35

Deceived by the reference to Stampioen (l. 12), Esze misinterprets R/D 35 and places the letter in the context of the Stampioen-affair. As a result, she points to Van Waessenaer as the possible addressee of the letter.⁷ Dibon examined the letter anew, from the photographic reproduction published by Esze, and he correctly deduces that, like the other letter found in Debrecen (D/R 34), it is addressed to Regius and written in the context of the Utrecht quarrel.⁸ Dibon presumes that the letter is written in reply to R/D 32 (2 February), and antedates D/R 34 (6 February 1642).⁹ However, Dibon's conjecture is wrong: the letter was sent together with D/R 34 on 6 February 1642.

The present letter, D/R 35, is riddled with allusions to other letters, both by Regius and Descartes. We can distinguish references to four different letters: Descartes' own 'preceding letter' (*praecedentem epistolam*, l. 2) and a letter prior to that one (*Misi autem nuper*, ll. 2–3). Next, Descartes has just received a letter by Regius (*tuam [epistolam] accepi*, l. 1), which is to be distinguished from a previous letter (*ut nuper scripseras*, l. 4–5). Dibon's unraveling of these references is erratic and lacks substantial argumentation. But as his reconstruction affects all letters exchanged in January and February 1642, a brief discussion is in order, before presenting my own conclusions.

Crucial for Dibon's point of view is his assumption that AT no. 266, which I divided into D/R 31 and D/R 33, is one single letter. Dibon furthermore believes that in AT no. 266 Descartes replies to two letters: the first one, R/D 30, contained Regius' draft of his response to Voetius, in the second letter Regius would have told Descartes that any response might endanger his position. This last letter — lost according to Dibon — corresponds to Regius' letter referred to as *ut nuper scripseras*, D/R 35, l. 4–5. Next, the letter Descartes has just received (cf. l. 1) is R/D 32 (2 February), in which Regius asks the philosopher for the corrections he needs to complete his response to Voetius.¹⁰ To this, Descartes answers in the present letter that he has recently sent the material required: *Misi autem nuper* (l. 2–3), which must refer back to AT no. 266. Apparently, AT no. 266 had not yet reached Regius. Dibon is now left with one letter to account for: Descartes' own 'previous letter' (*praecedentem epistolam*, l. 1). According to Dibon, the letter — now lost — was sent shortly after AT no. 266 to confirm Regius he had dispatched the material in question.¹¹ As to the date of D/R 35, Dibon ventures the guess that it was written before D/R 34, where Descartes could rightly claim that he had nothing more to say on Voetius.

Dibon's reconstruction suffers from a variety of weaknesses. First, Dibon needs to assume the existence of two unknown and lost letters in order to account for all references in D/R 35. Next, Descartes' lost letter, the 'preceding letter', would have confirmed the sending AT no. 266, which is very unlikely as Descartes had not yet

⁷ ESZE 1973, 542.

⁸ DIBON 1985, 172–173, 182/DIBON 1990, 557–559, 569.

⁹ DIBON 1985, 189/DIBON 1990, 577.

¹⁰ DIBON 1985, 184–189/DIBON 1990, 571–577.

¹¹ 'La lettre de Regius du 2 février a apparemment croisé la lettre *précédente* dont Descartes fait mention. Ce dernier ne peut que confirmer son envoi récent (*nuper*) des annotations à la réponse à Voet', DIBON 1985, 186/DIBON 1990, 573–574.

received any impatient message from Regius. Finally, it is even more implausible that Regius sent Descartes no less than three letters (R/D 30, a letter lost, and R/D 32) before receiving anything back, and then subsequently receive one after another AT no. 266, a letter confirming the sending of AT no. 266, and at last D/R 35, which confirms the sending of both AT no. 266 and the preceding letter. None of these points in Dibon's reconstruction is backed by solid argumentation.¹²

The interpretation of D/R 35 is much easier if we accept the epistolary sequence established in the commentary on D/R 31 above: D/R 31 – R/D 32 – D/R 33. To start with the reference in D/R 35 that Regius had 'recently' written that his chair would be at stake if he published the *Responsio*: here Descartes must refer back to R/D 32 (2 February). Consequently, Regius' second letter, the one Descartes has just received, is of a later date, but still prior to the publication of the *Responsio*. Baillet does not mention a letter by Regius between 2 and 17/27 February, R/D 32 and R/D 36 respectively, but we do have an indication of its contents: Regius asked Descartes to send him the things he needs to complete the *Responsio* as soon as possible. Descartes answers in D/R 35 that he has already sent the material in question — characterised as *ea pauca*, and a few lines down as *notulis quas adjunxi* (l. 6). Descartes probably aims at the *notulas extemporaneas* sent along with D/R 33.¹³ If so, Regius' lost letter crossed D/R 33. This leaves us to identify Descartes' 'preceding letter', for which we have only one possible candidate: his letter of 6 February (D/R 34). The obvious explanation of Descartes' first words in D/R 35, *jam ad te scripseram praecedentem epistolam*, is that he had finished a letter to Regius but not yet sent it when Regius' letter arrived. Both letters will then have been dispatched together. That D/R 34 is the preceding letter mentioned in D/R 35, and that both letters were dispatched together, may account for the absence of both subscription and date in D/R 35.

¹² Dibon does mention that when Descartes writes in D/R 35 (ll. 7–8) that Regius may publish the response under any name he seems fit, he must be replying to R/D 32A (ll. 26–28), but Dibon neither explains nor indicates the fact that in the paragraph *Miratus sum* (D/R 33, ll. 1–16 — part of AT no. 266 according to Dibon), Descartes stipulates that Regius should not publish it under any name, a remark he could only have made *after* Regius had raised the subject (DIBON 1985, 187/DIBON 1990, 574–575).

¹³ D/R 33, ll. 9–10.

Regius to Descartes [Endegeest]

17/27 February 1642

Vie, II, 153 (no. 17).
AT, III, 527–528 (no. 269).

[...] M. Regius, ayant enfin arraché le consentement de M. Emilius,¹ mit sa réponse sous la presse, d'où elle sortit le XVI de Février, et il en envoya dès le lendemain deux exemplaires à M. Descartes. [*Im.*: Lettr. 17 de Reg. MS.]

L'écrit avait pour titre: *Responsio seu Notae in Appendicem ad Corollaria*
5 *Theologico-Philosophica, etc.*

COMMENTARY

Date

According to Baillet, Regius forwarded two copies of his reply to Voetius the day after it was published. The exact date of publication of the *Responsio* is 16/26 February 1642.²

¹ Cf. D/R 31, ll. 264–266, and R/D 32A, ll. 15–18.

² NH, 53/*Querelle*, 116. The copy of the *Responsio* in Utrecht University Library was acquired in 1900 at the auction of a collection assembled by Gerrit Dirk Bom (BOM 1900, no. 420; cf. DE WAARD 1947, 347, n. 5). The pamphlet is listed in Van Someren 1922 (no. 673a, 43; facsimile of the title page facing page 43). De Vrijer was unaware of the presence of the copy in Utrecht ('door mij niet gezien', DE VRIJER 1917, Bijlage IV), but after this was pointed out to him by Cornelis de Waard, De Vrijer devoted an article to the *Responsio* (DE VRIJER 1929).

Regius to Descartes [Endegeest]

[23 February/] 5 March 1642

Vie, II, 153–154 (no. 18).
 AT, III, 534–535 (no. 271).

[...] il [Voetius] crut qu'il fallait étouffer le livre¹ dans sa naissance; et prenant pour prétexte qu'il avait été imprimé sans ordre du Magistrat, que son imprimeur était un Catholique, et son marchand libraire un Remontrant,² il convoqua l'Assemblée générale de son Université, [*i.m.*: Les 18 et 19 de Février 1642.] où il se plaignit
 5 de cet écrit comme d'un libelle fait contre lui, contre la dignité rectorale, contre l'honneur des Professeurs et de toute l'Université, par un de ses collègues.³ [*I.m.*: Narrat. hist. Acad. pag. 53.⁴] Il en demanda la suppression et en même temps l'extermination de toute cette nouvelle philosophie qui troublait le repos de toute
 10 l'Université. Plusieurs souscrivirent à cet avis, et trois d'entre eux, [*i.m.*: Epist. 18 MS. Reg. ad Cart.] savoir Dematius ou de Maets Professeur en théologie, Mathaeus Pro-
 fesseur en droit, et Lyraeus Professeur en humanités, furent députés vers le
 15 Magistrat pour lui porter les plaintes de l'Assemblée.⁵

Le Magistrat, pour les apaiser, envoya saisir 130 exemplaires du livre chez le libraire, qui dès le premier jour en avait débité 150, et en avait envoyé ensuite
 15 un grand nombre à Amsterdam et à La Haye. [*I.m.*: Ibid.] De sorte que ce qui resta d'exemplaires devint exorbitamment cher, et fit rechercher le livre comme une chose très rare et très précieuse. Ces circonstances, loin d'apaiser l'esprit de Voetius selon l'intention du Magistrat, ne servirent qu'à l'irriter, voyant que cette
 20 suppression faisait que le livre de Regius était couru avec plus d'empressement qu'auparavant, et qu'il était lu avec plus de soin.⁶ Il ne songea plus qu'à se venger également de M. Regius et de M. Descartes, et il assembla presque tous les jours

1 REGIUS 1642.

2 The Catholic printer is not identified, but the publisher is Jan Evertsz. van Doorn, who published several Remonstrant pamphlets and whose name figured in 1618 on the sheriff's blacklist of persons 'suspected of Arminianism'. In 1635, due to the more liberal climate, he became the dean of the guild of publishers. See EVERS 1918 and GRUYS/DE WOLF 1980, 30.

3 NH tells a different story: Voetius did not wish to be present at the gatherings of the Senate at first, to avoid precisely this kind of calumny (NH, 53/*Querelle*, 117). It seems likely, however, that NH mentions this explicitly to contradict Descartes' accusation in the *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet* that Voetius misused his authority as rector during the Senate's meetings (AT VII 589). Descartes' source of information is probably R/D 37.

4 *Querelle*, 117. See the previous note.

5 On 18/28 February 1642 (*Acta*, 149–150). NH relates that all the professors subscribed (see my commentary).

6 Cf. *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet*, AT VII 589.

son Université pour prendre de nouvelles délibérations contre la philosophie de ce dernier, sans qu'il fût permis à M. Regius d'y assister. [*I.m.*: Ibid.] Le XXI de Février il dressa un résultat de délibération qu'il fit signer par la plupart des
 25 Professeurs, pour pouvoir être présenté au Sénat ou Conseil de la ville au nom de l'Assemblée des quatre Facultés, afin qu'on pût obtenir une sentence du Magistrat, tant pour la proscription de la philosophie nouvelle, que pour la suppression de l'écrit de Regius comme d'un libelle injurieux au Recteur de l'Université, et capable de détourner la jeunesse d'aller prendre ses leçons.⁷ M. Regius écrivit le V
 30 de Mars suivant à M. Descartes pour l'informer du mauvais succès de sa réponse à Voetius, et de tout ce qui se passait à son désavantage; et pour le prier d'employer son crédit auprès de M. Vander-Hoolck et de ses autres amis pour détourner la tempête qui menaçait leur philosophie commune et sa personne particulière.

COMMENTARY

Date

Baillet gives the date of the letter, 5 March 1642, without indication of the calendar used. The subject of the letter is the actions taken by the Academic Senate after the publication of the *Responsio*. On 18 and 19 February OS the Senate gathered to discuss Regius' defence against Voetius, and they requested the Burgomasters — successfully — to seize the copies. The last event Baillet relates in connection with R/D 38 is another Senate's meeting on 21 February/3 March, which suggests that the letter was written on 23 February/5 March.

Another indication that New Style is meant, is Baillet's silence about a measure against Regius taken after 5 March NS. On 22, 23 and 24 February OS (4–6 March NS) a delegation of the Senate discussed the steps to be taken against Regius with the *curatores*, and they decided, among other things, to discontinue Regius' public course on *Problemata*. It is not known when Regius was informed of this decision, but he must have known it by 5/15 March. If the letter were written on 5 March OS, it is very unlikely that Regius (and Baillet) had not mentioned it.

*Context**The Senate's and the Vroedschap's reaction to the Responsio*

On 18/28 February, two days after the publication of the *Responsio*, the entire academic senate except for Regius gathered to discuss the affair. They drew up a statement, in which they urged the Vroedschap to seize all copies of Regius' work, to prohibit any teaching other than traditional philosophy, to consider how one could put an end to

⁷ See my commentary.

Regius' philosophical course on *Problemata*, and finally which reply would befit the *Responsio*. A delegation of three professors, Dematius, Matthaëus and Lyraeus, was sent to the *curatores* to hand over the statement.⁸ The Burgomasters then seized all copies that had not yet been sold.⁹ The next day, the professors reported back to the Senate, relating that the *curatores* would like to know how the Senate wished to reply to Regius' pamphlet. The Senate decided that their delegates, together with Cyprianus Regneri, should formulate a judgement on the work and the New Philosophy that was to be shown to the Vroedschap, and published after their approbation.¹⁰ On Monday 21 February/3 March, the Senate approved the contents of the document. Cyprianus Regneri, however, asked to be relieved from the task of bringing the judgement before the Vroedschap, which was granted.¹¹ Addressing the Vroedschap, the delegates said that the prosperity and the reputation of the university was at stake, and that their judgement aimed at limiting the consequences of the affair. The Vroedschap ordered the *curatores* to discuss the matter with the delegates.¹² The following day, the *curatores* informed the Vroedschap that nothing definitive had been decided, but that they intended to terminate Regius' lectures on *Problemata*.¹³ The *Acta* of the Senate of 24 February/6 March record the further deliberations between *curatores* and delegates. The *curatores* asked the delegates the following: 1. Would it not be necessary to give Regius another course instead of his lectures on *Problemata*? 2. How was Regius henceforth to conduct his teachings in medicine? 3. Would it be possible that some expressions in the judgement were softened? To which the professors answered negatively, saying that Regius should confine himself to medical courses in traditional medicine. To the last point they replied that some words might be changed, but that the condemnation of Regius' way of philosophising would be maintained.¹⁴ According to NH, the *curatores* took the matter up with Regius personally, and informed him that he would not be allowed to continue either his public courses on physical problems or his philosophical disputations.¹⁵

Finally, on 15/25 March, the Vroedschap passed a resolution which forced Regius to give up any public courses or private lectures other than medical, and they authorised the Senate to publish their judgement on the *Responsio*, in the mildest terms possible so as not to harm the author's reputation.¹⁶ Two days later, the Senate prepared the final text of their judgement, describing it as a decree to remain faithful to ancient philosophy.¹⁷ According to Regius, Æmilius and Cyprianus Regneri refused to subscribe, which may

8 *Acta*, 149–150. The statement is found in NH, 54–57 (on pp. 58–62 a Latin translation from the original Dutch statement)/*Querelle*, 118–119.

9 *Resolutiën*, 158. NH reports that the majority had already been sold or sent to other towns (NH, 53/*Querelle*, 117).

10 *Acta*, 150.

11 *Acta*, 150.

12 NH, 54/*Querelle*, 117–118; *Resolutiën*, 157–158. According to Adam and Tannery, the date 21 February in NH is inexact and should be 24 February; however, the minutes of the Vroedschap confirm NH: the Senate's delegates addressed the Vroedschap on 21 February/3 March, not on 24 February/6 March.

13 *Resolutiën*, 158 (22 February/4 March 1642)

14 *Acta*, 151.

15 NH, 62/*Querelle*, 120.

16 *Resolutiën*, 159.

17 *Acta*, 160 (17/27 March 1642).

[23 February/] 5 March 1642

R/D 37

explain why the judgement is published in NH without any signature (cf. R/D 41). NH relates that the judgement — an official condemnation of Cartesian philosophy — was read and then approved of by the Vroedschap on 24 March/4 April, after which it was immediately printed.¹⁸

¹⁸ NH, 64 ('24 Februarii' in NH is an evident mistake for 24 March)/*Querelle*, 121. The *Judicium Senatus Academici Inclutae Academiae Ultrajectinae de Libello non ita pridem Ultrajecti edito, titulo Responsionis [...]*, is dated 17/27 March 1642; it is reprinted in NH, 65–67/*Querelle*, 121–122, and in Descartes' *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet*, AT VII 590–593 (with the mistaken date 16 [/26] March); also in AT III 551–553.

Descartes [Endegeest] to Regius
[between 5 and 10 March 1642]

CLE, I, 420–424 (no. 93).
AT, III, 536–542 (no. 272).
AM, V, 158–168; RL, 106–115; B, 199–205.

Vir Clarissime,

Gratulor tibi, quod persecutionem patiaris propter veritatem;¹ gratulor, inquam, et ex animo: non enim video tibi quicquam mali ex istis turbis posse contingere, sed contra gloriae tuae multum accedet. Laetari debes
5 quod Deus inimicis tuis consilium ac bonam mentem ademerit; vides enim iam prohibitione libri tui nihil aliud effectum esse, nisi tantum ut cupidius ematur, accuratius examinetur, eius² iniquitas et causae tuae bonitas à pluribus agnoscatur.³ Plures iam advertent quam acerbè, quam iniuriosè, ac quam sine causâ, solâ invidentiâ suâ permotus, te
10 ille prior lacessiverit; et contra tu quam modestè, quam leniter, quam etiam (quod sanè indignissimum est) reverenter responderis, et quam iustae ac graves causae te ad respondendum coëgerint. Plures agnoscent quam infirmae sint rationes omnes quibus tuas opiniones impugnare conatus est, et contra quam validae sint eae quibus ipsum refutas. Plures
15 concludent nullas amplius ei superesse ad tibi respondendum. Atque omnino plures indignabuntur, quod tantum possit contra ius et fas in vestra civitate, ut ei licuerit publico scripto te Atheum, Bestiam, et aliis eiusmodi nominibus vocare,⁴ falsasque adhibere rationes ad falsis te criminibus onerandum; tibi vero nequidem liceat | verissimis uti 421
20 rationibus, verbisque modestissimis ad te purgandum.

Egregium vero est quod audio ab ipso proponi, ut nempe verbis [537] sibi liceat in te disputare apud delegatos, qui iudicent uter superior sit futurus;⁵ haud dubiè quia eius rationes, dum adhuc calent, ut quaedam

21 Egregium ... in CLE, D/R 38 is not divided into paragraphs

1 Cf. Matthew 5,10: 'Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter iustitiam quoniam ipsorum est regnum caelorum' (Vulgate).

2 Sc. Voetius.

3 Cf. R/D 37, ll. 13–17.

4 Cf. D/R 33, ll. 87–88.

5 This is indeed what Voetius proposed during the assembly of the professors on 18/28 February or 19 February/1 March (NH, 54/*Querelle*, 117).

iuscula, sunt sorbendae, et cum frigescent, corrumpuntur. Hac in re, ut
 25 et in aliis multis, est St(ampioenio) nostro simillimus; et sanè non iudico
 tibi quicquam à tali adversario esse metuendum. Quid enim deinceps
 moliri potest? Fortè ut tibi prohibeatur à Magistratu, ne amplius do-
 ceas ea quae soles docere?⁶ Fortè etiam ut tanquam falsa et haeretica
 condemnentur? Fortè denique quod extremum est, ut tu ipsemet tuo
 30 docendi munere priveris? Sed nec puto Consules⁷ vestros tam illi fore
 obsequentes, ut quicquid ei placuerit decernant. Quinimo neminem ex
 iis esse existimo, cui non facile suboleat, quam ob causam tum à Voëtio,
 tum ab aliis plerisque ex tuis collegis, philosophia tua tam acriter imp-
 pugnetur: nempe quia verior est quam vellent, rationesque habet tam
 35 manifestas, ut erroneas ipsorum opiniones etiam non impugnando ever-
 tat, et ridiculas esse ostendat. Nam sanè illi vitio vertere non possunt,
 quod sit nova, quoniam illi etiam Philosophi quotidie novas excogi-
 tant opiniones, et inde maximè gloriam quaerunt, nullusque unquam
 hoc prohibuit; sed nempe illas sibi mutuo non invident, quia veras non
 40 putant; neque etiam tibi tuas inviderent, si falsas esse arbitrarentur. At
 certè Magistratus, qui hactenus non prohibuerunt ne docerent novas
 et falsas, non vetabunt etiam ne doceas novas et veras. Et quamvis
 fortè nonnulli, qui tricas istas sc(h)olarum, utpote ad benè regendam
 Rempublicam minimè utiles, nunquam didicerunt, aequitatem causae
 45 tuae non videant, confido tamen ipsos tam aequos et prudentes fore, ut [538]
 non magis testimonio tuorum adversariorum sint credituri, quam tuo;
 et vel unicum D. V(an der Hoolck), qui veritatem totius controversiae
 proculdubio rectè intelligit, satis authoritatis apud collegas suos esse
 habiturum, ut te ab omni iniuriâ deffendat. Sed, etiamsi aliter contin-
 50 geret, | ac vel professio, quod esset mirabiliter absurdum ac sine ullo 422
 exemplo, tibi auferretur, non tamen ideo tibi vel minimum dolendum
 esse arbitrarer, nec ullum in te dedecus, sed immortale in alios redun-
 daret. Atque tunc profectò, vel crassa ignorantia, vel veritatis odium,
 vel ridenda in vestra civitate potentia toti mundo innotesceret. Quin
 55 etiam profectò, si tuo essem loco, vellem scire à Consulibus, quot ego

26 metuendum CLE (1657) | mutuendum CLE (1663)

6 Descartes aims at Regius' philosophical course on *Problemata*.

7 Frederik Ruysch and Van der Hoolck (cf. D/R 28, n. 12). On the relation between the university and the city government, see my introductory note on Utrecht University

haberem Dominos, et me potius sponte munere meo abdicare, quam Voëtio servire. Nec dubito quin brevi, si velles, perfacilè alibi professionem et magis honorificam et magis utilem esses habiturus; citiusque mille alij à vestris invenirentur, qui eadem qua tui adversarij docerent, 60 quam unus qui eadem quae tu; et tamen fortè ille unus magis à studiosis desideraretur.⁸

Quantum ad me, credidi hactenus me beneficio affectum esse à Dominis tuis, quod, cum scirent te à meis in Philosophia opinionibus non esse alienum, non ideo minùs libenter te in professorem elegerunt; 65 ac fortè etiam, ut mihi persuadere voluisti,⁹ ob hanc praecipuè causam elegerunt. Hoc me peculiariter illis devinxit; atque ideo valdè exopto, ut iactari possit apud posteros, vestram civitatem omnium primam [539] fuisse, in qua Philosophia nostra publicè fuerit recepta, quod spero ipsi dedecori non futurum, ut è contrario non esset laudi, si te nunc tutum 70 ab adversariorum iniuriis non praestaret.¹⁰ Debuit enim sciri ab iis qui te primum in professorem receperunt, fieri non posse ut ea nova quae habebas, aliquid eximij continerent, quin statim plures eorum ex tuis collegis, qui satis ingenij non haberent ad eadem amplectenda, magnam invidiam in te conflarent; atque ideò parati esse debuerunt ad te contra 75 hos protegendum.

Nec sanè ipsis erit difficile; nam quid in te, vel per calumniam, obiici potest? te scilicet nova docere?¹¹ Quasi vero in Philosophia hoc non sit tritum, ut quicumque non planè ingenio sunt destituti novas excogitent opiniones, atque inde maximè gloriam quaerant; sed nempe 80 illas sibi mutuo non invident, quia veras non putant; ut neque etiam tibi tuas inviderent, si falsas esse arbitrarentur. An vero aequum esset, 423 cum eae aliorum permittantur opiniones, quae novae sunt et falsae, ut

8 Several elements in this paragraph reappear below, from l. 76 onwards. See my commentary on the text.

9 Cf. R/D 1, ll. 1–20.

10 One is reminded of Descartes' advice to a father on the choice of a university for his son: 'ie croy qu'il seroit beaucoup mieux à Utrecht; car c'est une Université qui, n'estant erigée que depuis quatre ou cinq ans, n'a pas encore eu le temps de se corrompre', Descartes to ***, 11 October 1638, AT II 379.

11 In ll. 76–127 Descartes counters three grievances laid down by the Senate in their communiqué to the Burgomasters, issued on 18/28 February 1642. The first one reads: 'In dese uwe Ed(ele) A(chtbare) Academie is over eenighen tijt herwaerts van een van onse Collegen [Regius] geleert ende gedefendeert geworden sekere soorte van Philosophie, ten meesten deele omstootende de fundamenten van de Philosophie, welcke in alle Academien der gantscher werelt ontfangen ende geapprobeert is, ende oock by onwetende soude moghen misbruyckt werden tot nadeel van de Theologie ende andere Faculteyten', NH, 54/*Querelle*, 118.

tuae prohiberentur, quia novae sunt et verae?¹²

Magnum aliud crimen obiicitur, quod in Voëtium scripseris.¹³ Quasi
 85 vero sit aliquis sanae mentis, qui legendo utriusque libellum,¹⁴ ac moni-
 tus eorum quae priùs ab illo facta fuerunt, non clarè videat illum ipsum
 fuisse qui acerbissimè in te scripsit, calumniisque evertere conatus est;
 te vero tantum nimis humaniter ac nimis moderatè respondisse, eodem
 modo ac si, cum quis te ad occidendum stricto ense fuisset persecutus,
 90 tu vero manu ictum à corpore avertisses, nihilque praeterea egisses, nisi
 quod verbis quam humanissimis eius iram mollire conatus fuisses, ille [540]
 furore ardens accusaret te, quod te à se occidi non permisisses.

At fortè Voëtius ipse te non accusat, sed alij collegae? tanquam
 si obscurum esset illos eius voluntate id facere, eâdemque in te invidiâ
 95 flagrare; ac tanquam si ideo iusta esset accusatio, quod impetum in
 te facientem repuleris, nec ille potius ut aggressor et calumniator sit
 puniendus. Calumniatorem ob id praecipuè appello, quod sciam ipsum
 te iniquissimè accusare voluisse, quod aliquas opiniones, Theologiae
 vestrae contrarias, docuisses, cum tamen omnes tuae melius quam vul-
 100 gares cum Theologiâ consentiant, et facile esset, vel ex solis eius the-
 sibus de Atheismo,¹⁵ quas vidi, per certas et evidentes consequentias
 ostendere, illum potius esse quod de nobis falsò voluit credi.¹⁶ Quin, et
 si esset operae pretium ipsum qualis est describere, artesque omnes eius
 detegere, talis fortè appareret, ut civitati vestrae foret indecorum, ipsum
 105 diutiùs in concionatorem aut professionem retinere; magna enim est vis
 veritatis.

Ultimum et praecipuum quod obiicitur est Academiae vestrae detri-
 mentum, quod ex professorum inimicitiiis, ut inquirunt, oriatur.¹⁷ At

100 solis CLE (1657)] soleis CLE (1663)

12 Cf. ll. 36–42 above.

13 'Hier op is gevolcht dat onse Collega [Regius] voorstaender van de vreemde Philosophie een Boeck(j)en heeft laeten drucken, in welke hy die corollaria met uytdruckinge van den naeme des Auteurs [Voëtius] weder spreekt. Ende dat in sulcker voegen dat hy die ghene, welke de Philosophie van alle Academien aengenomen voorstaen, ofte de syne niet toe-en-staen, niet nae behooren en (be)handelt', NH, 55/*Querelle*, 118.

14 Voëtius' *Appendix ad corollaria theologicaphilosophica* and Regius' *Responsio*.

15 VOETIUS 1639. Cf. my commentary on *ÆM/D* 5, 19.

16 Examples are found in D/R 33, ll. 27–35, 77–88.

17 'Wanneer wy tot kennisse ghecommen zijn van het Boeck voorsz., soo hebben wy ons daer over seer onstelt, als nae alle apparentie sullende strecken tot groot nadeel van onse Academie, welke swack ende teer, ende in haren eersten op-ganck is. [1] Want door sulcken maniere van doen is te verwachten dat de liefde ende eendracht onder de Professores verbroken sal worden. [...] 4. Dat onse Academie by de

primò, non video quid privatae istae inimicitiae Universitati nocere
 110 possint; nam econtra hoc efficiet, ut singuli, reprehensionem aliorum
 metuentes, tanto diligentius officio suo fungantur. Ac dein- | de, si vel 424
 maximè hoc noceret, certè alij potius, qui sunt inimiciarum authores,
 quam tu, qui illas fugis, eo nomine essent deponendi. Nec dicent, [541]
 opinor, tua dogmata talia esse ut studiosos avertant ab Academiâ vestrâ
 115 frequentandâ; nam audio te et satis multos auditores, et maximè in-
 signes habere; eaque videtur esse fortuna nostrarum opinionum, non
 solùm apud vos, sed et aliis omnibus in locis, ut à praestantioribus
 ingeniis amentur et aestimentur, nec nisi à vilioribus ludi magistris,
 qui sciunt se falsis artibus ad aliquam eruditionis famam pervenisse,
 120 ideoque timent ne, cognitâ veritate, illam amittant, odio haberi. Et nisi
 me augurium fallit, spero fore, ut aliquando propter te unum plures
 Academiam vestram sint adituri, quam propter omnes eos qui tibi ad-
 versantur; nec fortè ad hoc nocebit editio Philosophiae quam paro;¹⁸
 adeò ut, si Domini vestrae Civitatis ad utilitatem et decus Academiae
 125 suae respiciant, omnes potius tuos inimicos quam te unum eiicient; nam
 etiam faciliùs mille alios invenient, qui eadem doceant quae illi, quam
 unum qui eadem quae tu.¹⁹

Nec vereor ne fortè aliqui ex vestris Consulibus, non imbuti sc(h)o-
 lasticis studiis, utpote ad rectè regendam Rempublicam non necessariis,
 130 magis credant adversariis tuis quam tibi. Neque enim illos puto tam
 obesae naris, ut horum invidiam non advertant; et vel unicus D. V(an der
 Hoolck),²⁰ qui statum totius controversiae atque aequitatem tuae causae
 proculdubio rectè perspexit, estque rerum istarum planè intelligens,
 satis authoritatis apud collegas suos est habiturus, ut te ab omni iniuria
 135 deffendat;²¹ tantamque in eo esse scio integritatem ac prudentiam, ut [542]
 non verear ne magis faveat adversariis tuis quam veritati.

Ac denique ob hoc praecipuè debes laetari, quod tua causa sit talis
 ut, postquam iudicata fuerit à tuis, iudicari etiam debeat ab incolis totius
 orbis terrarum, et cum in ea de honore tantum agatur, si quid tibi priores
 140 contra ius ademerint, cum foenore ab aliis restituatur. Vale.

nabuyrige Academien ende Scholen, ende voorts by alle onse Provincien in verachtige sal comen; soo den toe-loop van studenten nae apparentie sal comen te verminderen', NH, 55/*Querelle*, 119.

18 Descartes' *Principia philosophiae*, published in 1644.

19 Cf. ll. 58–60 above.

20 CLE: D.V.R. Cleselier probably misread D.V.H. Cf. l. 47, and D/R 39, l. 13.

21 Cf. ll. 42–49 above.

COMMENTARY

Date

The letter is the reply to R/D 37, in which Regius informed Descartes of the Senate's deliberations on 18 and 19 February OS and the subsequent seizure of the *Responsio*.²² Descartes is well informed about the Senate's meetings and their grievances in the communiqué to the Burgomasters which led to the confiscation of the *Responsio*.²³ But he does not mention any further repercussions, on the contrary, in the present letter Descartes assures Regius that Van der Hoolck will protect him against any injustice and will prevent a ban on the New Philosophy (ll. 26–28, 40–42, 47–49). This indicates that the letter predates D/R 39, in which Descartes knows that the *curatores* and the Senate had forced Regius to abandon his course on *Problemata* (cf. D/R 39, ll. 8–9). Being the reply to R/D 37, and written before D/R 39, the date of the letter is between 5 and c. 10 March 1642.

Text

Three elements in the second paragraph reappear, in some cases almost verbatim, elsewhere in the text (cf. notes 12, 19 and 21), which renders it impossible that the text as published by Clerselier is identical to the letter as it was sent. At a certain moment, Descartes changed his approach, and decided to deal with the Senate's main grievances in an orderly manner (from l. 76 onwards). It is impossible to reconstruct the letter actually sent, but I conjecture that when Descartes copied the draft, he simply omitted the second paragraph. His repeated appeal to public opinion in the first paragraph (*Plures...*, ll. 8, 12, 14 and 16) contrasts elegantly with *Quantum ad me* (l. 62).

Context

The rhetoric displayed in the letter separates it from Descartes' other letters to Regius, and the appeal of the letter to the Utrecht dignitaries to withstand Voetius' machinations, suggests that it is meant to be read by more people besides Regius. Indeed, Descartes' next letter mentions a previous letter which Regius showed to Van der Hoolck and which he intended to present to others as well: 'I am glad that Van der Hoolck did not want you to show the letter I recently sent you to others' (D/R 39, ll. 15–19). Descartes continues: 'For although I could give Voetius what I promised him there, I hope it will not be necessary: too many things already divert me from my Philosophy, which I nevertheless hope to finish this year'. The 'promise' he made to Voetius probably refers to ll. 102–106 in the present letter, in which Descartes states that it would be useful to reveal the true

²² See my commentary on R/D 37.

²³ Descartes refers to a peculiar proposal by Voetius during one of the meetings in ll. 21–23. In their statement, formulated and communicated to the Burgomasters on 18/28 February, the Senate points out that 1. the New Philosophy Regius propagates is opposed to the philosophy embraced by all and taught at every academy; 2. the *Responsio* is an offence to Voetius and in general to all who disagree with Regius; 3. the pamphlet is a cause of internal differences between the professors, which will be harmful to the Academy's reputation and diminish the influx of students (NH, 54–55, 58–61/*Querelle*, 118–119). All these points are dealt with by Descartes in the present letter (cf. ll. 76–83, 84–106, 107–127).

character of Voetius to the public. Descartes is relieved that Van der Hoolck objects to showing the letter around: people might spread the word that Descartes himself would go after Voetius. Indeed, Descartes fears that an attack on Voetius will divert him too much from his own project, the *Principia* or ‘Philosophy’ as he calls it, which he hopes to finish as soon as possible (l. 123; D/R 39, ll. 18–19). The official condemnation of Cartesian philosophy in Utrecht, however, did trigger a response by Descartes in his *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet* (cf. R/D 44D, n 4), and the following year he fulfilled his promise with the massive *Epistola ad Voetium*.²⁴

²⁴ Descartes’ confidence in the prevalence of truth (ll. 105–106) would, however, be tasked severely, as he was accused of libel himself (see my commentary to R/D 49, *Context 1*).

Descartes [Endegeest] to Regius
[between 10 and 25 March 1642]

CLE, I, 419–420 (no. 92).
AT, III, 528–529 (no. 270).
AM, V, 153–155; RL, 102–104; CSMK, 210 (partly); B, 189–190.

Vir Clarissime,

Quantùm audio ab amicis, nemo legit responsionem tuam¹ in Voëtium, qui non eam valdè laudet; legerunt autem quamplurimi; nemo qui Voëtium non irrideat, et dicat ipsum de causâ suâ desperasse, quandoquidem ope vestri Magistratus indignit ad ipsam defendendam. Formas autem substantiales omnes explodunt, et palam dicunt, si reliqua omnis nostra Philosophia ita esset explicata, neminem non eam amplexurum. Dolere non debes quod tibi Physicorum problematum explicatio [529] interdicta sit; quin et vellem etiam ut privata institutio interdicta fuisset: talia enim omnia in honorem tuum cedent, et in dedecus adversariorum.² Ego certè, si tuorum Consulium loco essem, et Voëtium vellem evertere, non aliter tecum agerem eius causa, quam faciunt; et quis scit quid in animo habent? Certe non dubito quin Dominus V(an der) H(oolck) tibi faveat, debesque accuratè eius consiliis mandatisque obtemperare. Gaudeo quod noluerit, ut litteras quas ad te nuper scripseram, cuiquam ostenderes; etsi enim à me ipso impetrassem, antequam mitterem, ut ea, si opus esset, praestarem, quae Voëtio per ipsas promittebam, longè tamen malo ut ne sit opus;³ nimis multa me quotidie avocant à Philosophia mea, quam tamen hoc anno absolvere decrevi.⁴ Caeterum obsequere accuratè ac laeto animo iis omnibus, quae tibi à Dominis tuis praescribentur, ut certus ea tibi dedecori nulli esse posse. Disputationes autem quae in te fient | contemne, ac dicas tantum, si quid in illis boni

420

21 nulli AT] nullo CLE

1 Regius' response to Voetius (REGIUS 1642).

2 On 22 February/4 March the *curatores* and the Senate decided to terminate Regius' lectures on *Problemata* (*Resolutiën*, 158; cf. my commentary on R/D 37). On 15/25 March the Vroedschap formally approved, forcing Regius to abandon any public courses or private lectures other than medical (*Resolutiën*, 159). The present letter clearly predates the resolution by the Vroedschap.

3 The letter in question is probably D/R 38 (see my commentary on D/R 38). According to Dibon, Descartes refers to D/R 35, which is, in my view, very unlikely: D/R 35 is obviously a personal note to Regius and it could hardly impress Van der Hoolck or anyone else (DIBON 1985, 188–189/DIBON 1990, 576–577).

4 Cf. D/R 38, I. 123.

afferant, ipsos etiam posse illud idem scriptis mandare, te vero non posse nisi editis scriptis respondere.⁵ Vale.

COMMENTARY

Date

In the present letter Descartes discusses the prohibition of Regius' course on *Problemata*, commenting that he would prefer him to have been forbidden even to give private lectures in philosophy (ll. 8–9).⁶ The letter consequently postdates D/R 38, in which the philosopher still expects that Van der Hoolck could prevent a ban on the New Philosophy (cf. D/R 38, ll. 26–28, 40–42, 47–49), but it is written before Descartes learned of the Vroedschap's resolution taken on 15/25 March which also denied Regius the right to give private lectures in anything but medicine. This fixes the date of the letter between c.10 and c.25 March 1642.

The traditional place of the letter in the correspondence is erroneous. Adam and Tannery date the letter 'late February', placing it immediately after R/D 36 (17/27 February), and before R/D 37 and D/R 38. They rightly point out that Descartes reacts to the Senate's decision to discontinue Regius' course on *Problemata*, but they fail to realise that the date of the Senate's record is 24 February OS, i.e. 6 March NS. The fact that the decision is not mentioned at all in both R/D 37 and D/R 38 seems to have escaped them.

⁵ Cf. R/D 41B, ll. 25–27.

⁶ Regius' letter, to which the present letter is a reply, is not extant. It is not known when exactly Regius was informed of the decision of the *curatores*, but according to NH, the *curatores* had a meeting with the medical professor shortly after discussing with the Senate the proper reaction to the *Responsio* on 4 and 6 March NS (NH, 62/*Querelle*, 120).

Descartes [Endegeest] to Regius
[between 25 and 31 March 1642]

CLE, I, 418 (no. 91).
AT, III, 486 (no. 264).
AM, V, 107–108; RL, 70; B, 140–141.

Vir Clarissime,

Hic te ab aliquot diebus expectavi; iam autem aliquid audio quod, etsi non videatur esse ullius momenti, vereor tamen ne fortè tuum iter tardaverit; et ego econtrà tantò magis tecum loqui exopto, ut quid super
5 hac re agendum sit, communibus consiliis videamus. Nempè audio tuos adversarios tandem vicisse, atque effecisse, ut tibi interdiceretur, ne nostra amplius doceres.¹ Quo animo istud feras, nescio; sed, si mihi credis, planè irridebis et contemnes, tamque apertam invidiam tibi magis gloriosam esse existimabis, quam imperitorum applausus. Neque pro-
10 fectò mirandum est, quod in re, in qua vocum pluralitas locum habet, tu solus, cum veritate paucisque fautoribus, adversariorum multitudini resistere non potueris. Si hoc solo risu et silentio ulcisci velis, atque otium sequi, non dehortabor; sin minùs, quantum in me erit, tibi non deero. Interim rogo ut, vel voce vel litteris, tui me instituti quamprimùm
15 facias certiozem. Vale et me ama.

Si huc venias, rogo ut quamplurimas ex adversarij tui thesibus tecum afferas.² Vale.

COMMENTARY

Date

With some hesitation, Adam and Tannery place the letter in January 1642. First, because in December 1641 Descartes invited Regius to Endegeest (cf. l. 16; D/R 29, ll. 47–48); second, because the disputations referred to (l. 16) may concern Voetius' disputations against Regius of December 1641, and finally, the letter contains an expression which is

16 Si ... *no new paragraph in CLE*

1 The reference is probably to the Vroedschap's resolution of 15/25 March. See my commentary.

2 Cf. R/D 41B, ll. 25–26.

also found in a letter of 19 January 1642 (ll. 9–12).³ However, Adam and Tannery rightly point out that in January 1642 no measures were taken against Regius. Therefore, if the letter dates from January 1642, Descartes was misled by his anonymous source.

Misinformed as Descartes may have been, it makes little sense to write ‘audio tuos adversarios *tandem* vicisse’ in January 1642. Moreover, the fact that the consequence, namely *tibi interdiceretur, ne nostra amplius docetur* (ll. 6–7), does not come as a surprise to Descartes, indicates that he had been prepared for this to happen. This renders it plausible that the letter was in any case written after R/D 37 (5 March [NS]), in which Regius relates the Senate’s attempt to ban the New Philosophy.

I conjecture that the rumour that reached Descartes was true: it refers to the Vroedschap’s formal decision on 15/25 March that henceforth Regius was to teach medicine alone, in his public as well as in his private lectures.⁴ The news being brought to Descartes before Regius put pen to paper, he writes to his friend in order to inquire after the truth of the rumour, and his state of mind after the setback. R/D 41 ([21/] 31 March) appears to be the reply to Descartes’ inquiries.⁵ If this is the case, the letter can be dated between 25 and 31 March 1642.

³ Descartes to Gibieuf, AT III 473,14–17.

⁴ *Resolutiën*, 159.

⁵ As noticed by Duker as well (DUKER 1861, 109). See especially R/D 41B, ll. 23–29.

Regius to Descartes [Endegeest]

[21/] 31 March 1642

Vie, II, 30 [A], 155–156 [B] (no. 19).
AT, III, 557–558 (no. 276).

[A]

C'était [Voetius] un esprit bourru et volage selon M. de Sorbière, qui était de sa communion lors qu'il le reconnut tel; [*i.m.*: Lettr. et Rel. in IV^o pag. 687.¹] si étourdi et si indiscret, qu'il ne faisait point difficulté de médire et de calomnier grossièrement dans ses sermons. [*I.m.*: Regij Epist. MS. 19 ad Cart.] Ce qui
5 obligea un jour le Ministre M. Heydanus de le faire descendre de chaire, et de l'interdire pour cette raison.²

[B]

[...] Voetius triomphant de cet arrêt³ convoqua son assemblée dès le XVII du même mois; et y fit porter, contre toute forme de justice, un jugement qui paraissait rendu au nom de toute l'Université,⁴ [*i.m.*: Ibid.⁵ et Narr. pag. 67.⁶] mais qu'il avait minuté seul et prononcé comme Recteur, [*i.m.*: Son rectorat finissait alors.⁷] étant
5 tout à la fois le juge et la partie de M. Regius, qui ne fut ni appelé ni entendu dans ses défenses. Irrégularité, dont le blâme semblait moins tomber sur les Professeurs, [*i.m.*: Lettr. 19 MS. de Reg.] de qui on ne devait exiger autre chose que l'art de bien régenter, que sur les Magistrats, qui avaient érigé des régents

1 'De sorte que rencontrant les pensées de M. Descartes plus à son gout [than other 'new philosophers'], il [Regius] s'en accomoda tout incontinent, fit du bruit, acquist de la reputation, et donna de l'ombrage à son Colleague Gilbert Voëtius professeur en Theologie. Il en fut persecuté par cet esprit bourru, et pendant cette persecution M. Descartes departit liberalement à son disciple les louanges qu'il luy a voulu oster depuis pour un suiet assés frivole; Car il disoit alors, qu'il ne cognoissoit que deux personnes qui penetrassent dans ses sentiments, un homme et une fille, dont le premier estoit ce Regius, et l'autre madame Elizabeth l'aisnée des Princesses Palatines', Sorbière to Pierre Petit (1594/98–1677), 20 February [1658], in SORBIÈRE 1660A, 687 (the year '1657' in SORBIÈRE 1660A is probably a mistake for 1658, as the letter refers to a letter by Petit of 20 November 1657). On Sorbière and Regius see my commentary.

2 There is no independent evidence of the incident, and its actual context is far from clear. On Heydanus, see the *Biographical Lexicon*.

3 On 15/25 March 1642, the Utrecht Vroedschap passed a resolution which forced Regius to give up any public courses or private lectures other than medical, authorising the Academic Senate to publish their judgement on the *Responsio (Resolutiën, 159)*.

4 *Judicium Senatus Academici Inclutae Academiae Ultrajectinae*, cf. my commentary on R/D 37, *Context*.

5 The preceding reference is 'Epist. Cartes. ad celeb. Voet. pag. 266, 267' (AT VIII B 185–186), which is a misprint for *Epistola ad Voetium*, 36–37 (AT VIII B 33–34).

6 *Querelle*, 122–123. The only information Baillet borrows from NH, 62, is the date the judgement was issued.

7 On 16/26 March Matthaëus succeeded Voetius as rector.

en juges sans leur donner en même temps la suffisance et l'intégrité nécessaire
 10 pour juger. Il n'y eut que huit Professeurs qui eurent part à ce jugement. [*I.m.*:
 Lettr. 36 MS. de Reg. à Desc.⁸] Savoir G. Voetius, Ch. Dematius, M. Schotanus,
 A. Mathaeus, G. Stratenus, J. Liraeus, Arn. Senguerdius, et Dan. Berckringer, qui
 prononcèrent contre la réponse de M. Regius à Voetius et contre la philosophie
 nouvelle. Les autres furent honteux de suivre la passion de Voetius, mais ils étaient
 15 les plus faibles.⁹ Il n'y eut que M. Emilius qui forma opposition à ce jugement,
 et M. Cyprien, [*i.m.*: Cyprianus Regneri, qui ne connaissait point M. Descartes et
 n'était point ami particulier de Regius.] Professeur en droit, qui protesta de nullité,
 voyant que l'on n'alléguait aucune raison recevable pour rendre ce jugement valide.
 Il voulut même qu'il fût fait mention de son opposition dans l'acte du jugement, et
 20 qu'on le nommât pour n'être point confondu mal à propos avec les auteurs d'une
 action si peu raisonnable sous le nom général des Professeurs de l'Université.¹⁰
 [*I.m.*: Narrat. histor.]

M. Regius manda toutes ces procédures à M. Descartes le XXXI de Mars 1642,
 [*i.m.*: Lett. 19 MS. de Reg.] et lui envoya le décret du Magistrat du xv du même
 25 mois, le jugement de ces Professeurs dont nous venons de parler, et les thèses
 de Voetius le fils dressées par son père.¹¹ Il lui donna avis en même temps que
 Voetius avait suborné un jeune étudiant pour écrire contre sa réponse,¹² mais que
 les savants et les honnêtes gens, tant d'Utrecht | que des autres villes de Hollande, 156
 commençaient à se déclarer contre la conduite de Voetius.

⁸ R/D 48A.

⁹ In fact, all professors, except *Æmilius* and *Regneri*, agreed with Voetius. The two associate professors, *Ravensberger* and *Paulus Voet*, were no members of the Senate.

¹⁰ Baillet refers to NH, but nothing to this extent is found there. His source must be R/D 41. That the letter mentioned the opposition of *Regneri* and *Æmilius* is confirmed by Descartes' reply (D/R 42, ll. 4–5). In the *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet* Descartes also recounts that *Regneri* demanded that his opposition be expressly stated (AT VII 590). Moreover, in the *Epistola ad Voetium* Descartes relates how *Regneri* demanded proof of the judgement's accusation that the New Philosophy was false, absurd, and contrary to orthodox theology (AT VIII B 34). Possibly due to *Regneri*'s opposition, the judgement was issued without any subscription at all. The only indication of *Regneri*'s discontentment in the Acta of the Senate is his request, on 21 February OS, to be relieved from the task to inform the *Vroedschap* of the judgement, which was granted (*Acta*, 150).

¹¹ For the *Vroedschap*'s resolution and the judgement, cf. my commentary on R/D 37, *Context*. The only surviving disputation from this period by Voetius' eldest son *Paulus* is VOET 1642, defended on 19/29 March, containing a defence of substantial forms.

¹² See D/R 42, ll. 9–10.

COMMENTARY

Date

Baillet gives the date of the letter, 31 March 1642, without indication of the calendar used. However, since Descartes' reply was written before 10 April NS (see my commentary on D/R 42), the precise date of the letter is [21/] 31 March 1642.

*Context**Regius and Sorbière*

An interesting source for Baillet on Dutch literary life and science are the letters and descriptions by Samuel Sorbière (1615–1670).¹³ After his arrival in Holland in the spring of 1642, he made a tour of the prominent scholars, visiting Descartes at Endegeest, where he met Picot and Hogelande as well, and Regius in Utrecht. He wrote Mersenne that he had numerous talks with Regius and heard him publicly teach the circulation of the blood.¹⁴ Probably at this time, Regius gave him a copy of his *Physiologia*.¹⁵ He kept in touch with the Utrecht professor — perhaps because of his own medical interests — and informed his foreign correspondents of Regius' publications in 1646 and 1647.¹⁶ In fact, he had no high opinion of the physical theories of either Descartes or Regius, but he stayed on friendly terms with Regius. During his tour through the Dutch academies in 1660, his visit to Utrecht was rather short, but he did visit the three persons worth seeing: Van Schurman, Regius and Voëtius:

D'Amsterdam nous fusmes à Utrecht, où nous desirions de voir la celebre Mademoiselle Schurman. Mais comme elle fait quelque façon à se montrer; à cause de l'importunité à laquelle elle seroit exposée, s'il ne tenoit qu'à aller heurter à sa porte; nous ne fismes pas assés de sejour dans cette Ville, pour y prendre le tour qu'il falloit. Cependant Monsieur Regius nous y accueillit avec toute sa courtoisie, nous mena dans son carosse à la promenade, et nous fit voir quelques excellens peintres. Nous ne voulusmes pas partir d'Utrecht sans y avoir une veuë de ce Gilbert [sic] Voëtius Ministre et Professeur en Theologie, qui a tant fait parler de soy en ces Provinces-là par son esprit de contradiction. Il a esté tousiours le contretenant de quelqu'un de ses Collegues, ou de quelque autre scavant homme. Je l'ay veu acharné tantost contre Regius et Descartes, [...] et une infinité d'autres avec qui il a pris plaisir d'entrer en querelle. [...] Cét homme a du scavoir et de la chaleur. Comme il s'est exercé toute sa vie à battre le fer, nous remarquions qu'il se tenoit tousiours sur ses gardes, en posture de parer ou de porter quelque coup. Mais c'est assés parlé de ce gladiateur...¹⁷

13 On Sorbière, see the biographical notice by Malcom in HOBBS 1994, 893–899.

14 'Ultrajecti plures sermones habui cum Henrico Regio medico, quem audivi publice in Academia opinionem Harvaei, etc. [sic]', Sorbière to Mersenne, 25 August 1642, CM XI 241.

15 SORBIÈRE 1691, 210–212, AT IV 240

16 See Sorbière's correspondence with Hobbes and Mersenne, in HOBBS 1994, I, 128, 132, 136, 142 (cf. SCHUHMAN 1997, 130), and in CM XV 68, 95, 125–126, 203. A copy of a letter by Sorbière to Regius from 29 October 1666 is kept in Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms Latin 10.352, f. 399v. Further references to Regius in the same manuscript are found in letters to Andreas Vissonatus, 14 May 1643 (f. 52) and to Abraham Prataeus, 5 April 1647 (f. 108v). I thank Prof. K. Schuhmann for bringing the manuscript to my attention.

17 Sorbière to Guillaume de Bauru, 19 July 1660, in SORBIÈRE 1660B, 181–182, 185; BLOK 1901, 83–85.

Descartes [Endegeest] to Regius

[early April 1642]

CLE, I, 425–426 (no. 94).
 AT, III, 558–560 (no. 277).
 AM, V, 186–188; RL, 116–118; B, 211–213.

Vir Clarissime,

Legi et risi tum theses Voëtij pueri, sive infantis, filij volui dicere, tum
 etiam iudicium Academiae vestrae, quae fortè etiam non immeritò in- [559]
 fans dici potest.¹ Laudo Æmiliū et Cyprianū quod tot ineptiarum rei
 esse noluerint.² In te verò subirascor, quod talia tibi cordi esse videantur;
 5 laetari enim deberes quammaximè, quod videas adversarios tuos suis se
 propriis armis iugulare. Nam certè nemo mediocriter intelligens scripta
 ista perleget, quin facilè animadvertat adversariis tuis et rationes deesse
 quibus tuas refutent, et prudentiam quâ imperitiam suam tegant. Au-
 10 divi hodie rursus Monachum tui Voëtij responsionem parare;³ et quidem
 certum est, auditum enim à Bibliopolâ qui habet edendam.⁴ Continebit
 circiter decem folia, nempe Ap(p)endix Voëtij cum notis tuis adhuc
 semel ibi edentur. Faveo sic scribentibus, et velim etiam ut gaudeas.
 Quantùm ad decretum tuorum Dominorum, nihil mitius, nihil pruden-
 15 tius mihi videtur ab iis fieri potuisse, ut scilicet se collegarum tuorum
 querelis liberarent.⁵ Tu, si mihi credis, ipsis quam accuratissimè, atque
 etiam ambitiosè, obtemperabis, docebisque tuam Medicinam Hippo-
 craticè et Galenicè, et nihil amplius. Si qui studiosi aliud à te petant,
 excusabis te perhumaniter, quod tibi non liceat; cavebis etiam ne quam
 20 rem particularem explices, et dices, ut res est, ista ita inter se cohaerere
 ut unum sine alio satis intelligi non possit. Dum ita te geres, si quae
 ante- | hâc docuisti digna sint quae discantur, et habeas auditores dig- 426

12 Appendix *ExJ*] Appendix CLE

1 Cf. R/D 41B, ll. 25–26.

2 Cf. R/D 41B, ll. 15–18.

3 The ‘monk’ is Voetius’ student Lambertus vanden Waterlaet (cf. the *Biographical Lexicon*). On his work against Regius, see my commentary. In the translation of AM the adverb *rursus* is mistakenly taken with *parare*: ‘un Moine prépare de nouveau une réponse’. The adverb clearly belongs to *Audivi hodie*.

4 The Leiden printer Willem Christiaens van der Boxe, active between 1631 and 1658 (GRUYS/DE WOLF 1980, 14). Cf. R/D 16, n. 5.

5 Cf. R/D 41B, n. 3.

nos qui ea discant, non dubito quin brevi denuò vel Ultraiecti vel alibi [560]
 copiam et auctoritatem illa docendi cum honore duplicato sis habiturus.
 25 Interim verò nihil mali mihi videtur tibi contigisse, sed econtrà mul-
 tum boni; omnes enim te multò plus laudant, et pluris faciunt, quam
 fecissent, si adversarij tui tacuissent. Ac praeterea accessit otium, cum
 docendi onere ex parte sis liberatus, nec ideo de stipendio decessit.
 Quid deest, nisi animus, qui modeste haec ferat? Quiesce, quaeso, et
 30 ride, nec vereare ne adversarij tui satis mature non puniantur.⁶ Denique
 vicisti, si tantum siles; si malis redintegrare praelium, fortunae rursus
 te committes. Vale.

COMMENTARY

Date

The letter is in reply to R/D 41 of [21/] 31 March. Descartes confirms that a work against Regius by a certain ‘monk’ is now being printed. The book, Vanden Waterlaet’s *Prodromus*, was ready on 10 April, and the letter consequently dates between 31 March and 10 April 1642.⁷

*Context**Prodromus sive Examen tutelare orthodoxae philosophiae principiorum*

The Voetian reply to Regius’ *Responsio* was not long in coming. On April 10, Lambertus vanden Waterlaet, the respondens of Voetius’ disputations of 18, 23 and 24 December 1641, sent a copy of his freshly printed *Prodromus* to Huygens.⁸ The pamphlet consists of two parts. In the first part, Vanden Waterlaet gives the text of Voetius’ *Appendix* on substantial forms, Regius’ reply, and finally his own response to Regius. The second part offers a closer analysis of several passages in Regius’ *Responsio*. The first part consists of 120 pages (9 quires, marked A–I), the second of 36 pages (3 quires, marked a–c). The use of uppercase and lowercase letters indicates that the second part was printed separately. However, the errata of the second part are listed on p. 120 of the first part, which shows that both parts were assembled in one volume before the work left the printing office. As each part is written in a very different style, the suspicion forces itself that each part was composed separately by a different author. In any case, the indisputable author of the first part, Vanden Waterlaet, was responsible for seeing the whole through the press.⁹

6 Perhaps Descartes alludes to his account of the Utrecht affair in the *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet* (AT VII 582–599).

7 On 10 April Vanden Waterlaet sent a copy to Huygens (HUYGENS 1911–1917, III, 278). The *terminus ante quem* of D/R 42 is indicated by Verbeek (VERBEEK 1999, 101–102).

8 HUYGENS 1911–1917, III, 278. On 7 April 1642 Huygens wrote to Mersenne that the work was being printed (CM XI 100–101). Heereboord reported the same on 8 April (Heereboord to Colvius, AT VIII B 196–197).

9 Cf. Verbeek’s observations on VANDEN WATERLAET 1642, in VERBEEK 1999, 98–101.

Regius to Descartes [Endegeest]

4 April 1642

Vie, II, 157 [A], 175 [B] (no. 20).
AT, III, 562 (no. 278).

[A] = R/D 47A

Pour ce qui est de la réfutation que Voetius avait entreprise contre la réponse de M. Regius à ses thèses par le ministère de ses étudiants, [*i.m.*: Lettr. 25 MS. de Regius.¹] l'on peut dire qu'elle échoua entre les mains d'un moine renégat, ou fugitif, comme l'appelle M. Regius, pour avoir voulu dissimuler qu'il en fût
 5 l'auteur. Pour éloigner le public encore davantage de cette pensée, il avait confié l'écrit à ce moine pour l'aller faire imprimer à Leyde, afin qu'il parût que Messieurs Descartes et Regius avaient encore des ennemis ailleurs qu'à Utrecht. [...] ² Mais le Recteur de l'Université de Leyde qui était M. Golius, [*i.m.*: Lettre 20 MS. de Reg.] ayant été averti de ce qui se passait, se transporta incontinent chez l'imprimeur
 10 de cette réfutation, et fit faire en sa présence une information de cette entreprise.³ [*I.m.*: Item. lettr. 25 MS.] L'imprimeur la rejeta toute sur le moine, qui se trouva heureusement absent de l'imprimerie, et qui prit la fuite pour aller à Utrecht donner avis à Voetius de ce qui était arrivé à son ouvrage, et lui rendre compte de sa commission.⁴

[B]

La philosophie ancienne, ou, pour mieux parler, la manière ancienne de philosopher, recevait de jour en jour de nouvelles attaques par les nouveaux philosophes. Les deux Boots, médecins de Londres, entre les autres voulurent se signaler par un livre qu'ils firent paraître à Dublin en 1642 [*i.m.*: Ou même dès le mois de
 5 Juillet 1641.] contre Aristote. Regius en donna avis à M. Descartes par une lettre du IV d'Avril, [*i.m.*: Lettr. 20 MS. de Reg. à M. Desc.] où il lui témoigna que ce qu'il en avait lu lui avait paru assez bon pour renverser la matière première et détruire les formes substantielles. Le livre était petit, et ne paraissait pas encore suffisant pour saper les principes d'Aristote et des Péripatéticiens. Il avait pour

1 R/D 46.

2 In the passage omitted Baillet paraphrases D/R 42 (ll. 9–13).

3 The refutation in question is VANDEN WATERLAET 1642; see my commentary. Golius was rector of Leiden University from 8 February 1642 till 8 February 1643.

4 See my commentary on text A.

- 10 titre, *Philosophia naturalis reformata, id est Philosophiae Aristotelicae accurata examinatio ac solida confutatio, et novae ac verioris introductio per Gerardum ac Arnoldum Botios fratres Hollandos Medicinae Doctores*.⁵

COMMENTARY

Date

The date of the letter, 4 April 1642, is given by Baillet. There are no means to establish the calendar used.

Text

Text A contains two references to R/D 47 (no. 25 in the Clerselier collection), the second of which cannot be separated from the reference to the present letter. I do not omit the passage connected to the first reference, in order to preserve Baillet's own context.

AT's selection from *Vie* also contains the paragraph immediately prior to my selection, in which Baillet relates the publication of Vanden Waterlaet's *Prodromus*. I do not incorporate the paragraph, because there is no mention of R/D 43.⁶

5 *Philosophia naturalis reformata*, Dublin: Societas Bibliopolorum, 1641. The work offers a minute analysis of the various arguments for and against Aristotle, concluding that the Stagirite's discussion of principles is confused (VERBEEK 1992A, 9–10). The brothers Gerard (1604–1650) and Arnold (1606–1653) Bootius, or Boot(s), received their medical training in Leiden and then settled in the British Isles. Arnold became physician general to the English troops in Ireland, Gerard was appointed physician to the English King. Cf. NNBW, IV, 217; DNB, 5, 283–285; LINDEBOOM 1984, 214–216. In a letter to the Dordrecht minister Andreas Colvius (1594–1671), Adriaan Heereboord (on him see R/D 50, n. 2) shares Regius' opinion: 'Excuditur jam Leidae apud nos responsorium aliquod scriptum, pro formis substantialibus, et D. Voetio, sub Respondentis nomine [VANDEN WATERLAET 1642]. Cui quod respondere non licebit Regius, iniquius ferrem, nisi Bootii fratres jam demoliti essent illas formas substantiales, ut, quid amplius dici queat, vix equidem videam.' (8 April 1642, quoted from AT VIII B 196–197).

6 The paragraph in question contains a marginal reference, 'Ibid. num 32', which belongs to the following passage in the main text: '[...] on grossit le libelle [*sc. Prodromus*] d'une seconde partie, dans l'intention de défendre encore mieux l'honneur de l'Université et des anciennes opinions' (*Vie*, II, 156/AT III 561). Adam and Tannery cannot explain the reference, and they conjecture that it is related to the previous note, which claims that the *Prodromus* is listed in the inventory of Descartes' estate. But Adam and Tannery remark, first, that the *Prodromus* does not figure at all in the so-called 'Stockholm inventory', and second, that this inventory catalogues its entries by letters, not by numbers. However, had Adam and Tannery copied down Baillet's marginal references more carefully, they would undoubtedly have noticed that 'Ibid. num. 32.' refers back to the marginal reference at the top of the paragraph, viz. 'Epist. ad P. Dinet. num. 31' (*Epistola ad Patrem Dinet*, AT VII 598–599; Baillet used the 1673 edition of the *Meditationes* (Paris: Bobin and Le Gras), in which edition the text is divided into numbered articles). One cannot blame Baillet for being imprecise, because the marginal notes between the two references to the *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet* are clearly marked with an asterisk (for a similar case, see R/D 50B). For the 'Stockholm inventory', see my Introduction, § 1.1.1).

*Contents**Text A*

Although Baillet's story in text A appears to be straightforward, the biographer is in fact terribly confused. According to Baillet, one of Voetius' students, a 'renegade monk', went to Leiden to have a refutation of Regius' *Responsio* printed. When the rector of Leiden University, Jacobus Golius, started an investigation, the monk ran off to Utrecht and the project failed. We recognise in this project Vanden Waterlaet's *Prodromus* — with the exception that it actually did appear — but Baillet did not. Two misconceptions prevented him from putting the pieces together. First, he assumes that the 'renegade monk' is Martin Schoock (cf. R/D 49B, ll. 10–11), whereas Lambertus vanden Waterlaet is meant.⁷ What increased Baillet's confusion is the fact that Vanden Waterlaet played an active role in the realization of Schoock's *Admiranda methodus*, which explains why his name pops up in R/D 47 (no. 25 in the Clerselier collection). Baillet's second mistake is his belief that the monk's project failed, and because he knew that the *Prodromus* did appear — he discusses its publication in the paragraph preceding text A — the monk's project and the *Prodromus* could not be the same thing.

Baillet's first misconception, the mistaken identity, can be accounted for, but it is difficult to understand why he believes that Golius prevented the monk from publishing the pamphlet. Did he find this in Regius' letter? If so, the letter would obviously date from 4 April NS, before the *Prodromus* finally did appear. However, Baillet's assumption that the project failed, may very well be his own conclusion, as 'faire une information' (l. 10) means conducting an investigation; it does not say anything of the outcome.⁸

Given Baillet's profound confusion, it is impossible to draw anything conclusive from text A. But his statement that Golius made inquiries is in itself not implausible. According to a decree by the Senate of Leiden University, students were not allowed to publish without the Senate's permission and since Vanden Waterlaet had matriculated in Leiden in February 1642, Golius, being rector, may have started an investigation.⁹

⁷ See the *Biographical Lexicon*.

⁸ In the abridged version of *Vie*, Baillet gives a succinct account the whole affair: '[...] Waterlaet son écolier imprima un libelle sous le titre de *Prodrome*, comme si c'eût été l'avancoureur de celui qu'il préparoit lui-même, mais dont la fortune ne fut pas si heureuse. Car voiant que les gens de bien n'étoient pas fort contens de ses manières à Utrecht, et l'ayant envoyé à Leyde pour l'y faire imprimer sous la direction d'un Moine renegat, le Recteur de cette Université qui étoit Golius le supprima avant qu'il fût entièrement imprimé, et le Moine prit la fuite.' BAILLET 1693, 204/BAILLET 1692 (1946), 196.

⁹ *Album Stud. Acad. Lugd.-Bat.*, 329.

Regius to Descartes [Endegeest]

1 June 1642

Vie., I, 13 [A]; II, 165 [B]; 177 [C]; 178 [D]; 179 [E]; 170–171 [F] (nos. 21 and 22).
AT, III, 570 [B]; 571 [C]; 572 [D]; 573–574 [E]; 570–571 [F] (no. 281–I).

[A]

Cartesius, selon lui [Descartes], était un nom feint, plus propre à le faire méconnaître des personnes de sa connaissance, et à le faire désavouer de ses parents, qu'à le faire connaître à la postérité. [*I.m.*: Tom. 1 de ses lettr. p. 387, tom. 2 p. 265, item pag. 284.¹] L'événement fit voir qu'il avait encore autre chose à craindre
5 de cette licence de latiniser son nom, [*i.m.*: Senguerdus apud Regium Epist. 22 MS. ad Cart.] puisque quelques-uns de ses ennemis cherchant à lui dire des injures, s'avisèrent de l'appeler *Cartaceus Philosophus*.² [*I.m.*: Philosophe de carte.]

[B]

[...] cette édition,³ qui se trouvant ainsi plus complète que la première, parut plus que suffisante pour payer la patience avec laquelle les Hollandais et les autres étrangers avaient attendu la lecture de l'ouvrage. [*I.m.*: Lettr. 21 et 22 MSS. de Regius.]

[C]

[...] M. Descartes, qui au jugement de plusieurs venait de le [Voetius] couler à fonds dans l'Épître au P. Dinet. [*I.m.*: Lettr. 22 MS. de Reg. à Desc.]

[D]

L'Épître au P. Dinet lui [Voetius] tenait au cœur. [*I.m.*: Lettr. 22 MS. de Regius.]
L'exposition toute simple que M. Descartes y avait donnée de sa conduite, et le petit commentaire qu'il y avait fait au Jugement Académique de l'Université, qui en était devenu tout ridicule, lui avaient dérangé le cerveau.⁴

1 Respectively D/R 13, ll. 38–41; Descartes to Mersenne, 11 November 1640, AT III 235/CM X 228; Descartes to Mersenne, 31 December 1640, AT III 277/CM X 362.

2 Apparently, Regius informed Descartes that the Utrecht professor of philosophy Senguerd made fun of the name *Cartesius*, calling Descartes *Chartaceus philosophus*, a philosopher who exists only on paper.

3 The second edition of the *Meditationes*, printed in Amsterdam by the Elzevier house in 1642.

4 Regius having been silenced by the Senate and Vroedschap alike, Descartes proceeded in a personal capacity. In his *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet*, appended to the second edition of the *Meditationes* (Amsterdam: L. Elsevier, 1642) Descartes scorns both Voetius and the judgement of the Senate, which he attributes to Voetius alone. The Vroedschap, however, is praised for its decision to appoint Regius professor of medicine, thereby showing that they preferred Cartesianism over the Ancient philosophy (AT VII 582–599).

[E]

M. Regius, nonobstant le conseil que lui avait donné M. Descartes d'exécuter à la rigueur le Décret des Magistrats, par lequel il lui était défendu d'enseigner autre chose qu'Hippocrate et Galien, et les opinions communément reçues dans l'Université,⁵ ne pouvait s'empêcher de proposer les nouveaux sentiments avec
 5 les anciens. Il manda à M. Descartes [*i.m.*: Lett. 22 MS. de Reg.] « qu'il se trouvait obligé d'en user de la sorte, parce qu'il appréhendait de faire désertier la plupart de ses auditeurs, qui ne voulaient pas se contenter des sentiments de Galien, d'Hippocrate et d'Aristote. »⁶

[F]

[...] M. Regius rendait à M. Descartes de fréquentes visites dans Eyndegeest, qu'il regardait comme l'école où il allait puiser les enseignements auxquels le simple commerce des lettres ne pouvait suffisamment fournir. Monsieur Descartes le considérait souvent chez lui moins comme un disciple qui eût besoin d'instruction,
 5 que comme un ami à qui il devait procurer quelque divertissement. Aussi voyons-nous [*i.m.*: Tom. I des lettr. p. 428.⁷] qu'il avait soin de convier avec lui sa femme et sa fille de le venir voir à Eyndegeest. [*I.m.*: V. aussi les lettr. MSS. de Regius.] Il n'était pas difficile à M. Regius de mener souvent sa famille à M. Descartes, qui la regardait avec la même tendresse qu'il aurait fait la | sienne. [...] Il y trouva
 10 M. Picot qui demeurait avec M. Descartes depuis la fin de l'année précédente; [*i.m.*: Lettr. MSS. de Desc. à Picot, et de Regius à Descartes.] et la relation qu'ils eurent ensemble, en se considérant comme disciples d'un même maître et nourris de la même doctrine, forma entre eux une amitié pareille à celle qui les unissait avec M. Descartes.⁸

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COMMENTARY

Date

In text B, Baillet refers to two different letters, which have the numbers 21 and 22 in the Clerselier collection. The reference to letter 21 is the sole reference to that particular letter in Baillet's *Vie*. Since it is bracketed together with the reference to letter 22, it is not listed separately in this edition.

⁵ Cf. D/R 42, ll. 16–18.

⁶ Sorbière confirms that Regius did not stick to explaining traditional medicine, see my commentary on R/D 41.

⁷ D/R 45, ll. 64–66.

⁸ Cf. my commentary on D/R 34.

Baillet does not give the date of either letter, but both are in any case posterior to the publication of the Amsterdam edition of Descartes' *Meditationes* (cf. text B), published mid-May 1642.⁹ If letter 21 precedes letter 22, it may have been a short letter to acknowledge the receipt of a copy of the *Meditationes*, and in that case would date from the second half of May 1642.

Although Baillet does not mention the date of letter 22, it is possible to determine its precise date, on the basis of text E and two notes in the *ExI*. According to the notes in the *ExI*, D/R 45 is the reply to a letter by Regius of 1 June 1642.¹⁰ Regrettably, the notes do not indicate which letter of the Clerselier collection in particular, but text E supplies sufficient indications that it concerns letter 22. In text E, Baillet relates that Regius did not follow Descartes' advice in D/R 42 (ll. 16–21) to observe his superiors' decree to teach medicine strictly along Hippocratic and Galenic lines. Regius explains — and Baillet now quotes from the letter — that obeying the decree would turn away most of his students, since they refused to confine themselves to the views of Galen, Hippocrates and Aristotle. In D/R 45 (ll. 30–34) Descartes returns to the subject, saying that Regius in his lectures should not mix 'our philosophy' with Galenic and Aristotelian elements, unless he is convinced that the Utrecht magistrates do not object. He adds that having no students at all will not harm his reputation. This, together with Descartes' remark in D/R 45 (ll. 2–4) that he is pleased to hear the Utrecht reaction to his *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet*, shows that D/R 45 is the reply to letter 22, the date of which is therefore 1 June 1642.

Text

Adam and Tannery take letters 21 to 26 in the Clerselier collection together, indicating the difficulty of listing them separately (AT III 570). The compilation is dated 'Summer 1642', with the reservation that some of the letters may actually date from 1643. Although references to some of the letters are indeed inseparable, it is not necessary to stack them indiscriminately. The fact that several passages in *Vie*, omitted in AT, deal with just one of the letters 21 to 26, makes separation even more desirable.¹¹ Moreover, one of the letters concerned can be dated very precisely (no. 22, or R/D 44). In the present edition, the letters 21 to 26 are therefore listed as follows:

- Nos. 21 and 22: R/D 44 (1 June 1642);
- Nos. 23 and 24: R/D 49 (late July or August 1643);
- No. 25: R/D 46 (Winter 1642–1643);
- No. 26: R/D 47 (before May 1643).

⁹ CRAPULLI 1985, 101.

¹⁰ *ExI*, I, p. 426, *in margine*: 'Celle cy sert de reponse a celle de M^r le Roy du 1^{er} Juin 1642.' The note on an inserted leaflet reads: 'La 95 du 1^{er} Vol. p. 426 est de M. D. a M. Reg. Elle n'est point datée, mais car elle repond a une lettre de Regius datée du 1^{er} Juin, je la date du 8^e Juin 1642.' Because both hands give the same date, the calendar meant is probably the Gregorian calendar (cf. my Introduction, § 2.3.1).

¹¹ Some references in *Vie* to the letters 21–26 are neglected: R/D 44A and R/D 46C, ll. 1–13. Others were initially overlooked by Adam and Tannery, but are found elsewhere in their edition: R/D 46C and R/D 49C.

Descartes [Endegeest] to Regius
[June 1642]

CLE, I, 426–428 (no. 95).
AT, III, 565–568 (no. 280).
AM, V, 200–205; RL, 120–124; CSMK, 213–214 (partly); B, 216–219.

Vir Clarissime,

Gaudeo nostram de Voëtio historiam¹ vestris non displicuisse; neminem
adhuc vidi, ne ex Theologis quidem, qui non illi vapulanti favere videre-
tur.² Nec sanè nimis acris mea narratio dici potest, cùm nihil nisi rem
5 gestam commemorem, multòque etiam plura scripserim in quendam ex
Patribus Societatis Iesu.³

Legi cursim ea quae ad me misisti, nihilque in iis non optimum, et
valde ad rem, notavi, praeter haec pauca.⁴

Primò, stilus multis in locis non est satis emendatus.

10 Praeterea, fol. 46, ubi ais *materiam non esse corpus naturale*,
adderem: *iuxta illos qui corpus naturale definiunt hoc modo etc.*; nam,
quantum ad nos, qui eam veram et completam substantiam esse puta-
mus, non video | cur corpus naturale esse negemus. 427

Et, folio 66, differentiam inter res vivas et vitae expertes videris [566]
15 maiorem statuere, quam inter horologium aliudve automatum, et cla-
vem, gladium, aliudve instrumentum, quod spontè non movetur: quod
non probo. Sed, ut *sponte moveri* est genus respectu machinarum

7 Legi ... no new paragraph in CLE 9 Primò ... no new paragraph in CLE 10 Praeterea ... no new
paragraph in CLE 14 Et ... no new paragraph in CLE

1 The *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet*, appended to the second edition of Descartes' *Meditationes de prima philosophiae*, Amsterdam: L. Elsevier, 1642.

2 No examples are known from the Dutch Reformed or the Walloon Church, but the Remonstrant theologians took advantage from Descartes' attack on Voetius. In one of his pamphlets Voetius' Remonstrant adversary Jean Batelier (1593–1672) published a Dutch translation of Descartes' comments on Voetius in the *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet* (BATELIER 1642, 74; cf. VERBEEK 1992A, 23). For Voetius' polemic with Batelier, see DUKER 1989, II, 47–70.

3 Pierre Bourdin SJ (1595–1653), professor of mathematics and physics at the Jesuit College of Clermont in Paris, attacked some points in Descartes' *Essais* in 1640. He is also the author of the Seventh Set of Objections, published in the Amsterdam edition of the *Meditationes* (1642). Appended to the 1642 edition of the *Meditationes* is the *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet*, in which Descartes complains to the Provincial of the Paris Jesuits, Jacques Dinet SJ (1584–1653), about the Jesuits' hesitations with respect to his philosophy. For Bourdin and Descartes, see ARIEW 1995. On the Jesuits' attitude towards Descartes' philosophy, see SORTAIS 1929; SORTAIS 1937; ARIEW 1999, 140–154.

4 A response to Vanden Waterlaet's *Prodromus*.

omnium quae sponte moventur, ad exclusionem aliarum quae sponte non moventur, ita *vita* sumi potest pro genere formas omnium viventium complectente.

Et, folio 96, ubi ais: *certè multò maiorem efficaciam* etc., mallet: *certè non minorem efficaciam* etc.; non enim est maior in uno quam in altero.

Denique, fol. 106, locum Ecclesiastae dicis à Salomone proferri ex personâ impiorum. Ego autem, in paginâ 579 editionis Parisiensis,⁵ eundem locum explicui, ex persona ipsius Ecclesiastae, ut peccatoris.⁶

Sed non video cui usui haec tua responsio esse possit, quia Capadox⁷ eâ est indignus, nisi rursus quid novi agat, et tunc unâ cum responsione ad istud novum sub nomine alicuius ex tuis discipulis edi posset; nunc existimo esse quiescendum. Nec etiam debes nostra in tuis lectionibus cum Galenicis et Aristotelicis miscere, nisi certus sis id tuo Magistratui esse gratum; mallet nullos haberes auditores, neque hoc tibi dedecori esset.⁸

Ad id quod obiicis de ideâ Dei solvendum, notare oportet non agi de essentiâ ideae, secundum quam ipsa est tantum modus quidam in mente humanâ existens, qui modus homine non est perfectior, sed de eius perfectione obiectivâ, quam principia Metaphysica docent debere contineri formaliter vel eminenter in eius causa;⁹ eodem modo ac si dicenti unumquemque hominem posse pingere tabellas aequè bene ac Apelles,¹⁰ quia illae constant tantum ex pigmentis diversimodè permixtis, potestque illa quilibet modis omnibus permiscere, esset respondendum, cum agimus de Apellis picturis, nos non tantum in iis considerare permixtionem colorum qualemcunque, sed illam quae fit certâ arte ad rerum similitudines repraesentandas, quaeque idcirco non nisi ab istius artis peritissimis fieri potest.¹¹

21 Et ... *no new paragraph in CLE* 27 Sed ... *no new paragraph in CLE* 34 Ad ... *no new paragraph in CLE*

5 AT VII 430–431.

6 Ecclesiastes, 8,17; 11,9.

7 See below, II, 59–64.

8 Cf. R/D 44E.

9 Cf. *Meditationes*, AT VII 42; *Principia*, AT VIII 11. The principle that an effect can have nothing of perfection that did not previously exist in one of its causes, either formally or eminent, is perfectly traditional indeed, but Descartes' claim that the same holds true for objective perfection, is not (see GOUDRIAAN 1999, 270–272).

10 Famous Greek painter (4th century BC).

11 Regius' view rejected by Descartes appears to be similar to the opinion advocated in Regius' *Explicatio*

- Ad secundum respon- | deo, ex eo quod fatearis cogitationem esse 428
 attributum substantiae nullam extensionem includentis, et vice versâ ex-
 tensionem esse attributum substantiae nullam cogitationem includentis,
 tibi etiam fatendum esse substantiam cogitantem ab extensa distingui.
 50 Non enim habemus aliud signum quo unam substantiam ab aliâ differre
 cognoscamus, quam quod unam absque aliâ intelligamus. Et sanè potest
 Deus efficere quidquid possumus clarè intelligere; nec alia sunt quae
 à Deo fieri non posse dicuntur, quam quae repugnantiam involvunt in
 conceptu, hoc est quae non sunt intelligibilia; possumus autem clarè
 55 intelligere substantiam cogitantem non extensam, et extensam non cog-
 itantem, ut fateris. Iam coniungat et uniat illas Deus quantum potest,
 non ideò potest se omnipotentiâ suâ exuere, nec ideò sibi facultatem
 adimere ipsas seiungendi, ac proindè manent distinctae.¹²
- Non potui notare ex tuo scripto an Monachum¹³ an Voëtium per
 60 Cappadocem intelligas, quod non displicuit: sibi sumat qui volet. Sed
 audio ignorari cuias sit Voëtius, adeo ut erga ipsum sis beneficus, si [568]
 Cappadociam ei in patriam assignes.¹⁴ Multum autem debes Monacho,
 quod auditorum tuorum numerum augeat.

46 Ad ... no new paragraph in CLE 53 quae AT] quod CLE 59 Non ... no new paragraph in CLE

mentis humanae (1647), viz. that our imperfect idea of God by no means warrants the actual existence of God: 'XIII. Imo ipsa Idea Dei, menti insita, est, vel ex divinâ revelatione, vel traditione, vel rerum observatione [cf. D/R 15, ll. 10–21]. XIV. Conceptus noster de Deo, sive idea Dei, in mente nostrâ existens, non est satis validum argumentum ad existentiam Dei probandam: cum non omnia existant, quorum conceptus in nobis observantur; atque haec idea, utpote à nobis concepta, idque imperfecte, non magis quam cuiusvis alius rei conceptus, vires nostras cogitandi proprias superet.' (AT VIII B 345); for Descartes' refutation of these claims, see *Notae in programma quoddam*, AT VIII B 359–363. Cf. VERBEEK 1992A, 60; VERBEEK 1993B, 12–13; VERBEEK 1999, 105–106.

- 12 Regius seems to have put the objection to Descartes that it is logically possible that a thinking substance and an extended substance are not distinct. Regius is clearly moving towards his view in the *Explicatio mentis humanae*: 'II. Quantum ad naturam rerum attinet, ea videtur pati, ut mens possit esse vel substantia, vel quidam substantiae corporeae modus; vel, si nonnullos alios Philosophantes sequamur, qui statuunt extensionem et cogitationem esse attributa, quae certis substantiis, tanquam subjectis, insunt, cum ea attributa non sint opposita, sed diversa, nihil obstat, quo minus mens possit esse attributum quoddam, eidem subjecto cum extensione conveniens, quamvis unum in alterius conceptu non comprehendatur. Quicquid enim possumus concipere, id potest esse. Atqui, ut mens aliquid horum sit, concipi potest; nam nullum horum implicat contradictionem. Ergo ea aliquid horum esse potest. III. Errant itaque, qui asserunt, nos humanam mentem clare et distincte, tanquam necessario à corpore realiter distinctam, concipere.' (AT VIII B 342–343); in thesis IV, Regius solves the question saying that it is revealed in Holy Scripture that mind and body are really distinct. For Descartes' refutation, see *Notae in programma quoddam*, AT VIII B 347–354. Cf. VERBEEK 1992A, 59–60; VERBEEK 1993B, 10–12; VERBEEK 1999, 106–107; FOWLER 1999, 343–344, 357–377.

13 Lambertus vanden Waterlaet (cf. D/R 42, n. 3).

14 In antiquity the Cappadocians stood in bad repute (cf. AT III 569).

Caeterum audivi à D. P.¹⁵ tibi animum esse huc nos invisendi. Ego
 65 verò te etiam atque etiam invito, neque te solum, sed et uxorem et filiam;
 mihi eritis gratissimi. Iam virent arbores, ac brevi etiam caerasa et pyra
 maturescent. Vale, et me ama.

COMMENTARY

Date

The letter is in reply to R/D 44 of [22 May/] 1 June 1642 (cf. my commentary on R/D 44).

Text

The text is closely studied by Verbeek, who argues that it consists of fragments of three different letters: I. paragraph 1 (end of May 1642); II. paragraphs 2–8 and paragraphs 11 and 12 (first week of April 1642); III. paragraphs 9 and 10 (1644–1645).¹⁶

Verbeek's argument to distinguish between part I and part II, is Descartes' allusion in the first paragraph to the *Epistola ad Patrem Dinet* (*nostram de Voëtio historiam*, l. 1), published in the second edition of his *Meditationes* (Amsterdam 1642), whereas in the seventh paragraph (l. 25) Descartes refers to the first edition (Paris 1641). Part I being posterior to the publication of the Amsterdam edition in mid-May 1642,¹⁷ Verbeek dates it in late May.

According to Verbeek, part II, which contains Descartes' commentary on Regius' proposed answer to Vanden Waterlaet's *Prodromus*, antedates not only the Amsterdam edition, but the *Prodromus* as well. His argument rests on the interpretation of the Latin phrase *nisi rursus quid novi agat* (l. 28). The traditional interpretation is 'unless he makes another move', which suggests that Descartes asks Regius to publish his reply only if his opponent attacks him once again.¹⁸ Verbeek points out that *agere aliquid* usually means 'to discuss something', and the intention of the phrase would therefore be 'unless he discusses new things', or 'unless he puts forward new arguments', which may suggest that neither Descartes nor Regius are yet acquainted with the contents of Vanden Waterlaet's *Prodromus*. If so, Regius prepared a response to the *Prodromus* before its publication on April 10, and the letter consequently dates from early April 1642.

Verbeek's arguments are not compelling, and the two points he raises are inconclusive. First, concerning the reference to the Paris edition of the *Meditationes*, one

64 Caeterum ... *no new paragraph in CLE*

15 Adam and Tannery conjecture Pollot, but Picot is more likely, in which case *huc nos invisendi* includes him as well (cf. R/D 44F, ll. 9–14).

16 VERBEEK 1999.

17 Cf. R/D 44, n. 9.

18 Cf. AM V 202; RL, 123; B, 218.

needs to take into consideration that the reference may be inserted by Clerselier for the convenience of the French readers.¹⁹ In the original manuscript the reference could have been to the Amsterdam edition, or perhaps Descartes did not specify the place at all. As for Verbeek's second point, the interpretation of the phrase *nisi rursus quid novi agat*, his reading is plausible, but on the other hand, there is nothing implausible to the traditional reading either. The phrase is ambiguous, and one needs to look for additional indications for its proper interpretation.

In my view, there is enough evidence to sustain the traditional date of June 1642 for parts I and II. First, Descartes' remark 'You are much indebted to the monk, because he increases your audience' (ll. 62–63), indicates that the work had already been published. Consequently, the traditional interpretation of the phrase discussed is to be preferred. Second, Descartes writes 'In your lessons you must not mix our [philosophy] with the Galenic and Aristotelian, unless you are convinced that it pleases your Magistrates; I'd rather see you had no audience, which would not dishonor you' (ll. 30–33). This is clearly in reply to R/D 44E, in which Regius informed Descartes that if he did not discuss new opinions in his medical courses, he would lose most of his students. R/D 44 being of 1 June, part II postdates the Amsterdam edition of the *Meditationes*, and consequently Verbeek's argument to distinguish between parts I and II is invalid.

Finally, part III, in which Descartes replies to two objections (*objicis*, l. 34) by Regius. Verbeek shows that these objections resemble the theses in Regius' *Explicatio mentis humanae* (1647), which the Utrecht professor cancelled from his *Fundamenta physices* in order to appease Descartes. Part III may therefore belong to the discussion between Descartes and Regius on the publication of the *Fundamenta physices* in June and July 1645. Verbeek mentions another possibility, namely that the objections were made after reading the *Principia*. In any case, according to Verbeek part III dates from 1644–1645, rather than 1642. In my view, the fact that Regius poses objections, implies that he reacts to a work by Descartes, and this may be the *Principia*, as Verbeek suggests, but it cannot be excluded that he refers to the *Meditationes*, which text Regius already knew (cf. R/D 12C), but he had never seen the voluminous Objections and Replies. The date 'June 1642' is admittedly uncertain, but lacking any further indications, it cannot well be separated from the other parts of D/R 45.

¹⁹ Clerselier occasionally adds a reference or substitutes preexisting references with references to French editions/translations of Descartes' works. See my Introduction, *xxvii*.