

## *Friendship and religion in the Republic of Letters; the return of Justus Lipsius to Catholicism (1591)*

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The rector of the Jesuit College of Mainz, Johannes Busaeus, later looked back on the events of 14 April 1591 with a measure of embarrassment. Just before noon an anonymous visitor had knocked on the college door seeking confession from Busaeus. As it was Easter Sunday, the rector naturally was pre-occupied and another theologian was sent to deal with the unwanted visitor. 'I was called but could not come, but had I known I was called by [Justus] Lipsius, I would have been able to.'<sup>1</sup> Easter, associated as it is with the concept of redemption, perhaps formed the ideal background for the reconciliation of the Flemish humanist Justus Lipsius (Overijse, 18 October 1547 – Leuven, 23 March 1606) with the faith into which he had been born. But as Busaeus' initial refusal to hear confession shows, Lipsius' reconciliation did not run entirely smoothly. More importantly, as this article will demonstrate, the events of that momentous day formed neither the beginning nor the end of that process.

In an appendix to his famous autobiographical letter, Lipsius boasted that he had made philosophy out of philology; he was the first of his generation 'to

I have incurred a great number of debts in the process of writing this article. I would foremost like to thank Jeanine De Landtsheer who generously shared her knowledge of the Lipsius correspondence with me. I am grateful for the opportunity to observe – and admire – her scholarship at first hand. I firmly believe that the contents of this article complement rather than contradict her work. I would also like to thank Dirk van Miert and Howard Hotson for comments on an early version of this argument. Part of this argument was presented at the 2009 Harvard-Princeton History Graduate Conference. I am grateful to Anthony Grafton who allowed me to participate. A Scaliger fellowship gave me the opportunity to work with the original manuscripts of the Lipsius correspondence in the Leiden University Library and Kasper van Ommen was a generous host. The hospitality of the Royal Netherlands Institute in Rome made research in the Jesuit archives possible. Robin Briggs has been a constant source of wisdom and advice throughout and after my graduate studies. The feedback of the anonymous reviewers of *Renaissance Studies* has been invaluable. I am grateful to Martin McLaughlin for proofreading the final drafts and his constructive criticism. Late night musings with David Lowe about the meaning of friendship prompted this article; those discussions make up my debt of friendship, which I hereby acknowledge and repay.

<sup>1</sup> Jeanine De Landtsheer, 'From North to South; Some New Documents on Lipsius' Journey from Leiden to Liège', in Dirk Sacré and Gilbert Tournoy (eds.) *Myrica: Essays on neo-Latin Literature in Memory of Jozef IJsewijn* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 303–31, here 328 (Appendix I; dated 10 October 1591). 'Vocer ego; non possum venire, sed si scivissem me a Lypisio vocari, potuissem.' See also: Jeanine De Landtsheer, 'Le retour de Juste Lipse de Leyde à Louvain selon sa correspondance', in Christian Mouchel (ed.), *Juste Lipse (1547–1606) en son temps (colloque de Strasbourg, 1994)* (Paris: H. Champion, 1996), 347–68.

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make literary scholarship serve true wisdom'.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, Lipsius' position among the triumvirate of humanist learning – alongside Joseph Scaliger and Isaac Casaubon – has never been in doubt. His edition of Tacitus, first published in 1574 and often revised, established his reputation for textual criticism. His *De Constantia* (1584) introduced a brand of Stoicism, of philosophical detachment from the world, that was well suited to an era of religious violence and warfare. His *Politica* (1589), a humanist mirror for princes, went through more than ninety editions.<sup>3</sup> And yet, as Anthony Grafton observed, the image of Lipsius *Philosophus*, Lipsius the scholar, co-exists uneasily with that of Lipsius *Proteus*, Lipsius the shape-shifter.<sup>4</sup> A Jesuit novice in Cologne (1562–64), a Lutheran in Jena (1572–74), a Calvinist in Leiden (1578–1591) and – finally – a Catholic in Leuven, Lipsius was seemingly the religious weathervane who wrote a book on constancy.<sup>5</sup> His scholarly reputation has become inextricably linked to his departure from

<sup>2</sup> This article uses the standard method of reference to the critical edition of the Lipsius correspondence set out in: Aloïs Gerlo *et al.* (Jeanine De Landtsheer) (eds.), *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, 19 vols (Brussels: Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, 1978–), of which volumes I–III, V–VIII, XIII–XIV, covering the years 1564–1590, 1592–1595 and 1600–1601 have already appeared. *ILE IV* which covers the crucial year 1591 is forthcoming. Bracketed letters (e.g. [*ILE 00 00 00*]) can be found via the printed inventory of the Lipsius correspondence: Aloïs Gerlo and Hendrik Vervliet, *Inventaire de la correspondance de Juste Lipse* (Antwerp: Éditions Scientifiques Érasme, 1968). Letters cited in this article, which were originally published in Lipsius' *Centuriae*, have also been given the title of the edition in which they first appeared and their number within that collection. I have used the following abbreviations (which differ slightly from those used in *ILE*):

*Cent.* = Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum Selectarum Centuria I* (Leiden/Antwerp, 1586).

*Cent. Duae* = Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum Centuria Duae*, 2 vols. (Leiden/Antwerp, 1590).

*Cent. ad IH* = Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum Selectarum Centuria Singularis ad Italos & Hispanos* (Antwerp, 1601)

*Cent. ad Belgas* = Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum Selectarum Centuria Prima[-Tertia] Ad Belgas*, 3 vols. (Antwerp, 1602).

*Cent. Misc.* = Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum Selectarum Centuria Miscellanea* (Antwerp, 1602).

*Cent. Misc. Postuma* = Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum Selectarum Centuria Quarta Miscellanea Postuma*, ed. Johannes Woverius (Antwerp, 1607).

[*ILE 03 11 03 W*]; *Cent. Misc. Postuma*, No. 84. This letter is regarded as an appendix to Lipsius' autobiographical letter (*ILE XIII 00 10 01*; *Cent. Misc.*, 87). The reference to philology and philosophy is an inversion of a well-known passage in: Seneca, *Moral letters to Lucilius*, Letter 108. Cf. Anthony Grafton, 'Renaissance Readers and Ancient Texts', in Anthony Grafton, *Defenders of the Text* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 23–46, here 39–40. 'Ego ad Sapientiam primus vel solus mei aevi Musas converti.'

<sup>3</sup> Lipsius lacks an intellectual biography. The most comprehensive account of Lipsius' life so far is undoubtedly Jeanine De Landtsheer, *Lievelling van de Latijnse Taal: Justus Lipsius te Leiden Herdacht bij zijn Vierhonderdste Sterfdag* (Leiden: Universiteitsbibliotheek Leiden, 2006); an English translation of which is planned. For the *Politica* see: Justus Lipsius, *Politica: Six Books of Politics or Political Instruction*, ed. Jan Waszink (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004). A critical modern edition of the *De Constantia* is still wanting. For a re-issue of the contemporary (1595) English translation with a modern introduction, see: Justus Lipsius, *On Constancy*, ed. John Sellars (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Anthony Grafton, 'Portrait of Lipsius', in Anthony Grafton, *Bring Out Your Dead; The Past as Revelation* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 227–43, here 228.

<sup>5</sup> For Lipsius' little-known period as a Jesuit novice: Jacques Kluyskens, 'Justus Lipsius (1547–166) and the Jesuits with four unpublished letters', *Humanistica Lovaniensia* 23 (1974), 244–70; on Jena: Sylvette Sué, 'Justus Lipsius' verblijf te Jena aan de hand van zijn briefwisseling en redevoeringen, 1572–1574', *Handelingen van de Koninklijke Zuidnederlandse Maatschappij voor Taal- en Letterkunde en Geschiedenis*, 22 (1968), 389–410. On the early part of Lipsius' life see also: Hendrik Vervliet, *Lipsius' jeugd, 1547–1578. Analecta voor een kritische biografie* (Brussels, 1969). The literature on Lipsius' stay in Leiden is extensive, but see especially: Karl Enekel and Chris Heesakkers (eds.), *Lipsius in Leiden. Studies in the Life and Works of a Great Humanist* (Voorthuizen: Florivallis, 1997).

Calvinist Leiden in the spring of 1591 and the debate over the sincerity of his religious beliefs that followed. Lipsius, who claimed to have remained true to the Catholic faith throughout his stay, was described as a life-long actor by his Protestant detractors.<sup>6</sup> Depictions of Lipsius have veered uneasily between hagiography and polemic ever since.<sup>7</sup> Rather than attempting to unearth a 'real' Lipsius supposedly hidden behind layers of rhetoric, this essay takes Lipsius' rhetoric as its starting point. It explores the role played by Lipsius' publicly espoused rhetoric of friendship in making possible the humanist's return to the Southern Netherlands and Catholicism.

This focus on the public nature of Lipsius' reconciliation forms a significant departure from the standard historiography. In his autobiographical letter, first published a decade after his arrival in Leuven, Lipsius related that 'religion and honour [*religio et fama*] (both thorny issues) forced [me] to leave [Leiden].'<sup>8</sup> This statement – *fama* being a reference to Lipsius' vociferous conflict with Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert on the issue of religious toleration – has framed our understanding of the humanist's motivations ever since.<sup>9</sup> Crucially, *religio et fama*, and not Lipsius, were the grammatical subject of the sentence. Scholars have, following Lipsius' lead, treated the humanist's reconciliation as the result of outside pressures, exerted on Lipsius by concrete persons (for example, 'Catholic intellectuals') or abstract forces (such as the fall-out of Lipsius' conflict with Coornhert, and the changing political climate of the Dutch Republic).<sup>10</sup> Once Lipsius felt comfortable enough to resume the publication of his correspondence, he was keen to portray his reconciliation as effortless, a simple act of moving house. And this is how historians, by presupposing a welcoming new home in the Southern Netherlands, have continued to treat it as an act that required little in way of preparation and that was, if not quite a spur of the moment decision, still one that was the result of immediate pressures.<sup>11</sup> To the extent that Lipsius was himself responsible for his return, attention has focused exclusively on the

<sup>6</sup> E.g., see the comments made by Petrus Burmannus, *Sylloges epistolarum* 5 vols. (Leiden, 1724–27), i, \*\*2v. 'per omnem vitam Histroniam egisse deprehendet.'

<sup>7</sup> For a historiographical overview of this debate: Nicolette Mout, 'Faked conversions? The case of Justus Lipsius (1547–1606)', in Maria-Cristina Pitassi and Daniela Solfaroli Camillocci (eds.), *Les modes de la conversion confessionnelle à l'époque moderne; Autobiographie, altérité et construction des identités religieuses* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2010). I am grateful to Professor Mout for making a copy of this article available to me in advance of publication.

<sup>8</sup> *IJE* XIII 00 10 01; *Cent. Misc.*, 87. 'relinquere eos [the people of Leiden] Religio et Fama (acre utrumque telum) adegerunt.'

<sup>9</sup> E.g. Francine de Nave, 'De Polemieck tussen Justus Lipsius en Dirck Volckertsz. Coornhert (1590): Hoofdoorzaak van Lipsius' Vertrek uit Leiden (1591)', *De Gulden Passer*, 48 (1970), 1–39, here 36. The article closes with the passage from the autobiography just cited.

<sup>10</sup> Mark Morford, *Stoics and Neostoics: Rubens and the Circle of Lipsius* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 96–138, esp. 111–12; Morford opens his chapter on Lipsius' return with a discussion of the autobiography.

<sup>11</sup> Jan Papy, 'Justus Lipsius', *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2004: <<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/justus-lipsius>> (accessed March 2011).

logistics; scholars maintain that Lipsius observed an ‘almost absolute secrecy about his intentions’.<sup>12</sup> Letters to individual correspondents, in which Lipsius stated that his stay in Leiden would not be of an indefinite nature, have been cited but the role his *published* correspondence played in laying the groundwork for his return to the South has been ignored.<sup>13</sup>

While it is certainly true that Lipsius kept quiet about his logistical preparations – Busaeus’ surprise alone attests to that – I argue that there was a very public side to his reconciliation, which preceded the humanist’s departure from Leiden by a number of years. Far from being a passive object won back by Catholics, Lipsius himself was very much in charge of what was a carefully planned and drawn-out process. This article shows how Lipsius employed the language of friendship both to win support for his return to the Southern Netherlands and as a platform on which he acted out his reconciliation with Catholicism. Drawing on Alan Bray’s work on the public, utilitarian nature of early modern friendship and Constance Furey’s work on the religious Republic of Letters I show that Lipsius’ reconciliation with Catholicism cannot be understood outside this friendship paradigm.<sup>14</sup>

## I

Letters were, as Lipsius echoing classical definitions observed in his *Epistolica Institutio* (1589), ‘a message of the mind to those who are absent or appear absent’.<sup>15</sup> If you wish to get to know someone, Lipsius told the reader of his first series of published letters, the *Centuria Prima* of 1586, ‘read the letters, which depict them’.<sup>16</sup> There is an obvious problem with publishing a letter that was originally destined only for one recipient. Lipsius criticized Coornhert for publishing their correspondence; ‘among the good it is the custom that letters written between two [men] perish with two.’<sup>17</sup> This sentiment, expressed by a man whose *Centuriae* of published correspondence spawned an

<sup>12</sup> Jeanine De Landtsheer, ‘Pius Lipsius or Lipsius Proteus?’, in Jeanine De Landtsheer and Henk Nellen (eds.), *Between Scylla and Charybdis: Learned Letter Writers Navigating the Reefs of Religious and Political Controversy in Early Modern Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 303–49, here 330.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. *ibid.*, 313–14. De Landtsheer does not point out that the letter she cites (*ILEI* 78 04 01; see below) was published by Lipsius in his *Centuria Prima*.

<sup>14</sup> Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003); Constance Furey, *Erasmus, Contarini, and the Religious Republic of Letters* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

<sup>15</sup> Justus Lipsius, *Principles of Letter-writing: A Bilingual Text of Justi Lipsi Epistolica Institutio*, eds. R. V. Young and M. Thomas Hester (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1996), 8–9. ‘Scriptum animi nuntium ad absentes, aut quasi absentes.’ Translation slightly adapted. For a reflection on Erasmus’ use of the same phrase see: Marc Fumaroli, ‘La conversation savante’, in Hans Bots and Françoise Waquet (eds.), *Commercium Litterarium; La Communication dans la République des Lettres (1600–1750)* (Amsterdam: APA-Holland University Press, 1994), 67–80.

<sup>16</sup> *Cent.*, \*6v. ‘Nosse me, aut alium vis? epistolas lege, quae depingunt.’

<sup>17</sup> Justus Lipsius, *De Una Religione Liber* (Leiden, 1591), 10. ‘Apud bonos ita solet, ut duobus scripta inter duos pereant.’

entire genre, encapsulates the paradoxical rhetoric of Renaissance letter-writing and the friendships which it sustained; it was a seemingly private language geared (often) towards public consumption and use.<sup>18</sup> And this unease is apparent in the preface of his first *Centuria*, where Lipsius professed to be ‘somehow willing unwilling’ to publish the work.<sup>19</sup> The publication of his later *Ad Hispanos et Italos* (1601), the first *Centuria* to appear after his reconciliation, was justified on account of the possible loss of the original letters – in other words, they were still published with the original recipient in mind.<sup>20</sup> Lipsius also claimed that his letters offered general advice; ‘we offer counsel, warning, precautions, especially to young people, who I have always attempted to lead not just to pleasantries, [but] to usefulness, and to place them in mind and vigour above the common people.’<sup>21</sup>

The main aim of Lipsius’ *Centuriae*, however, was to offer the reader a chance to get to know its author. Lipsius insisted on his sincerity:

not only (I am telling you the truth) do I not write twice, I hardly read them [my letters] twice. They emanate from me through a certain transparent channel straight from an open heart; they are as my mind or body is at the moment I write.<sup>22</sup>

The modern critical edition of the Lipsius correspondence, the *Iusti Lipsii Epistolae* [ILE], has long shown that we should take this claim with a grain of salt. The autobiographical nature of Lipsius’ published letters has long been recognized.<sup>23</sup> Scholars have studied the ways in which Lipsius’ *Centuria Prima* defended the scholar’s neo-Stoic programme, launched two years earlier with the publication of his *De Constantia*.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, Lipsius (in an unpublished letter) drew an implicit parallel between Seneca’s letters and his own: ‘one letter of Seneca, one conversation of Epictetus can advise you more and better than my carefully and long-windedly composed letters.’<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, aside from the attention paid to the philosophical aspects of the letters, Karl

<sup>18</sup> E.g. Valens Acidalius, *Epistolarum Centuria Una* (Hanau, 1606); Antonio Pérez, *Ant. Perezii ad Comitem Essexium [ . . . et] ad Alios, Epistolarum, Centuria Una* (Paris, [1603?]); on the public nature of friendship: Bray, *The Friend*, 67.

<sup>19</sup> *Cent.*, \*5v. ‘quodammodo volens nolens.’

<sup>20</sup> *Cent. ad IH*, +3v.

<sup>21</sup> *Cent.*, \*6r. ‘Consulimus, monemus, cavemus, apud iuventutem praesertim: quam cura mihi semper ad utilia non solum ad amoena ducere, & animo ac robore ponere supra hunc vulgum.’

<sup>22</sup> *Cent.*, \*5rv. ‘Atque adeo (dicam vere) bis non scribo, bis vix eas lego. Profluunt mihi ex liquido quodam canali aperti pectoris: & ut animus aut corpus meum est cum scribo, ita illae.’

<sup>23</sup> Vervliet, *Lipsius’ Jeugd*, 8–9.

<sup>24</sup> Jean Jehasse, *La Renaissance de la critique: l’essor de l’humanisme érudit de 1560 à 1614* (Saint-Etienne: Publications de l’Université de Saint-Etienne, 1976), 268–73, 290–94. And after Jehasse: Jan Papy, ‘La correspondance de Juste Lipse: Genèse et Fortune des *Epistolarum Selectarum Centuriae*’, *Les Cahiers de l’Humanisme* 2 (2001), 223–36; and Morford, *Stoics*, 105–6.

<sup>25</sup> ILE I 81 11 12. ‘Una Epistola Senecae, unus sermo Epicteti, plura melioraque tibi suggerent, quam verbosae et elucubratae epistolae meae.’

Enenkel's study of Lipsius' autobiography (published as a letter) is the only sustained examination of Lipsius' self-image.<sup>26</sup>

One historiographical reason for this scholarly hesitation – the spectre of Lipsius *Proteus* – has already been touched upon. It may, however, also be due in part to *ILE*, the very research tool that has done so much to unlock Lipsius to modern researchers. The chronological arrangement of the modern correspondence privileges the date on which a letter was sent, over a possible date of publication, and the standard method of referencing *ILE* does not distinguish between published and unpublished letters. Scholars need to consult *ILE* or the published inventory on which it is based to discover a cited letter's provenance.<sup>27</sup> I am certainly not calling for *ILE*'s 'unstitching', as Lisa Jardine has done for P. S. Allen's edition of Erasmus' correspondence – *ILE* has set an enviably high standard that is unlikely ever to be replicated – but I will draw attention to Lipsius' observation in his first *Centuria* that his letters were 'new in arrangement and old in composition'.<sup>28</sup> Without *ILE* this study would not have been possible, but study of the letters in their original published (or, as we shall see, manuscript) form remains essential.

The *Centuria Prima* was printed months before the humanist's first failed (and often underplayed) attempt to leave Leiden in the autumn of 1586. Lipsius' printer Christophe Plantin had received permission to distribute the *Centuria* in (Catholic) Antwerp with an Antwerp title page.<sup>29</sup> The work made it clear, to those who cared to read it that way, that Lipsius did not plan to stay in Leiden forever. A 1579 letter to two friends, Janus Lernutius and Victor Giselinus, announced that Lipsius had found in Leiden a refuge from the troubles of the Dutch Revolt; but a temporary one, 'until these troubles

<sup>26</sup> Karl Enenkel, 'Humanismus, Primat des Privaten, Patriotismus und Niederländischer Aufstand: Selbstbildformung in Lipsius' Autobiographie', in Karl Enenkel and Chris Heesakkers (eds.), *Lipsius in Leiden* (Voorthuizen: Florivalis, 1997), 13–45.

<sup>27</sup> The original inventory still forms a crucial resource for those years for which *ILE* is still lacking. Gerlo and Vervliet, *Inventaire*.

<sup>28</sup> See: Lisa Jardine, 'Before Clarissa: Erasmus, "Letters of Obscure Men", and Epistolary Fictions', in Toon van Houdt et al. (eds.), *Self-Presentation and Social Identification; The Rhetoric and Pragmatics of Letter Writing in Early Modern Times* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2002), 385–403, which inspired part of my argument; the original title of Jardine's contribution was 'Unstitching P. S. Allen's Edition of the Letters'; *Cent.*, \*3rv. 'novum dispositu, compositu veterem.'

<sup>29</sup> On the printing history of the *Centuriae* see: Jeanine De Landtsheer, 'Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) and the edition of his *Centuriae Miscellaneae*, 1586–1605; Some Particularities and Practical Problems', *Lias* 25 (1998), 69–82, esp. 74–5.

The friendship of Justus Lipsius and his printer CHRISTOPHE PLANTIN (TOURS, c. 1520 – Antwerp, 1 July 1589) has often been celebrated – indeed, was commemorated by Lipsius himself in his *Centuriae Duae* (*Cent.*, II, 77). Plantin had been active as a printer in Antwerp since 1555. Plantin remains best known for his polyglot Bible project, sponsored by Philip II of Spain. He founded a second branch in Leiden in 1583 but returned to Antwerp soon after its fall to the troops of Alexander Farnese in 1585. Leon Voet, *The Golden Compasses; The History of the House of Plantin-Moretus*, 2 vols. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969–1972), i, 3–137; *Nationaal Biografisch Woordenboek* [NBW] 19 vols., (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1964–2009), v, 689–96; Jeanine De Landtsheer et al. (eds.), *Justus Lipsius; Een Geleerde en zijn Europese Netwerk* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2006), 554–8.

fall silent and angers abate' – a passage later cited by Lipsius' Catholic biographer Aubertus Miraeus to demonstrate the transient nature of Lipsius' stay.<sup>30</sup> An earlier letter in the *Centuria*, dated 1576, criticized Giselinus for spreading the rumour that Lipsius had abandoned his native Overijse, a village not far from Leuven, and left for (or fled to) Cologne. Lipsius wrote that he planned to stay and he invited both Giselinus and Lernutius to his ancestral home. The letter, however, noted the presence of soldiers, 'I am not afraid that they may disturb [us] but that they drive [us] out.'<sup>31</sup> In another letter Lipsius publicly disapproved of the incarceration of nobles by the populace of Ghent in 1577 as the third stage of the Dutch Revolt gathered apace; 'new liberty always contains this [feature] that it deviates easily into license.'<sup>32</sup> A 1578 letter thanked Martin Delrio, later a Jesuit but then an aide to the governor-general Don Juan of Austria, for rescuing Lipsius' belongings out of the hands of Spanish soldiers – another letter used by Miraeus to highlight the danger Lipsius found himself in.<sup>33</sup> As a result, no doubt, of the *Centuria*, Delrio's rescue of Lipsius' belongings became well-known in Catholic circles. In a 1595 letter, written after the expulsion of the Society of Jesus from most of France, the Jesuit Fronto Ducaeus recounted to Lipsius how Pierre Pithou had acted as Ducaeus' Delrio by saving his library.<sup>34</sup>

Yet, the accuracy of these particular letters is debatable. Lipsius had already moved the greater part of his belongings to safety before the arrival of Spanish troops and Leuven suffered relatively little.<sup>35</sup> The public nature of the letters is also evidenced by their problematic dating. The editors of the modern correspondence redated most of them; the marginal reference in the *Centuria* to the tumultuous events in Ghent (in 1577) for instance does not square with

<sup>30</sup> *ILE* I 78 [79] 04 01; *Cent.*, 27. 'Dum haec consulescunt turbae, atq[ue] irae leniunt.' Plautus, *Miles Gloriosus*, In. 583. Cf. Aubertus Miraeus, *Vita Iusti Lipsii, Sapientiae et Litterarum Antistitis* (2nd edn.; Antwerp, 1609), 19. *ILE*'s editors emended the date of some of the letters; I have given the date originally given in Lipsius' *Centuria* in brackets.

<sup>31</sup> *ILE* I 75 [76] 10 05; *Cent.*, 2. 'Circa nos militares globi: qui vereor non ut interpellent, sed pellant.'

<sup>32</sup> *ILE* I 76 10 13; *Cent.*, 21. 'Habet hoc semper nova libertas, ut ad licentiam facile deflectat.'

<sup>33</sup> *ILE* I 78 03 04; *Cent.*, 14. Cf. Miraeus, *Vita*, 18–19.

MARTIN DELRIO (or Martín del Río, Martinus Delrio; Antwerp, 17 May 1551 – Leuven, 19 October 1608) is the author of the *Disquisitiones Magicae* (1599–1600), an influential book on magic, witchcraft and superstition. He was the eldest son of the Spanish merchant Antonio del Río and originally destined for a career in the Habsburg administration of the Low Countries. The young Delrio also held humanist interests and published editions of a number of classical authors, most notably Seneca *tragicus*. Delrio met Lipsius in Leuven upon the latter's return from Rome in 1570. Delrio left the Low Countries a year after the death of his patron, the governor Don Juan of Austria (r. 1576–8) and joined the Society of Jesus in Valladolid on 9 May 1580. Jan Machielsen, 'How (not) to get published; The Plantin Press in the 1590s', *Dutch Crossing* 34/2 (2010), 99–114, esp. 104–5.

<sup>34</sup> *ILE* VIII 95 01 25 D.

<sup>35</sup> Jeanine De Landtsheer, 'Three Overlooked Letters from the Correspondence of Lipsius in Leiden', in *Lias* 26 (1999), 143–55, here 149–50 (Letter 3; Dated 20 November 1577); Werner Thomas, 'Martín Antonio Delrio and Justus Lipsius', in Marc Laureys (ed.), *The World of Justus Lipsius: A Contribution towards his Intellectual Biography* (Brussels: Institut historique belge de Rome, 1998), 345–66, here 353–4.

the published date (October 1576) of the letter.<sup>36</sup> In other words, whether they were sent or not, these letters were at least substantially revised and clearly had a public purpose.

Lipsius' neo-Stoicism also offered scope for a Catholic reading of the letters. Martin Delrio's later claim that his friend's 'mind had never been among the evil-thinkers, only his body was' invokes a neo-Stoic detachment from the world.<sup>37</sup> Letters in the *Centuria* discuss the lack of hospitality offered by the *Hollandi* (stoically faced by Lipsius) and the political turmoil of the Low Countries (for which the *De Constantia* provided Lipsius with sufficient armour).<sup>38</sup> Lipsius also published invitations to Paris and Breslau. The letter from Paris drew attention to Lipsius' declaration in the preface of his *Electa* (1580) that his stay in Leiden would be only temporary.<sup>39</sup> And although Lipsius declined the Paris offer, he stressed in his reply how bad an environment Leiden was for his health.

But is there any other nook in the Low Countries offering [peace and] quiet?  
And thus we put up with this and stay here; until it pleases God to return peace  
to these Low Countries and us to our old place.<sup>40</sup>

An offer of accommodation from Breslau is similarly published and declined; 'and thus I have decided not to leave this fatherland, unless I am expelled by some greater flood.'<sup>41</sup> Elsewhere, Lipsius publicly discussed his plan to visit the waters of Spa, in the neutral prince-bishopric of Liège.<sup>42</sup> Letters such as these were ambiguous – Lipsius' declaration to Giselinus and Lernutius that his stay in Leiden would be temporary was paired with an invitation for them to come and visit – but that is not how Lipsius' Catholic correspondents chose to or were told to read them.

A private correspondence with leading figures in the Southern Netherlands further framed their reading of the *Centuria*. Scholars have pointed to the importance of Christophe Plantin in the effort to 'win back' the humanist but they have ignored or toned down the extent to which Lipsius was himself in charge of this process.<sup>43</sup> In June 1587 Plantin wrote to the Mechlin canon

<sup>36</sup> *ILE* I 76 10 13. The marginal reference is also tellingly absent from the 1590 edition.

<sup>37</sup> [Heribertus Rosweyde] Hermannus Langeveltius (pseud.), *Martini Antonii Del-Rio [. . .] vita, brevis commentariolo expressa* (Antwerp, 1609), 32. 'animo fuit inter male sentientes nunquam, corpore tantum.'

<sup>38</sup> *ILE* II 84 12 29, *Cent.*, 54; *ILE* II 84 08 23 B, *Cent.* 63.

<sup>39</sup> *ILE* I 80 02 12; *Cent.*, 17.

<sup>40</sup> *ILE* I 80 03 07; *Cent.*, 18. 'Sed quis in Belgica alius angulus ad quietem? Itaque ferimus, & hic haeremus: donec deo visum pacem huic Belgio reddere, & nobis veterem sedem.'

<sup>41</sup> *ILE* II 84 03 17, *Cent.*, 91; *ILE* II 84 04 00, *Cent.*, 92. 'Itaque non decretum mihi commovere ex hac patria, nisi fluctu aliquo maiore expellar.'

<sup>42</sup> *ILE* II 85 07 22, *Cent.*, 81.

<sup>43</sup> The phrase is Morford's: Morford, *Stoics*, 106. See also: Jeanine De Landtsheer, 'An Author and His Printer: Justus Lipsius and the Officina Plantiniana', *Quaerendo* 37 (2007), 10–29; Jeanine De Landtsheer, 'Justus Lipsius en Christoffel Plantijn', in R. Dusoier *et al.* (eds.), *Justus Lipsius (1547–1606) en het Plantijnse Huis* (Antwerp: Publicaties van het Museum Plantin-Moretus en het Stedelijk Prentenkabinet, 1997), 23–38.

Nicolas Oudaert that an *incognitus* visitor had reported that Lipsius ‘desires nothing more than to be able to come here as fast as possible with his wife and servant’.<sup>44</sup> In November 1587 the printer reported to Oudaert how unhappy Lipsius was with being appointed rector of Leiden University – a position which made it impossible for him to leave.<sup>45</sup> A merchant had visited Plantin with letters, ‘in which [Lipsius] bewailed that his friends here had been too hasty in disseminating *his* intention’ – fearing that he would now die in office.<sup>46</sup> Plantin also forwarded a letter from Lipsius to Martin Delrio, now a member of the Society of Jesus. The letter does not survive but from Plantin’s accompanying note we can gather that Lipsius was prepared ‘to open his mind’ to Delrio.<sup>47</sup> Plantin, who did not live to see his friend return, served as a willing conduit for contacts between Lipsius and the Spanish Netherlands but it was Lipsius who took the initiative.

## II

The two *Centuriae* of 1586 and 1590 represent a web of friendships without which Lipsius’ self-fashioning cannot be understood. They offered a vision of friendship that Lipsius shared with his readership.<sup>48</sup> Lipsius’ public friendship with the botanist Carolus Clusius is in many ways emblematic. The humanist acknowledged the gifts and greetings sent by Clusius in Vienna (the gifts presumably being seeds for Lipsius’ garden).

You wish these to be the confirmation of friendship and you offer them as it were as a deposit. I accept these gladly and I promise in return to you that cultivated with sacred faith and obligations, I will enter into this new friendship, which is between truly good men.<sup>49</sup>

The idea that true friendship can only exist among the good was a commonplace, already expressed in Cicero’s *De Amicitia*, and so was the evident tension

<sup>44</sup> Jean Denucé and Max Rooses (eds.), *Correspondance de Christophe Plantin*, 9 vols. (Antwerp: De Grootte Boekhandel, 1883–1918) (hereafter *Plantin*), viii–ix, 236. 7 June 1587 (Letter 1264). ‘nihil magis desiderare quam ut cum uxore et ancilla huc venire possit quam citissime.’

NICOLAS OUDAERT (death: Mechlin, 1 July 1608) was secretary to the Archbishop of Mechlin Jean Hauchin, and was vicar-general of the diocese while the seat remained vacant in the years following Hauchin’s death (1589–96). Oudaert was executor of Lipsius’ will. *Biographie Nationale de Belgique*, 44 vols. (Brussels: Académie royale de Belgique, 1866–1986), xvi, 382–3.

<sup>45</sup> *Plantin*, viii–ix, 324. 20 November 1587 (Letter 1324).

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.* ‘litteras in quibus conqueritur amicos nimium praeproperos fuisse istic in disseminando eius voluntatem’. My emphasis.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* viii–ix, 332–3. 29 November 1587 (Letter 1331). ‘tibi mentem suam aperire’.

<sup>48</sup> I suggest that it is this quality of Lipsius correspondence – this general solicitation of friendship – that has earned Lipsius the condemnation of modern scholars of the Republic of Letters for subverting its egalitarian spirit. Hans Bots and Françoise Waquet, *La République des Lettres* (Paris: Belin, 1997), 25.

<sup>49</sup> *ILE* II 84 05 07 L; *Cent.*, 48. ‘Vis enim ea sciendiæ amicitiae esse, & offers velut arras, quas libens accipio, & restipulor tibi sancte ea fide & officiis cultum a me iri hanc novam amicitiam, quae inter vere bonos.’

between friendship's utility and its supposedly altruistic nature.<sup>50</sup> But letters also offered the possibility of friendship between men, such as Clusius and Lipsius, who had never met. When Lipsius – towards the end of the 1586 *Centuria* – learnt of the death of Janus Gulielmus, with whom he had exchanged many published letters, he wrote to a mutual friend: 'I did not know him at all by his face or appearance, [but] very well by his mind.'<sup>51</sup> The *Centuriae* were, in other words, a general solicitation of friendship. In a first (unpublished) draft Lipsius declared to Andreas Schott in Spain, who had won him the friendship of Antonio Covarrubias, that he had performed the task of a true friend, 'not only to love [the friend] but to entice others into the same love'.<sup>52</sup> And Lipsius' books played a great part in establishing this web of friendships as well. In his *Duae Centuriae* Lipsius thanked John Johnston for the friendship of David Chytraeus; 'I love him already, whoever he is, [and] I love my *De Constantia* which unites me with so many friends.'<sup>53</sup> The religious affiliation of these men was as diverse as their geographical location but the principle certainly applied to a number of Catholic correspondents, who together would enable Lipsius' return to Leuven.

Both the 1586 and 1590 *Centuriae* established Lipsius' friendships with influential Catholic figures. In the 1586 *Centuria* Lipsius included a letter to Dominicus Lampsonius, secretary to the Prince Bishop of Liège and a friend of Laevinus Torrentius, the Bishop of Antwerp.<sup>54</sup> The neutral Prince-Bishopric would become Lipsius' home for the year preceding his appointment to a chair in Leuven in the summer of 1592. Lampsonius' support would ease Lipsius' stay and Lipsius expressed an interest in Lampsonius' main pre-occupation; the writings of Pedro Ximenes. Lampsonius had sponsored the work of Ximenes, a heterodox Spanish theologian living in Cologne, whose (never completed) *Demonstratio Catholicae Veritatis* was meant to bring about

<sup>50</sup> Cicero, *De Amicitia* (Loeb), V:18; IX:31.

<sup>51</sup> *ILE* II 84 12 01 M; *Cent.*, 83. 'De vultu aut facie non eum noveram, optime de animo.'

<sup>52</sup> *ILE* I 82 07 06 S. 'Vere hoc est amicum esse, mi Schotte, non amare solum ipsum, sed in eundem amorem alios illicere.'

<sup>53</sup> *ILE* III 88 03 22 J; *Cent. Duae*, I, 38. 'Quidquid huius est, amo iam amo Constantiam meam, quae tam multos mihi conciliat amicos.'

<sup>54</sup> DOMINICUS LAMPSONIUS (Bruges, 1532 – Liège, 17 July 1599) became a secretary of Reginald Pole, England's last Catholic Archbishop of Canterbury, in 1554, a patron he remembered fondly in his correspondence with Lipsius [*ILE* 91 04 06]. After Pole's death in 1558 Lampsonius became secretary to three consecutive prince-bishops of Liège. Lampsonius was especially interested in painting and a correspondent of Giorgio Vasari. NBW, xvii, 417–21; De Landtsheer, *Lipsius*, 226–7; Colette Nativel (ed.), *Centuriae Latinae*, 2 vols. (Geneva: Droz, 1997–2006), ii, 451–5.

LAEVINUS TORRENTIUS (Ghent, 8 March 1525 – Brussels, 26 April 1595) remains best known for his *Poemata Sacra*, which included a celebration of Balthasar Gérard, the murderer of William of Orange. In 1575 Torrentius became vicar of the Prince-Bishopric of Liège and in 1585 after Antwerp fell to the forces of Alexander Farnese he was appointed bishop of that city. Torrentius was a benefactor both of humanists and Jesuits. De Landtsheer, *Lipsius*, 352–4; NBW, xiii, 779–785; Nativel, *Centuriae*, ii, 803–5.



the reconciliation of Protestants through gentle disputation.<sup>55</sup> In the 1586 *Centuria* Lipsius asked Lampsonius to obtain for him Ximenes' friendship. 'I hear much from many about his sincere doctrine and piety. If you are to me an intermediary and conciliator of his friendship, you will tie me to you by this great favour.'<sup>56</sup> In the 1590 *Centuriae* Lipsius asked Lampsonius again to provide him with Ximenes' writings, 'if you love me'.<sup>57</sup> In another letter he declared his love for Lampsonius.

Conversations which you have promised, sweet as nectar! Stories! Dinners! I have no reason to fear your Juno [Lampsonius' wife], whom I would appease not with one word, but with [the wink of] one eye! To no Jupiter [Lampsonius] falls the task of mollifying her anger towards this Aeneas [Lipsius], who is ready to appease her.<sup>58</sup>

Lipsius framed himself as a rival to Lampsonius' wife for the affections of her husband and he promised Lampsonius, an art-lover, a portrait so Lampsonius might see him.<sup>59</sup> 'I am as certain that you love me, as that I breathe. He is not a lover, who does not love forever.'<sup>60</sup>

Lipsius also included a letter in his 1586 *Centuria* to the Jesuit Francesco Benci, whom he knew from his visit to Rome in the late 1560s.<sup>61</sup> Lipsius had received a letter from Benci. 'I testify to God, most wonderful man, that I burst forth in reading your name alone; how much more at the mention of your love, which I knew you retained wholly and completely!'<sup>62</sup> Lipsius did not mention Benci's entry into the Society of Jesus but he had heard of a 'change of life, which I trust will work entirely to your salvation'.<sup>63</sup> In a second letter included in the 1590 *Centuria*, he thanked Benci – 'my brother' – for his letter

<sup>55</sup> On Lampsonius' emotional commitment to Ximenes' project see: Ronald Truman, 'Justus Lipsius, Arias Montano and Pedro Ximenes', in Marc Laureys (ed.), *The World of Justus Lipsius: A Contribution towards his Intellectual Biography* (Brussels: Institut historique belge de Rome, 1998), 367–86, esp. 382–3.

<sup>56</sup> *ILE* II 84 05 31; *Cent.*, 60. 'Tu si mihi interpres & conciliator amicitiae illius es, magno me beneficio devinxeris.'

<sup>57</sup> *ILE* III 88 06 17; *Cent. Duae*, II, 54. 'si me amas.'

<sup>58</sup> *ILE* II 87 06 19; *Cent. Duae*, II, 19. 'O sermones nectarci, quos promittis! O fabulae! O epulae! O Iunonem tuam mihi non timendam, quam placem verbulo, sed ocello! Nullo love opus ad iram eius leniendam in hunc Aeneam, qui paratus est satisfacere.'

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>60</sup> *ILE* III 89 08 14; *Cent. Duae*, II, 90. 'Tam scio amare te, quam me spirare. [Plato, *Laws*, 641 e:] Οὐδέτις ἐραστιῆς ὅστις οὐκ ἀεὶ φιλεῖ (non est amator, perpetim qui non amat).'

<sup>61</sup> PLAUTO BENCI (Acquapendente, 21 October 1543 – Rome, 6 May 1594) met Lipsius on the latter's trip to Rome (1568–70), when both moved in the circles around the French philologist Marcus Antonius Muretus. Benci entered the Society of Jesus on 18 May 1570, adopting the more Catholic name of Francesco, and taught at the Jesuit Collegio Romano until his death. *Diccionario Histórico de la Compañía de Jesús Biográfico-Temático* (Rome, 2001), i, 405–6; De Landtsheer, *Lipsius*, 471–3.

<sup>62</sup> *ILE* II 84 04 05 B; *Cent.*, 52. 'Deum ego testor, vir optime, ut in solo nomine tuo lecto exsili: quanto magis in commemoratione amoris, quem integrum inviolatumque servari apud te cognovi!'

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* 'Genus vitae mutasse te audivi: quod salutare tibi futurum omnino confido.'



of reply.<sup>64</sup> ‘Your letter stirs me up, and it breathes as it were a certain breeze of life into our languor.’<sup>65</sup>

Lipsius used his publications to further tie these men to him. Plantin even sent Oudaert, the Mechlin canon, two manuscript folia of the *Politica* in advance of publication.<sup>66</sup> Although Lipsius’ private letter to Delrio has not survived it was sent within one month of Lipsius’ commentary on Senecan tragedy, which publicly praised Delrio, ‘forever our friend’, for his earlier work on the subject.<sup>67</sup> Benci was sent a copy of the *De Constantia* for his judgment – Benci should warn Lipsius freely about the work.<sup>68</sup> Lamponius was sent a copy of the *Politica* and publicly asked for his judgment. ‘See if we err somewhere’.<sup>69</sup> But Oudaert, who had warned Lipsius on his use of the Stoic concept of *fatum*, was offered the most exalted place. Lipsius’ letter to Oudaert followed immediately after a letter to Michel de Montaigne.<sup>70</sup> After asking Montaigne for his thoughts on the *Politica*, Lipsius humbly deferred to Oudaert’s criticism. The humanist protested that although his opinion did not differ from the (very Catholic) Thomas Aquinas, he would retract if necessary. ‘Would this shame me? [No,] it is truly never too late for us to see and embark on the true and right path.’<sup>71</sup>

As we have seen, it was a friend’s task to gain for his friend the friendship of others. Lamponius had won Lipsius the friendship of a close adviser of the Prince Bishop of Liège. ‘I am glad that you have united me with Petrus Oranus [. . .] as a friend.’<sup>72</sup> And Lipsius used the letters to ask Lamponius about others as well, notably Bishop Torrentius, but also about the Jesuit Johannes Oranus, Petrus Oranus’ brother, with whom Lipsius had studied at the Jesuit College in Cologne; ‘But do I not know a certain Oranus from Cologne from way back?’<sup>73</sup> That Lipsius’ strategy of courting by proxy was successful is shown by a letter to Lipsius from Jacques de Carondelet, the Prince Bishop’s chancellor. Lipsius had sent Carondelet a copy of his *De Una Religione* with one of his – now lost – letters to Lamponius. ‘I am also very grateful to you because you from time to time greet me among others in the letters you write to Lamponius.’<sup>74</sup> In his biography Miraeus provided a long list of the friends

<sup>64</sup> *ILE* III 87 [88] 08 31; *Cent. Duae*, II, 79. ‘mi frater’.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.* ‘Tuae litterae me excitant, & velut adspirant in hoc languore nostro vitalem aliquam auram.’

<sup>66</sup> *Plantin*, viii–ix, 226. 28 May 1587 (letter 1258).

<sup>67</sup> Justus Lipsius, *Animadversiones in Tragoedias Quae L. Annaeo Senecae Tribuuntur* (Leiden, 1588), 9. ‘aeternum nobis amicus’. The *Animadversiones* were (despite the 1588 title page) ready for distribution from mid October 1587. Cf. *ILE* II 87 10 16.

<sup>68</sup> *ILE* II 84 04 05 B; *Cent.*, 52.

<sup>69</sup> *ILE* III 89 08 14; *Cent. Duae* II, 90. ‘Vide sicubi erramus.’

<sup>70</sup> *ILE* III [89] 09 17; *Cent. Duae*, II, 96.

<sup>71</sup> *ILE* III 89 11 09; *Cent. Duae*, II, 97. ‘An me pudeat? Numquam et veram rectamque viam tarde videre et inire possumus, nunquam sero.’

<sup>72</sup> *ILE* III 88 06 17; *Cent. Duae*, II, 54. ‘Petrum Oranium quod amicum mihi conciliasti [. . .] gaudeo.’

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* ‘Sed nonne ego Oranium novi aliquem Coloniae olim?’; *ILE* II 87 06 19.

<sup>74</sup> [*ILE*91 02 11]. ‘Ago tibi magnas eo nomine gratias, & insuper quod per litteras tuas, quas ad Lamponium scribis, aliquando me inter alios frequenter salutas.’

which Lipsius ‘found’ when he arrived in Liège but as Carondelet’s letter showed, Lipsius did not simply come across them.<sup>75</sup> This same process also operated on a more abstract level. Lamponius, Benci and Oudaert were also representatives of interests: the elite of the neutral prince-bishopric of Liège, the Society of Jesus, and the secular clergy of the Southern Netherlands. Lipsius required their support to make his return to Catholicism possible.

This reading of Lipsius’ published correspondence may be dismissed as a partial one, based on only some of the 200 letters published in the first two *Centuriae*, but that is precisely the point. Lipsius praised the leading Huguenot scholar Joseph Scaliger, as the ‘first among the best’ and also directed letters to Reformed theologians such as Franciscus Junius and Martinus Lydius.<sup>76</sup> By balancing the content of his *Centuriae*, Lipsius could complain publicly (to Lamponius) about conspiracies against him in Leiden and toy with the idea of leaving for Germany or tell Johnston (already in Germany) that given all the troubles in Leiden he may soon be joining him there.<sup>77</sup> I have argued that private letters encouraged a partial reading of the published correspondence but Lipsius also solicited this in his dedicatory epistle.

Who does not know these three aspects of letters; to whom, when and where they were written? If decorum is present in these three elements, all is correct, even though they are not correct in every conceivable respect.<sup>78</sup>

Catholics looked out for signs of what Lipsius could not say openly. And indeed, the very nature of the genre allows for partial readings. When Oudaert read the dedicatory epistle of Lipsius’ *De Recta Pronunciatione* (1586), dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney, he deduced that Lipsius could be planning to leave for England instead, ‘unless he meant this for the ears of the man for whom he wrote it’.<sup>79</sup>

Lipsius’ courtship was successful. We saw Lamponius obtain for Lipsius the friendship of Petrus Oranus and Jacques de Carondelet. But Lamponius, as the published letters invited him to do, also pressed Laevinus Torrentius about Lipsius.<sup>80</sup> Torrentius had been the harshest Catholic critic of Lipsius’ *De Constantia* and their correspondence had lapsed after Lipsius failed to heed Torrentius’ criticism and advice. From the bishop’s exaspera-

<sup>75</sup> Miraeus, *Vitae*, 27–8. ‘Amicos hic reperit’.

<sup>76</sup> *ILE I* 76 11 26; *Cent.*, 6. ‘inter probissimos primus.’

<sup>77</sup> *ILE II* 87 06 19; *Cent. Duae*, II, 19.

<sup>78</sup> *Cent.*, \*4r. ‘Quis tria illa nescit in epistola adspici, cui, quando, ubi scripta? In quibus si a decore nihil abitur; omnia recta, etiamsi non usquequaque recta.’

<sup>79</sup> Jeanine De Landtsheer, “Die wereldvreemde profen van Leuven in hun ivoren toren”; Een vergeten brief van Nicolaas Oudaert aan Christoffel Plantijn’, *De Gulden Passer* 87/1 (2009), 31–53, here 42 (letter dated 12 October 1586). ‘nisi sit ut auribus id dederit illius cui scribit.’ I am grateful to her for making an offprint of this article available to me.

<sup>80</sup> Morford, by contrast, designated Torrentius as the person who won back Lipsius to Catholicism. Morford, *Stoics*, 105–6.

tion we can deduce that Lampsonius brought up the subject of Lipsius regularly in their correspondence (Lampsonius' letters have not survived). From the moment in late 1586 when Torrentius left Liège to take possession of his Antwerp bishopric until Lipsius' return in 1591, the humanist features in Torrentius' correspondence *only* in the letters to Lampsonius and he was nearly always discussed in the same paragraph as Ximenes, Lampsonius' other pre-occupation. Despite Lampsonius' best efforts, Torrentius declined to write to Lipsius but he did offer a modicum of support.<sup>81</sup> 'About Lipsius,' Torrentius told Lampsonius,

'I have heard nothing so far; I wish him prosperity in all respects, but, I believe, he keeps to his nest [Leiden] too long. If he frees himself from there, he will perceive that I am a friend [. . .] It is scarcely credible that those, who remain among evil men for a long time, can be untouched by all evil. Erudition without piety I do not like at all.'<sup>82</sup>

And Lipsius also attempted to contact Torrentius directly. Torrentius reported to Lampsonius that he had received the *Politica* with an inscription in the author's own hand, 'submitted for my judgment, but I have not yet read it through'.<sup>83</sup> Far from pressuring Lipsius to return, as Mark Morford has claimed, it was Lipsius who directly and indirectly was pressing Torrentius for his friendship and support.<sup>84</sup>

The importance of the *Centuriae* for the creation of this web of relationships cannot be overstated. Francesco Benci never received the letters Lipsius included in his *Centuriae* but first read them in print.<sup>85</sup> Lipsius' letter in the 1590 *Centuriae* brought the Roman Jesuit near to tears. 'I must speak freely; it was pleasant in the past to be thought your friend by intelligent men, in whose hands your writings are worn out with frequent consultation. Now even more so when I am called a brother.'<sup>86</sup> It has been argued that Benci privileged his friendship with Lipsius over concerns for Lipsius' religious well-being; and Benci certainly remembered their shared student days fondly.<sup>87</sup> I argue

<sup>81</sup> Marie Delcourt and Jean Hoyoux (eds.), *Laevinus Torrentius: Correspondance*, 3 vols. (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1950–54), ii, 346. 28 September 1588 (Letter 502).

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.* ii, 512. 3 July 1589 (Letter 612). 'De Lipsio nihil hactenus audivi; omnia illi opto prospera, sed nimium, mihi crede, diu illum nidum servat. Si inde se extricaverit, sentiet me sibi amicum esse [. . .] Credi vix potest ab omni malo intactos esse qui inter malos tam diu manserint. Et mihi sine pietate nulla placet eruditio.'

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.* ii, 520. 24 July 1589 (Letter 619). 'meo illa iudicio summittit, sed necdum perlegi.'

<sup>84</sup> Morford, *Lipsius*, 106.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Benci's letters: *ILE* II 87 07 12; *ILE* III 90 12 13.

<sup>86</sup> *ILE* III 90 12 13. 'Libere dicam, iucundum erat olim a viris eruditis, quorum manibus tua scripta teruntur, intelligi me esse amicum tuum; nunc est etiam amplum, cum frater appellor.'

<sup>87</sup> Hugo Peeters, 'La correspondance de Juste Lipse avec Plauto/Francesco Benci: le récit d'une amitié', in Marc Laureys (ed.), *The World of Justus Lipsius: A Contribution towards his Intellectual Biography* (Brussels: Institut historique belge de Rome, 1998), 97–119, here 104–5.

instead that this is a false dichotomy. Benci used the religious connotations of friendship to rouse Lipsius into action. Benci echoed Cicero's comment that a friend is another self:

Indeed, see that I consider you a second self, and I think you will be, since you, an actor of the first rank, act below your ability and I appear to be only someone in this theatre. Indeed, for me it is enough not to be hissed at.<sup>88</sup>

Lipsius in his published letters had cast Benci as a model and Benci called on Lipsius to emulate him. Friendships such as these invited inspection by outsiders. When the German Jesuit Jacobus Pontanus learned of Lipsius' reconciliation in Mainz, he immediately informed Benci: 'Listen now what Lipsius has done, a man well-known to you, and – from what I have seen in his two letters [published in the two *Centuriae*] to you – your admirer and distinguished eulogist.'<sup>89</sup>

Lipsius' letter of submission to Nicolas Oudaert also drew the desired response. Oudaert had indeed told Plantin's successor and son in law Johannes Moretus that Lipsius' use of the Stoic word *fatum* might be problematic in the eyes of some great men but that their concerns could be easily mollified in future editions. But Oudaert himself was basking in Lipsius' high opinion of him.<sup>90</sup>

Therefore when Lipsius prostrated himself over Oudaert's very light criticism, the canon did not know what to do. To Moretus he protested that he did not mean any disapproval. The *Politica* were absolute *oracula*. 'But yet, your letter has me anxious that this great friend appears to suggest he should abstain from this sort of writing' and this had not been Oudaert's intention at all.<sup>91</sup>

I have argued that Lipsius employed the humanist rhetoric and understanding of friendship to prepare his return. The practical aim should not be neglected, of course. Lipsius needed the support of these men in order to effect his return to Catholicism and the Southern Netherlands. Cast in the language of courtship and kinship, they certainly stand in contrast to Peter Miller's study

<sup>88</sup> *ILE* III 90 12 13. 'Quin vide quam te alterum me esse putem, futurum arbitror, ut tu actor primarum partium minus aliquanto contendas quam potes, ut ego aliquid esse videar in hoc theatro; et quidem satis est, ut ne exsibilis.' Cf. Cicero, *De Amicitia* XXI:80.

<sup>89</sup> De Landsheer, 'From North to South', 330 (Appendix 2; dated 14 June 1591). 'Nunc audi quid fecerit Lipsius, tibi minime ignotus homo, et tui – quod ex duabus eius epistolis ad te perspexi – admirator et laudator egregius.'

<sup>90</sup> *Plantin*, viii–ix, 597–8. 23 October 1589 (Letter 1503). 'Caeterum tanti ne Oudartum Lipsius facit, ut iudicium illius existimet aliquid esse? Crede mihi, mi Morete, etiamsi certo compertum habeam nullum mihi esse iudicium, hoc tamen tanti viri Elogio maiorem in modum gaudeo, quando id non potest non esse boni alicuius affectus iudicium.'

<sup>91</sup> *ILE* III [89 12 30]. 'Ceterum in l[itte]ris tuis anxium me habet quod amicus ille magnus de abstinendo ab hu[ius] modi g[ene]ris scriptione videtur innuere.' Moretus copied out this passage from Oudaert in a letter to Lipsius. Both fragment and letter are undated. *ILE* suggests that Oudaert's worries pre-empted Lipsius' prostration but this is, given the similarity, implausible and not the only reading possible from the evidence available.

of the neo-Stoic understanding of friendship as rational in nature and distinct from love, which was passionate and hence fleeting.<sup>92</sup> And to some extent Lipsius' expressions of friendship were rhetorical. Certainly, some of the promises made by Lipsius were feigned. When Lampsonius discovered that Lipsius had passed through Cologne without paying his respects to Ximenes (who resided there), he was deeply upset. Lipsius' neglect, as Ron Truman has shown, is easily understood; the Spanish theologian was simply too heterodox for Lipsius to associate himself with.<sup>93</sup> Similarly, Lipsius' promise that he would expurgate anything disagreeable to the Catholic faith from his writings should be – and has been – taken with a grain of salt.<sup>94</sup>

At the same time we should not ignore the *religious* dimension of friendship based on the understanding that one could not find God without a guide. Constance Furey has shown the importance of friendship for the religious aspirations of an earlier generation of humanists. I argue that these relationships offered a platform on which Lipsius could act out his reconciliation. We have seen Lipsius' friendship with Oudaert as a forum for his public, implicit submission to the Catholic Church. By the same token, Lipsius' process of reconciliation did not end in Mainz. One last friendship completed it.

### III

Upon arrival at the Jesuit College of Mainz, Lipsius sent a letter to Martin Delrio, then at the Jesuit College of Liège:

I have arrived safe and sound in Germany amongst the Jesuits. I speak falsely when I say *safe* [*salvus*]; I arrived sick and weighed down by the weight of my sins. [. . .] No more remains than that I should persevere on this straight road and walk thereon with a firm step.

[*salvus atque incolumis perveni in Germaniam ad Patres vestros. Mentior, salvus. Aeger perveni, et pressus pondere peccatorum. [. . .] hoc unum superest, ut perseverem in bona via et firmo eam pede calcem.*]<sup>95</sup>

It was Delrio who in this letter was designated both the motivator of Lipsius' departure and as a friend and brother.

Help me with your prayers, you who have led me, in part, to this place, after reading your wholesome letters; may God chastise me if I have ever been at

<sup>92</sup> Peter Miller, *Peiresc's Europe: Learning and Virtue in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 41–2, 49–75, esp. 58–60.

<sup>93</sup> Truman, 'Lipsius, Arias Montano and Ximenes', 383.

<sup>94</sup> Lipsius' promise is recounted in the letters of both Busaeus and Delrio to Benci. De Landtsheer, 'From North to South', 328; Rome, Archivio della Pontificia Università Gregoriana (hereafter APUG), MS 532, 30 (Dated 11 December 1591).

<sup>95</sup> [JLE 91 04 14 D].

peace. Night and day have I been goaded by that spur, nor have I had any genuine sleep, but only a persistent insomnia. [. . .] Rejoice, *brother*, in having truly recovered a *friend and a brother*, and forgive what is past and done with, so God may also forgive you.

[Iuva o me tuis precibus, tu, inquam, qui ad hanc me in parte duxisti, post cuius salutare litteras Deum iterum iratum habeam si unquam conquievi. Nocte et die me fodit ille stimulus, nec ipse somnus mihi nisi per insomnia inquietus. Deo gratia esto, qui invitum quasi et reluctantem sic eduxit et posuit in locis ubi mihi, ecclesiae et reip[ublicae] possim esse utilis. Quod serio recipio me (illo adiuvente) facturum. [. . .] Laetare frater, qui vere fratrem et amicum recepisti et ignosce omnia praeterita, ita Deus tibi quoque ignoscat.]<sup>96</sup>

Lipsius signed his letter as ‘Now finally truly your brother J[ustus] Lipsius’.<sup>97</sup> The Jesuits were quick to acknowledge the role assigned to Delrio. In his letter to Benci written half a year later, Johannes Busaeus described Delrio as the ‘author of his [Lipsius’] conversion’.<sup>98</sup> In a letter to his student Heribertus Rosweyde, Delrio wrote that Lipsius ‘has chosen me to be his Judge on matters of conscience’.<sup>99</sup> Delrio was in many ways an ideal choice. We have already seen how a short letter to Delrio in the 1586 *Centuria* served as a justification for Lipsius’ departure from Leuven in 1578. And Delrio, who left the Low Countries for Spain shortly after Lipsius, could at least not fault his friend for leaving. Whether Lipsius knew of Delrio’s entry into the Society of Jesus when the 1586 *Centuria* appeared in print is uncertain. Nor do we know when Lipsius heard of Delrio’s return to the Low Countries, but in his *Electa* (1580) Lipsius already reminisced about their friendship and solicited information about Delrio’s whereabouts.<sup>100</sup> Lipsius’ private, lost letter not only coincided with the publication of Lipsius’ notes on Senecan tragedy in which he had praised Delrio, it also followed soon after the Jesuit’s reluctant return from Spain.<sup>101</sup>

Delrio played his part with verve. He carefully drafted a reply on the back of Lipsius’ letter and sent two (slightly differing) versions to Spa and Cologne in the hope that a copy would find Lipsius there.<sup>102</sup> By comparing Lipsius’ exile in Leiden to that of Jesus in Egypt, Delrio was almost turning Lipsius into

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.* My emphasis.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.* ‘Nunc demum tuus vere frater.’

<sup>98</sup> De Landtsheer, ‘From North to South’, 328 (Appendix 1). ‘auctore conversionis eius’.

<sup>99</sup> [Rosweyde], *Vita*, 32–3. ‘ille me sibi ad conscientiae res Iudicem delegit.’

<sup>100</sup> Justus Lipsius, *Iusti Lipsi Electorum Liber I* (Antwerp, 1580), 176.

<sup>101</sup> Unfortunately we do not know where Plantin sent his letter to and Delrio’s movements are erratic. The Jesuit left the Jesuit College of Bordeaux, his home for the years 1584–86, in December 1586. Rome, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu (hereafter ARSI), Ep. Gal. 92, fol. 290 (letter from Pierre Lohier to Claudio Acquaviva, dated 23 December 1586); in August 1587 he is at the Jesuit College of Mainz. ARSI, Rh. Inf. 16, fol. 2. By May 1589 at the latest he is at the Jesuit College of Leuven. *Plantin*, viii–ix, 524. 25 May 1589 (letter 1465). Delrio was teaching at the Jesuit College of Liège when Lipsius contacted him from Mainz.

<sup>102</sup> Lipsius’ letter with Delrio’s verso draft: Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus (hereafter MPM), Arch. 86, ff. 405–6. One version was sent to ‘Coloniam Ubiorum’ (and forwarded from there to Koblenz); the second was sent to ‘Coloniae vel Spadae’. Leiden University, Ms Lips 4. All three versions of this letter have been published

Christ himself.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, Lipsius had, as it were, returned to life. 'I recovered you, whom I had lost; a friend who had died, came back to life for me.'<sup>104</sup> And Delrio, whose attitude towards heresy was otherwise not a lenient one, also pointed to St Paul and St Augustine, who both had sinned and been brought back to the true faith. Delrio freely mixed classical and biblical metaphors; he exhorted Lipsius not to let go of Ariadne's thread and not be as Lot's wife, transforming into a pillar of salt after turning to look back. At the same time, Delrio promised his assistance and affirmed their friendship. 'I was, am, and will be your friend.'<sup>105</sup>

This friendship was purposefully misrepresented by Catholics and Protestants alike. Both misconstrued the language of friendship; Lipsius' designation of Delrio as his guide was used to assign the Jesuit the lead role in this story. Heribertus Rosweyde, Delrio's Jesuit biographer, called forging Lipsius' return – 'between the jaws of barking dogs and between the roaring of lions' – Delrio's greatest achievement.<sup>106</sup> Petrus Burmannus, the hostile eighteenth-century Protestant editor of Lipsius' correspondence, saw in Delrio's reply the 'most certain proof of the triumph and joy' of the Jesuits ~~on~~ their achievement.<sup>107</sup> For Catholic polemicists, Delrio became the anchor of Lipsius' Catholic faith; for Protestants these letters were proof of Lipsius' submission. Claims that Lipsius had become 'a sort of puppet in [Delrio's] hands' are therefore heir to both traditions.<sup>108</sup> Although few scholars share this particularly harsh assessment, this misunderstanding of the language of friendship has underpinned both negative views of Lipsius and the common assumption that Lipsius' reconciliation was, in one way or another, not of his own making.

To be sure, Lipsius' protestations were humble indeed. Lipsius likened Delrio's words to 'sweet nectar'; they were 'more pleasing [to Lipsius] than dew is to herbs in the early morning'.<sup>109</sup> Yet, theories about Lipsius' docile submission ignore the manuscript evidence. Lipsius' letters to Delrio survive in a carefully compiled manuscript among Lipsius' own papers, as Leiden University's Ms Lips 3 (2). The public nature of the letters preserved in Lipsius' personal archive has been recognized.<sup>110</sup> With some very curious exceptions, marked 'to be destroyed' [*perdenda*], these letters were considered

in Aloïs Gerlo and Hendrik Vervliet, *La Correspondance de Juste Lipse conservée au musée Plantin-Moretus* (Antwerp: De Nederlandsche Boekhandel, 1967), 28–35 as GV 21 [bis/ter].

<sup>103</sup> [ILE 91 05 02] GV 21bis.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.* 'Recepi itaque te quem amiseram, revixit mihi qui perierat amicus.'

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.* 'Fui amicus, sum, ero.'

<sup>106</sup> [Rosweyde], *Vita*, 25. 'multorum circumlatrantium canum rictus, inter leonem rugitus.'

<sup>107</sup> Burmannus, *Sylloges*, i, 503. 'quare hic potius, quam nusquam volui deprehendi laetitiae & triumpho, quem de Lipsio ad se traducto, egerunt, quibus iam se olim manciperaverat, Jesuitae, documenta certissima.'

<sup>108</sup> Thomas, 'Delrio and Lipsius', 362.

<sup>109</sup> [ILE 91 06 06 D] 'Bibi suaviter tuum nectar: non ros tam gratus matutinae herbae quam mihi tui sermones.'

<sup>110</sup> Gerlo and Vervliet, *Inventaire*, 11 n. 1 note that Lipsius had already numbered the letters of Ms Lips 3 (8) for publication; see also: Jeanine De Landtsheer, 'Le Ms. Lips. 3 (4) de la bibliothèque universitaire de Leyde: une analyse codicologique', in: R. De Smet *et al.* (eds.), *In honorem Aloysi Gerlo* (Leuven: Peeters, 1997), 49–63.

for publication by Lipsius himself.<sup>111</sup> More importantly, Lipsius' letters to Delrio were not only preserved for publication, they were originally *written* and sent with a public audience in mind as well. Their original recipient understood this, for these letters survive in Delrio's hand. It was the Jesuit who arranged and numbered them chronologically, and very occasionally annotated them.<sup>112</sup> The letters were almost certainly copied at Lipsius' request.<sup>113</sup> Yet, despite Lipsius' spending considerable time in editing them, they were not, in the final instance, published.<sup>114</sup> It has, however, already been reported that one page from the manuscript is missing.<sup>115</sup> Careful study reveals that the dates of three published letters correspond to three chronological lacunae; in two instances the last two or three lines still survive in the original manuscript.<sup>116</sup> Lipsius, in other words, physically excerpted letters from the manuscript for inclusion in his *Centuriae ad Belgas*. And these published letters invoke a similar reliance on Delrio's guidance.

I am here alone [in Spa], but I appear all the more [alone], when [I am] here without a literary conversation with you. I beseech you, cultivate our literary discussions, not just to delight us, but to help us.<sup>117</sup>

When Lipsius in the preface to his *Centuria Prima ad Belgas* (1602) claimed to have constructed his life as a house to be looked into, he was – to some extent at least – right.<sup>118</sup>

We may speculate as to why the majority of the letters did not appear in print. Alan Bray has shown how the rhetoric of early modern friendship could easily be subverted, and this – to my mind – is what created the image of a submissive or weak Lipsius, a subversion of the rhetoric of friendship.<sup>119</sup> It is possible that Lipsius understood the dangers involved and sought to pre-empt this image of submission. In his autobiographical letter, for instance, Lipsius

<sup>111</sup> *ILE* VII 94 12 25 P; *ILE* VIII 95 03 05.

<sup>112</sup> Note for instance Delrio's clarification regarding the letter he had sent to Lipsius in Leiden. Leiden University, Ms Lips 3 (2), fol. 2r. 'In tue 1587'; also note Delrio's clarification of Lipsius' travels in the third person: e.g. Ms Lips 3 (2), fol. 16v. 'Lovanium mox discessit, unde sequentes.'

<sup>113</sup> Delrio had copied at least one of Lipsius' letters before. A copy of Lipsius' letter *ILE* V 92 10 08 can be found on the back of Delrio's reply *ILE* V 92 10 14 D.

<sup>114</sup> E.g. Ms Lips 3 (2), fol. 14r, where Lipsius affixed 'Epist[ola] V Martino Delrio Sacerd[ote] Soc[ietatis] Iesu; Leodicum' to the top of a letter.

<sup>115</sup> Jeanine De Landtsheer, 'From Ultima Thule to Finisterra: Surfing on the Wide Web of Justus Lipsius' Correspondence', in Karl Enenkel and Chris Heesakkers (eds.), *Lipsius in Leiden* (Leiden: Florivallis, 1997), 47–69, here 65.

<sup>116</sup> These three letters are: [*ILE* 91 05 27 D], *Cent. ad Belg.* II, 2 (the last lines of which survive on Ms Lips 3 (2), fol. 3r); *ILE* V [92 00 00] D<sup>4</sup>, *Cent. ad Belg.* I, 10; *ILE* V 92 06 03 D<sup>1</sup>, *Cent ad Belg.* I, 8 (the last two lines survive on Ms Lips 3 (2), fol. 15r).

<sup>117</sup> *ILE* V 92 06 03 D<sup>1</sup>; *Cent ad Belg.* I, 8. 'Soli hic sumus, sed magis videor, cum nec tecum litterarius hic sermo. Quaeso eum frequenta, non delectandis nobis solum, sed iuvandis.'

<sup>118</sup> *Cent. ad Belg.*, i, \*3r.

<sup>119</sup> Bray, *The Friend*, esp. 177–204.

described Delrio as ‘free-speaking’ [*liberi oris*].<sup>120</sup> In one of the published letters Lipsius wrote to Delrio: ‘Why or what would I fear from ~~those in Leiden?~~ I admit that they love me and they miss me dearly but *we are tied to no mortal in [any] one hour*’ – the latter comment could easily be extended to encompass the recipient of the letter as well.<sup>121</sup> Yet, Lipsius had also found other avenues to affirm his Catholicism. Lipsius marked his return to the Southern Netherlands with the publication of his *De Cruce* (1594), a title with strong religious connotations, evoking the (false) idea that this was a work of religious devotion. Christophe Plantin had mentioned the project to the Spanish theologian Benito Arias Montano as early as September 1587 – Plantin claimed that Lipsius did not dare to print the work in Leiden.<sup>122</sup> To a Catholic priest operating covertly in Amsterdam Lipsius advertised the *De Cruce* as proof of his devotion to the Catholic faith.<sup>123</sup> Lipsius’ correspondents professed themselves ‘crucified’ by desire during their long wait for the work to appear in print.<sup>124</sup>

In his letters Lipsius expressly involved Delrio in the project. ‘If only I could from time to time enjoy your conversation and judgment in person!’<sup>125</sup> He asked Delrio whether he should dedicate the work to the pope and the Jesuit lauded the idea.<sup>126</sup> But it was a small world and Delrio was dismayed when he discovered through another route that Lipsius had instead dedicated the work to the States of Brabant, his new paymasters at the University of Leuven.<sup>127</sup> In these letters then we also find a measure of insincerity. But it should also not surprise us that when Lipsius used the *Notae* of the *De Cruce* as a way to publicly thank and link himself to others (ostensibly for advice relating to the project), the first among them was ‘the wisest man and greatest friend’, Martin Delrio.<sup>128</sup>

## IV

Lipsius’ reconciliation with the Catholic faith was a necessarily public event. The repercussions of the ‘defection’ of a leading humanist (if that is what it was) made it so. Lipsius’ letter of resignation sparked immediate controversy. The Antwerp geographer Abraham Ortelius, a Catholic friend of an irenic bend, fielded a great many questions about the sincerity of Lipsius’ religious

<sup>120</sup> *ILE* XIII 00 10 01.

<sup>121</sup> [*ILE* 91 05 27 D]; *Cent. ad Belg.*, II, 2. ‘A Batavis etiam ipsis cur, aut quid metuum? amant me & aegre carent, fateor: sed nos devincti nemini mortalium sumus in unam horam.’ My italics.

<sup>122</sup> *Plantin*, viii–ix, 296. 16 September 1587 (letter 1303).

<sup>123</sup> *ILE* VI 93 11 14 (06?).

<sup>124</sup> *ILE* VI 93 11 02 M.

<sup>125</sup> *ILE* V 92 09 15 D<sup>2</sup>. ‘Utinam tui praesentis sermonibus et iudicio interdum fruar!’; See also: *ILE* V 92 10 08.

<sup>126</sup> *ILE* V 92 10 08; *ILE* V 92 10 14 D.

<sup>127</sup> *ILE* VI 93 06 28.

<sup>128</sup> Justus Lipsius, *De Cruce Libri Tres* (Antwerp, 1594), 101. ‘a Mart. Antonio Delrio, doctissimo & amicissimo viro.’

beliefs from his Calvinist correspondents.<sup>129</sup> In a letter to his London cousin James Cole, the geographer declined to speculate. '[Lipsius] may be Catholic or Calvinist; to me this is not clear. And if he had ears to listen with, he would be neither.'<sup>130</sup> But even someone as critical of Lipsius' rhetoric as Ortelius showed he understood the language of friendship. 'I fear strongly that with much enthusiasm he rushes to speak well rather than live well [*potius dicere bene, quam esse*]. But an old saying teaches us that we should know the faults of friends, not hate them.'<sup>131</sup>

Rather than disowning the rhetorical nature of Lipsius' letters, we should recognize that their long-term aim was the humanist's reconciliation with Catholicism. If his deference to Delrio was to some extent contrived, so too were the misdated or never sent letters included in his 1586 *Centuria*. A search for a 'real' or 'private' Lipsius inevitably leads to the discounting of part of this evidence. The reading I have proposed here, which takes rhetoric as its starting point, can account for the whole.<sup>132</sup> Lipsius understood that his reconciliation would be a public affair. It led him to adopt a role which at least one of his students attempted to emulate. In September 1594 the humanist received an emotional appeal from his student Johannes Esychius, who sought to follow in Lipsius' footsteps.<sup>133</sup> And we should note that Delrio never appeared to have any doubts about Lipsius' sincerity. In December 1591 he told Benci that Lipsius visited the Jesuit College of Liège nearly every day and frequently received the sacraments.<sup>134</sup> In May 1592 Delrio observed to the Jesuit Leonardus Lessius that 'either I am greatly deceived (but I do not think so) or [Lipsius] is egregiously and solidly on the right side.'<sup>135</sup>

Even when we exclude the ensuing controversy, the process of religious reconciliation was ~~through~~ itself necessarily a public one. Lipsius may have kept his exact travel plans to himself but his published correspondence gives no doubt as to the transient reasons for his stay in Leiden and his willingness to leave. His courting of influential figures both in the Spanish Netherlands and the Prince-Bishopric of Liège was carefully planned and performed in part in public. Private letters structured such a reading but a Catholic audience would have already been pre-disposed to read the *Centuriae* this way. After his arrival in Mainz Lipsius used both his friendship with Martin Delrio

<sup>129</sup> E.g. Jan Hendrik Hessels (ed.), *Abrahami Ortelii et Virorum Eruditorum ad Eundem [...] Epistolae* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1887), 524–6. 18 August 1592 (Letter 218). To his cousin Emanuel van Meteren.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 513. 6 May 1592 (Letter 214). 'nempe an Pontificius sit vel Calvinianus: mihi hoc enim non liquet. Et si aures ad audiendum habeat, neuter erit.'

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.* 'Vereor autem valde ne potius dicere bene, quam esse, summo studio contendat. At amicorum vitia quia nosse, non odisse, vetus doceat verbum.'

<sup>132</sup> See also: Bray, *The Friend*, 204.

<sup>133</sup> *ILE* VII 94 09 16.

<sup>134</sup> Rome, APUG, MS 532, 30.

<sup>135</sup> Jan Machielsens and Jeanine De Landtsheer, 'Recommending Lipsius; A Letter from Martinus Antonius Delrio to Leonardus Lessius', *Lias* 34 (2008), 271–82, here 279 (Dated 30 May 1592). 'Vel fallor prorsus (quod non arbitror) vel egregie ille et obfirmate in bonis partibus.'

and the language of friendship as a platform to further act out his reconciliation with Catholicism. Published or not, Lipsius' letters to Delrio were written with a wider audience in mind. Lipsius, as Francesco Benci observed, was an actor of the first rank. Our appreciation of his performance does not and should not render it meaningless.

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