

The Frisian take on the Dutch Revolt: Pier Winsemius' Tacitist history of Philip II's reign

My presentation will focus on the Tacitism of the Frisian lawyer and historian Pier Winsemius (1586-1641), whose *Historiarum ab excessu Caroli V. Caesaris sive rerum sub Philippo II per Frisiam gestarum ... libri septem* was published by the States of Friesland in 1629. The book is a history of the Dutch revolt in Friesland in a markedly Tacitean style, in which princely simulation and *arcana* are part of the historical analysis. Winsemius was originally a student in Franeker and studied in Leiden around 1610, in the period Tacitus enjoyed an intense popularity at that university. Winsemius became historiographer of the States of Friesland in 1616 and professor of eloquence at the university in Franeker in 1636. He is the author of an extensive oeuvre mostly in Latin (but also includes a history of Friesland in Dutch), and seems to have been an admirer of Hugo Grotius' works, who in turn expressed admiration for Winsemius' history.

This presentation is one outcome of the research project *Origins of Secularisation: Tacitism from the 16th to the 18th century*, which I am currently conducting in the Historical institute of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. The aim is to write a general history of Tacitism in the stated period. Special points of attention in this project are, the connection between Tacitism and debates on secularisation and church-government relationships, the (often) controversial nature of Tacitism, and the relationships between Tacitists and their direct political environment and context. One of the outcomes so far is a proposal for a new typology of 'Tacitisms', to improve and supplement the typology proposed by Giuseppe Toffanin in 1921. Even within an explanatory framework based more on the category of context than on that of type, a typological division still appears to be useful.

In my paper I will examine Winsemius' Tacitism in order to answer questions like, what does it look like as such and to which of our types (if any) does it conform? Does it serve a specific political and/or strategic purpose in its own historical context? What does it look like on the stylistic level? Was he aware of Grotius' Tacitean general history of the Revolt (completed in 1612 but unpublished until 1657, and are the contextual similarities between the two works useful to the understanding of Winsemius' work?