

Justus Lipsius, political humanism and the disciplining of 17th century statecraft

Halvard Leira (hl@nupi.no)

Paper for 6th pan-European International Conference, Turin, Italy
Panel 8-20 International Law / The English School in International Relations
Saturday 15/9-845-1030

Abstract

Justus Lipsius (1547-1606) was among the most influential thinkers of the late 16th/early 17th century. His guides for action were highly influential in the establishment of moderate absolutism and what has been called the fiscal-military state across Europe. In this article I explore Lipsian thought in an International Relations context. Special attention is paid to his ideals of discipline, which were meant to order both the ruler and those that he ruled. Dignity, self-restraint and discipline were the recipes for the foreign policy of the prince, while the individual was subordinated to the purposes of the state, and taught to control his own life by mastering his emotions. If not a seminal thinker in his own right, it is necessary to understand Lipsius' thought and influence to be able to fully understand the 17th century theoretical approaches to peace and prosperity and the relative discipline of early-modern statecraft.

Bionote

Halvard Leira is a research fellow at the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs. His research interests include International Relations theory and international political thought, and the relationship between such theory and thought and political practice. His latest publication was the centenary history of the Norwegian MFA (with Iver B. Neumann).

Introduction¹

Justus Lipsius (1547-1606) was a thinker of tumultuous times. His political thought straddles the late renaissance and the early modern age, without fitting neatly into either category, and he was cursed with immediate fame rather than lasting recognition. Widely read, admired and copied in the 17th and early 18th centuries, by thinkers and practitioners alike, he was then largely forgotten. While the generation that followed him, with the likes of Hobbes and Grotius, produced several seminal thinkers, Lipsius was for at least two centuries hardly known outside the confines of classical scholarship.

The omission of Lipsius most likely relates to his focus on the practical aspects of theory.² He was in some respects more of a political scientist than a political theorist,³ explicitly producing insights of practical value to policymakers, and not pondering the nature of man or political institutions.⁴ The omission is nevertheless unfortunate, as Lipsius provides an important theoretical link and synthesis between earlier thinking on reason of state and natural law and later theories of absolutism and international law, shedding light both on his predecessors and his successors.⁵

The first aim of this article is to present Lipsius' political thought in an International Relations context. For International Relations scholars, interest in Lipsius should be piqued by the related historiographical⁶ and historical⁷ turns in the discipline over the last ten to fifteen years. In a historiographical perspective, the reasons for studying Lipsius are both his importance in his own right and his importance for acknowledged canonical IR-writers like Grotius and Hobbes. In a wider historical perspective, studying Lipsius provides insights into issues of discipline and governance, of central importance for our understanding of the development of the early-modern states and state-system. Following from this, Lipsian thought adds complexity to the understanding of early-modern Europe, and adds to the critical accounts of 1648 as the foundational moment for international relations.⁸

However, Lipsius was among the leading thinkers in the wider theoretical set of trajectories labelled Tacitism, neostoicism or political humanism, which was also highly influential in the

¹ An earlier version of this article was presented at 47th annual ISA convention, San Diego, CA. Thanks for valuable comments are due to my fellow panellists, the discussants; Chris Brown and Richard Mansbach, and Iver B. Neumann.

² Lipsius stands right in the middle of what Stephen Toulmin *Cosmopolis: the hidden agenda of modernity* (New York: The Free Press, 1990) pp. 34-35 *et passim*, has analysed as the broader move “from practical philosophy, whose issues arose out of clinical medicine, juridical procedure, moral case analysis, or the rhetorical force of oral reasoning, to a theoretical conception of philosophy”.

³ There is, however, no unanimity on this. Peter Burke ‘Tacitism, scepticism, and reason of state’, in J. H. Burns (ed.): *The Cambridge History of Political Thought* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), pp. 479-498, at 483, 485, sees Lipsius as a sort of political scientist, while J.G.A. Pocock, *Barbarism and religion: The first decline and fall* (Cambridge: CUP, 2003), p.279 explicitly calls him a philosopher, and Jan Waszink, ‘Introduction’, in Justus Lipsius (ed. Jan Waszink): *Politica. Six books of politics or political instruction* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004), pp 3-204, at 3, claims that reason of state thought was “closer to an antidote to political theory than a theory itself”.

⁴ Gerhard Oestreich, *Neostoicism and the early modern state* (Cambridge: CUP, 1982), p. 130.

⁵ In this article, I focus mainly on the Lipsian ideas of statecraft. I explore how Lipsius' writings relate to the development of international law in another article (‘At the crossroads – Justus Lipsius and the early-modern development of International law’, *Leiden Journal of International Law* 20 (2007), pp. 65-88.

⁶ Interest has been particularly, but not exclusively, directed at IR in the 20th century. Central references are David Long & Peter Wilson (eds.), *Thinkers of The Twenty Years' Crisis: Inter-War Idealism Reassessed*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995); Brian C. Schmidt, *The Political Discourse of Anarchy: A Disciplinary History of International Relations* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1998) and Michael Cox (ed.), E.H. Carr. *A Critical Appraisal* (London: Palgrave, 2000). In addition one can find a substantial number of articles and conference-papers. Torbjorn L. Knutsen, *A History of International Relations: Theory 2nd ed.* (Manchester: MUP, 1997) provides a much wider historical sweep.

⁷ References to the debate about this turn can be found in Nick Vaughan-Williams ‘International Relations and the “Problem of History”’, *Millennium*, 34 (2005), pp. 115-136.

⁸ See e.g. Stephen Krasner: ‘Westphalia and All That’, in Judith Goldstein & Robert Keohane (eds.) *Ideas and Foreign Policy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993); Stephen Krasner: ‘Compromising Westphalia’, *International Security*, 20 (1995-96), pp. 115-151; Andreas Osiander, *The states system of Europe, 1640-1990* (Oxford: OUP, 1994); Andreas Osiander: ‘Sovereignty, International Relations and the Westphalian Myth’, *International Organization*, 55 (2001), pp. 251-287 and Janice E. Thomson, *Mercenaries, Pirates, and Sovereigns. State-building and Extraterritorial Violence in Early Modern Europe* (Princeton: PUP, 1994).

establishment of the power-structures and governing ideologies of the early moderate absolutist states, and Lipsius produced political guidebooks that went through close to hundred editions. Lipsian theories of practice thus provide part of the normative/theoretical backdrop for the drawn-out processes of change that led to the creation of modern states, the state-system and the early-modern international society. Hence, an exploration of Lipsian thought will also elucidate the practice of 17th century statecraft, with more explicit disciplining and the growth of what has later been called fiscal-military moderate absolutist states.

Two caveats are warranted. Firstly, the point here is not to establish Lipsius as a canonical IR-thinker with a specific relevance for our own times. On the contrary, while Lipsian themes can inspire current readers, the emphasis is on Lipsius as historically situated thinker. Secondly, while elucidating the above themes, the intention is not to provide fundamentally new interpretations of Lipsius' work. Rather, the intentions are to present International Relations scholars with a body of work that to a great many of them is perfectly unknown, and, hopefully, to bring to the fore some implications of Lipsian thought that are often forgotten in the rapidly growing specialist literature on Lipsius. Before delving into thought and practice, we nevertheless need to situate Lipsius.

Lipsius and his age

The life of Lipsius

Justus Lipsius was born a Catholic in the southern part of the Low Countries in 1547. He led a nomadic scholarly life, studying with the Jesuits in Cologne and classical learning in Rome, then working as a professor successively at the Lutheran university of Jena, the Calvinist university of Leiden and the Catholic university of Louvain.⁹ Lipsius' movements seem to have been partly related to a wish for avoiding the bouts of active warfare that commenced with the revolt against Spain in 1568. He yearned for peace and order, and seems to have valued them over any particular denomination. While in the United Provinces he engaged actively in politics at a relatively high level, whereas his desire for engagement seems to have subsided when he moved to the Southern Spanish-controlled lands in 1590-91. He kept up a vigorous correspondence with people of all denominations regardless of where he lived.

Lipsius won his fame firstly as a commentator on Tacitus, and he was the first to distinguish Tacitus' writings into the *Annales* and the *Historiae*.¹⁰ He "laid the first foundations of Tacitism in Germany",¹¹ and is still considered to be a leading Tacitus-scholar.¹² He was widely considered to be among the greatest intellectual lights of his period, and corresponded with 700 different people, including leading scholars, artists and statesmen.

Lipsius enhanced his reputation through producing wildly popular "manuals" for princes and their advisers. One reading of his project is that Lipsius tried combine Stoicism and Christianity, more specifically fusing a re-wrought Senecan moral philosophy and Tacitean insights into disenchanting political practice, thus creating a doctrine for action that made "Machiavellian" politics acceptable and at least roughly compatible to Christian ethics. Apart

⁹ Waszink, 'Introduction', provides a very useful introduction, both to Lipsius' life and to the scholarly debate about his main work: the *Politica*.

¹⁰ Jan Papy; 'Justus Lipsius', in Edward N. Zalta (ed.) *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2004 Edition), <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2004/entries/justus-lipsius/>, (2004), accessed 9/3-06.

¹¹ Jan Papy, 'Justus Lipsius and the German Republic of Letters: Latin Philology as a Means of Intellectual Exchange and Influence', paper presented at the conference *Germania latina - latinitas teutonica*, (2001), accessible at <http://www.phil-hum-ren.uni-muenchen.de/GermLat/Acta/Papy.htm>, accessed 31/3-06.

¹² Waszink, 'Introduction', p. 6.

from the, at the time definitive, editions of Tacitus and Seneca, Lipsius produced two main treatises; *De Constantia*,¹³ dealing with the ethics of individual life in times of turmoil; how the citizens should endure and obey, and the *Politica*,¹⁴ dealing with how to rule principalities. He also wrote two introductions to stoic philosophy, and several expositions of Roman military and civil life. Most of them were immensely popular at the time, and Lipsius spawned both an imitational style and a host of treatises that reproduced his insights. During the age of enlightenment, Lipsius nevertheless was forgotten.

Earlier scholarship

Between the late 18th and late 20th centuries, Lipsius was chiefly remembered as a humanist scholar and stylist. Oestreich suggests that the reason for this is that later commentators concentrated on *De constantia*,¹⁵ and read it as an exposition of a private philosophy, rather than seeing Lipsius' works as a whole, explicitly dealing with political problems of the day. Those who indeed mentioned the *Politica*, seem to have read it anachronistically, ignoring its orientation towards practice.¹⁶ The reason for this, as Ford points out, could well be that the philosophy of Lipsius was not

*'political' in the modern sense, in that it did not really concern itself with political institutions of any sort. Rather, it was 'political' because it offered a code of behaviour to individuals who happened to be the sovereign heads of states – a code to which they were obliged to conform both in personal life and in the conduct of those affairs of state that are the daily diet of kings.*¹⁷

Although drawing on the *Politica*, the traditional interpretation is obvious in Skinner's seminal work on political thought, where Lipsius is presented as a transitional character, and where the highlighted passages deal with the submission of subjects, not the act of governing by the prince.¹⁸ With a growing interest in Lipsian political thought over the last decades, the traditional descriptions have been modified, if not outright refuted.¹⁹

The most influential re-appraisal of the context in which Lipsius stands, can be found in Richard Tuck's discussion of shift in humanism that happened in the late 16th century.²⁰ When political theorists re-engaged substantially with inter-state relations in Renaissance Italy, the chief classical source of inspiration for the humanists was Cicero, and the republican ideal was dominant, even if many of the states were indeed principalities. Political tracts mainly took the form of advice books for princes. As the 16th century wore on, the facts of aspiring Spanish hegemony and religious strife led to more pessimistic political thinking. Resistance against empire and in particular religious (civil) war shifted intellectual debate "from rhetoric and philosophy to politics and history".²¹ The civic humanism of the renaissance gave way to the political humanism of the baroque.

¹³ *De constantia libri duo qui alloquium praecipue continent in publicis malis.*

¹⁴ *Politiorum sive Civilis doctrinae libri sex.*

¹⁵ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 14.

¹⁶ See e.g. Friedrich Meinecke, *Machiavellism – The Doctrine of Raison d'Etat and its Place in Modern History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), p. 26, 197.

¹⁷ Christopher A. Ford, 'Preaching Propriety to Princes: Grotius, Lipsius and Neo-Stoic International Law', *Case Western Reserve Journal of International Law*, 28 (1996), pp. 313-367. Cf. Robert C. Evans, *Jonson, Lipsius and the Politics of Renaissance Stoicism* (Durango: Longwood Academic, 1992), p. 20: 'Lipsius seems less interested in abstract 'systems' than in the fallible but malleable individuals who comprised them'.

¹⁸ Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought, vol. II* (Cambridge: CUP, 1978), p278-283.

¹⁹ See e.g. Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government 1572-1651* (Cambridge: CUP, 1993); Ford, 'Preaching Propriety'; Adriana McCrea, *Constant Minds: Political Virtue and the Lipsian Paradigm in England, 1584-1650* (Toronto: UTP, 1997); and Andrew Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics, and Literature in the Age of Milton* (Cambridge: CUP, 1998).

²⁰ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government* and Richard Tuck, *The rights of war and peace: political thought and the international order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford: OUP, 1999).

²¹ J.H.M. Salmon, 'Cicero and Tacitus in 16th century France', *American Historical Review* 85 (1980), pp. 307-331, at 317.

The key vehicle for this change was a newfound interest in Tacitus. He had found fame in German lands already at the beginning of the 16th century, mostly based on patriotic readings of the *Germania*.²² More importantly, Tuck stresses how a turn to Tacitus as a political thinker could be found among Italian exiles in France in the 1570s.²³ Tacitus provided a way of handling issues that Machiavelli had raised, without acknowledging him. Tacitus also provided a sceptical and disenchanted view of politics that appealed to the tumultuousness of the times, particularly the war-torn France and Netherlands. Salmon for instance traces how, in France through the 16th century, “Tacitus, the historian of the corruption of liberty, emerged as the exemplar of private and public prudence, and a reinterpreted Cicero was relegated to the role of a minor precursor in prudential morality”.²⁴

Lipsius was both at the time and later seen as a leader of this transformation. He drew his prose and realism from Tacitus, and practical ethics from Seneca, creating “what can thus be called *neostoicism*; by linking together Seneca and Tacitus, Lipsius promoted a distinctive approach to society, privileging the role of ancient wisdom as the means to understand the demands of the contemporary world”.²⁵ According to Oestreich, the key concepts borrowed from the stoics were “authority, self-control, constancy, obedience and discipline”, but to them were added a political activism drawn from Tacitus.²⁶ The central virtue was *constantia*.²⁷

The move from Cicero to Tacitus was, crucially, also potentially a move from republicanism to an endorsement of absolute government. No longer were republican virtues, community spirit and the responsibility of the individual central, the focus was rather on virtues that fit in a society with stronger central power, individual subordination and standing armies.²⁸ As Tuck notes, “The stress on a *social* morality and on the ethical need to subordinate one’s own interests to those of one’s republic disappears completely”.²⁹ Where Cicero furthered republican virtues, the Tacitean state saw its citizens as conquered enemies, importing “ideas about war into civil life: all politics was now seen as at least potentially civil war, and our fellow citizens were no different from enemies with whom we lived in uneasy peace”.³⁰

The shift to Tacitus had particular relevance in the Netherlands. In both *Germania* and *Historiae*, Tacitus wrote at length about the Batavians of the Low Countries, and even saw the Batavian revolt against the Roman Empire in a positive light. A “Batavian myth” had been elaborated in the early 16th century, and as the rebel provinces were fighting for their existence against the Spanish Habsburgs around the turn of the century, Tacitus was a tremendously fitting writer to turn to.³¹ As Schama points out, the turn of the century witnessed how “a succession of more austere and critical histories [...] stayed close to Tacitus and other dependable Roman sources like Pliny and Strabo to relate the history of the

²² Donald R. Kelley, ‘*Tacitus Noster: The Germania in the renaissance and reformation*’, in T. J. Luce & A. J. Woodman (eds.) *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton: PUP 1993), pp. 152-167.

²³ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 40.

²⁴ Salmon, ‘Cicero and Tacitus’, p. 307.

²⁵ McCrea, *Constant Minds*, pp. 4-5. See also Evans, *Jonson, Lipsius*, p. 2. As Mark Morford, ‘Tacitean *Prudentia* and the Doctrines of Justus Lipsius’, in T. J. Luce & A. J. Woodman (eds.) *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton: PUP, 1993), p. 136 puts it: “Lipsius preferred to draw universal lessons from the examples of history, which he found to be more valuable than the general precepts of philosophers. On these terms the prudentia of Tacitus contained more valuable doctrine than the precepts of Aristotle and Plato”. Lipsius hardly ever mentioned contemporary thinkers in his political writings, but there can be found influences from among others Machiavelli, Guiccardini and Bodin in the *Politica*.

²⁶ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 96.

²⁷ *Ibid* p. 6, 13, 18; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 52. It should nevertheless be stressed that Lipsius’ thought was not a seamless whole, and that different emphasis can be found in different texts, Waszink ‘Introduction’, pp. 12-14.

²⁸ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 346-348.

²⁹ *Ibid* p. 51.

³⁰ Tuck, *The rights of war and peace*, p. 10.

³¹ Jonathan Israel, *The Dutch Republic. Its Rise, Greatness and Fall 1477-1806* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 57-58, 442.

Batavians and their undefeated war against Roman imperial tyranny”.³² Warfare, particularly of the religious kind, was of crucial importance for the shift in political thinking. Both in his life and in his works, war was also of the essence for Lipsius. This is evidently clear in the text that reignited interest in Lipsius’ political thinking and influence; the seminal work of Gerhard Oestreich.

Oestreich’s work can be read as a reaction against the different materialist explanations of the emergence of the post-feudal/early-modern state. Even though he does not explicitly criticise the literature describing the development of the fiscal-military state, he does lament that

*The elaboration of army organization and state finance, two of the most important instruments at the state’s disposal in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are held to have resulted from military and political necessity and to have evolved by themselves in response to the requirements of the real world [...] Hence, the theories of practical government which were current at the time have been left largely unexamined, as opposed to those which are interesting from the standpoint of legal and constitutional philosophy.*³³

Thus, according to Oestreich, the materialist determinism inherent in much historical sociology de-contextualises the military and fiscal practices that were crucial in enabling the early absolutist states. One could also add that in its earlier instantiations, such theories tended to overstate the exploitative quality of these states. Later explorations of the emerging fiscal-military states have paid more attention to cultural factors, and concluded that consensual and bargaining processes were more common than outright coercion.³⁴ However, there still seems to be little interest in the political ideology (or doctrine of action) that guided the princes and their advisors. Following Oestreich, this is where Lipsian neostoicism enters into the equation. Later studies of specific countries tend to criticise some of Oestreich’s conclusions, but they are modified rather than refuted.³⁵

This revival of interest in the political thinking of Lipsius has as of yet focused almost exclusively on domestic politics, even if some of the discussions deal with themes such as war, military organisation, sovereignty and diplomacy, that are of obvious interest to international relations scholars.³⁶ Historians of International Relations theory have on the other hand little to add. Knutsen mentions Lipsius in passing,³⁷ but in the English School reader on Grotius,³⁸ Lipsius is not mentioned at all.

Lipsius’ theory of practice

This part of the article focuses on Lipsius’ political writing. In the context of the *Politica* and related works, Lipsius’ approach to governing, discipline, war and empire is discussed. It is nevertheless not possible to engage with Lipsius’ theories of rule without first briefly noting his ideas about the overarching guidelines for ruling and being ruled.

³² Simon Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches - An interpretation of Dutch Culture in the Golden Age* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1987), p. 75.

³³ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 36.

³⁴ See e.g. Jan Glete, *War and the State in Early Modern Europe. Spain, the Dutch Republic and Sweden as Fiscal-Military states, 1500-1660* (London: Routledge, 2002).

³⁵ The studies include McCrea, *Constant Minds*; Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics*; Papy, ‘Justus Lipsius and the German Republic of Letters’ and Bo Lindberg, *Stoicism och stat. Justus Lipsius och den politiska humanismen* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2001). The critics play down the direct influence of Lipsius and/or the extent to which he was a neostoic (at least in the *Politica*). The critique makes little difference to this article, where we trace Lipsian thought more broadly. It should also be stressed that there existed no agreed upon “stoic” corpus of texts until the early 20th century. To Lipsius and his contemporaries, stoicism was “not necessarily a school in philosophy, nor a self-contained system of thought”, Hans Blom & Laurens Winkel ‘Grotius and the Stoa: introduction’, in Hans Blom & Laurens Winkel (eds.): *Grotius and the Stoa*, special issue of *Grotiana (new series)* 22/23 (2004) pp. 3-20, at 5. Neostoicism was also “an attitude or set of attitudes”, rather than a political theory in the strict sense Burke ‘Tacitism’, p. 491.

³⁶ The exceptions are Ford, ‘Preaching Propriety’ and, although Lipsius predates his main theme, Tuck, *The rights of war and peace*.

³⁷ Knutsen, *A History*, p. 64.

³⁸ Hedley Bull, Benedict Kingsbury & Adam Roberts (eds.), *Hugo Grotius and International Relations* (Oxford: OUP, 1990).

Constancy and Prudence

Lipsius' first major treatise, *De constantia* was a work of moral philosophy, where he prescribed how individuals could lead meaningful political lives in the chaos of war.³⁹ Lipsius was particularly concerned with "the preservation of the self not only from external attack but also from the passions which might leave it open to attack".⁴⁰ One should strive to achieve freedom from emotions, and to maintain firmness based on judgement and right reason.⁴¹ The subjects were supposed to endure with dignity and quiet fortitude; "to beare rule, and to be ruled, is not onely in the number of those things which are necessarie, but amongst those likewise that are profitable".⁴²

The striving for emotionlessness must be seen as an antidote to religious and political passion, and as the baseline for political action: "Lipsius argued otherwise [than earlier stoics] in *De Constantia*, declaring that virtue – or constancy – should be pursued through active engagement in public life precisely because of the instability of outward circumstances".⁴³ The corollary to such an active engagement by virtuous citizens was presented in the *Politica*, where Lipsius turned to the ones who rule.

The form of the work was the "mirror for princes", but like Machiavelli before him, Lipsius used the form as a vehicle for criticising the values of the traditional literature.⁴⁴ Form as well as language (Latin rather than the vernacular) suggests a conservative approach. The choice of language can probably be explained by Lipsius' strong attachment to perpetuating a European republic of (Latin) letters, but one should furthermore not discount the importance of packaging what could be seen as radical content in a conservative form. For Lipsius, the motivation for writing a "mirror of princes" was "the present estate of Europe, which I confesse I cannot consider without teares".⁴⁵ The stated goal of the book was to set out the rules for appropriate behaviour in civil life, defined as "that which we leade in the societie of men, one with another, to mutuall commoditie and profit, and common use of all. I assigne unto it two guides, Prudence and Vertue".⁴⁶ Although virtue and prudence were co-dependent; one could not have one without the other, in the *Politica*, Lipsius put most emphasis on prudence. This he defined as "an understanding & discretion of those things which we ought either to desire or refuse, in publicke, & in privat, [...] there are as it were two kinds or sorts therof, Domesticall, & Civile. Of the which, the first is profitable for it selfe, the latter for

³⁹ Papy, 'Justus Lipsius'.

⁴⁰ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 51.

⁴¹ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 19.

⁴² Justus Lipsius, *Sixte Bookes of Politickes or Civil Doctrine* Done into English by William Jones (London: R. Field, 1594; facsimile reprint Amsterdam: Da Capo Press, 1970), p. 16. The quotes are from this first English version of the *Politicorum*, a translation that is reported to be faithful to the original text, apart from the, as it were quite prudent in late Elizabethan England, omission of a few paragraphs on the advisability of female rulers, Evans, *Jonson, Lipsius*, p. 12. This translation has been preferred to Waszink's more textually accurate one, since we are interested in the influence and reception of Lipsian thought, rather than establishing some sort of definitive authorial intent. I have used Waszink's translation to establish modern meanings of some sixteenth-century English terms, as well as the original Latin. The *Politica* is a remarkable quilt of quotations from antiquity and Lipsian insights, and I have, for reasons of brevity, chosen not to detail when Lipsius quotes and when he comments.

⁴³ McCrea, *Constant Minds*, p.4. Against this, Lindberg, *Stoicism och stat*, sees constancy as a way of retreating from official life, and concentrating on commercial activities, while Martin Van Gelderen, *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt 1555-1590* (Cambridge: CUP 1992) and M. Healy, 'Curing the "frenzy": Humanism, medical idiom and "crises" of counsel in sixteenth-century England', *Textual Practice* 18 (2004), pp. 333-350, agree with McCrea. The latter even quotes Lipsius claiming that "the true Stoickes never professed such doctrine [of withdrawal]", on the contrary, hiding was not an option when political sickness set in, then one must "seek out a physician and embrace painful cures" Ibid p. 339.

⁴⁴ Waszink, 'Introduction', pp. 35-36, 42-43, 99. The traditional literature e.g. espoused strictly virtuous moral guidelines and a division between the virtues of princes and subjects, two elements which Lipsius explicitly challenged.

⁴⁵ Lipsius *Sixte Bookes*, p. 63.

⁴⁶ Ibid p. 1.

others”.⁴⁷ Prudence such defined stemmed from one’s own personal experiences, and the memory of others, i.e. history.⁴⁸

Virtus and prudentia became a combination of religious and ethical considerations on the one hand, and empirical and scientific thinking on the other hand. Thus, even if prudence should ideally regulate all activities, it was particularly important in government:

*For without Prudence, it [government] is not onely weake and feeble, but I may well say none at all. [...] Doest thou imagine to rule onely by force? thou art deceived. [...] Force that is not assisted with advise, of it onne selfe destroyeth it selfe. Neither is that possession permanent, which is purchased with the sword. [...] Power conioined with Prudence is profitable, but force without it turneth rather to detriment.*⁴⁹

Power guided by prudentia is not only morally superior, it is also the most effective power.

Prudence also transcended governing; it was to Lipsius a concept of individual morals as well as the domestic arrangements of the state: “The ultimate aims of prudence were found not in politics, but in constancy and piety in order that an individual or state might flourish as a virtuous entity”.⁵⁰ One of Lipsius’ main contributions to the development of the concept was his fusing of the private and the public aspects of prudence and his privileging of politics over rhetoric as the companion to history for learning and applying prudence, thus encouraging a politics of necessity and reading of history as the source for individual consolation.⁵¹

Governing

Prudence was the major guide for action, but the art of governing required further elaboration. Starting by defining the need for government, Lipsius declares that “There is no greater mischiefe in the world then want of government”.⁵² Among the different types of government, he clearly preferred monarchy, “but onely that which is true, and lawfull, which I define to be the government of one, imposed according to custome, and lawes, undertaken & executed for the good of the subiects”.⁵³ Here Lipsius is moving close to contractual ideas, where what is at stake is not so much the interests of the one prince, but the benefit of “all”. Lipsius also pursues the idea further, even suggesting that the prince “ought to set aside his owne privat benefits” for the good of his subjects, and at least to treat them to the same standard as himself: “The prince then, ought not only to observe Iustice to him selfe, but as I added, towards others likewise”.⁵⁴ He also explicitly notes that “the thraldome of thy subiects is not committed unto thee, but their libertie, defence and protection. Neither is the commonwealth thine, but thou art the common-wealths”.⁵⁵

The prince and his subjects were to some extent co-constitutive of the body politic, as can be seen in the use of a bodily metaphor when Lipsius described how the parts of the whole should be held together and given meaning by bonds of authority:

⁴⁷ Ibid p. 11-12.

⁴⁸ Even though the idea of prudence was drawn from Tacitus, his conception of prudence was less than clear: “Tacitus himself seldom used the word, and his *prudentia* is to be found in his narrative. [...] Tacitean *prudentia* therefore is the foundation of doctrines that are those of Lipsius, not necessarily of Tacitus”, Morford, ‘Tacitean *Prudentia*’, pp. 150-151.

⁴⁹ Lipsius, *Sixte Bookees*, p. 39-40.

⁵⁰ Theodore G. Corbett, ‘The Cult of Lipsius: A Leading Source of Early Modern Spanish Statecraft’, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36 (1975), pp. 139-152, at 143.

⁵¹ Salmon, ‘Cicero and Tacitus’, pp. 323-324.

⁵² Lipsius, *Sixte Bookees*, p.17.

⁵³ Ibid p. 19.

⁵⁴ Ibid p. 22, 29.

⁵⁵ Ibid p. 23.

*like as the feet, the hands, the eyes, do service to the soule, & by the commandement hereof, either we are in rest, or we labour: So this infinit multitude is goverened as it were by the soule of authoritie. But who can govern without it? The force of commanding is in the consent of them that obey.*⁵⁶

Among the many advices on how to build and maintain authority and thus ensuring the consent of the masses, Lipsius pays particular attention to different ways of achieving stability. He implores the prince to “Observe constantly those lawes which are once established; neyther do thou alter any of them”, and warns that if he “Let it be permitted to violate, and infringe the law of contracts, and you may take away the use of trafficke [commerce] from amongst men. It is then a most wicked and treacherous part, to breake faith, sith that it preserveth our life”.⁵⁷ The upkeep of law and contracts were of particular importance for a trading state like the Netherlands, where the merchants above all wanted freedom from arbitrariness and stable preconditions for trade.⁵⁸ According to Lipsius, a law-abiding monarchy could ensure just that, which gives sense to the above-mentioned quote that being ruled was not only necessary, “but amongst those [things] likewise that are profitable”.⁵⁹ The only exception to the rule of the sanctity of laws could, according to Lipsius, be found when the life of the prince was endangered: “Then I say, let him decline gently from the lawes, yet not except it be for his own conservation, but never to inlarge his estate”.⁶⁰

Upholding of laws and contracts alone did not ensure the uplifting of the people. The prince should not only be a servant of the commonwealth, he should also be an example to his subjects: “Doest thou long to have thy citizens trained up in goodnesse? Be thou a patterne unto them. A prince, by doing that which is lawfull and right, teacheth his subiects to do the like”.⁶¹ Teaching the subjects what was right also implied punishing wrongdoing, but rash and vengeful punishment should be avoided, just as leniency: “there ought to be great moderation: in such fort, that neither thou purchase thee reverence with terrour, nor love with servile humility”.⁶²

Moderation should also govern religious governance. On the one hand, Lipsius considered religious strife to be at the heart of Europe’s troubles, he preferred one single religion to be observed within a state, and suggested that for public dissenters, “Here is no place for clemencie, burne, sawe asunder, for it is better that one member be cast away, then that the whole body runne to ruyne”.⁶³ On the other hand, he also proposed that he prince should not intervene against dissenters who kept their dissent private. If one could interact peacefully, and obeyed the prince, inner beliefs mattered less.

A parallel logic applied to conspiracy and treason. Regarding conspiracy against the prince’s life, Lipsius comments that “There is nothing more glorious, then when a Prince is harmed, without inflicting punishment”.⁶⁴ Turning to treachery against one’s country, Lipsius becomes a lot more ruthless: “In my iudgement here is no place for pardon, [...]. They that are traitors

⁵⁶ Ibid p 108. Lipsius added to the use of bodily metaphors by drawing extensively on medical terms. As Healey, ‘Curing the “frenzy”’; Burke ‘Tacitism’ and Toulmin, *Cosmopolis* note with differing levels of abstraction, medicine, as a practical and particular science, at the time lent credibility to the rather less developed science of political philosophy.

⁵⁷ Lipsius, *Sixte Bookes*, p. 80, 35. Cf. the definition of civil life cited above, as that which leads to “mutuall commoditie and profit”, Ibid p. 11.

⁵⁸ Cf. Albert O. Hirschman, *The Passions and the Interests. Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph* (Princeton: PUP, 1977), pp. 48-56, who argues about the same period that what a world governed by interests rather than passions could provide, was predictability and constancy.

⁵⁹ Lipsius, *Sixte Bookes*, p. 16.

⁶⁰ Ibid p. 123.

⁶¹ Ibid p. 27.

⁶² Ibid p. 75.

⁶³ Ibid p. 64.

⁶⁴ Ibid p. 90.

to their own countrie, to whom and when will they ever be honest? never hope for it: they are to be cut off”.⁶⁵ Being unfaithful to one’s commonwealth was a lot more damning than being unfaithful to the prince.

Punishment was nonetheless a blunt tool for the reforming prince, effective only after transgressions had occurred and while possibly having a deterring effect, also very possibly creating renewed grievance. What was required was something that could make the citizens do the right thing in the first place; discipline.

Discipline

Discipline was of the essence in Lipsius’ thought, both the disciplining of the individual and of the society. As Oestreich puts it, the aim was

*to increase the power and efficiency of the state by an acceptance of the central role of force and of the army. At the same time, Neostoicism also demanded self-discipline and the extension of the duties of the ruler and the moral education of the army, the officials, and indeed the whole people, to a life of work, frugality, dutifulness and obedience.*⁶⁶

Discipline started with the army, but should permeate society sooner rather than later. Koivusalo concurs, for Lipsius, “the army was the foundation of the state body, and its discipline had to be maintained by means of continuous drills, strict regulations, self-control, obedience, prizes and punishments [his] articles on war were at the same time directed against cursing, swearing, gormandizing and whoring”.⁶⁷

At the overarching level, Lipsius desired that the soldiers should be “honest and courageous, which thou shalt never accomplish, except thou use these two instruments, Election, and Discipline, the one in getting them, the other in framing them after they are gotten”.⁶⁸ Selection of soldiers should be limited to “thine own subjects”,⁶⁹ since mercenaries are treacherous, rebellious and burdensome to the locals, whereas the subjects as soldiers are more modest, more obedient, loving of their own country and thus more valiant.

Turning to discipline, Lipsius laments that “therein we observe not so much as the forme thereof, nor the verie outward show. And as in times past they were wont to strive who should be most vertuous and modest, now the quarrel is who shall be most impudent and dissolute”.⁷⁰ The mess of current armies was compared to the order and discipline of the Roman army, which had conquered the world.⁷¹ More specifically, what animated Lipsius seems to have been his abhorrence of the volatile and uncertain military situation in the Southern Netherlands, where unpaid mercenaries roamed the countryside uncontrolled.⁷²

⁶⁵ Ibid p. 92.

⁶⁶ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 7.

⁶⁷ Markku Koivusalo, ‘The mythical body’, in *Finnish Literature Forum*, <http://www.kaapeli.fi/flf/koivusal.htm>, (1995), accessed 5/2-03. Koivusalo links this observation explicitly to Foucauldian thinking, and the change Foucault describes from symbolic order to microlevel order and ranking, cf. Robert Van Krieken, ‘Social Discipline and State Formation: Weber and Oestreich on the historical sociology of subjectivity’, *Amsterdams Sociologisch Tijdschrift* 17 (1990), pp. 3-28. van Krieken (1990).

⁶⁸ Lipsius, *Sixte Booke*, p. 139.

⁶⁹ Ibid p. 141.

⁷⁰ Ibid p. 140.

⁷¹ Ibid p. 151-152, cf. Jeanine De Landtsheer, ‘Justus Lipsius’s *De Militia Romana*: Polybius revived or how an ancient historian was turned into a manual of early modern warfare’, in Karl Enekel, Jan L. de Jong & Jeanine de Landtsheer (eds.): *Recreating Ancient History. Episodes from the Greek and Roman Past in the Arts and Literature of the Early Modern Period* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 101-121, at 115.

⁷² Ibid p. 116 n62. Where De Landtsheer sees Lipsius reacting against perceived excesses and suggesting preventive moves to avoid them, Glete, *War and the State*, 162 sees copying; arguing that the Army of Flanders at the time had a reputation as “the best army in Europe”. The question seems to be one of timing, as Jeremy Black, *European Warfare 1494-1660* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 107-117 demonstrates, the Army of Flanders could be both – fighting machine when paid, mutinous rebels when not paid.

To avoid such chaos, but still maintaining a credible armed force, Lipsius suggested creating an army consisting of a group of permanent soldiers, to be supported by a large pool of trained reservist. These carefully elected soldiers should be exposed to discipline: “a severe conforming of the soldier to value, and vertue”, effected through exercise, order, constraint and examples.⁷³ Exercise was not confined to the use of weapons and drill, but also, importantly, included general physical training and the digging of trenches and erection of palisades. Order referred largely to establishing clear chains of command and giving each soldier a specific place to be in quarters as well as while marching or fighting. Constraint on the other hand was intended to regulate the behaviour of soldiers outside of service, ensuring moderation in food, drinking and sex, modesty between soldiers and towards superiors and civilians and abstention from violence, plunder and pillage. Examples finally were rewards and punishment for proper or improper behaviour. Disciplining along these lines would have the added benefit of increasing capacity, as “Nature bringeth fort some few valiant men, but good order thorow industrie maketh many more”.⁷⁴ The practicalities, from recruitment via organisation to disciplining through training, were treated in even greater detail in *De Militia*, which Lipsius published in 1594-95. There it was suggested that “The combination of the Roman army (recruiting, discipline, and organisation) and, on the other hand, modern artillery, should create an invincible army”.⁷⁵

The regimen of military discipline suggests to us one of the two legs of what has been analysed as the “fiscal-military state” that developed in the period. In the United Provinces in the early 17th century, “The consequence [of warfare against the Spanish] was a huge fiscal liability imposed on a population of around one and a half million, and taxes that were far more penal than Alva’s notorious Tenth Penny, which had done so much to provoke revolt in the previous century”.⁷⁶ Thus there was also a strong need for an apparatus that could raise the necessary resources.

Lipsius spoke early and directly to such concerns. In typical rhetorical fashion, he raises the question “What commonwealth, or kingdome is there without Tribute?”. His answer is brief, but amounts to a statement of a theory of fiscal-military statebuilding almost 400 ears before such theories came in vogue:

*Neither the peace of the people can be purchased without weapons and man of warre, nor soldiers without pay, nor pay can be had without tribute: this is the ornament of peace, and the strength of warre: wherefore show then that it importeth the overthrowe and ruyne of the Empire, if the profit by which the commonwealth is sustained should be diminished: nay if sometime it be not increased.*⁷⁷

It is notable that Lipsius did not suggest to the imaginary princely reader that he should levy taxes so as to better be able to extract more taxes. Rather, we see the argument that military force enhances the prosperity of the subjects, and thus that it is the enlightened self-interest of the subjects to pay tribute. To make it easier to see this benefit, the prince should persuade rather than use force: “Is it not better to intreat, then to command?”.⁷⁸ A properly disciplined citizen should be able to make the right choice without being commanded.

Nevertheless, just as we have seen earlier, the prince should also make the right choice easier, by being an example. He should show good burgher-sense in handling the state finances and never use them for personal purposes:

⁷³ Lipsius, *Sixte Bookes*, pp. 152-160.

⁷⁴ Ibid p. 151-152.

⁷⁵ De Landtsheer ‘Justus Lipsius’s *De Militia Romana*’, p. 107.

⁷⁶ Schama, *The Embarrassment of Riches*, p. 252.

⁷⁷ Lipsius, *Sixte Bookes*, p. 97.

⁷⁸ Ibid p. 98.

*Who will be offended to be at a small charge for the commonwealth, if they see thee live soberly, and moderately, not wasting anything vaine? Let them understand that money is in deede levied for the common profit, and that thou art only a keeper and distributor thereof, as the goodes belonging to the commonwealth, not as thine owne.*⁷⁹

Expounding on the theme of the common good, Lipsius also made a strong plea for equality, arguing that the amount of tribute to be paid should correspond to the ability to pay. The means to this end was a yearly census, where censors should “value the ages, races, families, and revenues of thy people: to whome do thou give absolute power, to set downe the uttermost estimation of their substance”.⁸⁰ To ensure fairness and avoid rebellions against them, Lipsius suggested that the people should elect their own censors.⁸¹

But Lipsius did not intend to limit the censor to levying tribute, and suggested a revitalisation of the old Roman duties of the censors; imposing

*punishment concerning manner, or those excesses which are not forbidden by lawes. For the proper dutie [of the censor], is to correct those things which deserve not to be punished, yet being neglected or continued, they minister occasion of many great mischiefs. Yea being tolerated, they do, by little and little, wholly subvert an estate. For what awayleth it to play the men abroad, if we live like beasts at home? [...] This then is to be appointed as the Mistresse of shame and modestie, and choice is to be made of some one or other, as the corrector of manners, and master of the ancient discipline.*⁸²

The censors should thus be a sort of norm-police, shaming moral transgressors into mending their ways.⁸³ Lipsius suggests that even the prince should not be excused from censure: “Submit thy selfe to be censured, that is, [...] frame thy life by the same rule, thou wouldst fashion other men by”.⁸⁴

In sum, what emerges is a thoroughgoing disciplining of the entire society, of its means of violence, its finances and its morals. The discipline should be both starting and ending in the person of the prince. The main vehicle, and indeed inspiration for further disciplining, was the army. Military philosophy came to focus on “the transformation of individual psychology towards the internalization of discipline and the personal acceptance of the centralisation of authority in the state”.⁸⁵

Constantia, prudence, authority and discipline were of importance for personal morals, but were also transferable to society as a whole, and were important for the disciplining of the early absolutist state. Prudentia and discipline subordinated the ruled in relation to the ruler, but also curtailed the use of power, since the disciplining of the individual and of society as a whole were parallel processes: “The pleasures of life were conceded to the prince only in calculated doses. Consequently, his political functions required transformation of the prince into a disciplined, rational, modern human being”.⁸⁶ The supreme power of the prince might in the final equation be more important than the interests of the population. However, Lipsius stressed explicitly that the prince could only break the law for the sake of preservation,

⁷⁹ Ibid p. 100.

⁸⁰ Ibid p. 102.

⁸¹ Based on the previous passages, it is hard to agree with Pocock, *Barbarism and religion*, p. 283, that there is little in Lipsius to tell us “where the prince is to find the revenue he is to expend”, on armed forces.

⁸² Lipsius, *Sixte Booke*, p. 103.

⁸³ Lipsius (and his translator) spoke to the times; the Online Etymology dictionary refers to the first use of *censor* in the transferred sense of “officious judge of morals and conduct” in England in 1592, see <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?search=censor&searchmode=none> (accessed 7/7-06).

⁸⁴ Lipsius, *Sixte Booke*, p. 106.

⁸⁵ Van Krieken, ‘Social Discipline’.

⁸⁶ Wolfgang Weber, “What a Good Ruler Should Not Do”: Theoretical Limits of Royal Power in European Theories of Absolutism, 1500-1700’, *Sixteenth Century Journal* 26 (1995), pp. 897-915, at 905.

whereas crimes committed for the sake of enhancing glory were tyrannical (and were the only legitimate cause for rebellion).⁸⁷ As Burchell puts it:

*For Lipsius, both the activity of rule and the activity of being ruled were seen as positive exercises of self-discipline, using techniques which were in principle generalisable to the population as a whole [...] The ruler, like the general, helped create the objects of his tutelage as reliable and independent moral individuals; and the ruler was no less constrained by the ethical requirements of good tutelage than his subjects were constrained by their need to resist the blandishments of violence and rebellion.*⁸⁸

Thus, Lipsius sought “not only to discipline power and authority, but to limit them”.⁸⁹ Discipline was only the first step, to be seen in the context of “educating people to a discipline of work and frugality and on changing the spiritual, moral and psychological make-up of political, military and economic man”.⁹⁰

If we return to the Foucauldian theme mentioned briefly above for a second, Lipsius does not only strike us as a theorist of discipline, but also as an early exponent of the ideas later associated with “governmentality”. He explicitly links governing and modes of thought (government and mentality), discusses techniques for governing everything from the self to interstate relations, and suggest control over populations in the guise of a census. Lipsius’ prince also has strong pastoral traits, and should concern himself not only with conduct, but, as seen above, with the conduct of conduct. It remains to be seen how this should be achieved in inter-state relations.

*Foreign matters – dissimulation, war and empire*⁹¹

Writing at a time of blurry borders and before sovereignty had achieved any coherent meaning; Lipsius did not distinguish between domestic and foreign politics, other than distinguishing between policies directed against one’s own subjects and policies directed at other princes. His typology of the world’s people indicates the difference from modern polities: “In my opinion, there are three sorts of people, thine owne subiects, thy neighbors, and all men in generall”.⁹²

As a general rule of conduct, prudence also applied at the inter-state level, where Lipsius defined it to be “a skill to governe externall matters quietly and safely”.⁹³ However, external matters led Lipsius to modify the moral guidelines of prudence. He notes that there are some political thinkers who refuse to entertain notions of a mixed prudence, and comments that they “give their opinion, as if they lived in the commonwealth of Platon and not in the dregs of the state of Romulus”.⁹⁴ As elsewhere in the text, Lipsius offers conditional support to Machiavelli (or, more precisely Machiavellianism), even borrowing his rhetoric when discussing foreign princes, who “seeme to be made of fraude, deceit, and lying [...] and althought the shewe themselves to be like Lyons, yet are they in their corrupt hearts, dissembling Foxes”.⁹⁵ Thus,

⁸⁷ Cf. Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, pp. 56-58.

⁸⁸ David Burchell, ‘The Disciplined Citizen: Thomas Hobbes, Neostoicism and the Critique of Classical Citizenship’, *Australian Journal of Politics and History* 45 (1999), pp. 506-524, at 513.

⁸⁹ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 9.

⁹⁰ *Ibid* p. 159.

⁹¹ This section draws on Leira, ‘At the crossroads’, where the legal arguments underpinning the discussion about dissimulation as well as Lipsius’ just-war arguments and the relationship between empire and natural law are elaborated.

⁹² Lipsius, *Sixte Booke*, p. 67.

⁹³ *Ibid* p. 66.

⁹⁴ *Ibid* p. 112.

⁹⁵ *Ibid* p. 113.

*The Prince may [...] sometimes having to deale with a foxe, play the foxe, especially if the good and publike profit, which are always conioyed to the benefit, and profit of the Prince doe require it [...] the forsaking of the common profit is not onely against reason, but likewise against nature.*⁹⁶

The only thing that could legitimate immoral behaviour is the interest of the commonwealth.

Lipsius nevertheless declared that he only suggests an indirect course, not a rejection of the right course, and stresses that he does not forsake virtue. However, some measure of deceit might be necessary, and even to be encouraged:

*Decept [...] is a subtile councill, which swarveth from virtue or the lawes for the good of the Prince and the estate. There are three sorts thereof, [...] 1. Light decept is that, which paceth not farre from vertue, being slightly watered with the dewe of evill. Of this kinde I holde distrust and dissimulation. 2. Middle decept, which withdraweth it selfe from virtue, and approacheth neere to the confines of vice; in the which I put purchasing of favour and decept. 3. The third is that, which not only separateth it selfe from virtue, but likewise from the lawes, by a forcible and perfect malice, of which kind trechery, and iniustice are. The first sort of decept I persuade, the second I tolerate, and the third I condemne.*⁹⁷

The prince simply should not be too trusting, and might even with good conscience buy the services of foreign courtiers, particularly if it could hinder war.

The relevant measure of the deeds was thus not their internal moral status, but the reasons for doing them and the effects thereof:

*There are certaine kind of lies, in which there is no great offence, yet are they not without fault. And in this ranke we deeme that light corruption and decept are only then, when a good and lawfull king useth them against the wicked, for the good of the commonwealth. Otherwise it is not onely an offence, but a great sinne.*⁹⁸

What emerges in Lipsius is thus a reason of state that is not only concerned with the survival of the state, but where balance, peace and order are central components. Power might be important, but without wise control it does more harm than good. The wisely administered power, exercised with moderation and within the limits of the law, was the ideal. Although ends might justify means, in general, the concepts of dignity, self-constraint and discipline underlay the *prudencia mixta* that is prescribed for dealing with external affairs

Dignity and self-constraint were also to be sought in warfare, as when Lipsius admonished the prince to: “be true of faith in battell. Wherefore, o ye Princes, [...] hold inviolably the treaties of peace you make, and let faith be more precious unto you then your Empires”.⁹⁹ A concern with keeping the peace is also clear in the cautioning against conquest: “It is a harder matter to conserve Provinces, then to make them thine; they are gotten by force, and kept by iustice”,¹⁰⁰ and in the praise of diplomacy: “It were better for you by councill and pollicie to attempt forrain matters,¹⁰¹ and not to meddle with weapons”.¹⁰²

If war, in spite of precautions, was to break out, Lipsius claims that: “A mere naked force, is not avayleable to bring this matter to passé, if it be not tempered wit certaine industrie and counsel: that is, with militarie prudence”.¹⁰³ Prudence also entailed choosing a middle road: “In the enterprising of warre, I do admonish thee to have care of these two things, that all iniustice, and temeritie, be eschued, but especially iniustice: neyther oughtest thou ever begin

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid p. 115.

⁹⁸ Ibid p. 120.

⁹⁹ Ibid p. 35.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid p. 83.

¹⁰¹ In Latin “res externas”, Justus Lipsius (ed. and translation Jan Waszink), *Politica. Six books of politics or political instruction* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2004), p. 438.

¹⁰² Lipsius, *Sixce Bookes*, p. 84.

¹⁰³ Ibid p. 127.

any warre, but such as use and reason doth admit”.¹⁰⁴ Lipsius stressed that war, if it was to be pursued, must at least be lawful, and that what made the war lawful was “the author thereof, the cause, the ende”. The only lawful author was the prince, while just cause could be defense of one self or others, or invasion intended to redress previous wrongdoing, following the “lawe of Nations”.¹⁰⁵ All other causes were renounced, and the only ends that were just were peace and defence.¹⁰⁶ Peace, on the other hand, was considered to be “honourable, profitable, and safe”.¹⁰⁷ Even worse than regular war was civil war, “the verie sea of calamities”, which was even “worse and more miserable then tyrannie, or uniuist government”.¹⁰⁸

The tension between rightful wars and the benefits of peace and corruption of warfare underlay Lipsius’ ideas about empire as well, ideas that combined his admiration of Rome, the possibilities of peace that would be provided by universal empire and the need for Spanish goodwill in latter parts of his life with his dislike of war and conquest and his suspicion of the nobility. Thus, on the one hand, Pocock can quote Lipsius, from *Admiranda sive de magnitudine Romana*, as saying “The fear some have that a colony may grow stronger than its mother city, being at a distance, is of no weight; certainly it did not happen in the Roman empire. Nor will it in the Spanish, I judge it altogether prudent that they have filled the New World with colonies”.¹⁰⁹ On the other hand, this quote is followed by another one, where Lipsius criticised kings “who are forever exhausting themselves, by sending out armies and colonies, without adding to their resources; how can this fail to drain the spring and run it dry? This is a problem to be most seriously provided against”.¹¹⁰ Furthermore, as Papy comments, the providential granting of America to Spain “had its moral dangers, for the old Spanish vigor was almost carried away by avarice, luxury and greed, so that Lipsius concisely concluded his letter to a Spanish friend with the following observation: ‘the New World conquered by you, has conquered you in its turn’”.¹¹¹

The influence of Lipsius

It is hard to distinguish between Lipsius’ influence on political theorists, practitioners and theorists/practitioners, particularly since a large number of the people that he inspired fall into the latter of the three categories. Nevertheless, this part of the article will proceed from influence on practice towards increasingly theoretical heirs.

Starting with the numbers, *De constantia* was printed 44 times in Latin, 15 times in French, and was translated to Dutch, English, German, Spanish, Italian and Polish, totalling over eighty editions between the 16th and 18th centuries.¹¹² And even that was to be surpassed by the *Politica*, which was printed in 96 editions from 1589 to 1751, in Latin, Dutch, French, English, Polish, German, Spanish, Italian and Hungarian.¹¹³ When we compare this e.g. to the

¹⁰⁴ Ibid p. 128.

¹⁰⁵ In Latin “iure gentium”, Lipsius, *Politica*, p. 546.

¹⁰⁶ Lipsius, *Sixce Booke* pp. 130-133.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid p. 183.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid p 187, 201.

¹⁰⁹ Pocock, *Barbarism and religion*, p. 287.

¹¹⁰ Ibid p. 289. Karl A. E. Enekel, ‘Ein plädoyer für den imperialismus: Justus Lipsius’ kulturhistorische monographie *Admiranda sive de magnitudine romana* (1598)’, *Daphnis* 33 (2004), pp. 583-621 for his part reads the entire *Admiranda* as a pleading for (Spanish) imperialism and a unified Europe.

¹¹¹ Jan Papy, ‘Lipsius’ Prophecy on the New World and the Development of an ‘American’ Identity at the University of Lima?’, in Enrique González y González & Leticia Pérez Puente (eds.), *Colegios y universidades II: del antiguo regimen al liberalismo* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Mexico, 2001), p. 272-283, at 274.

¹¹² Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 13.

¹¹³ On top of this, the *Politica*, was frequently copied, if not outright plagiarised, and referenced by other authors. Ibid: 90, 162, cf. Morford, ‘Tacitean *Prudentia*’, p. 151.

29 editions of Bodin's *Six livres* between 1576 and 1753, Lipsius' influence on political thinking and practice can hardly be overstated.¹¹⁴

The rapid and sustained popularity of the *Politica* seems to have stemmed from its practical orientations and usability, it could be put to a host of different, and even contradictory uses. Style and format made it attractive by itself, but the main appeal seems to have come from Lipsius' "emphasis on the realities and practicalities of political life".¹¹⁵ Evans further concluded that:

*Lipsius was read and valued by those who already had power and wanted to increase or retain it, as well as by those who had lost power or felt its lack. His audience included kings, courtiers, and the critics of both. [...] The Politics could be used by those within the court or by those without, by those who favoured monarchies as well as by those who admired republics, by those who valued piety as well as by those with concerns more obviously worldly.*¹¹⁶

In this respect, the reception of Lipsius mirrors the reception of his greatest source of inspiration – Tacitus, who was also used to legitimate just about anything.¹¹⁷ Moss furthermore stresses that the *Politica's* character of a commonplace-book implies a lot more ambiguity and several more layers of meaning than usually attributed to it.¹¹⁸ If we follow her reading, Lipsius might well have *intended* his book to be of use to a host of different political positions.¹¹⁹ The open-ended objective can be interpreted as setting out the parameters of discourse, the *via media* between Machiavellian power and Senecan/Christian ethics, but not to affect closure by privileging one position over the other.¹²⁰

The earliest, and possibly most important and lasting influence of Lipsian/neostoic thinking was the emphasis on discipline and subordination that became a central element of the "scientific approach to warfare",¹²¹ and the related "military revolution". The key area for these changes was the United Provinces, and the reformers were the princes of Nassau. Maurice of Nassau, the later Prince of Orange (and commander-in-chief of the Dutch forces), had studied with Lipsius, and was presented with copies of the *Politica* and *De Militia* shortly after their respective publications.¹²² He and his cousins had been working on military reform since the 1580s, to better be able to fight the war against Spain and to protect civil society from unruly soldiers.¹²³ A system of standing armies, supported by trained reservists had already been operating in the Italian states for some time,¹²⁴ and the Dutch had started imitating it. Lipsius' work fed into this ongoing process, providing added impetus to the return to Roman ideals and the strengthening of discipline. Circumstances led the United Provinces to continued reliance on mercenaries, but the effects of the reforms were nonetheless largely the intended, by having the troops serve long-term.¹²⁵

¹¹⁴ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 57.

¹¹⁵ Evans, *Jonson, Lipsius*, p. 10.

¹¹⁶ Ibid p. 11-12. Cf. Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics*, p.7: "In a century [the 17th] so dominated by 'fears and jealousies', Stoic rhetoric was available and attractive to the 'winners' and 'losers' alike – a fact that bound many writers together who might otherwise have been strangers".

¹¹⁷ Evans, *Jonson, Lipsius*, p.12-14.

¹¹⁸ Ann Moss, "The *Politica* of Justus Lipsius and the Commonplace-Book", *Journal of the History of Ideas* 59 (1998), pp. 421-436.

¹¹⁹ Cf. the linking of Lipsius to the oral practice of rhetoric at the time, in Martin Dzelzainis, 'Shakespeare and Political Thought', in David Scott Kastan (ed.): *A Companion to Shakespeare* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), pp. 100-116.

¹²⁰ This reading differs from the one presented by Waszink, 'Introduction', pp. 74-78, who sees the *Politica* as driven by one specific authorial intent.

¹²¹ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 4.

¹²² Cf. Tuck, *Pilosophy and Government*, p. 61.

¹²³ De Landtsheer 'Justus Lipsius's *De Militia Romana*', p. 116.

¹²⁴ Tuck, *Pilosophy and Government*, p. 61.

¹²⁵ Gunther E. Rothenberg, 'Maurice of Nassau, Gustavus Adolphus, RAimondo Montecuccoli, and the "Military Revolution" of the Seventeenth Century', in Peter Paret (ed.): *Makers of Modern Strategy. From Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton: PUP, 1986), pp. 32-63, at 35.

The most important tactical innovation was the countermarch, which allowed for valley-firing of muskets, and which was based on the practices employed in antiquity for firing spears and arrows. The countermarch was accompanied by standardising the procedures for loading and firing, which in turn necessitated standardised weaponry.¹²⁶ To be effective, these procedures had to be repeated again and again and, again based on Roman examples diffused largely by Lipsius, practice and drill became intrinsic features of military life. Soldiers' spare time were used to repeat standardised drills, ensuring almost automatic reproduction and obedience even under fire.¹²⁷ By concurrently reducing the size of the tactical units, the Nassaus were able to have large numbers of soldiers manoeuvre in unison, and thus control the flow of battle to a much larger degree than imaginable before.¹²⁸

Again following the guidance of Lipsius and the Romans, when the soldiers were not drilling or marching they were "digging ditches and erecting ramparts".¹²⁹ In the field this had the advantage of reducing casualties. Both while campaigning and in camp, constant drilling and digging also had the much desired side-effect, advocated by Lipsius, of banishing idleness, which again greatly reduced debauchery and strengthened morale.

Military historians disagree as to whether there was a revolution, when it might have occurred and whether the drivers were technological, societal or organisational. If we accept that some important changes took place around 1600, Lipsian influences are hard to ignore, regardless of emphasis. As we have seen, he argued for technological advances, but just as importantly, for organisational changes as well as changing the place and role of the military in the societal fabric.

The military practices of the Nassaus in the late 16th/early 17th century were in turn widely imitated across Europe. The Swedish military practices under Gustavus Adolphus drew explicitly on the Dutch examples, as did the practices of a large number of German princes, while the Habsburg general and military thinker Muntecucoli referred directly to Lipsius.¹³⁰ With the benefit of hindsight, historical sociologists have described how these military reforms were a key step in shoring up the central power of the emerging modern kingdoms, enabling kings to establish relatively large armies with strong loyalty and obedience under fire, and also increasingly to ensure internal pacification. Such pacification in turn enabled trade, economic growth and increased taxation, which again helped sustain the army, just as Lipsius had envisioned.

Fittingly for a man who preferred peace to war, Lipsius also influenced diplomatic practice and the art of diplomacy. His works could be found in the libraries of both Richelieu and Olivares, and, in what was probably *the* most important textbook for diplomats of the 17th and early 18th century;¹³¹ Juan de Vera Y Figueroa's *Embaxador*, the author drew heavily on Lipsius' ideas, particularly the division that Lipsius made in the *Politica*, between the

¹²⁶ Geoffrey Parker, *The Military Revolution 2nd ed.* (Cambridge: CUP, 1996), p. 19-20.

¹²⁷ William McNeill, *Keeping Together in Time* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 128-129.

¹²⁸ *ibid.*: 130; Parker *The Military Revolution*, p. 20.

¹²⁹ William McNeill, *The Pursuit of Power* (Chicago: UCP, 1982), p. 128.

¹³⁰ Rothenberg, 'Maurice of Nassau', p. 60; McNeill *The Pursuit of Power*, p. 129; Parker *The Military Revolution*, p. 20-24; De Landtsheer 'Justus Lipsius's *De Militia Romana*', p. 103-104, 119. Glete, *War and the State*, p. 159 concedes that Lipsius was an important figure in translating and facilitating access to classical ideas of warfare, but qualifies this by arguing that Lipsius made "no marked impression on the tactical formations of the Army of the Flanders" after relocating to Louvain in 1592 (*ibid.* p. 162). However, correlation between the physical location of Lipsius and army reform can hardly be used as a test for the influence of Lipsian. Lipsius *did* have privileged access in the United Provinces, but this should logically indicate that the influence of his ideas in other territories would take longer time to materialise. Furthermore, Lipsius' probably most important work on military organisation, *De Militia*, was not published until 1594-95, and the *Politica* itself was not removed from the Catholic Index of prohibited works until 1593, and not translated into Spanish until 1604 (Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 57-58). Dissemination of ideas does take time.

¹³¹ "Most aspiring diplomats read it throughout the next hundred years", Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1955), p. 181.

dissimulation and deceit that could be necessary in the public life of Princes (and ambassadors) and the strict morality that should govern their private lives.¹³² Lipsius also corresponded directly with several prominent Spanish statesmen, and in what was the leading state of Europe at the time, his “combination of scholarship, religious piety, and sophisticated statecraft” was the most important theoretical input to actual politics, making him “far more popular than any politike, including Niccolò Machiavelli”.¹³³ Lipsius’ particular popularity in Spain could be explained partly by his affinity with the Spanish scholastics, like Vitoria, partly, as Corbett stresses, the double strand of militarism and piety that dominated Spanish statecraft, and that led to a search for theories that harmonised Machiavellian themes and religious values, such as Lipsius (and through him, Tacitus) was a prime example of.¹³⁴ In a recent book-length study detailing Spanish thought during the 17th century, Jeremy Robbins concludes that Lipsian neostoicism was “the most influential political and moral philosophy in Baroque Spain”, inspiring writers such as Quevedo, Saavedra Fajardo and others to such a degree that Lipsius could be seen as the “intellectual father of the Olivares generation”.¹³⁵

Moving to England, we find strong Lipsian influence in a lot of thinkers/practitioners like Jonson, Bacon, Milton and Raleigh.¹³⁶ This influence can be dated back to Lipsius’ involvement in the circles around Leicester during the years of English direct involvement in the land war against Spain (1585-87).¹³⁷ The most important example is Bacon, who modelled parts of his essay “Of Simulation and Dissimulation” on Lipsius’ discussion, and who suggested the *Politica* to young men as the best work on the subject of governing.¹³⁸ Even more impressed was Ben Jonson, who owned a copy of the *Politica*, widely annotated in his own hand.¹³⁹ He was not alone, in 1621 “In a sermon preached before the Parliament [...] William Loe lamented that too many Englishmen ‘studie Bodines Commentaries, Lipsius Pollitiques, and Machiuelles Prince..., more than the holy Scriptures’”.¹⁴⁰ Shifflet goes as far as claiming that “Stoic literature of the 1640s and 1650s is best understood, then, not simply as a response to the Civil War, but as a crucial part of the discursive history that prepared for and structured that conflict from beginning to end”.¹⁴¹ Lipsius was read in all English political camps, however, where in continental Europe his thought tended to underpin absolutism, in England, Lipsian thinking became a vehicle for mixed monarchy or republic.¹⁴²

In such a light, and given the relationship between Bacon and Hobbes, it should come as no surprise that there can be found clear affinities between Lipsius and Hobbes.¹⁴³ The *Politica* was e.g. mentioned as the only modern source of inspiration in the introduction to Hobbes’ first work, the translation of Thucydides.¹⁴⁴ For both Lipsius and Hobbes, the individual could

¹³² Gareth Alban Davies, ‘The influence of Justus Lipsius on Juan de Vera y Figueroa’s Embaxador’, *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 42 (1965) pp. 160-173, at 161, 164-167; Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*, chapter 22. This distinction, and the discussion about degrees of simulation and dissimulation, was also critical for the political debates in Spain more generally Jose A. Fernandez-Santamaria, ‘Reason of State and Statecraft in Spain (1595-1640)’, *Journal of the History of Ideas* 41(1980) pp. 355-379.

¹³³ Corbett, ‘The Cult of Lipsius’, p. 139

¹³⁴ Ibid p. 140-141, cf. Fernandez-Santamaria, ‘Reason of State’, p. 367; Anthony Pagden, *Lords of all the World. Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France c. 1500—c. 1800*. (London & New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 45, 112, 115).

¹³⁵ Jeremy Robbins, *The art of perception*, special issue 82 (2005) of *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*, p. 41 and (quoting J.H. Elliot) 42.

¹³⁶ Evans, *Jonson, Lipsius*; McCrea *Constant Minds*; Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics*.

¹³⁷ The connection with Leicester, and particularly Sidney, would provide the first inroad for Lipsian thought in England, and explains some of its popularity in English oppositional circles, like the one around Essex. See J.H.M. Salmon, ‘Stoicism and Roman Example: Seneca and Tacitus in Jacobean England’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 50 (1989), pp. 199-225; McCrea *Constant Minds*; Dzelzainis, ‘Shakespeare and Political Thought’ and Healy, ‘Curing the “frenzy”’.

¹³⁸ Martin Dzelzainis ‘Bacon’s “Of simulation and dissimulation”’, in Michael Hattaway (ed.) *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), pp. 233-240.

¹³⁹ Evans, *Jonson, Lipsius*: xv.

¹⁴⁰ McCrea, *Constant Minds*, p. 31.

¹⁴¹ Shifflett, *Stoicism, Politics*, p. 6.

¹⁴² Healy, ‘Curing the “frenzy”’, p. 339, 349 n.19; cf. Salmon, ‘Stoicism’.

¹⁴³ Burchell, ‘The Disciplined Citizen’.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 518-519.

find inner peace in a stoic retreat from the world, but in a larger perspective an absolutist state with one, and only one, religion was the only security against religious (civil) war. As Burchell puts it, Hobbes “is perhaps best understood as an inheritor of the culture of Neostoicism, and as deeply indebted to it, without actually being part of that culture”.¹⁴⁵

Returning to the Netherlands, there is some disagreement about the influence of Lipsius on Grotius’ thinking. Tuck points out that Grotius’ father was a pupil and close friend of Lipsius, and that Grotius held Lipsius in high esteem.¹⁴⁶ Both men were inspired by the earlier Spanish scholastic thinking about law and the role of the state, and not least by classical stoicism.¹⁴⁷ Eyffinger is more cautious. He notes that the two shared a distinctly social and political outlook, but sees Lipsius as a pessimist absolutist and Grotius as a more optimistic contractual thinker. Nevertheless, he also notes how Grotius, in one of his few forays into political analysis draws on the Lipsian idea of “power tempered by prudence”.¹⁴⁸

Focusing on the political discourse of the period, Ford makes a strong case for seeing the two thinkers as closely linked.¹⁴⁹ They both drew heavily on Tacitus and earlier stoicism and focused on “naturalist individual obligation” rather than political institutions, and strong, although law-bound authority, preaching “virtue and self-restraint to princes [...] a message of Stoic forbearance and self-control addressed not just to subjects, but to their sovereigns”.¹⁵⁰ In Ford’s perspective, Grotius is rooted not so much the quest for a new international order, as in Stoic moral reasoning.

Both Lipsius and Grotius were part of what might be termed the emerging Dutch bourgeois-scientific discourse, what Oestreich, drawing on Dilthey, calls “the Netherlands movement”.¹⁵¹ In the ongoing war of liberation against Spain, developing the military and mobilising the full resources of the state became a matter of survival. Oestreich has stressed the strong burgher element in this movement, e.g. through the use of metaphors from trade and seafaring. Such a bias is evident in the emphasis that was placed on the economics of warfare, how the military must be financed through regular taxation. Lipsius and Grotius were significant in the development of the doctrines that legitimated dramatic increases in the power of the state, in peace as in war. At the same time, there was a strong desire in the bourgeoisie for less unpredictability on behalf of the nobility and the kings, and a strong emphasis on the sanctity of contracts. Ideas about natural law and international law are expressions of this at the international level. In this perspective it is hardly coincidental that the Grotian emphasis on the sanctity of contracts was developed in the Netherlands, the strongest bourgeois bastion of the day. The idea of inalienable rights was vital for keeping trade unfettered. Lipsius’ *prudencia mixta* and Grotius’ later development of international law can thus be seen as attempts at transferring the disciplining of the domestic society to the external realm.

However, Grotius, and several of his contemporaries came to believe that Lipsius’ ideas were not really appropriate for a state without a prince, like the United Provinces. This led them to advocate an aristocratic republic (or an oligarchy), like Venice or ancient Rome.¹⁵² Paradoxically, even if Lipsius’ theories were undeniably Dutch, in their preoccupation with

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 518

¹⁴⁶ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 155, 159.

¹⁴⁷ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 37, 51, note 12)

¹⁴⁸ Arthur Eyffinger, “*Amoena gravitate morum spectabilis*” Justus Lipsius and Hugo Grotius’, *Bulletin de l’Institute historique belge de Rome* 68 (1998), p. 297-327, at 323)

¹⁴⁹ Ford, ‘Preaching Propriety’

¹⁵⁰ Ibid

¹⁵¹ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 34 *et passim*)

¹⁵² Richard Tuck, ‘Grotius and Selden’, in J. H. Burns (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Political Thought* (Cambridge: CUP, 1991), pp. 499-529, at p. 502-503.

peace, the virtues of the burgher and the opposition against interruptions of the trade, the United Provinces turned out to be one of the countries where specific Lipsian ideas about governing had less influence, at least outside of the military ranks.

Conclusions

As (western) international society again finds itself in transitional times, it should come as no surprise that the theories, practices and institutions of the period that saw the transfer from the pre-modern to the modern stage seem increase in salience. The renewed scholarly interest in Lipsius could in this perspective be seen as an effect of a movement of focus away from abstract sovereignty to what states have been doing while sovereign and how they have been doing it, as well as the challenges to that sovereignty. In this article, it has only been possible to present a first stab at an exploration of Lipsian thought in an International Relations framework, but some tentative conclusions and suggestions can be made.

The modern state grew out of complimentary developments in France and the Netherlands; political sovereignty was developed in France, inspired by Bodin, while the “drilled and disciplined standing army”, as well as the laws regulating state behaviour were pioneered in the Netherlands, inspired by Lipsius and Grotius.¹⁵³ The practical functioning of the fiscal-military states of early-modern Europe, internal as well as external policies, can hardly be understood without taking into account the prescriptions for actions drawn up by Lipsius.

Understanding Lipsian themes helps elucidate both later thinking and specific practices, enabling us to say something concrete about how one thought about and actually used power in early-modern Europe. Such an approach sheds light on the elements of a consensual agenda that existed in the state system even before 1648, not least centred on autonomy.¹⁵⁴ The states were not seeking to maximise power at all times; consensus about the autonomous status of the existing members of the system meant that there were limits to the use and maximisation of power. Maximising power was imprudent, as it transgressed the consensual agenda. Or, as Hirschman notes, the ideal of statecraft in the late 16th/early 17th centuries was the rational, individual pursuit of one’s interests, which would lead to gains for all parties, and would be vastly superior to earlier, more passionate policies.¹⁵⁵

Lipsian prudence could be seen to enable just this sort of rationality; both for individuals and states, and his perhaps most important contribution to political thought can be found in his innovative tying together the disciplining of the individual, the domestic polity and the external policies of the state through the concept of prudence. Oestreich clearly thinks that the ideas of prudence were developed in the context of the individual and then exported to the realm of the state. Tuck presents elements of a complementary analysis when he claims that the idea of the autonomous agent was first developed in thinking about international affairs, then brought “into *civil* life: all politics was now seen as at least potentially civil war, and our fellow citizens were no different from enemies with whom we lived in uneasy peace”.¹⁵⁶ What matters here is that it was the perceived similarities between personal, domestic and external affairs that made it possible for Lipsius and his contemporaries to apply the same logic of action to all three spheres. However, as the spheres were tied together by a common logic of action, that very logic of action, by emphasising rational calculation and individuality helped further the emerging differentiation between the domestic and the international.

¹⁵³ Oestreich, *Neostoicism*, p. 75.

¹⁵⁴ cf. Osiander, *The states system of Europe*, p. 36, 77-78.

¹⁵⁵ Hirschman, *The Passions*, p. 50-51.

¹⁵⁶ Tuck, *The rights of war and peace*, 10.

Lipsius provides a combined insight into political thinking and practice at the time when the renaissance fused into the early modern age. In the form of his treatises, particularly the *Politica*, as well as in his focus on the person of the prince, he can be seen as the last renaissance philosopher. However, in his emphasis on religious belief as a personal matter, in his adherence to social disciplining, census and standing armies, in his concern for stability and peace and in the political programme of mutual interests between princes and subject, excluding the perceived passions of the nobility, he stands on the threshold of modernity. His immediate followers down this path are Grotius and Hobbes, each in his different way incorporating and developing further Lipsian insights. To International Relations scholars, accustomed to reading history backwards and placing thinkers in neat categories, the genre-defying writings of Lipsius might be perplexing, but this very complexity is also what, potentially, makes him so interesting.