

Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Upsaliensis

Volume One

Acta Conventus Neo-Latini

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Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Upsaliensis

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Alejandro Coroleu, Domenico Defilippis,
Roger Green, Fidel Rädle, Valery Rees, Dirk Sacré,
Marjorie Woods and Christine Wulf



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CHALLENGES TO CLEMENCY:
SENECA, LIPSIUS AND THE DUTCH REVOLT

Violet Soen

For Neo-Latinists, the virtue of clemency is reasonably well-known, but for medievalists it is less known. During the Middle Ages the virtue of clemency never figured as prominently in philosophical, religious or political debate as the four cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance) or the three theological virtues (faith, hope and charity). Erasmus, however, insisted in his *Institutio principis Christiani* that clemency was the virtue for which princes were best honoured.¹ So one might wonder why clemency only came to the foreground in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Was this caused by the reappraisal of Seneca's *De Clementia*? Did the edition of his *Opera Omnia* in Naples in 1475 pave the way? Was it then neo-Stoicism, especially in its political outlook, which furthered the specific reception of Seneca's *De Clementia*?

This contribution argues that there was more at stake. Fascination for Seneca's *De Clementia* could only increase because this classical text seemed to give a humanist answer to a changing society, in which a military revolution, the Reformation and ensuing civil wars shook its foundations. In this context, clemency was not only a matter of political theory, but also one of political and legal practice. Hence the edition of Seneca's *De Clementia* by leading thinkers such as Erasmus, Calvin and Lipsius should also be understood within a dialectic between political theory and politics. Within this context, it is significant that Justus Lipsius commented repeatedly on the virtue of clemency, both in his well-known *Politica* and his less famous *Monita* (which is the subject of the contribution of Marijke Janssens to these *Acta Upsaliensia*). In both works Lipsius' concept of clemency proved elastic enough to capture different and shifting meanings of the classical virtue in the sixteenth century. At the same time it echoed the political debate of his time, especially that of the Dutch Revolt.

¹ Erasmus, *Institutio Principis Christiani*, *Opera Omnia Desiderii Erasmi Roterodami IV*:1 (1974), 95–220, 142: 'admonens hoc esse boni principis semper intra regni terminos versari et peculiarem huius laudem esse clementiam'.

SENECA'S *DE CLEMENTIA* AND SIXTEENTH-CENTURY POLITICS

Why did Seneca's clemency seem an appropriate virtue in early modern Europe? And why if it did so for most thinkers, did it not do so for others, most notably Machiavelli? After the 1475 Naples edition of Seneca's *Opera Omnia*, editions of *De Clementia* appeared in 1478, 1480, 1492, 1496 and 1503. In 1532 John Calvin provided an edition and a commentary on *De Clementia* in order to acquire recognition as a humanist, choosing this text to comment on the important theme of the character of the sovereign.² Seneca's *De Clementia* was and is not an easy starting point for interpretation, as it is only preserved incompletely.³ Seneca wrote the text for his pupil Nero, to encourage the young emperor to be clement, and by thus imitating the Gods to be their true vice-regent. The resulting text was a carefully constructed combination of a moral treatise on virtue, a mirror for princes and political propaganda for Nero's reign. With *De Clementia* Seneca aimed to illustrate how nature and reason showed that clemency was specifically apt for the *princeps*. Moreover, the virtue assured a prince a good reputation and the true affection and love of his subjects.⁴ This set-up made *De Clementia* fit perfectly into late medieval monarchical traditions staging the Prince as a *vicarius Dei* with the duty of *imitatio Dei*. From the thirteenth century onwards Seneca's treatise spread as an important body of political doctrine on the Italian peninsula.⁵

It was mainly Seneca's analysis of military strategies and the dangers of civil war which made *De Clementia* relevant in sixteenth-century politics, confronted with an acceleration and escalation of warfare, often framed as the early modern Military Revolution.⁶ Seneca had recommended

² J. Calvin, *Calvin's Commentary on Seneca's De Clementia*, ed. André Malan Hugo and Ford Lewis Battles (Leiden: 1969), 74*.

³ Amongst the many editions, the most recent: Seneca, *De Clementia*, ed. Susanna Braund (Oxford, 2009).

⁴ J. Rufus Fears, "Nero as the Viceregent of the Gods in Seneca's *De Clementia*," *Hermes* 103 (1975): 486–496, Miriam T. Griffin, *Seneca, A Philosopher in Politics* (Oxford, 1976), 155–158, Traute Adam, *Clementia principis. Der Einfluß hellenistischer Fürstenspiegel auf den Versuch einer rechtlichen Fundierung des Principats durch Seneca* (Kiel, 1970). For a more general contextualization within Roman politics: Melissa Barden Dowling, *Clemency and Cruelty in the Roman World* (Michigan, 2006).

⁵ Peter Stacey, *Roman Monarchy and the Renaissance Prince* (Cambridge, 2007).

⁶ Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution 1500–1800. Military innovation and the rise of the West* (Cambridge, 1996, second edition), Clifford J. Rogers, *The Military Revolution Debate: Readings on the Military Transformation of Early Modern Europe* (Boulder, 1995). See also: Jeremy Black, *The Origins of War in Early Modern Europe* (Edinburgh, 1987) and Frank Tallett, *War and Society in Early Modern Europe* (London/New York, 1992).

clemency in warfare. The *princeps* had to be the true but moderate commander of military troops; leniency towards besieged enemies brought more advantage than revenge. In the early modern context of rapidly emerging *crudelitas*, its antonym *clementia* became more and more important.⁷ Equally Seneca considered clemency as a remedy for internal struggles and civil wars, the other important source of unrest and military escalation in the sixteenth century. Only with clemency, Seneca argued, could the Romans return to the Golden Age. If Nero applied *clementia*, it would generate love and admiration of the people, by which the *res publica* could benefit from *securitas*.⁸ This reasoning widely appealed to sixteenth-century moderates which sought to avoid military escalation in the civil wars that troubled the European continent.⁹

Niccolò Machiavelli, however, rejected Seneca's plea for clemency. Living and observing the important French and Spanish invasions on the Italian land and peninsula – the start of the Military Revolution – he came to conclusions opposite to those of the Stoic philosopher. According to the Florentine secretary, violence and cruelty could sometimes be more lenient than clemency, because clemency itself risked creating disorder and chaos. A prince could sometimes prefer violence for his one safety and that of his state, as long as he strove in the long run for clemency.¹⁰ As so often noticed, Machiavelli referred to *Realpolitik*: during warfare, captains often preferred a firm treatment of the subjugated to make others surrender out of fear.¹¹ Recently Peter Stacey has shown how Machiavelli's rejection of Seneca's plea for clemency was in fact part of his much broader negation of the Senecan reasoning on the Roman monarchy.¹²

⁷ Daniel Baraz, "Seneca, Ethics, and the Body: The Treatment of Cruelty in Medieval Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59 (1998): 195–215.

⁸ Griffin, *Seneca*, 155–158.

⁹ Jan Waszink, "Virtuous deception: the *Politica* and the Wars in the Low Countries and France, 1559–1589," in *Iustus Lipsius, Europae Lumen et Columnen*, ed. Gilbert Tournoy, Jeanine De Landtsheer and Jan Papy (Leuven, 1999), 248–267 and Violet Soen, "Between dissent and peacemaking. The Dutch Nobility on the Eve of the Revolt (1564–1567)," *Revue belge de Philologie et d'Histoire* 86 (2008): 735–758.

¹⁰ J. J. Barlow, "The Fox and the Lion: Machiavelli replies to Cicero," *History of Political Thought* 20 (1999): 627–645.

¹¹ Geoffrey Parker, "The Etiquette of Atrocity: The Laws of War in Early Modern Europe," in *Empire, War and Faith in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Geoffrey Parker (Allen Lane, 2002), 144–168 and Jean-Marie Charles, "Le sac des villes dans les Pays-Bas au seizième siècle. Étude critique des règles de guerre," *Revue internationale d'histoire militaire* 24 (1965): 288–302.

¹² Stacey, *Roman Monarchy*, *passim*.

In addition to this Renaissance interest in *l'art de gouverner*, the Reformation triggered interest in clemency and Christian mercy.¹³ The Reformation not only generated a vivid discussion on the theological essence of pardon and atonement, but also caused political reflections on the role of the prince and the pope. Should he act as a Severe Judge or as a Good Shepherd towards dissidents?¹⁴ Erasmus for example asked Pope Hadrian VI why he was not able to forgive repentant heretics seven times seventy times, just as Christ had done.¹⁵ Clemency for 'repentant heretics' could be invoked for a complex matrix of human, social and religious reasons, but also in order to prevent uprising and revolt.¹⁶ Mario Turchetti has labelled this strand of moderate ideas as *tolérance-indulgence*.¹⁷ Even Sebastian Castellio, though seen as the most radical propagandist of tolerance in the sixteenth century, often used the term *clementia* to formulate his imperative of moderation and toleration.¹⁸

Seneca's treatise did not deal with religious conflict as such, but his success was also due to his concrete suggestions for the carrying out of clemency by means of pardon, or in Latin, *remissio* or *indulgentia*. In his second book Seneca had narrowed the focus of clemency to the juridical sphere and the practice of a king as *Judex*. In this legal perspective, clemency appeared both the 'inclination of the mind to leniency in punishments', as its result, namely 'the moderation that remits something from the punishment that is deserved and due'.¹⁹ Clemency was thus generally the act of showing indulgence and more concretely the right to pardon. This right to pardon proved to be the final link between Roman and early

¹³ Wolfgang Weber, "Gratia – caritas – charisma. Zur Deutung des christlichen Konzeptes der Gnade in der politischen Kultur Europas" in: *Freiheits- und Rationalisierungsprozesse in der politischen Kultur Europas*, ed. Ralf Elm (München, 2006), 178–219, 194–204.

¹⁴ Michel de Waele, "Clémence, oubliance et pardon en Europe, 1520–1650," *Cahiers d'Histoire, la Revue du Département d'Histoire de l'Université de Montréal* 16 (1996): 5–8 and Violet Soen, «De reconciliatie van 'kettters' in de zestiende-eeuwse Nederlanden (1520–1590),» *Trajecta* 14 (2005): 337–362.

¹⁵ Léon Halkin, *De biografie van Erasmus* (Baarn, 1991), 188–205.

¹⁶ Juliaan Woltjer, "Political moderates and religious moderates in the Revolt of the Netherlands", in *Reformation, revolt and civil war in France and the Netherlands 1555–1585*, ed. Philip Benedict, Guido Marnef and Henk Van Nierop (Amsterdam, 1999), 185–200.

¹⁷ Mario Turchetti, "Religious Concord and Political Tolerance in Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century France," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 22 (1991): 15–25.

¹⁸ Hans Guggisberg (trans. Gordon Bruce), *Sebastian Castellio 1515–1563: humanist and defender of religious toleration in a confessional age* (Ashgate, 2003).

¹⁹ Seneca, *De Clementia*, book II: 3.1: 'inclinatio animi ad lenitatem in poena exigenda' and Seneca, *De Clementia* book II, 3.2: 'clementiam esse moderationem aliquid ex merita ac debita poena remittentem'.

modern times. Although the right to pardon was based on Roman Law, it only grew substantially during the Late Middle Ages, acquiring consequently crucial importance within the context of early modern state formation.²⁰ In everyday judicial practice, repression was altered with grace and pardon. So Hugo de Schepper and Marjan Vrolijk concluded that “the other face of the struggle against violence” became “peace and order by clemency”.²¹

LIPSIUS AND THE DUTCH REVOLT

Justus Lipsius too listed *De Clementia* among what he considered as Seneca’s most important works.²² In his *Politica* of 1589, the philosopher called clemency the ‘Moon of Government’ and ‘a lenient and soft goddess’. He identified clemency as a virtue proper to mankind, but especially appropriate for princes.²³ In the *Monita* of 1605 he even urged every prince to read these *aurei libelli duo*, the two ‘golden books’ of Seneca’s *De Clementia*. This resulted visibly from his overall appraisal of the work of Lucius Annaeus Seneca, inspired by his French teacher Marc Antoine Muret at the *Collegium Romanum* during his Roman sojourn in 1568–1569. As Jeanine De Landtsheer has argued, Lipsius’ fixation on Seneca was probably more important in his life and work than his preoccupation with Tacitus.²⁴ The literary and philological critique of Seneca, however, served to Lipsius mainly as a starting point for further theoretical and philosophical reflection.²⁵

²⁰ Hugo de Schepper and Jean-Marie Cauchies, “Legal Tools of the Public Power in the Netherlands, 1200–1600,” in *Legislation and Justice*, ed. Antonio Padoa-Schioppa (Clarendon, 1997), 229–268.

²¹ Marjan Vrolijk and Hugo de Schepper, “The other face of struggle against violence: Peace and order by clemency in the Netherlands, 1500–1650”, in *Janus at the Millennium. Perspectives on Time in the Culture of the Netherlands*, ed. T. F. Shannon and J. P. Snapper (Lanham, 2004), 279–295.

²² Jean Jehasse, “Juste Lipse et la critique littéraire,” 131.

²³ Justus Lipsius, *Politica. Six books of Politics or Political Instruction*, ed. Jan Waszink (Assen, 2004) 324–325; ‘Unam Imperiorum’ and ‘Mitis et mollis ea Diva’. (I follow here the translation of Jan Waszink).

²⁴ Jeanine de Landtsheer, “Justus Lipsius and Lucius Annaeus Seneca,” in: *Annales Societatis Litterarum Humaniorum Regiae Upsaliensis-Kungliga*, Uppsala, 1999, 217–238, 218; J. Papy, “Erasmus’ and Lipsius’ Editions of Seneca: A Complementary Project?,” *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 22 (2002): 10–36.

²⁵ De Landtsheer, “Lipsius and Seneca,” 220, Papy, “Erasmus’ and Lipsius’ Editions,” 30–36 and J. Jehasse, “Juste Lipse et la critique littéraire d’après Sénèque (1605)” in *Juste Lipse (1547–1606)*, ed. A. Gerlo (Brussels, 1988) 127–132, 130; Jan Papy, “Lipsius’ (Neo-)

Lipsius' position in favour of Seneca in his *Politica* implied a clear refutation of Machiavelli's view on clemency in politics. Just as Seneca had done, Lipsius argued that clemency brought unity, love, safety, stability and honour for kings; similarly, he refuted the arguments against the use of clemency. Neither Seneca nor Lipsius, however, pleaded for unlimited clemency. For both philosophers, too much clemency could result in *misericordia*, which was not desirable for a Stoic way of life. Too much clemency could also damage the position of the king if his enemies exploited it as a sign of weakness. Furthermore, pardoning everybody, for example by means of an amnesty, was as cruel as refusing any pardon.²⁶ Lipsius urged clemency to be carried out on the basis of judgement (*cum iudicio*), because without it leniency was 'mere weakness and apathy, and even a fault, and certainly not a virtue'.²⁷ This means that Lipsius took a stance in sixteenth-century political theory, rather than – as Gerhard Oestreich has argued – forecasting the programme of the seventeenth-century *Machtstaat*.²⁸ In solving the problem of unlimited absolutism and warfare, Lipsius opted for clemency as a desirable virtue and praxis. *Clementia* was one of the *soft skills* – a soft Goddess – that was necessary in an authoritarian system.²⁹ Nevertheless, Lipsius seemed more cautious on clemency for religious dissidents disturbing the State religion. His statement *clementiae non hic locus* led to the famous clash with Coornhert.³⁰

Lipsius' plea for clemency can also be understood as a stance in the political debate of the Dutch Revolt.³¹ In a Senecan-Ciceronian way royal councillors discussed whether the use of clemency would make Philip II better loved, or on the contrary, if it would create an impression of weak-

Stoicism: constancy between Christian faith and Stoic virtue", in *Grotius and the Stoa*, ed. Hans Blom and L. Winkel (Assen, 2004), 47–72.

²⁶ Seneca, *De Clementia*, Book II, I, 2.

²⁷ Lipsius, *Politica*, ed. Jan Waszink, 326–327.

²⁸ Gerhard Östreich, "Justus Lipsius als Theoretiker des neuzeitlichen Machtstaates", *Historische Zeitschrift* 181 (1956): 31–78.

²⁹ Therefore, following Martin Van Gelderen, I am inclined to identify Lipsius more as the last Renaissance philosopher reflecting on the Virtuous Prince than as the first Neo-Stoic political theorist: Martin Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt 1555–1590* (Cambridge, 2002), 180.

³⁰ Gerrit Voogt, "Primacy of Individual Conscience or Primacy of the State? The Clash between Dirck Volckertszoon Coornhert and Justus Lipsius," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 28 (1997): 1231–1249.

³¹ James Tracy, "Princely *auctoritas* or the freedom of Europe. Justus Lipsius on a Netherlands Political Dilemma," *Journal of Early Modern History* 11 (2007): 303–329.

ness.³² The king chose a strategy in which he would punish first, before granting pardon upon his arrival as a *Rex Pacificus*.³³ As Gustaaf Janssens has demonstrated, the Duke of Alba thus conceived his repression in the Netherlands as ‘paving the way’ for the *adventus regi*, in which Philip II could arrive as a ‘clement king and forgiving father’.³⁴ In the end, Philip II never travelled to the Netherlands again. During the renewed military offensive after the invasions of William of Orange and his allies in 1572, the royal soldiers under the command of Alba and his son Don Fadrique committed so many atrocities – despite following a certain ‘etiquette’- that the *leyenda negra* of Spanish innate cruelty and tyranny easily spread across the European continent.³⁵

As has long been known, Alba’s policy was at the core of Lipsius’ criticism of the Habsburgs.³⁶ In 1568 he implicitly criticised the military strategy of the Duke by glorifying the *toga* rather than *militia* in his dedicatory letter to Granvelle.³⁷ At the University of Jena, he described Alba as a ‘furious tyrant’ with a ‘bloody image’, opposing the cruelty of the tyrant to the clemency of the prince. Equally his courses on Tacitus served to draw parallels between the cruelties of Tiberius and those of Alba.³⁸ It is important to ask though, if Lipsius had only the cruelties of Alba in mind: he started drafting the *Politica* after similar cruelties committed by the Duke of Anjou in 1583 and the Earl of Leicester in 1586 (although both were asked by the uprising States-General to lead their Revolt).³⁹ Furthermore, Lipsius wrote the *Politica* at the time that Farnese had eventually succeeded in turning the virtue of clemency into personal propaganda, by consistently using references to it in the military, political and judicial

³² A similar discussion is to be found in Michel de Waele, “Image de force, perception de faiblesse: La clémence d’Henri IV,” *Renaissance and Reformation* 17 (1993): 51–60.

³³ Geoffrey Parker, “1567: The End of the Dutch Revolt?,” in *España y las 17 provincias de los Países Bajos. Una revisión historiográfica (XVI–XVIII)*, Ana Crespo Solana and Manuel Herrero Sánchez (Cordoba, 2002) I: 269–290.

³⁴ Gustaaf Janssens, *Don Fernando Alvarez de Toledo, derde hertog van Alba, en de Nederlanden* (Brussels, 1993) en *Ibid.*, *Brabant in het verweer. Loyale oppositie tegen Spanje’s bewind in de Nederlanden van Alba tot Farnese 1567–1578* (Kortrijk/Heule, 1989).

³⁵ Geoffrey Parker, “The Etiquette of Atrocity: The Laws of War in Early Modern Europe,” in *Empire, War and Faith in Early Modern Europe*, 144–168.

³⁶ See also Tracy, “Lipsius,” 308.

³⁷ Jean-Marie Chatelain, “Juste Lipse cicéronien: rhétorique et politique de l’éloge du cardinal de Granvelle dans les ‘Variae Lectiones’”, in *Juste Lipse (1547–1606) et son temps*, ed. C. Mouchel (Paris, 1996) 455–470, 457.

³⁸ Jan Papy, “Virtue and Doctrine: The humanist programme of Justus Lipsius,” in *Annales Societas Litterarum Humaniorum Regiae Upsaliensis* (1998): 197–214, 204.

³⁹ Waszink, “Virtuous deception,” 258.

sphere.⁴⁰ So city sacks and atrocities were by no means a monopoly of 'the Spanish' and their soldiers – although the *leyenda negra* successfully spread that image⁴¹ – but rather the collateral damage of civil war, according to Lipsius, to be remedied with clemency.

It becomes even clearer that Lipsius wrote within the dialectics of political theory and practice when acknowledging that the philosopher benefitted twice from Habsburg clemency in the form of a tangible pardon.⁴² He was first pardoned in 1574 for his flight and sojourn in the Holy Roman Empire within the framework of a collective pardon,⁴³ and then again when returning to Leuven in 1592, by means of an individual letter of pardon. In this way Lipsius' biography showed a striking parallel to that of Seneca. The antique philosopher only started to write extensively on clemency once he had received it after his exile. In another striking parallel, both authors started to praise the clemency of the *princeps* of which they received pardon. After all, Seneca's *De Clementia* was an implicit panegyric of Nero's early reign. Lipsius took longer to commit himself to a panegyric, as some years passed after his 1592 reconciliation before he drafted the *Monita et Exempla Politica*. It was meant to be a clarification of the *Politica* but also a glorification of the Habsburg dynasty, in the person of Albert of Austria, who ruled the Habsburg Netherlands together with his wife Isabella from 1598 onwards.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Violet Soen, "Alexander Farnese and the *clementia principis*. A Reassessment of his 'Method of Clemency' (1578–1585)", in *Alexander Farnese and the Low Countries*, ed. Hans Cools, Sebastiaan Derks and Krista De Jonghe (Turnhout, forthcoming); Gustaaf Janssens, "Pacification générale ou réconciliation particulière? Problèmes de guerre et de paix aux Pays-Bas au début du gouvernement d'Alexandre Farnèse (1578–1579)," *Bulletin de l'institut historique belge de Rome* 63 (1993): 251–278. M. De Waele, «Entre concorde et intolérance: Alexandre Farnèse et la Pacification des Pays-Bas», in *De Michel de L'Hospital à l'édit de Nantes. Politique et religion face aux Églises*, ed. Thierry Wanegfellen (Paris, 2002) 51–70.

⁴¹ Koenraad Swart, "The Black Legend during the Eighty Years War", in *Britain and the Netherlands V: Some Political Mythologies*, ed. J. S. Bromly and E. H. Kossmann (The Hague, 1975), 36–57 and Violet Soen, "Más allá de la leyenda negra? Léon van der Essen y la historiografía reciente en torno al castigo de las ciudades rebeldes en los Países Bajos (siglos XIV a XVI)", in *El Ejército Español en Flandes 1567–1584*, ed. Léon Van der Essen and Gustaaf Janssens (Yuste, 2008), 45–72.

⁴² I have developed this more thoroughly in: V. Soen, "The *Clementia Lipsiana*: Political analysis, autobiography and panegyric," in *(Un)masking the Realities of Power. Justus Lipsius's Monita and the dynamics of Political Writing in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Erik De Bom, Marijke Janssens, Jan Papy and Toon Van Houdt (Leiden, forthcoming).

⁴³ Violet Soen, *Geen pardon zonder paus! Studie over de complementariteit van het koninklijk en pauselijk generaal pardon (1570–1574) en over inquisiteur-generaal Michael Baius (1560–1576)* (Brussels, 2007).

⁴⁴ Marijke Janssens, "Collecting Historical Examples for the Prince. Justus Lipsius' *Monita et Exempla Politica* (1605): Edition, Translation, Commentary and Introductory Study of

In the *Monita*, Lipsius saw it as a task to ‘collect historical examples for the prince’, also in questions of clemency. So in the twelfth chapter of the second book of the *Monita*, Lipsius once more addressed the question of the aptness of clemency for princes. First, he referred to the definition of Seneca in the second book of *De Clementia*: clemency there figured as ‘*clementia, lenitas superioris in inferiorem, in constituendis poenis*’. Subsequently he subscribes to the Senecan dogma that “the very clemency of the rules creates the shamefulness to sin” (*Verecundiam peccandi facit ipsa clementia regentis*), basing it on his own experience (*et in domo mea ac familia sum expertus*).⁴⁵ Yet this time, he traced the history of clement leaders back to the Bible, with Moses and David in the forefront and only further back, amongst many others, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Octavian and Vespasian. Even if clemency still figures among the most important virtues for a prince, it now figures as a Christian principle and as a virtue associated with *pietas*. In the end clemency would establish peaceful and stable relations between rulers and vassals. If vassals had the same *pietas* as their ruler, they would leniently accept his rule.

But in the *Monita*, the Habsburg glorification comes to prevail. Lipsius sees Archduke Albert as a perfect prince incarnating this clemency, associating him with the *clementia* of Caesar and the *magnanimitas* of Vespasian. Albert and Isabella had indeed renewed the Farnese clemency strategy, by granting numerous letters of pardons during their Joyous Entry in the cities and by incorporating *clementia* in the propaganda for their reign.⁴⁶ In this way, Lipsius contributed to the dynastic representation which Emperor Maximilian I had initiated at the start of the sixteenth century by appropriating *clementia principis* as an innate virtue of the Habsburgs, and already associating it with the *pietas austriaca*.⁴⁷ Lipsius may have been especially confronted with this Habsburg self-image when he frequented humanist court circles in Vienna, seeking the emperor’s patronage. Howard Louthan has shown that the *clementia austriaca* was

an Early Modern Mirror-for-Princes”, Ph.D. Dissertation, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, 2009. Marijke Janssens, “De *Monita et exempla politica* (1605) en Lipsius’ humanistische programma,” in *Iam illustravit omnia. Justus Lipsius als lievelingsauteur van het Plantijnse Huis*, ed. Jeanine De Landtsheer and Pierre Delsaerd (Antwerp, 2006), 201–220.

⁴⁵ Lipsius, *Monita*, book 2, chapter 12, 16–17 and 32–23, ed. Marijke Janssens, vol. II, 535.

⁴⁶ Margit Thøfner, *A common art: urban ceremonial in Antwerp and Brussels during and after the Dutch revolt, Studies in Netherlandish art and cultural history* (Zwolle, 2007).

⁴⁷ Veronika Pokorný, “*Clementia Austriaca*. Studien zur Bedeutung der *Clementia Principis* für die Habsburg im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert,” *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 86 (1978): 311–364.

at that time a quest for compromise in the biconfessional Holy Roman Empire.⁴⁸ Carefully avoiding references to Maximilian II in the *Monita*, Lipsius rather illuminated the *pietas* and the *iustitia* of Rudolf II and the *constantia* of Philip II. Where clemency had first served as a vehicle for Lipsius to ventilate criticism of Habsburg policy, the very same virtue had now changed into a panegyric for that dynasty.

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An episode from Justus Lipsius' life which has often been commented on took place on the afternoon of Friday 26th November 1599 at Louvain University, when the humanist philosopher gave an academic lecture in the presence of Archduke Albert and Archduchess Isabella. During an audience at 11 o'clock in the morning, Lipsius was urged by the Archduke to give a lecture for him and his wife after lunch. Hence, in the afternoon he found himself explaining some lines of Seneca's *De Clementia*. Afterwards he wrote to one of his friends that he had chosen to highlight *aliquid pro tempore*, "something according to the circumstances".⁴⁹ These words illustrate once more the conclusion of this contribution: the sixteenth-century reception of Seneca's *De Clementia* not only mirrored humanist and neo-Stoic interest but also questions of contemporary politics.

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⁴⁸ Howard Louthan, *The Quest for Compromise: Peacemakers in Counter-reformation Vienna* (Cambridge, 1997).

⁴⁹ Toon Van Houdt, "Justus Lipsius and the Archdukes Albert and Isabella", in *The world of Justus Lipsius: A contribution towards his intellectual biography*, ed. Mark Laureys (Rome, 1998), 405–432, 408–409.