

and then what can be construed out of them. A student first learns the definitions of subject and predicate. Similarly in logic he first learns the elements and their properties, and then constructs syllogisms, etc. Molinaeus observes that one does not know beforehand what it is to speak congruously and to reason correctly. This is the reason many youngsters dislike the study of logic and grammar. In logic and grammar, learning is by construction, a view later advocated by Thomas Hobbes. Franco Petri BURGERSDIJK rejected this idea of a difference in method between logic and grammar and the other arts.

In his *De cognitione Dei*, Molinaeus advocates a version of natural theology. True knowledge of God is the absolute perfection of the mind. Here Molinaeus seems to follow not Aristotle, but John Calvin. Man has an inherent notion of God, as is clear from the testimony of countless people over many centuries. Molinaeus qualifies man's natural knowledge by saying that the infinite cannot be grasped by the finite. Moreover, man cannot will the good on his own account. Even an atheist can learn how to honour God and to study God's wisdom in the phenomena of nature and find the way to live his life according to God's direction. This natural knowledge of God is necessary to restrain sin, but it will always be imperfect and restricted. Man must find a way between the two extremes of neglect and harmful curiosity.

The *Eléments de la philosophie morale* is of an Aristotelian character as well. The structure of his work follows the *Nicomachean Ethics*; and the distinction between the two kinds of virtues of the mind, viz. those of the intellect and those of the will, is conceded. Moral virtue is a disposition of right willing, and is perfected by the study of morals. The will is free and not compelled by fate – interestingly, Molinaeus refers to Vergil. The ultimate goal of morality, however, is the vision of God. Molinaeus shows no sign of Stoicism. His Leiden predecessor LIPSIUS, for instance, concentrated on steadfastness (*constantia*), which

he defined as the virtue of a soldier, i.e. as an immovable strength. According to him, everything outside the soul was irrelevant.

The occasion of his polemic with Cardinal Bellarmine (1542–1621) was the political situation in England, where the state and Roman Catholic Church were in conflict. The *De monarchia temporali pontificis Romani* begins with the statement that God can be compared to the sun, which breaks that which resists and spares those who concede. The Pope, however, acts in the opposite way. The result was that he, contrary to Queen Elizabeth I of England, was neither happy nor rich. The Roman Catholics in England wished to seize power, but God prevented it. Some people advised King James of England to give the Roman Catholics liberty of religion. Fortunately, he saw the danger. In his *De monarchia*, Molinaeus repeatedly says that one must realize that his opponent, Bellarmine, uses the principle that the higher order should command the lower, just as the spiritual should be in command over the corporeal order. Molinaeus replies that this is true not universally, but only within its own sphere. The Pope advises the king as pastor, so within his own sphere, but is subservient to the king as civil subject. State and Church should be separated. Molinaeus advanced three arguments for this thesis. (1) If the Pope were able to liberate the subjects from a king, he would also be able to liberate children from obedience to their parents, or make an order to end a marriage, etc. (2) Nobody may be punished for the guilt of another, e.g. a son for the transgression of his father. (3) Experience teaches us that transfer of power leads to trouble. It is clear that Molinaeus denies any secular power to the Church of Rome.

In his *Anatome Arminianismi*, Molinaeus attacks the thesis of the Arminians, who advocate the doctrine of free will with respect to salvation. He says that a man has a truly free will only if he is born again. Molinaeus takes an orthodox stance. His arguments are based on evidence from the Bible, evidence of the

senses, and experience. Whatever is without faith, is sin, he says. The gentiles are capable only of external works; they do not have an inner correspondence in their heart with God's law. They cannot fulfil it. If someone cries from his pitiful position, he starts his renewal, Molinaeus says, adhering to a solid Reformation tenet. Molinaeus claims that one should first of all believe in God and know Him, before one receives faith. He criticizes the Arminians for attaching importance to merits. This position is derived, Molinaeus says, from Pelagius and the Roman Catholic Church. ARMINIUS argues that if one accepts a state of necessity, as the Calvinists do, there can be no blame. Molinaeus answers that whoever is drunk and thereby becomes blind, is also guilty, namely of being drunk. One should use judgement and knowledge in a certain sense as God does, who is good by necessity and is still free. The *Anatome* provoked a fierce reaction on the part of the Remonstrants, for instance Johannes Arnoldi Corvinus (1595–1650, a pupil of Arminius), who criticized the traditional Calvinist interpretation that sees natural revelation as evidence that nobody can be excused from worshipping God.

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## MONNIKHOFF, Johannes (1707–87)

Johannes Monnikhoff was baptized on 10 August 1707 in Amsterdam, and buried there on 28 June 1787. Like his father Willem he was a physician. In 1730 Monnikhoff was allowed to practise by the authorities. Shortly after that he wrote an important medical treatise on fractures, *Ontleed- heel- en werktuig-kundige zamenstelling ... der scheursels of breuken*, first published in 1750. In 1752 he was appointed *stadsbreukmeester* (herniotomist) of the city of Amsterdam. He contributed much to hernio-



logy during his life, and he made sure that medical research would continue after his death. Nine months before he died he established a foundation, which existed until 1853. The proceedings of this trust were collected into two series *Verhandelingen* (1797–1815, 7 vols) and *Nieuwe verhandelingen* (1811–51, 7 vols).

During his entire life Monnikhoff took a great interest in philosophical and theological matters. Only one of his many treatises was published, the *Volzeekere en bondige betooging* (1760), a prize-winning essay, in which he proved the existence of God by a posteriori arguments. His philosophical legacy consists of a large collection of handwritten documents. He is best known as the writer of the B manuscript of SPINOZA's *Korte Verhandeling*. For this transcription Monnikhoff probably used the older A manuscript, in which he made some notes and corrections. The B manuscript also contains a Dutch translation of the notes Spinoza added to his *Tractatus Theologico-politicus* and a *Voor-reeden* or introduction consisting of some reflections on Spinoza's thoughts, a short biography and a summary of the *Korte Verhandeling*.

Monnikhoff's interest in Spinoza's life and works might suggest that he was a Spinozist, but the opposite is true: both in his introduction to the B manuscript and in other writings he criticized Spinoza. He ridicules the *ordo geometricus* or mathematical method of Spinoza's *Ethica*, and attacks the Spinozist idea that all things should be regarded as attributes or modes of one unique substance. He does agree with the concept of God as an eternal, infinite, and immutable substance that does not need an external cause for its existence, but he strongly opposes the idea that finite, changeable things should be regarded as part of the divine. Monnikhoff's arguments contain few surprises: they are a blend of anti-Spinozistic arguments used by earlier authors such as Pierre BAYLE, Isaac Jaquelot, Willem van BLYENBERGH, Nicolaas HARTMAN, Christophorus WITTICHIUS and Bernard NIEUWENTIJT. Monnikhoff, for

instance, followed the latter in the idea that the existence of God could be deduced from the order and the apparent finality of nature.

The main influence on Monnikhoff, however, came from the Amsterdam merchant and philosopher Willem DEURHOFF. Many fragments of his work can be traced directly to the writings of this non-academic and self-taught thinker who managed to gather a group of passionate adherents around him. Monnikhoff made a great effort to collect all the lectures and writings of Deurhoff. He copied countless pages with notes taken by people attending weekly meetings at Deurhoff's home, transcribed several of his works, and wrote two biographies of Deurhoff. Being a real Deurhoffist, Monnikhoff went to great lengths to dispute Spinoza's ideas, but, paradoxically enough, he is now mainly remembered for having enabled one of Spinoza's works to survive.

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#### MORTERA, Saul Levi (c. 1596–1660)

Born in Venice to a family of Jews of German origin, Saul Levi Mortera (Morteira) studied Talmud and rabbinical literature with Leon Modena, one of the most important rabbis of Italy at that time. In his youth, he made the

acquaintance of the physician Eliahu Montalto, a New Christian from Portugal who became a Jew. When the latter was invited to Paris in 1612 by Maria de Medicis, to serve as a physician in her court, he took Mortera with him as his personal secretary and teacher of Hebrew and Judaism. They received permission to live openly in France as Jews, although Jews were then forbidden to live in that country.

After Montalto's death in 1616, Mortera accompanied the late physician's family, who had him buried in the cemetery of the Portuguese Jews of Amsterdam in Ouderkerk. Although Mortera was an Ashkenazic Jew, he integrated into the Portuguese community of Amsterdam. He married a young woman from that community named Ester Sores and remained in Amsterdam until the end of his life. He joined the Beth Jacob (House of Jacob) congregation, which was the older of the two Portuguese Jewish congregations in the city. In 1618, when that congregation split, following a controversy between the rabbi, Joseph Pardo, and some of the syndics, led by Dr David Farar, Mortera supported the latter faction. When Pardo joined the splinter group that established a third congregation known as Beth Israel (House of Israel), Mortera was appointed the rabbi (*Haham*) of the veteran congregation. Mortera shared his teacher's reservations about the Kabbalah, thus finding a common language with Farar, who adopted a rationalistic approach to the Talmudic tradition.

Around 1624, Mortera wrote a treatise on the immortality of the soul in Hebrew. This has not been preserved, but passages from it are mentioned in his extant sermons. Although this treatise was not meant to be a polemical response to the views of Uriel da COSTA, but rather a systematic presentation of orthodox Jewish views on the nature and destiny of the soul, it included indirect refutations of the latter's heresy. In 1635–6, Mortera engaged in a controversy with his colleague, the rabbi and Kabbalist Isaac Aboab da Fonseca. In a