



Between Concord and Discord, Juan Luis Vives (1492/1493 – 1540) on Language, Rhetoric, and Politics

Kaarlo Johannes Havu

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
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Examining Board

Prof. Martin van Gelderen, Lichtenberg-Kolleg, The Göttingen Institute for Advanced
Studies

Prof. Luca Molà, EUI

Dr. Annabel Brett, University of Cambridge

Prof. Markku Peltonen, University of Helsinki

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This thesis has been submitted for language correction

Abstract of the thesis

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This thesis presents a new interpretation of the political dimension of Juan Luis Vives's thought by looking at Vives's reception and appropriation of classical rhetoric in the context of northern humanism. This thesis argues that rather than theorizing politics in the language of law, Vives's main contribution to political thought occurred at the intersection of reflections on cognition, rhetoric, and ethical languages of virtuous government. This is to challenge the existing scholarship in two ways. First, it questions a prevalent interpretation of Vives as merely a theoretician of an overarching political concord and peace by showing Vives's deep interest in the possibilities of political action in a postlapsarian world of discord. Secondly, the thesis shows that while Vives, and northern humanism more generally, produced little systematic reflection on some of the basic political and legal concepts, Vives's theorization of cognitive, ethical, linguistic, and educational viewpoints was a way to frame the ultimate conditions and possibilities of political action in a non-utopian world. In the tumultuous 1520s and 1530s, when the religious unity of Christendom and the political concord between different European states were increasingly threatened, Vives argues that language and politics are inseparably entangled on three different levels. First, political, and ethical languages are conceptualized essentially rhetorically; they are meant to be transformative and they have to lead to constructive political action. Secondly and closely connected to the first point, the transformative potential of political discourses must be realized in different practices of counselling linking politics intrinsically to humanist concerns of active life in the service of community. Thirdly, since active life is realized in princely contexts unfavourable to open debate, the use of language and rhetoric has to be appropriated to this new environment. In this process, the place of rhetoric in educational schemes, the internal theory of rhetoric, and the relationship between language and cognition are problematized in the context of wider debates on education, good government, and human freedom central to the northern humanist tradition in the early 16th century. In conceptualizing politics, language, and cognition, largely together Vives's thought points to broader 16th- and 17th-century developments in European political thought where man's nature, passions, and cognition become one of the central concerns of political thought.

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List of abbreviations

- Allen *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami: denuo recognitum et auctum*, eds. Allen, Percy Stafford - Helen Mary Allen - Heathcote William Garrod, Clarendon Oxford 1906–1958, 12 vols.
- BR Bietenholz, Peter G (ed.): *A Biographical Register of the Renaissance and Reformation*, vols. I-III, Toronto 1985-1987.
- CHE “Clarorum Hispanensium epistolae ineditae”, 181-308 in *Revue hispanique*, 1901.
- CRA *Litterae virorum eruditorum ad Franciscum Craneveldium*, 1522 – 1528 (ed. by Henry de Vocht), Louvain Librairie Universitaire 1928.
- CRA2 “Litterae ad Craneveldium Balduiniana”, in *Humanistica Lovaniensia* XLI-XLIV (ed. by Jozef Ijsewijn et al.), 1992 – 1995.
- DA Vives, Juan Luis: *De anima et vita libri tres*, Basel, Robert Winter, 1538.
- DAE Vives, Juan Luis: *Epistolario* (ed. Delgado, José Jiménez), Editora Nacional, Madrid 1978.
- DC Vives, Juan Luis: “De concordia & discordia”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *De concordia & discordia in humano genere libri quattuor. De pacificatione, liber unus: quam misera esset vita christianorum sub Turca liber unus*, Michael Hillen, Antwerpen 1529.
- DCO Vives, Juan Luis: “De consultatione liber I”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *Rhetoricae, sive de recte dicendi ratione libri tres, Eiusdem de consultatione liber I, ad haec rerum index* Thomas I Platter & Balthasar Lasius, Basel 1536.
- DD Vives, Juan Luis: *De disciplinis libri XX. In tres tomos distincti, cum indice novo*, Johann I Gymnich, Köln 1532.
- DP Vives, Juan Luis: “De pacificatione”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *De concordia & discordia in humano genere libri quattuor. De pacificatione, liber unus: quam misera esset vita christianorum sub Turca liber unus*, Michael Hillen, Antwerpen 1529.
- DR Vives, Juan Luis: *De ratione dicendi*, Platter - Lasius, Basel 1536
- IO Quintilian: *Institutio oratoria* I-V (trans. by Russel), The Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts/London 2001.
- MA Gregorio Mayans y Siscar: *J. L. Vivis Valentini Opera omnia* I-VIII, Valencia 1782

– 1790.

- PC Vives, Juan Luis: “In leges Ciceronis praefatio”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *Opuscula varia*, Thierry Martens, Louvain 1519.
- VCA Vives, Juan Luis: “Commentarii ad divi Aurelii Augustini De civitate Dei”, commentary on Augustine: *De civitate Dei*, Johann Froben, Basel 1522.

1. Introduction

Vives, Rhetoric, and Politics

“Nobody needs language when dealing with himself; language has been given to man because of other men. For one cannot think of a more suitable instrument for human communication – language enables one to open to others what one has enclosed in one’s soul and cognition.”¹

Vives in *De concordia* 1529.

In reflecting on human sociability in his *De concordia & discordia in humano genere*, Vives greatly emphasized the importance of language as an expression of the caring nature of man. Drawing on classical and Christian sources, Vives eloquently pointed out that man was a social creature, amply endowed with qualities to succeed in the life of concord and peace for which he was created. Reason, religion, free will, and man’s bodily composition all testified to a fundamentally benevolent disposition towards others.² However, the greatest of all gifts given to mankind was the ability to speak, to communicate transparently that which was hidden in one’s mind to others.³ Thoroughly in the spirit of *De concordia*, the existing scholarship on Vives has largely underlined the fundamentally constructive nature of language in Vives’s political and social thought.

The aim of this study is to provide a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between language, rhetoric, man’s sociability, and politics in Vives, by looking at how the constructive ideal presented in *De concordia* is problematized in his political and rhetorical writings. While it is true that Vives never ceases to evoke the constructive possibilities

¹ Vives: DC, B5: “Nec ullus secum ipso sermone indiget, hominibus hominum causa tributus est sermo: quo non aliud excogitari poterat instrumentum communicationi hominum aptius: ut quisque alteri, sive quid ipse animo et cogitatione clausum teneat, aperire....” I have translated *sermo* as language. The more precise translation of *sermo* would be spoken language, but in Vives’s work it is often employed in a more general sense. In *De concordia* it explicitly includes written language.

² I have at times used masculine nouns and pronouns in contexts where the gender referred to can be interpreted as unclear or variable. I have taken this liberty to emphasize the masculine nature of the public world this study analyses.

³ Vives: DC, book 1.

of language to bring about social and political concord, the optimistic picture of language as the simple communication of benevolence and truth needs to be reassessed. There are a number of reasons for this. The first deals with the fact that *De concordia* puts forward its positive image of man as a *speculum* of a reality that is at odds with all the ideals propounded by Vives. Printed in 1529, Vives's *De concordia* appears at a moment in which the unity of Catholic Church is threatened by the Reformation, and when the warfare between the main European powers still raged. Thus, what is suggested in *De concordia* is not only a general theory of sociability, where language held a central place, but also an evocation of a critical discourse commenting on a reality in which language did not perform its social function. In this sense, *De concordia* presupposes the breakdown of the sociability it is proposing.

Secondly, this breakdown of concord is not merely an every-day fact; it also leads to a problematization of the dynamics of concord in Vives's own work. Vives's understanding of the relationship between concord and discord is a nuanced one, and none of his big treatises of the 1530s on language (*De ratione dicendi*), education (*De disciplinis*), and the soul (*De anima*) considers the possibility of completely overcoming discord without the help of divine grace. Rather, in a postlapsarian world, the only possible concord and perfection available for man – no doubt of great importance – has to incorporate ways of controlling impulses of discord and imperfection in education, civic life, and language usage more generally.

It is within this conceptual framework that Vives assimilates a great deal of classical rhetoric to his philosophical, political, and educational thought. This process is a complicated one, since classical rhetoric portrayed the use of words as a sophisticated art dealing with social power and persuasion challenging the idea of pure and simple communication in a Christian world of trust, transparency, and concord. The classics of rhetorical tradition – from Aristotle to Cicero and Quintilian – transmitted an idea of the use of language in civic contexts, in courts, and in political deliberations. Moreover, they presented a highly developed system that meticulously described how to construct one's character and *ethos* in a speech, how to touch and control passions in order to succeed in persuasion, and how to pick arguments and use concepts favourably to one's case. The knowledge of classical rhetoric is adopted in Vives's understanding of politics and social life as a central linguistic resource of countering discord by using existing dispositions and passions of men – in some case even corrupted ones. Thus, language does not simply overcome discord but it also controls it.

The third reason to problematize the simplicity of language is its explicit political dimension; the rhetorical element of language is intrinsically linked to humanist ideals of an

active life and counselling. Although rhetoric in Vives and northern humanism more generally is incorporated in many contexts – ranging from preaching to letter writing – this study focuses on the significance of language and rhetoric for princely regimes.⁴ It argues that the discourses of concord, inner peace, and self-government so crucial for Vives’s political thought are conceptualized partly rhetorically. Thus, these discourses have to be evoked rhetorically for them to hold transformative force over those in power. Closely related to this rhetorical dimension, rhetorical theory and education incorporate the commonplaces of concord, self-government, good rule, and tyranny into themselves; they provide insight into how these commonplaces could be evoked in a persuasive way by taking into account the opinions and the mind-set of the audience. Moreover, these rhetorical precepts quite explicitly link to different practices of counselling, ranging from immediate political deliberations to more general ways of setting the conceptual framework within which political action can be interpreted.

Throughout, this study argues for a broad conception of rhetoric and political concord. If it is recognized that language serves as the central medium that actively mediates between discord and concord, all reflections and problematizations of language – especially rhetoric – are potentially of great social and political importance. When the linguistic and rhetorical nature of politics and the political nature of rhetoric and language are combined, a range of possible links between linguistic reflections, humanist educational schemes, and political discourses emerge in Juan Luis Vives’s thought. In this way, different elements of Vives’s reception of classical tradition – ranging from education and the restructuring of arts to political philosophy and cognition – can be seen as varying contributions to the possibilities of social and political concord. Moreover, Vives himself was to emphasize greatly the links between educational, political, rhetorical, and investigational projects towards the end of his life.

Juan Luis Vives, Biography, and Historiography

The protagonist of the study, Juan Luis Vives (1492/1493 – 1540), was one of the most widely read humanists of the sixteenth century.⁵ He was born in Valencia in either 1492 or 1493 to a

⁴ Vives himself never wrote about preaching but its significance for northern humanism is visible in Erasmus’s major contribution to rhetoric that focuses on preaching: *Ecclesiastae sive de ratione concionandi*.

⁵ González González 2007, 61-118.

converso family. He studied in his hometown under the auspices of the newly founded *Studium generale*, although our knowledge of the exact nature and content of those studies is quite fragmented.⁶ In 1509, Vives left Valencia for Paris – a popular destination among Spaniards at the time – for reasons most likely related to the decades-long problems his family had been facing with the Inquisition.⁷ In Paris, he studied at least at the Collège de Montaigu, and participated in activities related to the printing press, leaving the French capital in 1514 when he continued his European tour to the Low Countries. It was in Bruges and Louvain where he resided for the remainder of his years, with the exception of a number of travels to England – both to the Tudor court and to Oxford’s lecture halls in 1523 – 1528.⁸ In the Low Countries, he was active in the Habsburg court, in the academic environment of Louvain, and in the Spanish merchant circles of Bruges. It is probably in 1516 that he encountered the most famous humanist of the Burgundian Netherlands: Desiderius Erasmus. Ultimately, Vives came to play a crucial part in what has become to be known as the northern humanist movement, a generation of men of letters the most famous of whom was Erasmus who both symbolically and socially epitomized the intellectual current north of the Alps.⁹ Vives contributed greatly to some of the key projects of northern humanists: educational reforms (*In pseudodialecticos, De disciplinis*), poor relief (*De subventionem pauperum*), political and social critique (*De Europae dissidiis, De concordia*), reassessment of rhetorical tradition (*De consultatione, De ratione dicendi, De conscribendis epistolis*), and a range of other issues. In 1540, Vives died in Bruges. He was survived by his wife Margarita Valldaura, a daughter of a *converso* merchant family, whom he married in 1524.¹⁰

The interest of academic scholarship in the Valencian humanist has a history of its own. Already in the nineteenth century Vives was studied in a variety of academic contexts, all of which constructed distinct traditions of interpreting the thought of the Spanish humanist. Especially strong was the attention given to Vives in Germany, where he came to be seen as nothing less than the precursor of modern pedagogy and psychology emptied of medieval

⁶ *Conversos* were Jews or Muslims who had converted, or had been forced to convert, into Catholicism. They were the main target for the Spanish Inquisition. See Ruiz 2001, 95-101.

⁷ González González 2008, 25-27; De la Pinta y Llorente – de Palacio y de Palacio 1964.

⁸ The duration of the Parisian years has been reassessed by Enrique González González. Before his work the predominant view was established by Mayans y Siscar in the eighteenth century. According to it Vives left Paris in 1512. González González 1987, 127-182; González González 2008, 31-39; MA, vol. 1, 28; Noreña 1970, 29-104.

⁹ González González 2007, 9-10.

¹⁰ González González 2008, 39; Noreña 1970, 105-120. For the *converso* background of the Valldaura family, see González González 1998, 51.

metaphysical speculations.¹¹ As Enrique González González has shown, in the Spanish context Vives was not always studied with scientific rigor, but his figure and thought were more fiercely and polemically debated than in any other country in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.¹²

The most influential early twentieth-century general assessment of Vives's biography and thought was offered by Adolfo Bonilla y San Martín, student of the immensely productive and influential Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, whose 1903 *Luis Vives y la filosofía del renacimiento* centred on proving the significance of Vives's essentially Spanish philosophy to wider European currents of thought.¹³ The generally accepted view of Vives incorporated into the Spain of Franco was embedded in the conservative tradition which endorsed a picture of Vives as an orthodox Christian thinker uninterested in active politics. The placement of Vives in Spanish history has been, however, complicated after the Second World War and especially since the 1960s. As a direct challenge to the dominant interpretation, Américo Castro – one of the leading Spanish historians of the twentieth century – suggested that Vives belonged to a Jewish tradition characterized by a certain Unamunian tragic sense of life (*sentimiento trágico de la vida*). This claim was fiercely challenged by numerous scholars whose mind-set was captured by Claudio Sánchez-Albornoz, who traced Vives's "vital anxiety" (*angustia vital*) to personal traits and larger cultural processes, and who emphasized Vives as a thinker who transformed "Hispanic lifestreams" (*Corrientes vitales hispanas*) into a philosophical system sensitive to the variety of individual character-traits found in the Spanish people.¹⁴ In challenging the view of Vives as part of an organic Spanish history, one can hardly over-emphasize the importance of the scholarly work of Miguel de la Pinta y Llorente, who together with José M. de Palacio managed to prove the *converso* background of Vives's family.¹⁵ This

¹¹ One of the most influential works was F.A. Lange's *Die Leibesübungen* printed for the first time in 1863. For a presentation of the German tradition, see González González 2007, 291-297.

¹² González González 2007, 309-353; González González 2008b, 394-395, 398-406.

¹³ Bonilla y San Martín 1903, 561-570. Bonilla was a student of the productive Menéndez Pelayo, whose influence on Bonilla was decisive. Bonilla's work belongs thus to the more conservative branch of Spanish turn of the century thought that aspired to a positive reassessment of the history of Spanish thought. See Menéndez y Pelayo, Marcelino: "La ciencia española" in *Obras completas*, Madrid 1911 – 1919 vol. 2; Menéndez y Pelayo, Marcelino: "Historia de los heterodoxos" in *Obras completas*, Madrid 1911 – 1919 vol. 4. Bonilla was more moderate in his assessment of Vives and explicitly denied the existence of a Vivesian system of philosophy (*vivismo*) as defended by Menéndez y Pelayo in assessing Vives's significance.

¹⁴ The actual importance of Vives was debated as part of the overall assessment of the distinctive features of Spanish philosophy, Castro 1984, 260, 646-648; Sánchez-Albornoz 1981, vol. 2, 278-284.

¹⁵ Castro only hinted at Vives's Jewish background; see Castro 1984, 646-648. In de la Pinta y Llorente – de Palacio y de Palacio the link to Castro's work is made in the very first page in the so called "nota importante," see De la Pinta y Llorente – de Palacio y de Palacio, 1964, 9. What role practices of Judaism played in Vives's upbringing has been extensively discussed. Recent scholarship argues that the role of Judaism was perhaps

complicated the placement of Vives in the nationalistic narrative of Franco's Spain, and created space for more daring research into specific areas of Vives's thought.

Despite scholarship that challenged the placement of Vives in one harmonious and organic story, the horizon of Spanish thought has remained strong for reading Vives even after his *converso* background was proven.¹⁶ In the most influential general study of the second half of the twentieth century, Carlos Noreña's *Juan Luis Vives*, the Spanish link is not lost, although it is given a distinct interpretation within the Jewish train of Spanish history. Noreña, who is keenly aware of Vives's European dimension, whilst focusing much on Vives's central-European connections, still situates his basic mentality inside the Spanish *converso*-tradition.¹⁷ In his monumental *Historia crítica del pensamiento español* from the 1970s and 1980s, José Luis Abellán argued that Vives belonged to a Spanish tradition by claiming, among other things, that the emigration of thinking is an integral part of Spanish history.¹⁸ Still in the current millennium, Emilio Hidalgo-Serna pictured Vives as a key figure in a Spanish tradition of rhetorical philosophy extending to Miguel de Cervantes, Luis de Góngora, Baltasar Gracián and Calderón de la Barca.¹⁹

In this study, Vives's place in the history of Spanish thought is not systematically pursued. Instead, my intention is to follow the path set by the Belgian tradition, especially by the famous early twentieth-century Belgian scholar Henry de Vocht, who understood Vives as part of the culture of northern humanism.²⁰ There are good reasons for doing this. Since the focus is on the conceptual links between rhetoric and politics, the provenance for the basic conceptual framework for making sense of these issues lies within the context of northern humanism. In contextualizing Vives's thought, I will employ both northern humanism and Erasmianism in my dissertation, with an awareness that both terms have been used in rather

smaller than what was thought before by making a distinction between the logic of Inquisitorial processes and actual Judaic practices. See González González 1998, 62-63. González González 2008, 19-31.

¹⁶ This is also visible in a number of recent with significant biographical parts that dedicate a lot of attention to the context of Valencia as an important framework for Vives's thought, see Gómez-Hortigüela 1998, Chapters one and 2; Fontán 1992, Chapter two; Noreña 1970, 15-28.

¹⁷ Although Vives appears as a thinker penetrated by a certain Spanish *converso*-spirit in Noreña's classical study, the significance of his thought is still measured by comparing him to some of the authentic heavyweights of later European thought, such as Kant, Bacon, Descartes, Locke and Montaigne (yet without some of the glaring exaggerations of a part of early twentieth-century scholars), see Noreña 1970, 19-22, 76-104, 122-147, 176, 228, 275-299.

¹⁸ Abellán 1986, 108-109. See also Abellán 2005, 12.

¹⁹ Hidalgo-Serna 2002, xiv-xv.

²⁰ In the Belgian tradition, this has been a commonplace ever since the nineteenth century and continues to be so. See for instance Matheeußen 1993, 28; Matheeußen 1998, 107-116; Ijsewijn 1988, 199; Cameron 1990, 148-149. For a detailed description, see González González 2007, 353-357. For an intermediary position, see González González 1998, 78-81.

flexible and even conflictual ways in the existing scholarship.²¹ I do not want to claim that the application of these terms implies a clearly defined set of ideas that could be used to classify Vives's thought. However, the flexible use of these terms is necessary for a historical study of Vives for it provides a reference point on three different levels, as I will argue throughout the study. First, beginning from the 1510s Vives explicitly identifies himself with the cause of *studia humanitatis* outside of Italy, and especially with the Erasmian variant of the movement. Secondly, some form of broad intellectual presuppositions and attitudes are intrinsically linked to the larger story of humanist studies outside of Italy, which has to be understood as a background for Vives. Lastly, the term Erasmianism, in addition to intellectual positions shared by many thinkers, refers also to tangible social and cultural activity around the great Dutch humanist, which has to be captured as forming the context of Vives's intellectual claims.

Vives, Northern Humanism, and Politics

The political dimension of northern humanism has not always received a great deal of attention in histories of political thought with the partial exception of More's *Utopia*. There is nothing new in this: in Allen's famous interwar *A History of Political Thought in the Sixteenth Century*, Erasmus and Vives hardly play a part. This same trend has continued in the post-war period: basically all existing works on the history of political thought move from Italian *quattrocento* and early *cinquecento* developments to consider the more explicit political theorists of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries spearheaded by the likes of Jean Bodin or Thomas Hobbes. Thus, they omit northern humanism altogether or dedicate only minor attention to it.²²

²¹ For two opposing uses of Erasmianism, see the classic theological formulation of Bataillon and the recent identification of Erasmianism with intellectual autonomy, Yorán 2010; Bataillon 1991, v; González González 1998, 79. For a discussion on Erasmianism, see Rummel 2004, 106-109. For a classic presentation of northern humanism as Christian Humanism, see Ijsewijn 1975. In Skinner 1978 northern Renaissance refers to a set of ideas on politics, education and virtues shared by a number of humanists outside of Italy, Skinner 1978, vol. 1, 193-262.

²² In Skinner the focus is mostly on More's *Utopia*, although his famous *Foundations of Modern Political Thought* dedicates a significant section to the political thought of northern humanism, see Skinner 1978, vol. 1, 193-263; Skinner 1988, 442-452. In the *Renaissance Humanism* (ed. Rabil) there is no separate section on the political thought of northern humanism, see Rabil 1988. In *Republicanism, a Shared European Heritage* (ed. Van Gelderen and Skinner) Vives is not mentioned and Erasmus figures mainly in Tilmans' article, "The Burgundian-Habsburg Netherlands (1477 – 1566)." Tilmans writes that Erasmus "called upon a Ciceronian language" in his *Institutio*, but her focus is not on Erasmus, see Tilmans 2002, 107-108. In Hankins's "Humanism and the Origins of Modern Political Thought" More's *Utopia* figures but Erasmus is mentioned only once, see Hankins 1996, 137-140. In Coleman, Janet: *A History of Political Thought. From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance* (Blackwell 2000) northern humanism is completely absent. In Haddock's *A History of Political Thought*, the chapters dedicated to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries move from Machiavelli to Bodin, Filmer, Hobbes, Grotius, Pufendorf, Althusius and Locke, Haddock 2008, 70-113. A notable exception is Pierre Mesnard's *L'essor de la philosophie politique au XVIIe siècle* where Erasmus's integral humanism and union of classical knowledge with Christianity

This has largely been the case also after the methodological changes the different traditions drawing on the linguistic turn brought to the writing of the history of political thought, ranging from German Conceptual History and the intellectual history of the Cambridge School, to currents of New Historicism and Cultural Semantics. These traditions of scholarship created an intellectual atmosphere where the significance of past thought was not assessed through their contribution to ahistorical and timeless questions arising from political philosophy and theory. Its different variants, although disagreeing on a number of issues, agreed on some fundamental principles on the dynamics of meaning and representation, which changed the way the history of political thought could be written. First, it became more common to think that the historical study of past thought had to be of a contextual nature, and that the context comprised the linguistic and conceptual possibilities a given thinker could have had at his disposal for the creation of meaning. Thus, to situate the language of a writer to the kind of discourse, *langage*, or a larger semantic field plays a fundamental role in recovering the historical meaning of his text. Secondly, most agreed that different semantic interpretations of key concepts or languages was a way to make normative claims over the very concepts that make social reality and experience understandable to us. Thus, semantic disagreements were intrinsically linked to the negotiation of social power. Thirdly and closely related to the previous point, the use of language is intentional. Words do not simply represent reality but every representation and description puts forward a normative claim to see the world in a certain way. People use language rhetorically to achieve something, to legitimize action, to do things.²³

While these dimensions of language use are theoretically present throughout the spectrum of linguistic usage, the specific way in which the history of political thought has been written in the post-linguistic-turn era has largely centred on those theories, or broader languages that present different and competing claims to normative vocabularies. The focus has been both on the reconstruction of the semantic fields in which normative concepts are embedded, as well

is not only presented but also very positively assessed, see Mesnard 1936, 86-140. Vives, however, plays no role in Mesnard.

²³ Different points have been more emphasized by different traditions with Skinner focusing more on the linguistic action of individual thinkers and Koselleck on long-term conceptual change and its relation to social history. Foucault's main focus has been in the epistemes and cultural practices that structure the possibilities of meaning although he has also been interested in the subject, as witnessed by his lectures on *Parresia*. New Historicism, for its part, has been less interested in explicit theories than in their anthropological and cultural background. Cultural semantics has emphasized the connection of linguistic systems understood as ever-changing force-fields to social identities. Skinner 2002, vol. 1, 1-7, 57-127, 155-157; Pocock 1989; Koselleck 1989; Müller 2014; Jay 1998, 1-14; Palonen 2003, 1-4; Richter 2003, 113-116; Foucault 1969, 9-29; Foucault 2009.

as on those moves that introduce conceptual change into existing semantic constellations.²⁴ Moreover, existing scholarship has not only treated concepts central to contemporary political discussions, but the political dimension of a range of other concepts has also been highlighted. Thus, the enriching effect of the history of political thought has not happened exclusively by historicizing existing normative vocabularies, but also by showing that politically and socially relevant discussions have been conducted in vocabularies somewhat alien to ours.²⁵ The historical claim has linked to a broadening understanding of what counts, conceptually, as history of political thought. Simultaneously, different forms of intellectual and conceptual history have been relatively open to the manifold ways in which representations and creations of meaning both arise from, and affect larger cultural and social constellations and practices, with the lines between social, cultural, and intellectual histories being analytical rather than ontological.²⁶

Despite the openness of contemporary intellectual history to varying vocabularies, the problem of finding a place for northern humanists in the history of political thought has been twofold. First, their eclectic and rhetorical attitude to all philosophy has meant that a focus on what they have to say about classical concepts of political thought in the early modern period would surface them as somewhat unsystematic and un-theoretical.²⁷ Even though Vives and Erasmus most certainly were very familiar with a range of discussions on political and social concepts, it is debatable whether they produce a coherent and original theory on say, sovereignty, law, justice, institutions, constitutions, rights, obedience, political freedom, or citizenship. Their more systematic and comprehensive contributions have largely been made elsewhere, mostly in education and theology. Secondly, the undeniable debt of northern humanist understanding of politics to a broader theological framework has pictured them as alien to political realities, as backward looking, and possibly irrelevant for contemporary

²⁴ These semantic shifts are, of course, ultimately social and take place in processes of reception.

²⁵ A good example of this is Martin van Gelderen's *The Political Thought of the Dutch Revolt 1555 – 1590*, Cambridge University Press 1992 that discusses a range of theological concepts such as freedom of conscience at length. The link to contemporary normative languages and concepts is often voiced; see for example Skinner 2002, vol. 1, 6-7. This is the starting point of the *Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe* of German Conceptual History.

²⁶ This does not necessarily mean that social action is determined by concepts but that they have to be justified and explained conceptually. Skinner has defended the idea of an innovative ideologist whose normative claims serve a legitimizing function by employing existing vocabularies innovatively in order to justify the kind of social action that could potentially be considered immoral, see Skinner 2002, vol. 1, 145-157. German conceptual history was very explicitly linked to social history, Koselleck 1989, 319. Many intellectual historians are open to the cultural and social aspect of thought, see for instance Brett 2002, 127; MacMahon – Moyn 2014.

²⁷ Erika Rummel has recently argued that some of Erasmus's central texts cannot be used to construct his political views because of their highly rhetorical nature, see Rummel 2014.

concerns.²⁸ Thoroughly in this spirit, much of the scholarship focused on northern humanism from the vantage point of systematic questions or theory building, has voiced the accusation that for humanists, virtue and disposition are everything, whereas institutions and the letter of the law amount to very little.²⁹

However, some approaches have taken this larger framework of politics for granted and have endorsed the fact that there is no autonomous set of political problems in Vives or Erasmus, since politics itself is irreducibly woven into a larger Christian ontology and theology of man. The outcome has more often than not accentuated concord, and a somewhat apolitical understanding of social life, and has linked to the powerful image of Erasmus as primarily a theologian or religious thinker.³⁰ In Noreña's classic *Juan Luis Vives* the picture presented of politics is fundamentally a moral one. According to Noreña, Vives's views on politics must be viewed as a sort of a social extension of his Christian and Stoic ethical view of individuals: "all social evils, especially poverty and war, are passional disorders of individual citizens which have burst into the social dimension."³¹ In this context, society and the body politic appear as "a redeeming device which seeks to repair the moral disorder."³² However, Noreña's emphasis on Vives the moral teacher reproduces the idea of Vives as partially *naïf* when it comes to politics, since he never considers "the possibility that the paternal character of political authority could prove a source of abuse and tyranny."³³ This is no doubt true if one looks into the tradition of law, where the problem remains unanswered with no theorization on the right to revolt, but is questionable if one looks into Vives's ethical, rhetorical, cognitive, and educational texts. In these works, the threat of tyranny appears as a major problem and concern that violates all the principles of self-governance and Stoic-Christian natural law.

Not altogether different from Noreña, the bulk of the existing interpretations on Vives's social and political thought underline two things and their close interrelations. First, they show Vives as a thinker of peace and concord, which can be interpreted both as the ultimate goals of all collective life, or as more concrete social and political projects that facilitate the realization of that end. Secondly, this interpretation links to the idea that all human associations

²⁸ Mansfield 2003, 34. The idea that Erasmian political thought cannot be separated from Christianity is also frequently voiced, see for instance Tuck 1990, 60-61.

²⁹ See for instance Kisch 1960; Monzón i Arazo 1992, 315-316.

³⁰ Bataillon 1991, v, 79-82; Abellán 1986, 35; Abellán 2005 75-76. In Pierre Mesnard's influential interwar interpretation of Erasmus's political thought the conceptual dependence of politics on the evangelization of Europe is made very explicit, see Mesnard 1936, 86-91.

³¹ Noreña 1970, 212.

³² Noreña 1970, 213.

³³ Noreña 1970, 213.

are essentially pacifist moral redeeming devices that aspire to the restitution of man to his true God-like nature.³⁴ For Francisco Calero, Vives is one of the foremost pacifist thinker of sixteenth century, and his *De concordia, & discordia in humano genere* is said to be one of the most important pacifist works of all times.³⁵ For Alain Guy, classical and Christian tradition came together in Vives in a philosophy that aspired to concord and peace.³⁶ Philp Dust sees Vives as the most acute theoretician of northern humanism, who combined a strong empirical and sociological analysis with a Christian call for peace and betterment of man.³⁷ Fernández-Santamaría, one of the more recent experts on Vives's political thought, has painted probably the most overarching picture of all aspects of Vives's social thought by arguing that what "informs his thought throughout is the conviction that man has the potential to recover the most important thing lost through the fall," meaning his true God-like nature.³⁸ In this context, human associations, arts, and education appear as necessary means for achieving just that.³⁹

While many of these interpretations have reconstructed the conceptual structure of Vives's arguments with an eye to detail, they have sometimes been more interested to show the modernity of Vives's positions than in asking what exactly that political or social theory – rhetorical in nature – is supposed to do.⁴⁰ However, simultaneous with these developments, there is a growing awareness that northern humanism can be approached somewhere in the crossroads of Christian concord, active life, and true *realpolitik*. Without focusing simply on political thought, two of the classics of the field, R.P Adams' *The Better Part of Valor. More, Erasmus, Colet, and Vives on Humanism, War and Peace, 1496 – 1535*, and James Tracy's *Politics of Erasmus*, painted a picture of northern humanists as actively participating in the most pressing political issues of the time, being keenly interested in contemporary social and political developments, and actually using these overarching Christian theories in more particular debates.⁴¹ Margo Todd's *Christian Humanism and the Puritan Social Order* also underlined the

³⁴ Among many others Abellán and González González greatly emphasize the pacifist and concordial nature of Vives's political thought, see Abellán 1986, 109-111; González González 1998, 81.

³⁵ Calero 1999, 12, 18.

³⁶ Guy 1972, 1-8.

³⁷ Dust 1987, 10-11.

³⁸ Fernández-Santamaría 1998, viii.

³⁹ Fernández-Santamaría 1998, 6. Others have also underlined the ethical nature of Vives's political and social literature. See for instance Matheussen on *De subventione pauperum*, Matheussen 1998, 110-111.

⁴⁰ The most common general argument is that humanist political thought, essentially pacifist, is a critique of warfare, see for instance Dust 1987, 1-11. Dust also makes some strong claims about the modernity of some of Vives's analysis calling them empirical. He for example compares Vives's discussion on man and beast to "those who study human growth and development." Dust 1987, 141.

⁴¹ Adams could frequently refer to an idealism that was essentially tied together with realism, see for instance Adams 1962, 3, 189.

social reformist zeal of the Christian humanism and the critical potentiality of the language of Erasmus, Vives, and English humanists, linking it very closely with the active performance of virtue.⁴² On a conceptual level, Quentin Skinner, in his *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, also suggested that northern humanism was intrinsically related to the practice of counselling, the active life, and the government of the body politic.⁴³ Brendan Bradshaw, for his part, has united a fundamentally Christian framework into a socially radical political programme. According to Bradshaw, the essence of the political thought of northern humanism lies indeed in its optimistic anthropological starting-point of man as *imago Dei* – a notion that makes impossible the understanding of political thought as merely describing the possibilities of action in a corrupted world. This can be considered a somewhat traditional point about Christian humanism. Yet, Bradshaw's insistence on the combination and acute awareness of the necessities of *realpolitik* and persuasion, combined with Christian and Platonic ideals of just government and social justice that fix the ultimate goals of politics, is a nuanced one. Hence, he has pointed out that the political thought of northern humanism can appear as novel and inventive only if it is approached in the complex crossroads of civil science, and the anthropological, theological, and ontological presuppositions that frame the understanding of politics and *studia humanitatis*.⁴⁴

More recently, Cathy Curtis has shown the engaged side of Vives. While reaffirming the idea of Vives as a theorizer of concord who tried to lead people to harmony from discord with the power of words, she has shown Vives's close links above all to a group of English humanists.⁴⁵ More importantly, Curtis has emphasized Vives's understanding of successful monarchy as a system that presupposes wise counsel, liberty of word, and thus the active participation of humanists.⁴⁶ While Curtis's interpretation emphasizes greatly the importance of the use of language, she has not been focusing on Vives's rhetorical reflections as such.

In short, there is a growing awareness that the overcoming of the prevalent view of Vives as a Christian thinker of concord and peace can be nuanced by looking into the ways in which these languages are put into play in the active life and counselling. While the idea of Vives as a political actor gains momentum, the diverse ways in which princely regimes are

⁴² Todd 1987, 22-43.

⁴³ Skinner 1978, vol. 1, 213-243.

⁴⁴ Bradshaw 1991.

⁴⁵ Curtis argues for the centrality of concord and discord in Vives's conceptualization of politics, Curtis 2008, 114.

⁴⁶ Curtis 2008; Curtis 2011.

linked to counselling in Vives's thought and in his activities as a man of letters, are still to be uncovered. Moreover, the diverse ways in which language and rhetoric both contribute to this process, and are problematized in relation to social and political concord, have not been systematically investigated.

Classical Rhetoric as an Object of Study

As is very well known, classical rhetoric was of the utmost importance for Renaissance culture. Its dissemination was guaranteed by its role in the educational structures of the time as a part of the so-called *trivium*.⁴⁷ The theoretical tools of rhetoric were applied to letter-writing, preaching, poetry, philology, and literature – to name a few of the many fields in which rhetoric exerted influence. Thus, rhetoric was the fundamental art in a variety of tasks dealing with language, ranging from the written and oral composition of one's own materials, to reading, note taking, commentary, and, ultimately thinking. Rhetoric was both a practice of writing and argumentation as well as a reflection on those practices. Even if rhetoric was never primarily a philosophical theory, but a reflection on the practices of language use, it could unite itself with cognitive, philosophical (mostly sceptical), political, and moral insights. Thus, the difficulties in grasping the whole meaning of rhetoric for the era seems to lie in the fact that it is at the same omnipresent – and because of its technical and non-substantial nature – partly invisible. This is why studying rhetoric can mean various things.

Paul Oskar Kristeller, one of the leading scholars of the Renaissance in the twentieth century, defended in the 1980s the idea that rhetoric held a central position in the humanist culture, and called for research to focus not only on the “internal history of rhetorical theory and practice,” but also “its impact on all other areas of Renaissance civilization.”⁴⁸ Kristeller's plea does not, of course, mean that the importance of rhetoric had not been noticed before. The famous contemporary of Kristeller, Eugenio Garin, for example, saw in rhetoric and in rhetorical education one of the keys to the self-understanding of Renaissance man as a historical being concerned with historically situated problems, as opposed to the dry and abstract metaphysics of the Middle Ages.⁴⁹ However, in many ways Kristeller's call has been

⁴⁷ The *trivium* formed the basis of language education both in schools and in the philosophical faculties of the universities. It consisted of dialectic, rhetoric, and grammar, but included moral, historical and literary education, understood in a relatively broad sense.

⁴⁸ Kristeller 1983, 19.

⁴⁹ Garin 1968, 19-42.

answered with the emergence of specialised monographs dedicated to different aspects of Renaissance rhetoric beginning from the 1970s and 80s. The scholarly expertise of people like James Jerome Murphy, John O. Ward, Paul Oskar Kristeller, Marc Fumaroli, Brian Vickers, John Monfasani, Quentin Skinner, Jacques Chomarat, Wayne Rebhorn, Ullrich Langer, John O'Malley, Markku Peltonen and Peter Mack, to name but a few, has provided every Renaissance scholar with high-quality research into a variety of themes around classical rhetoric.⁵⁰

Yet, the variety of ways in which rhetoric has been approached testifies to a broader divide as to what has directed attention to rhetoric in the first place. Very generally, the interest in language – so central to different philosophical traditions of twentieth-century thought – has channelled attention to very different aspects of rhetorical theory. This is visible in the existing scholarship on Vives and rhetoric as well.⁵¹ One of the more prolific writers on Vives's linguistic and rhetorical thought, Emilio Hidalgo-Serna, has repeatedly emphasized the importance of rhetoric for the philosophy of man. He has argued that by shifting the emphasis from pure reason (*ratio*) to creative *ingenium* – from mechanical deductive reasoning to the creative side of thinking – Vives in fact devised a new philosophy of man as a creative being capable of adjusting to the time-specific challenges posed by society and nature. Hidalgo-Serna has been influenced by Ernesto Grassi, and ultimately by Heidegger, in focusing on the poetical and metaphorical language of Renaissance rhetoric as creative hermeneutics. In a more Wittgensteinian vein, Richard Waswo has presented humanist understandings of semantics as a revolutionary shift from representational to relational or holistic semantics, championed above all by Lorenzo Valla and Vives.⁵² However, in Hidalgo-Serna and Waswo, the links of rhetoric and language to social power, politics, and contemporary debates are partly ignored, and the focus has been on conceptual discussions arising from twentieth-century philosophy.

The most attuned analysis of the details of Vives's rhetorical theory has, however, been made by Peter Mack, José Manuel Rodríguez Peregrina and Edward George. All three closely engage with specific texts situating them into the tradition of rhetorical theory. Mack, the writer of the recent *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric, 1380–1620*, has made key readings

⁵⁰ See for instance Mack 1993; Mack 2011; Murphy 2005; Murphy 1983; Kristeller 1979; Monfasani 1976; O'Malley 1979; Fumaroli 1980; Fumaroli 1999; Peltonen 2012; Skinner 1996; Vickers 1988; Chomarat 1981; Cox - O'Ward 2006; Langer 1999; Rebhorn 1995.

⁵¹ Many of the leading works on the history of rhetoric explicitly make a plea for the revival of rhetoric as a contemporary practice. See for example Fumaroli 1999, 1-17; Fumaroli 2009, 8-14; Skinner 1996, 15-16; Vickers 1988, vii-xi.

⁵² Hidalgo-Serna 1983; Hidalgo-Serna 2002, vii-viii. In Waswo Vives is described as holding an intermediate and philosophically dubious position between traditional referential and revolutionary relational semantics, see Waswo 1987, 113-132.

of Vives's work dealing with rhetorical theory, and has assessed their practicality for the production of language and arguments. E. George, for his part, has been the first to analyse systematically the relationship between Vives's rhetorical theory and practice.⁵³ Thus, George has not only tried to position Vives's rhetorical theory in the internal long tradition of the art of eloquence, but he has also systematically shown how Vives's own literary production is based on a careful use of literary and stylistic tools and strategies. However, in George's work the connections of rhetorical strategies and theoretical reflections to larger social and political processes, or political languages, are not systematically traced. Thus, with Mack's and George's work, a refined and nuanced understanding of the technical side of Vives's rhetoric is captured, but the focus has not been on uncovering the implications of rhetoric as a larger social and political practice, or as an instrument of social and cognitive power.

A far-more explicit connection between rhetoric and politics has been suggested by Nancy Struever, who has insisted on the thoroughly political nature of Vives's rhetoric. She has defended the union of rhetoric, not with contemplative questions of epistemology and cognitive imaginary – but with civic action.⁵⁴ In the case of Vives, her argument is indeed a bold one since she sustains that the Spanish humanist subordinates politics, jurisprudence, and psychology to rhetoric. She criticises E. George for “detaching rhetorical interests from investigational ones,” and goes on to argue that Vives's entire intellectual programme should be understood in the framework of rhetoric, since it works thoroughly inside a rhetorical modality.⁵⁵ More specifically, in politics this means that all political writing is based on the typically humanist concept of *decorum* (appropriateness), interpreted in Struever through the lens of rhetorized pragmatic philosophy.⁵⁶ However, her reading of Vives is not primarily historical with the bulk of the discussion being focused on comparing the Spanish humanist to contemporary philosophy. Her pronounced stress on rhetoric that incorporates practically everything may not stand up to historical scrutiny. It is questionable indeed whether rhetoric can be raised to play the role of an overall philosophical or civic modality, since rhetoric itself is always explicitly given a more limited and specific role inside larger theological, ontological, and ethical concerns in Vives.

⁵³ The study of rhetoric, naturally, can point to these two directions since it can refer to the analysis of the literary tools and strategies a writer is employing, or to the explicit reflection on the possibilities of rhetorical production – namely, rhetorical theory. Rodríguez Peregrina 1996; George 1992; Mack 2008.

⁵⁴ Struever 2009, 244-246.

⁵⁵ Struever 2009, 246-247.

⁵⁶ Struever 2009, 250-258.

However, the fact that rhetoric can be linked to civic practices and other languages has been voiced frequently in some of the most central interpretations of the early modern period. The bulk of these interpretations have largely taken place outside the confines of northern humanism, with some of the most influential interpretations of Erasmus's rhetoric only touching upon the civic dimension. Indicative of this, Jacques Chomarat's *Grammaire et Rhetorique chez Erasme*, and Gary Remer's *Humanism and the Rhetoric of Toleration*, have focused on clarifying certain aspects of Erasmus's theology through rhetorical categories rather than on the interconnections of rhetoric and civic practices. Thus, Chomarat, although well aware of the civic dimension of Erasmus's rhetoric, turned Erasmus primarily into a pious theologian-orator who preached transformative philosophy of Christ to the Europe of his time, whereas in Remer, Erasmus's toleration is intrinsically linked to the idea of dialogue.⁵⁷ However, it is outside theology and within the context of civil science (*scientia civilis*) that rhetoric has most frequently been linked to politics.

In those approaches to rhetoric that emphasize its civic and political importance, part of the argument has been that rhetoric can be viewed as a set of techniques through which meaning is constructed. In this view, the recapturing of the meaning of a text is partly dependent on understanding the metalanguage of rhetorical theory that has been employed in the construction of those meanings. Because rhetoric provides the kind of techniques meant for the production of certain reactions in the audience, it is fundamental to understand those tools, because it enables an interpretation of what a writer might have been doing. However, equally as importantly, it has been shown that much of early modern rhetorical theory can be viewed in relation to a number of other discourses that make rhetoric appear as something more than a tool for literary composition or the construction of arguments. More specifically, it has been demonstrated that especially in the Italian Renaissance and in sixteenth-and seventeenth-century English context, rhetoric came to be conceptualized as part of civil science (*scientia civilis*) that wove the art of eloquence together closely with a range of discussions outside of its purely technical range. Thus, rhetoric is incorporated into questions of the active life, participation, freedom, constitutions, and education, as well as into the ways in which normative vocabularies are negotiated and discussed. In the work of Quentin Skinner and John Pocock,

⁵⁷ Remer 1996, 43-102. Underlining the social importance of rhetoric in Erasmus, Chomarat argued, among other things, that truth stands in opposition to violence, not merely to error, see Chomarat 1981, 1118. Marjorie Boyle O'Rourke has also highlighted the importance of civic dialogue in Erasmus's discussions with Luther, see Boyle O'Rourke 1983, 5-42. Manfred Hoffmann has also strongly underlined Erasmus's rhetoric from the viewpoint of theology, with an explicit admiration for Chomarat, see Hoffmann 1994, 4-5.

rhetoric comes out essentially as a civic practice, as a culture of politics presupposing a certain dialogical nature of civic realm most suitable for republican or semi-republican values, cultures, and contexts.⁵⁸

This idea of dialogue has definitely underlined the passionate and aggressive nature of Renaissance rhetoric that always aspires to the domination of passions and emotions, linking rhetorical theory closely to questions of cognition, passion, and human motivation.⁵⁹ Some interpretations have raised the will to power as the central element of the self-interpretation of rhetoric in the early modern period.⁶⁰ Most explicitly, Wayne A. Rebhorn has argued that rhetoric cannot easily be squared with dialogue since the most common way of understanding rhetoric in the general discourse of the early modern period was that of pure power over the passions and minds of men. This use of power through the capacity to move the audience (*movere*) was, according to Rebhorn, understood as social and political power in the discourse and pictographic displays of the time.⁶¹ The focus on the most general aspect of rhetoric as the capacity to move the audience has the effect that it can be linked virtually to every political, theological, and philosophical constellation requiring words to achieve something. This enormous flexibility of rhetoric is also at the heart of much of Marc Fumaroli's influential work that focuses on the European wide developments of the art of eloquence, and underlines the way in which rhetorical theory and activity can be adapted to a number of circumstances. Thus, the crux of Fumaroli's project has been the way in which different parts of rhetorical theory – such as genres and styles – are rethought in varying contexts. Rather than being a clearly definable tradition, rhetoric is essentially a certain belief in the usefulness and power of words as a fundamental social practice, one that was ultimately debunked by later geometric and systematic philosophy. This basic view can then motivate an investigation into the practical possibilities of rhetoric to achieve this in specific circumstances by questioning new interpretations of audiences, speakers, cognition, styles, and a range of other things.⁶²

These multiform and varying approaches to rhetoric bring to the surface the difficulties in defining rhetoric univocally: it can mean the study of rhetorical techniques, the

⁵⁸ Pocock 1975, 58-64; Skinner 1996, 6-16. The fact that a certain republican rhetorical culture appears in a monarchical context is in the heart of some explanations on English Civil war. See Skinner 1996; Peltonen 2012, 1-9.

⁵⁹ Skinner 1996, 1-214.

⁶⁰ See Peltonen 2012, 6-7.

⁶¹ Rebhorn 1995, 1-9. One of the more famous metaphors is that of Hercules Gallicus, which equates Hercules's force with rhetoric, Rebhorn 1995, 67-75.

⁶² Fumaroli 1981.

use of rhetoric, or its educational, philosophical, civic or theological ramifications. Moreover, it can comprise the study of the most basic language, through which the social role of rhetoric itself is interpreted, as well as the investigation of rhetoric vis-à-vis its neighbouring sciences. Its relation to politics is equally manifold. Rebhorn, who defended the view of rhetoric as an identifiable discourse, defines the specific content of his *The Emperor of Men's Minds* in the following words:

“This book is concerned with the ways in which Renaissance people represented rhetoric to themselves, with how they thought about or, rather, wrote about it and how they imagined its powers and limits, its value to the individual and to the society, its characteristic uses, its relationship to other disciplines and activities.”⁶³

Defining the Problem

This study takes as its starting point two key issues arising from existing scholarship. First, it acknowledges that every attempt to understand Vives's political thought has to take seriously the contextualization of the very notion of politics itself in northern humanist thought. Consequently, throughout Vives's work politics is conceptually linked to all other human associations and man's sociability (*societas*). In a similar vein, civic prudence never loses its connection to eternal wisdom and truth, and social concord, peace, and law are intrinsically tied together with individual self-governance and piety. All this delimits and frames the conceptual autonomy of civic and political discussion, and weaves this together with a larger Erasmian reform programme. However, and equally as important, it is precisely both inside this framework and in its problematization that a range of questions dealing with good governance, duties, virtues, participation, and the use of language can be discussed together with the general dynamics of the political sphere. What is more, this large ethical framework is not merely a picture of a distant utopia in the self-understanding of Vives and other humanists; its critical and ethical potential is effectively evoked both as a social or civic critique in a world of profound discord, which is a point that accentuates the use dimension of social and political theories. Thus, the general ethical framework of politics found in Vives is not a reflection of an apolitical attitude, but a source that not only makes critique justified and necessary, but also

⁶³ Rebhorn 1995, 2.

offers some conceptual possibilities for doing just that.

This links to the second broad idea adopted from existing scholarship, namely that of the crucial importance rhetoric played in civic and social life in all early sixteenth-century culture. The thesis argues that the crux of Vives's political thought does not merely lie in recapturing the architecture of his political and social philosophy, but in understanding that all this is linked intrinsically and explicitly to the use of language. In ascertaining the importance of active life and the exhibition of linguistic prudence for successful social and civic life, Vives and other northern humanists were truly indebted to classical thinkers and Italian humanists. What is more, the virtues of a life of *negotium* were performed primarily in language, by putting into use one's knowledge of *artes sermocinales* (grammar, rhetoric, dialectic) under the guidance of prudence. However, the explicit union of rhetoric and successful civic life in the existing political languages was not the only way in which rhetoric exercised political and social importance. The profound linkage of political thought to language and rhetoric affect a number of issues; rhetoric is the place where meaning is generated, and political languages are put into motion, where political discourses and commonplaces are transmitted in educational practices, and where all relevant questions on the cognitive possibilities of persuasion are tackled; language itself is political.

It is very much a broad understanding of the importance of rhetoric for the political and social thought of Vives that drives this study. In this respect, rhetoric is interpreted both as a culture – an educational paradigm and a linguistic practice – but also as a reflection on the possibilities of that culture. In this second sense, it is a theory on the art of persuasion and its civic importance. If rhetoric and linguistic usage are seen as a culture inside of which political discourse is generated and concord mediated, all questions from the social extension of rhetorical teaching to its internal theory appear as socially and politically highly relevant. If it is acknowledged that Vives himself is keenly aware of this, it is possible to shed light on political concord, not only as an internal question of political theory, but as a problem that is tackled in different discourses where specific aspects of concord are at stake. What is more, to see rhetoric as a culture means that it cannot be dissociated from an analysis of the places in which rhetoric should be employed because these are presupposed in all rhetorical theory. All this will lead to a broader understanding of the social dimension of concord in northern humanism in general, which is not merely a political concept but one that incorporates educational, theological, cognitive, and linguistic viewpoints. This omnipresent importance of language and rhetoric for Vives's social and political thought is approached by looking into the

evolution of Vives's thought on three different fronts.

First, the study analyses the development of Vives's thought on the explicit importance given to language and rhetoric in his reflection on the functioning of human associations, and especially political communities. While reconstructing the basic presuppositions of Vives's political thought, I seek to demonstrate that Vives comes to argue that a successful princely regime is ultimately dependent on the prudent use of language in different practices of counselling. Closely linked to this, I show that the connection is not merely a theoretical one since Vives's reflection presupposes an actual culture of political deliberation that takes place not only in the representative institutions and in courts of princes but also more generally in the activities of a generation of men of letters. Moreover, this rhetoric does not simply try to overcome individual discord; it presents observations on how every non-utopian social and political concord is ultimately based on managing discord. It is in this context that Vives's own life can also be seen as an attempt to perform the virtues of an active life close to power by influencing decision-making, setting a framework within which decisions could be judged, and as exemplifying how a Christian humanist should engage in civic practices without becoming a corrupt courtier.

Secondly, I try to understand Vives's educational plans as reflections on the civic and social possibilities of rhetoric and other linguistic disciplines. Thus, education is the place where linguistic abilities are socialized, and as I argue, all this is intrinsically linked to Vives's ideas on social and political concord. More specifically, I intend to show that Vives's major contribution to education and pedagogy, *De disciplinis*, can be read as an attempt to reassess critically classical and humanist traditions by underlining the social importance of rhetoric, but also restricting its use to those in the higher echelon of the educational ladder. Thirdly, I portray some of Vives's well-known investigational schemes as reflections on the constructive social and political use of language. In this respect, I show that Vives's modifications to the internal theory of rhetoric, as well as its relation to other *artes sermocinales* in his *De consultatione*, *De disciplinis* and *De ratione dicendi*, are intrinsically linked to the social and political possibilities of language. Closely related to this, I seek to demonstrate that many parts of Vives's main treatise on the soul, *De anima*, can be read as reflections on the abilities of education, language, and rhetoric, to bring about a world of social and political concord inside man's natural limitations and possibilities (*ingenium*).

These three themes are not approached as abstract conceptual problems, but as a part of a larger story in which Vives incorporates the civic knowledge of *studia humanitatis*,

and especially rhetoric, into a Christian princely environment in the context of northern humanism. As is well known, the basic conceptual framework of Vives's thought has been portrayed in the existing scholarship as resistant to fundamental change.⁶⁴ While I agree that a significant break does not take place in Vives's central ideas on society, politics, ethics, and language, the trajectory of his work shows evolution as to the depth with which some of the themes are tackled. Thus, the way in which some key issues are amplified, problematized, and even subtly rethought, demonstrates how closely Vives's thinking on rhetoric, society, and politics evolved together with the very practical problems he faced. His attempt to fit classical and humanist wisdom into a Christian framework is simultaneously a reflection and a comment on some of the pressing issues of the 1510s and 1520s – such as educational reform, the Reformation, and European warfare propagated by Henry VIII, Francis I, and Charles V.

Vives's engagement with the *studia humanitatis* has some identifiable phases. He adopts the idea of rhetoric as communication of truth and wisdom in civic matters in the 1510s. In the late 1510s and especially in the 1520s, he becomes an Erasmian counsellor who reflects on the civic possibilities of rhetoric, and puts his mastery of humanist political discourse to work in his critique of warfare and discord. Finally, from the late 1520s he becomes detached from active politics and dedicates his efforts to reflecting on the place of rhetoric in education, somewhat rethinking its relationship to other neighbouring arts, and to questions of cognition and passions. Ultimately, by the late 1530s Vives's thought depicts the only possible world of concord available to man without the grace of God, as being based on the control of the impulses of discord that can never be completely tamed. Thus, together with the perfecting of men through education towards a world of concord, Vives underlines the importance of controlling passion and bad judgement within social bodies by the prudential use of language of those representing its reason. As a political offshoot of this, Vives argues that prudent men should both guard the prince from sinking into tyranny, and educate people – prone to passions and anarchy – to a world of concord, whilst taking into account the possibilities and limitations every person. This last point is effectively a reflection on the highly optimistic take on the possibilities of education to mould the character of men found in northern humanism, especially in the 1510s.

⁶⁴ Some of the more influential overall interpretations of Vives discuss his thought in a relative timeless vacuum completely detached from biography. In Noreña and Bonilla, the structure underlines the separation of biography and thought by dedicating different sections to life and more systematic questions, see Bonilla y San Martín 1903; Noreña 1970; Fernández-Santamaría 1998.

Whilst discussing Vives's thought in proximity to biography and larger European developments, there are some issues this study will not aim to tackle systematically. First, I will not assess the importance of psychological experience and Vives's *converso* background to his thought. Biographical details are presented in order to shed some light on possibilities to be an ethical counsellor in the early sixteenth-century context, as well as to assess the collective dimension of political influence. Secondly, the aim is not to supplant the existing specific studies on different aspects of Vives's thought, such as rhetoric, society, or the soul.⁶⁵ Rather, the study contributes by analysing separate discussions on education, linguistic disciplines, cognition, moral philosophy, and explicit social and political reflections together. This is a way to broaden the understanding of the political and social dimension of Vives's thought. Moreover, in my focus on a single humanist, I do not want to claim the autonomy of Vives in tackling conceptual problems – it is evident that his thought mirrors the basic semantic presuppositions of a whole culture of northern humanism within which he has to be understood. However, inside the culture of northern humanism, Vives's work can be seen as one of the only attempts to deal encyclopaedically with all the major questions of the time.

Regarding political thought, one could argue that separate disciplines – among many other things – shed a different kind of light on what is essentially the same problem: how to organise best the use of rhetoric and language in social and political life. This is not merely a conceptual implication, and Vives himself thought of different disciplines in relation to social and political concord. One can think of the idea of an ethical speaker, counsellor, and prudent man as being the centre of analysis in very different discourses. He is the subject of ethical and civic thought, as well as the object of educational patterns. He is analysed as a man of self-governance partaking in the wisdom of concord and truth, as a prudent counsellor, as an educated man of great *ingenium* capable of reasoning and speaking, as the ideal object of education, or even as a member of the humanist circles of the Republic of Letters. In this respect, I do not wish to claim that Vives comes with an explicit theory where all these discourses are woven together in some ingenious way (Vives is not a system builder), but merely that he considers them to be interrelated.

Lastly, while I greatly acknowledge the contributions of reception studies to early modern intellectual history, this study will not deal primarily with how meaning is created in

⁶⁵ For specific studies on Vives's rhetorical, political and social thought, see the separate discussions above. For specific studies on the soul, see Del Nero 2008b; Casini 2006; Sancipriano 1957, Sancipriano 1974.

the reception of Vives, but rather with how Vives himself creates meaning in the reception of a predominantly classical tradition.⁶⁶ Thus, this study reconstructs Vives's intellectual project, not the process of reception in which Vives ultimately becomes a major sixteenth-century thinker.

Description of Chapters and Materials

The way in which Vives's biography has been periodized has varied, although most writers have found four or five identifiable phases in Vives's life.⁶⁷ This study will largely rely on the existing periodization, but with a specific focus on certain key moments related to his rhetorical and political oeuvre.

In Chapter two, I describe Vives's initial contacts with humanism in Paris and Louvain in the 1510s. The chapter discusses what the profound changes introduced by humanism in language education, implied socially and politically. More specifically, it discusses the close connection Vives makes between educational reforms, linguistic production, and an active life of *negotium* – especially in his 1519 *In pseudodialecticos*, but also in a range of other works. Chapter three puts forward a two-fold argument. First, it discusses Vives's incorporation into Erasmian humanism, interpreted as a cultural and social activity, and argues that Vives's intellectual authority and credibility partly stem from the support of the most well known humanists of the time. Furthermore, it tackles the social dimension of that authority by examining its more openly civic implications, and presents an extensive analysis of Vives's *De consultatione* – a work in which the tradition of rhetoric is discussed within the framework of counselling.

Chapter four turns to some of the basic ideas that run through Vives's political thought. It clarifies Vives's basic dichotomy between good princely rule and tyranny, and shows how this language is turned into a strong demand of peace in the name of the whole of Christian Europe, rather than of any particular state. It also argues that some of the central political ideas are not only activated in actual political deliberations, but are also embedded in school exercises

⁶⁶ There are great studies on the reception of Erasmus, see Bataillon 1991; Seidel Menchi 1987; Bietenholtz 2009. For the reception of Vives, see Moreno Gallego 2006; González González 2007. For the rise and theoretical problems of reception studies in general, see Machor, James L. – Philip Goldstein (eds.): *Reception Study, from Literary Theory to Cultural Studies*, Routledge, New York/London, 2001.

⁶⁷ A relatively typical periodization can be found in González González 2007: 1. Until 1509 Valencian years, 2. 1509 – 1514 Paris, 3. 1514 – 1523 the Netherlands, Louvain, 4. 1523 – 1528 Between England and Bruges 5. 1529 – 1540 mature years, Bruges and Breda.

that show ways of putting them into use. Chapter five is centred on Vives's main work on politics, *De concordia & discordia in humano genere*. It asserts that *De concordia* is more than a political deliberation; it presents a general cultural analysis of the reasons of discord that point towards the possibilities of perfecting man – of restituting him to his God-like nature. With its larger cultural analysis, it builds a bridge to Vives's 1530s works that are detached from actual politics, focusing on different aspects of spiritual and intellectual renewal. The chapter also discusses the possibilities of the metaphor of social body as a source of collective social care (*De subventionem pauperum*), and as a reaction against radical Anabaptism (*De communione rerum*).

Chapters six, seven, and eight, focus firmly on Vives's most comprehensive treatments on rhetoric, education, and the soul: *De disciplinis*, *De ratione dicendi*, and *De anima*. The point of departure for all these chapters is that that these major treatises of the 1530s can be read as reflections of a relatively isolated figure on the possibilities and threats of the optimistic humanist Erasmian project of the 1510s and 1520s. Chapter six discusses the restructuring of linguistic arts in the first part of *De disciplinis* as a critique of the optimist conception of rhetoric typical of humanist tradition. Its ambivalent portrayal of the history of rhetoric is coupled with a new demarcation of rhetoric vis-à-vis other arts, as well as with a reassessment of dialectic in the spirit of the Dutch humanist Rudolph Agricola. Chapter seven takes its cue from Chapter six, and shows how the conceptual discussions of the first part of *De disciplinis* influence the actual formation of the prudent man in the pedagogical part of the work. More specifically, it shows that the highly cautious attitude to rhetoric carries over to the actual constructive proposition put forward in *De disciplinis*. In this, rhetoric is portrayed as necessary, but is ruled out of elementary education. The chapter also discusses whom the truly prudent are that should master the *trivium*, their qualities, places of activity, and social extension.

Finally, Chapter eight deals with Vives's main contributions to rhetoric – *De ratione dicendi*, and the soul – *De anima*. These works are read as extensions of the prudent man and the possibilities of social and political concord. In *De ratione*, Vives tries to adapt rhetorical theory to a context where open confrontation is not the norm. This kind of rhetoric incorporates the knowledge of classical theory that strives at persuasion into a strong analysis of the recipient, as well as into new non-adversary genres. The picture of rhetoric that arises from *De ratione* is that discord and difference of opinion are best controlled and mediated with an appearance of concord. Lastly, *De anima* appears not only as a key to self-knowledge, but

also to larger social wisdom that sets the ultimate limits for the possibilities of humanist educational, social, and rhetorical projects.

The basic material source of the study is all Vives's published and unpublished literary production, together with other humanist and classical literature that is relevant for understanding Vives's points on rhetoric, education, and politics. The main intellectual context is formed by other Renaissance humanists, among whom Erasmus's literary production together with his famous collection of letters have provided an invaluable framework for this study. Concerning Vives's and other humanists' treatises, I have used sixteenth-century editions wherever possible with preference to early editions.⁶⁸ With classical writers, I have opted in most cases for the standard Loeb editions.

⁶⁸ In the choice of an appropriate edition, some practical issues such as their availability have played a role.

2. From Paris to Louvain, Vives becomes a humanist

Chapter two focuses on Vives's career in the 1510s. It argues that Vives's first encounter with humanism in Paris in the early 1510s awakens his interest in humanist methods of reading and writing propagated by new materials on grammar and rhetoric. Vives's humanism has clear links to larger trends in the French capital, where the value of humanism was first and foremost interpreted in the context of humanist philology aspiring to truth – an approach epitomized by Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples. Thus, despite Vives's experimentations with a variety of styles, and his undeniable interest in rhetoric and the other arts of *studia humanitatis*, the significance of the humanist restructuration of language teaching is interpreted in the context of eternal wisdom and the unbreakable unity of the arts. The second part of the chapter deals with Vives's late-1510s writings printed in Louvain. Vives's familiarity with Dutch humanism and Erasmus are undeniable, yet the central thread of his work does not relate to Erasmus's late 1510s program of Biblical philology. Rather, Vives completes his critique of scholastic learning in *In pseudodialecticos* by attacking its dialectical method in an attempt to reform the whole *trivium* to a humanist mould that could be useful for the active life (*vita activa*). More specifically, this *trivium* should offer a method for reading and taking notes that could turn the linguistic resources of classical antiquity into production. This production should be put into use in a life of *negotium* that aspires to transform men and to cure discord with a responsible use of rhetorical language.

Vives's Quest for Wisdom, *Sapiens*

In 1514, a certain young Spaniard named Juan Luis Vives entered the literary scene of Europe by publishing his first writings. Most of these short texts were gathered in a larger volume comprising a selection of eight pieces of varied sorts, all of which were closely related to Vives's activities in the academic life of Paris. The central text that bound all other pieces together and gave them a larger interpretative framework in the compilation was *Sapiens*, a dialogue that discussed wisdom and university life in a playful manner.⁶⁹ In the introduction

⁶⁹ The compilation is known through a possible reprint in Lyon. For an in-depth description of the works, see González González 1987, 165-167.

to the dialogue itself Vives juxtaposes the current ignorant state of learning to the erudite wisdom of classical antiquity and early Christianity that produced great numbers of wise men, because, “in those free cities tongues were allowed to speak against vice.”⁷⁰ Moreover, in addition to pleading for the duty of the wise to denounce vice in the soldiers of truth, Vives argues, in a typically humanist vein, that the antidote against corruption and beastly life lies in education and learning. The Spanish humanist also informs the reader that satire is a more suitable way of revealing truth than panegyric since it is less prone to adultery and deceit.⁷¹ In the dialogue proper, the satire is performed by Nicolas Bérault, Gaspar Lax and Vives himself, who all feature in the dialogue offering the reader a fictional tour around the halls and corridors of the colleges of Paris University in a quest for true wisdom.

The text is often read as a humanist critique of scholasticism, a sort of early version of Vives’s polemical and more famous *In pseudodialecticos*; yet, there are some issues that complicate this interpretation.⁷² One is the very election of the persons of the dialogue since it is not easy to decipher what role exactly – if any – they are supposed to play in the message Vives wants to convey to the reader. Bérault was one of the more famous French humanists collaborating with Vives in the printing house of Kees and Lambert, and he very likely introduced Vives to some of the humanist circles and currents of Paris. Gaspar Lax, on the other hand, was Vives teacher and a scholastic dialectician at the Collège de Montaigu, a relatively well-known student of the most famous member of the theological faculty, the prominent dialectician John Mair.⁷³ Yet the dichotomy between Bérault and Lax is never brought to the forefront. Quite the contrary – the three protagonists seem to agree on all the judgements on the deficiencies of Parisian academic life.

In the same spirit, the judgement pronounced on the respective failures of different arts is rather varied as to the exact points on which they are criticised. In the case of the teachers of *studia humanitatis* – the grammarian, the poet, and the rhetorician – the main agenda is not a critique of their scholastic jargon. The problem of the grammarian lies in a pronounced focus on ultimately useless details, whereas the failure of the rhetorician is based

⁷⁰ Vives, Juan Luis: “Sapiens”, 296-300 in Vives, Juan Luis: *Opera Omnia*, vol. 1, Episcopus, Basel 1555, 296: “...nempe quod licebat in liberis civitatibus liberis esse linguas....”

⁷¹ Vives: “Sapiens”, 296.

⁷² Fantazzi 2008b, 93-95; González González 1987, 159.

⁷³ González González 1987, 143-164. Vives, in his *Vita Ioannis Dullardi (The Life of Jan Dullaert)* states that John Mair was certainly the best philosopher of his time, see Vives, Juan Luis: “Vita Ioannis Dullardi per Ioannem Lodovicum Vivem Valentinum”, 14-15 in Vives, Juan Luis: *Early Writings 2* (eds. Ijsewijn – Fritsen – Fantazzi), Brill, Leiden 1991, 14: “Usus est praeceptore Ioanne Maiore, philosophorum sui temporis facile principe....”

on his incapacity to move and raise emotions.⁷⁴ The poet, for his part, mumbles a confusing sequence of poetical sentences, where, to use the words of Lax, “the humane and the divine are entangled,” which clearly counts as true mockery of the “sacred theology of the poets.”⁷⁵ As to the dialectician, the philosopher, the physician and the mathematician the point of critique is intrinsically linked to the incomprehensible nature and irrelevance of their scholastic and technical language. Thus, in criticising the dialectician, engaged in constructing what appear to be valid arguments deprived of any meaningful content, Lax states that this is divination and suggests a return to “good dialectic” that “uses very short enunciations.”⁷⁶

The yearning for a man of encyclopaedic knowledge, as Vives puts it, in the early stages of the dialogue is finally fulfilled by a theologian who pronounces that “true wisdom is the Son of God,” contrasting this kind of wisdom to mundane riches and other temporal matters. The dichotomy between the wisdom of the soul and the passions of the body is made explicit and the final solution offered is the overcoming of mundane and bodily temptation in a relative isolation.⁷⁷ Hence, a work leaning towards humanist studies in various ways, although not systematically portraying humanism and scholasticism as two clear structures of knowledge, ends with a turn to wisdom that is not explicitly linked to the practical knowledge of *studia humanitatis* often associated with humanism. On the contrary, the true wisdom propagated by the theologian is of rather contemplative – even monastic – nature in its pronounced focus on inner spirituality.⁷⁸ All of this, however, resonated well in the academic *ambiance* of Paris at the time.

Interpretations of Vives's Early Works

Contrary to what was believed until recently, it is now widely accepted that Vives, who had arrived to Paris in 1509, stayed in the French capital until 1514. Moreover, thanks to the

⁷⁴ Vives: “Sapiens”, 297-298. The depiction of the grammarian links rather to the commonplace critique found in scholastic literature, see for instance Dorp’s letter to Erasmus, Allen 347, 34-43. The first line of the grammarian is actually in Greek, a subject that was famously popular at the Paris University of the time with Girolamo Aleandro’s lectures on Greek awakening great interest, see Renaudet 1916, 611-614. Vives makes a very similar critique of grammar teaching focusing on insignificant details in his *De disciplinis*, see Vives: DD, 278.

⁷⁵ Vives: “Sapiens”, 298: “...omnia prophana, humana divinis conmixta.”; “Haec est Poetarum sacra theologia...”

⁷⁶ Vives: “Sapiens”, 298: “...vera dialectica, enunciationibus perquam brevibus utentes, & quibus facile respondentem (ni esset impense doctus) capiebant...”

⁷⁷ Vives: “Sapiens”, 300: “Nonne recte ego vos dixi in nomine Domini congregatos? qui sapientiam, id est, Dei filium quaeritis...”

⁷⁸ Vives: “Sapiens”, 300. González González has also pointed this out, see González González 1987, 165-182.

groundbreaking work of Enrique González González we have a better idea of Vives's activities in the French capital. Whereas all scholarship until the 1980s emphasized his scholastic schooling inside the walls of the famous and conservative Collège de Montaigu, we now know that he was also involved in other activities related to what can be broadly dubbed humanism.⁷⁹ More than experimenting with rhetorical compositions and teaching courses under the auspices of the university in a rather humanist mould, he was also actively collaborating with the printers Thomas Kees and Jean Lambert. It is very likely indeed that during this Parisian period Vives encountered currents of humanist learning outside the Collège de Montaigu, as González González has suggested.⁸⁰

Even if Vives's *Sapiens* cannot be taken to portray humanism and scholasticism as antagonistic and all-encompassing intellectual paradigms, his connections with the printing world, experiments with literary styles, and pronounced focus on the teaching of classical and humanist materials witness a remarkable interest in the currents of new learning.⁸¹ Thus, whatever the self-understanding of Vives's *rapprochement* with humanism might have been, he seems to have adopted the working habits and methods of humanist language teaching and production already in 1514. Vives's approach and interest in texts, language, and the restructuring of the *trivium* and *studia humanitatis* – the minimal definition of humanism – can be situated inside the emerging humanist tradition.⁸²

If Vives is approached from the vantage point of a literary definition of humanism, his whole activities in 1514 display a strong adherence to classical writers and trends closely connected to the teaching of grammar and other arts of the *trivium* in a more humanist vein. This is most clearly visible in Vives's five printed prelections (*praelectio*) based on the books he was then lecturing on.⁸³ Firmly in accordance with the Parisian tradition, these prelections – possibly based on a real inaugural lecture by Vives – advertised courses that were most likely

⁷⁹ González González 1987, 127-182. See also Noreña 1970, 29-48.

⁸⁰ González González 1987, 137.

⁸¹ The dichotomy between scholasticism and humanism emerges very clearly in Vives's 1519 *In pseudodialecticos*. In 1514 there are many scholars how cannot easily be situated into one of the two traditions such as Josse Clichtove. Vives's own level of Latin was, however, far from excellent, see Ijsewijn – Fritsen – Fantazzi 1991, 1; Matheussen – Fantazzi – George 1987, 61.

⁸² Moss 2003, 1; Moss 1996, 1-24. Brian Cummings has also underlined the significance of literary culture and grammar to all literary production in the Renaissance and Reformation, see Cummings 2007, 5-25. Kristeller famously highlighted the fundamentally literary character of humanism, see Kristeller 1955, 10.

⁸³ Vives's other works from 1514 include a prologue to printer Kees's edition of a pseudo-Hygienian astronomical treatise and a small biography of Johannes Dullaert – one of his more scholastically minded teachers. In addition to these, Vives published a work comprising three texts misleadingly entitled *Opuscula duo* that employed classical style to Christian themes, see Ijsewijn-Fritsen-Fantazzi 1991, 17; González González 1987, 165-166.

extracurricular and dedicated to humanist materials.⁸⁴ Hence, they give a good overall picture of the intended contents of a lecture as designed by the teacher, as well as on the language the teacher chose in making publicity for his course. Two of these lectures are dedicated to Vives's own works while the three remaining are related to courses pronounced by Vives on other writers. These three were the *Convivium* of Francisco Filelfo, *De legibus* (*On the Laws*) and *De officiis* (*On Duties*) by Cicero and the pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herennium*.⁸⁵ González González has argued quite convincingly that at this point Vives was most likely connected to the French humanist Nicolas Bérault who appeared in *Sapiens*, and if one takes the activities of the French humanist into consideration, a rather comprehensive picture of an overall interest in modern humanist studies emerges. In the years of 1513 – 1515 Bérault was lecturing on Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* (*Institutes of Oratory*), Cicero's *De legibus*, Angelo Poliziano's *Silvae* – a poetical introduction to the *Georgics* of Vergil and the Poet Hesiod – on Roman Law, on astronomy, on Cicero's *Phillipicae* (*Philippics*) and finally in 1516, on Suetonius's *De vitae Caesaris* (*The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*). Bérault was closely connected to the biggest authorities of Greek studies of Paris Girolamo Aleandro and Guillaume Budé. Apart from this, he was the editor of the first French edition of Filelfo's *Conviviorum*, a book that Vives was lecturing on in 1514.⁸⁶ Moreover, Vives was the editor of Baptista Guarini's *De ordine docendi ac studendi* for the Lambert press composing a short introductory letter praising humanist pedagogy.⁸⁷ Taken together, the activities of Vives and Bérault indicate a broad interest in different aspects of humanist and grammatical studies moving from poetry and literature to history and the teaching of rhetoric.⁸⁸

Development of Teaching Materials and Grammar Courses, Defying the Late Medieval Tradition

Even though the humanist-scholasticism debate understood as an open conflict hardly surpasses any other intellectual dispute in the French capital before in 1514, a gradual swift in the

⁸⁴ González González 1987, 132-142, 163-164. Extracurricular courses were common in Paris. Following the practice of Italian humanists, those who gave courses outside the usual college curriculum chose single authors or texts, often preparing an edition of the text in question, see Fantazzi 2006, 247.

⁸⁵ Filelfo was popular in the Low Countries, and belonged to the canon of Italian writers mentioned frequently in Erasmian circles, see Ijsewijn 1986, 529.

⁸⁶ González González 1987, 127-182; BR I, 126-128.

⁸⁷ De Schepper 2000, 195-205.

⁸⁸ It has also been speculated that Bérault might have been Vives's teacher, see Ijsewijn – Fritsen – Fantazzi 1991, 2, 16. About the dating of these courses, see González González 1987, 165-181.

structure and learning of the arts is taking place in many of the colleges at the University of Paris.⁸⁹ The printing of humanist materials boomed from the start of the sixteenth century, which is exactly the moment in which the production of late medieval materials on grammar come somewhat to an abrupt halt. Moreover, contemporaries and printers knew well that something in the approach to the *trivium* and language teaching was indeed changing. Iohannes Balbi's *Catholicon* – the scholastic grammar *par excellence* – was becoming outdated as the most important printer of the French capital Josse Bade noted in his introduction to the 1506 edition of the work.⁹⁰ There are clear signs that the very strongholds of nominalist scholasticism were also affected by new materials, as Noël Beda's statutes for the famously conservative Collège de Montaigu from 1509 demonstrate. These are the only surviving statutes from the early years of the institution that state explicitly the content of the grammar course, and – despite their distinctively late medieval outlook – they reveal that the teaching of grammar was already influenced by new pedagogic literature. Although the grammar course is heavily based on the explanation of Alexandre de Villedieu's traditional textbook, *Doctrinale*, and to a lesser extent on Donatus's *Ars minor* and *Ars maior*, authorities that were then more current are mentioned as suitable materials for grammar teaching.⁹¹ These included Niccolò Perotti, Augustino Dati, and Guy de Jouenneaux (who had composed a growingly popular version of Lorenzo Valla's *Elegantiae lingua latinae*).

At least by the 1510s, the very practice of language education at Collège de Montaigu, where Vives studied at least at some point of his Parisian years, had also been influenced by the Italian way of teaching grammar.⁹² In 1509 the most prestigious theologian of the Montaigu, John Mair, was irritated by some of the developments of humanism that were potentially threatening to the scholastic process of clarifying truth, and he reminded his readers that even Pico della Mirandola had defended the technical language of scholastics as the appropriate tool for this task. In 1516, he seems to have been even more worried about recent

⁸⁹ Farge 1985, 118. Teaching was mainly carried out in about forty colleges, see Farge 1985, 11.

⁹⁰ Bade, Josse: “Iodocus Badius Ascensius domino Adae Kempensi”, introductory letter to Balbi, Johannes: *Catholicon seu universale vocabularium ac summa grammatices*, Josse Bade/Jean Petit, Paris 1506.

⁹¹ Montaigu statutes of 1509, reproduced in Bakker 2007, 91: “Et sic in scholis suis se habebunt regentes in grammatica quod, cum inchoant in festo Remigii lectiones suas, primus regens in grammatica incipit de Alexandro in *Pandere*; capiet oratorem unum cum poeta de non prohibitis (quia tales prohiberi debent: Terentius, Martialis, Iuvenalis, Naso in epistolis et similes); et insistet diligenter fundamentis in Donato, Alexandro, Peroto, Augustino et Guidone.”

⁹² González González has suggested that Vives's connections with Montaigu were probably looser than has been thought before. González González 1987, 134-137. Some earlier scholarship has underlined the marginal influence of humanism in Paris in the 1510s, see Padley 1976, 5-6.

developments, and implied that the Faculty of Arts was not preparing students for the study of theology in a suitable manner.⁹³ Also in the same year François du Bois, a teacher at the Collège de Montaigu and an active editor of classical texts for Josse Bade's printing house, published his *Progymnasmatum*, a contribution to the humanist trend of looking for an abundant, eloquent, and versatile style. Although the Faculty of Arts and its teaching habits are in many ways a *terra incognita* for modern scholarship, it has been shown that already in the early sixteenth century an M.A from the Paris University was the most prestigious qualification for a master in humanist colleges in France. This would indicate an increasing presence of humanist learning in the university halls of the capital.⁹⁴ In addition to all of this, the practice of giving extracurricular courses, paid for by students, on humanist and classical materials was normal, and contributed to the introduction of the new learning to the lecture halls of Paris University.

The meaning of the change in grammar teaching had philosophical, semantic, practical, and cultural ramifications since what was increasingly challenged was a whole culture of approaching language and argumentation. In the late Middle Ages, the purpose of grammar had not been limited to the teaching of linguistic skills for the use of language in different situations, but it had predominantly, although not exclusively, evolved into an investigation into the meaning of words linked closely to a highly developed tradition of formal dialectical reasoning. The *raison d'être* of what is called speculative grammar was very often explicitly stated in the introductions and commentaries of treatises, and referred to the Aristotelian idea of unveiling the semantic relations of a mental language.⁹⁵ In this way, some aspects of medieval grammar can be understood as propaedeutic elements leading to formal and terministic dialectic (logic), and many semantic problems expounded in terministic logic were indeed born out of grammatical commentaries.⁹⁶ A change in grammar teaching and materials had potential effects

⁹³ Mair, John: "Johannes Maior Alexandro Stevvard" dedicatory letter to Mair, John: *Quartus sententiarum*, Poncet Le Preux, Paris 1509; Mair, John: *In quartum sententiarum questiones utilissimae suprema ipsius lucubratione enucleatae cum duplici tabella videlicet alphabetica materiarum decisarum in fronte et quaestionum in calce*, Josse Bade, Paris 1516, 1. For a treatment of the evolution of Mair's thinking on humanism see Moss 2003, 76-86.

⁹⁴ Huppert 1984, 47-74.

⁹⁵ Moss 2003, 7. The significance of the change in teaching materials is discussed already by Eugenio Garin in his *L'Éducation de l'Homme moderne 1400-1600* 1968, 19-42. He focuses more on the philosophical implications of the change linking it to man's understanding of his historical nature than on the fact that specific educational practices were largely based on commonplaces, see Garin 1968, 28: "La position centrale que vient occuper le problème de l'éducation de l'homme, c'est-à-dire l'image de l'homme in fieri, ou en devenir, au lieu de la catégorie ou, à la rigueur, de la hiérarchie des intelligences, est assez significative: ce n'est pas par hasard que la science, le langage, la logique se définissent comme problèmes d'assimilation, de méthode, de classification et d'organisation du savoir." For a primarily negative assessment of humanist grammar, see Padley 1976, 5-57.

⁹⁶ Cummings 2007, 115-118.

across language disciplines, since the elementary teaching of language cannot easily be dissociated from what is expected of language use.

Some widely used materials for grammar education accentuated their relation to deep semantic analysis. One of the standard dictionaries of the late Middle Ages, Iohannes Balbi's *Summa grammaticalis quae vocatur Catholicon*, which was printed numerous times throughout Europe in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, highlights words as components of the technical language typical of the Paris University of the fifteenth century.⁹⁷ For most of the Middle Ages, the basic text of grammar education was Donatus's *Ars Grammatica* – especially its first part *Ars minor* and the third book of the second part (*Ars maior*). Donatus was very often followed by the even more philosophical Priscian, who was unsuitable for elementary education and rarely used in arts faculties. Donatus's *Ars minor* presented language not as a historical but as a formal system focusing on the web of semantic relations in detriment of syntactic ones. The more philosophical outlook of the work is also manifest in the third part of *Ars maior* dedicated to figures and tropes, where the problem is presented as a philosophical question of meaning and diversions of meaning, not as a possibility to rhetorical or literary style.⁹⁸ All this directed the *problematique* of grammar away from the accidental aspects of language, namely from morphology and analysis of the particularities of the syntax of classical Latin to questions of abstract semantic relations and how they could be signified in language. Only Alexandre de Villedieu's *Doctrinale* – composed in verse in order to be more easily memorized by the pupil – provided a pedagogical grammar to students. Villedieu's work presents rules through definitions, not semantic reflections on those rules, but it is not rich in references to the classical tradition, so dear to the more modern approach.

In addition to the materials and formal understanding of grammar, the late Middle Ages offered a practice of reading and understanding that was closely connected to its explicitly stated ends. Since the thirteenth century (at least) in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Paris, the dominant mode of teaching was based on the pedagogic devices of *quaestio* and *disputatio*.⁹⁹ Grammar, understood not only as prescriptive rules for language production but as

⁹⁷ Balbi's *Catholicon* included information on other aspects of grammar and rhetoric but by far its most extensive part was dictionary. For a more detailed analysis, see Moss 2003, 16-17.

⁹⁸ For a more detailed discussion, see Copeland –Sluiter 2010.

⁹⁹ This was the predominant but not the only way of reading texts. What is more, the medieval tradition created its own tradition of *enarratio* based on the commentary and reading of Latin authors, where the final goal was not only to fix correct language usage, but also to interpret the intentions of the writer through literal exegesis and to reconstruct the historical correct interpretation of texts. The medieval literary exegesis was heavily based on six questions: *quis, quid, cur, quomodo, quando, ubi, quibus facultatibus*. It was a method for contextualizing the text. Moreover, the study of poets never seized completely, see: Reynolds, Suzanne: *Medieval Reading*,

a way of reading and analysing texts, was organized around these basic tools. *Quaestio*, or *quaestiones*, as Weijers has noted, was a way of both amplifying and contextualizing problems arising from a text through a dialectical treatment. It was, furthermore, a method of presenting separate questions for a disputation and a way of exercising argumentative and analytical capacities.¹⁰⁰ *Disputatio* was the active treatment of a *quaestio* through arguments for and against, followed by a refutation and a final solution to the problem posed. Like *quaestio*, *disputatio* could serve as an active exercise or as a way of exposing a problem arising from a commentary of a text. The dominant role of disputations is a clear indication of the prevalent role of dialectical motifs in commenting a text: *disputatio* was primarily an exercise in formal reasoning and semantic precision that accentuated the importance of the formal validity of arguments according to the semantic and propositional rules of dialectical reasoning. Despite their highly formal nature, *quaestio* and *disputatio* had a distinctive practical task; they showed how problems arising from authorities and other texts could systematically be clarified and bound together with the unity of all other knowledge through a proper dialectical treatment of questions.¹⁰¹ In this way dialectic, the art of truth and error had developed a clear method for clarifying truth in matters that were questioned, and in order that dialectic fulfil its function, the grammar course had to prepare students for formal reasoning.

Humanist Proposal

Even though dictionary was not the basic unit of teaching, the evolution of their content points towards a significant change in the study of words that moved from a focus on formal semantics to semantics of *usus* and literary abundance. The most popular newcomer to the market of Latin dictionaries was Niccolò Perotti's *Cornucopiae*, a work based on the analysis of Martial's poetry using *enarratio* – a typically humanist tool for textual commentary. The nexus of semantic references is radically changed in *Cornucopiae*, firstly because of the points of reference are fixed in the tradition of classical antiquity, and secondly, because the way a word is defined is entirely dependent on its *usus* in other classical texts. Thus, a web of semantic relations between the corpus of classics is created where every definition of words brings to the fore other possible

1996, 1-27.

¹⁰⁰ Weijers 1995, 38-40.

¹⁰¹ Murphy has also underlined that *disputatio* had a substantial, not only formal, role to play and, consequently, it could be a way of treating themes of social and intellectual utility. Murphy 2005, I, 12. More generally on *disputatio*, see Murphy 2005, iv, 2-6.

uses of the term as it is applied by a number of classical *auctores*. As the name of the book implies, rather than explaining semantic and syntactic relations in the medieval sense, the book offers the reader a tool for verbal abundance, tying it closely together with rhetorical invention, and not with scholastic reasoning. It was, however, the three humanistic works mentioned in the statutes of Montaigu that formed the basis of the new way of teaching grammar, Perotti's *Rudimenta Grammatices*, Valla's *Elegantiae* together with Jouenneaux's version of Valla and Dati's *Elegantiolae*. Despite their significant differences, they all propagated an understanding of grammar based on *usus* and classical authors.¹⁰² Moreover, all were largely available in Paris by the early sixteenth century and were clearly competing with the older materials for the hegemony over the authority in grammar teaching.¹⁰³

The modern way of understanding grammar is not only tied to the change in materials but to an overall understanding of how the grammar course should be conducted in the first place. Probably the most fundamental change a number of thinkers tried to introduce to the grammar course was a relative denial of the use of prescriptive grammar in language education. This was not only meant as a *critique* of speculative grammar, but it also explicitly denounced the more basic and pedagogical grammar course of Latin centred on Villedieu's *Doctrinale*, which aspired to ingrain a set of grammatical rules to the minds of the pupils by the use of metrical verse. Even though these new materials did present inflections in a manner not completely different from Villedieu's, most of the humanist educational material agrees that the normative and prescriptive side of grammar has only a propaedeutic function, with the focus being on the reading of *auctores*. Thus, it is only through reading good literature that the pupil is introduced to the secrets of Latin language.¹⁰⁴ This highlights that language and language learning is not taken as an abstract system of rules, but as a process where correctness is inseparably entangled with elegant style and the imitation of classics. To speak correctly requires not only a construction of a sentence that would be correct because of prescriptive rules, but it should also be an elegant sentence taken from the existing corpus of authorities. Grammar teaching should aspire to an understanding of language that would bring to life a whole set of semantic relations going back to *auctores*. Thus, reading Latin authors serves a multitude of functions where the learning of a language is to a certain extent inseparable from

¹⁰² For differences and similarities, see Moss 2003, 35-63.

¹⁰³ All three (Valla in Jouenneaux's version) were very much available in Paris at the time, for their printing history see Green-Murphy 2006, 154-159; 336-338.

¹⁰⁴ Moss 2003, 35-63.

the absorbing of a whole world of classical antiquity, its vocabulary, mythology, moral philosophy, ethical concerns, and ways of expressing itself.

This, however, did not mean that everything classical antiquity ever produced should necessarily be read. The existing curricula underlined that certain materials should be introduced at specific moments of the educational path; they should be suitable to the level of understanding of a student climbing up the ladder of *ars humanitatis* and they should lead him to a proper interpretation of Latin culture by a selective presentation of right texts and quotes. One pedagogic way of doing this was the practice of *enarratio*, that is, the narration of the text that enabled the positioning of it in the context of all other texts of classical Latin. Unlike the scholastic *quaestio*, *enarratio* was not strictly defined, but made possible all kinds of explicatory commentaries, ranging from philological and historical questions to the use of words in other texts. Thus, an *enarratio* of a text made it understandable mainly in the context of other knowledge a student might have possessed about the classics.¹⁰⁵ In practice, these two ways of understanding grammar could live side by side. In the statutes of Montaigu, as devised by Noël Beda,¹⁰⁶ scholastic and humanist materials are not represented as two mutually exclusive alternatives to grammar teaching but as perfectly compatible with each other – probably even complementary. Accordingly, in the practice of explaining Villedieu, the teachers that are assigned different parts of the work are encouraged to read Villedieu together with poets. Even though *quaestio* is encouraged as a method, Beda also mentions that barbarisms should be avoided, and that *lectio* should be conducted elegantly, making it very explicit that in Beda's mind the two modes of approaching texts are compatible.¹⁰⁷

There can be very little doubt that whatever Vives's understanding of the larger significance of humanism was at the time, he was interested in humanist grammar as a general method of reading texts and as a gateway to the wisdom of classical antiquity. None of his texts follows the method of systematic *quaestio* and Vives never showed any interest in the materials of late medieval grammar. More importantly, his opinion on the importance of grammar was made very explicit in his *Praelectio in convivio Francisci Philelphi*. Here he tells a revealing, polemical, and probably fictional, anecdote about a man who had read the description of the

¹⁰⁵ In Paris in the early years of sixteenth century, many humanists published their *enarratio* thus making it easier to get an idea of how they were conducted. For more information about *enarratio* see for instance Moss 2003, 22.

¹⁰⁶ Later in the 1520s Beda became notoriously famous for his defence of Catholic orthodoxy against both doctrinal and methodological threats posed by the Reformation and some humanist trends

¹⁰⁷ Montaigu statutes of 1509, reproduced in Bakker 2007, 91.

course Vives was intending to give. Amid laughter, the man stated, “everyone who reads the notes will think that you lecture on natural philosophy or astrology whereas in this book you only comment on grammar.”¹⁰⁸ What follows is an angry reply in which Vives makes clear not only that what he is teaching could be useful to natural philosophy and astrology – subjects that have been treated with great eloquence in classical antiquity – but also to all other philosophy be it civil or religious. Thus, he puts forward an interpretation of grammar that makes explicit a strong urge to bring to life classical antiquity in its wholeness through a grammatical reading of the past. Grammar by its very nature is tied to the understanding of ancient culture; it claims that it can transmit the most important literary monuments of wisdom. The point about the general, even philosophical importance of grammar was a humanist commonplace, and it was to evolve into one of the recurrent themes of Vives’s writings, magnificently exemplified by the *laudatio* of the importance of the grammarian in his 1519 *In pseudodialecticos*.¹⁰⁹

The fact that Vives had chosen Filelfo’s *Convivia* as one of the subjects of his lectures is interesting indeed. In the *Praelectio*, Vives situates the work in the tradition of the encyclopaedic works of classical antiquity, Gellius’s *Noctes Atticae* (*Attic Nights*) and Macrobius’s *Saturnalia*. These were both somewhat disorganised collections of quotes. In quoting the famous metaphor from Seneca and Macrobius about the bee that gathers nectar from different flowers and turns it into honey Vives refers to the kind of eclectic method of gathering quotes so typical of the Renaissance education. For Vives, these are not merely random quotes, rather they point towards ultimate truths contained in the philosophy of classical antiquity. What is more, the importance of collecting quotes is explicitly tied to imitation and to one’s own production. In an eloquent ending Vives strongly affirms the humanist ideal of the union of wisdom and rhetoric; the truth and wisdom contained in these quotes shake hands with the most beautiful oratory in the writing of all great writers of classical antiquity, from Plato and Aristotle to Cicero.¹¹⁰

As a further demonstration of an interest in humanist grammar, Vives edited in 1514 a short Italian educational manual, Guarini’s *De ordine docendi ac studendi*, praising it loudly in the introductory text for the reader. Guarini’s *De ordine* was as one of the key texts of Italian *quattrocento* humanism, and as an affirmation of its status, it appeared in the 1514 Basel

¹⁰⁸ Vives, Juan Luis: “Praelectio in Convivia Francisci Philelphi”, 144-151 in Vives, Juan Luis: *Early Writings* 2 (eds. Ijsewijn – Fritsen – Fantazzi), Brill, Leiden 1991, 148: “ii omnes, inquit, qui has legunt cedulas, arbitrabuntur te aliquid vel in philosophia naturali vel in astrologia profiteri, cum solam grammaticam in eo libro interpreteris.”

¹⁰⁹ See Chapter three.

¹¹⁰ Vives: “Praelectio in Convivia”, 147-151.

edition of Rhenanus as explicitly united to the humanist programme of Erasmus.¹¹¹ Guarini's is indeed a full-fledged curriculum of *studia humanitatis* based according to the author himself especially on "the doctrine of my father," who happened to be Guarino Veronese, probably the most famous Italian humanist teacher of the *quattrocento*.¹¹² Although *De ordine docendi ac studendi* was meant for pre-university education in the Italian context, the propaedeutic nature of the Faculty of Arts in Paris made it potentially relevant for language teaching conducted in different *collegia*. Guarini makes the distinction of grammar to "methodical" and the "historical", dedicating some effort to explaining the rule-based nature of grammar falling under the category of "methodical," and he even mentions Alexandre de Villedieu and Priscian as potential authorities.¹¹³ It is, however, in the reading of poets and historians followed by moral philosophy when one is really introduced to the secrets of Latin, understood not only as linguistic rules, but rather as a totality of culture. The emphasis on the variety of subjects and an abundance of material is brilliantly manifested in the recommendation of the encyclopaedic work of Aulus Gellius (*Noctes Atticae*), Macrobius (*Saturnalia*) and St Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* (*City of God*), which according to Guarini was "filled with the histories, rites and the religious beliefs of the Ancient World."¹¹⁴ Yet, as Guarini argued: "who is erudite in these studies [grammar] can move to the study of rhetoric."¹¹⁵ The link from grammar to rhetorical production was, thus, evident.

¹¹¹ Rhenanus, Beatus: "Beatus Rhenanus Lucae Paliuro tubeaquensi", dedication letter to Guarini, Battista: *De modo et ordine docendi ac discendi*, Strasbourg, Matthias Schürer, 1514: "Scribit de praeceptoris officio, et discendi ratione, quam rem ad Guil. Thaleium Erasmus, Rhodolphus ad Barbirianum, uterque doctissime explicarunt."

¹¹² Guarini, Battista: *De modo et ordine docendi ac discendi*, Strasbourg, Matthias Schürer, 1514, iii: "Ea etenim college, quae non meo tantum iudicio (quod non magnum utpote adolescentis esse potest) sed doctissimorum etiam virorum, et in primis optimi parentis me, quem longo iam tempore in hoc docendi munere exercitatum fuisse non te fugit, ad praecipienda, studendiquae scriptum esse tibi persuadebis, quod non longo usu probatum sit."

¹¹³ Guarini: *De modo*, v: "Grammaticae autem duae partes sunt; quarum alteram Methodicen, quae breves omnium orationis partium formulas, id est methodus declarant, alteram Historicen, quae historias et res gestas pertractat, appellant."

¹¹⁴ Guarini: *De modo*, xi: "Ubi primum per se studere incipient, operam dabunt, ut eos videant, qui variis ex rebus composite sunt. Quo in genere est Gellius, Macrobius Saturnalium libris, Plinii naturalis historia, quae non minus varia est, quam ipsa natura. His addimus Augustinum de civitate dei qui liber historiis, et tam ritu veterum, quam religione refertus est."

¹¹⁵ Guarini: *De modo*, x: "Perspicuum iam nimirum esse arbitror eum qui in praedictarum rerum studiis eruditus fuerit, ad Rhetoricen disciplinam posse transcendere, ex qua cum discendi artem fuerit assecutus, non modo Ciceronis orationes intelligent, verum etiam ex superiorum rerum varietate, et copiosam, et ornatam cum arte coniunctam habebit eloquentiam."

From Grammar to Rhetoric

The art that showed how words and quotes could be put into use in one's own production was rhetoric. The importance of rhetorical motives for Vives's understanding of humanist studies is wonderfully presented in his prelection to the fourth book of *Ad Herennium*, a flamboyant expression of the language of power surrounding the art of eloquence. In the text, rhetoric is not primarily presented as a question of style and beauty, nor as a practice of teaching wisdom or as philological method of reading. Above all these things Vives opts, in his attempt to create publicity for his lecture, for the brute language of power, highlighting rhetoric as a force that reigns supreme over the minds of men. Thus, Vives promises that he tries to form an orator capable of dominating the audience: "he will induce them into any mood; he will have command of anybody's soul and will, and make them obey his words and speech without any resistance."¹¹⁶ The selection of *exempla* of good orators hails Cicero as a king who was able to turn the collective mind of the Senate to whatever he wanted, and "the choice of war and peace between the Athenians and Philip was in the power of Demosthenes thanks to his eloquence."¹¹⁷ Thus, Vives's eloquent praise of the utility of rhetoric for potential students at the Faculty of Arts is built primarily, although not exclusively, on a language of civic and social power based on the control of emotion and passion.

The fact that Vives's primary reference points were situated in the classical tradition was hardly a surprise since the corpus of authoritative texts on the use of word was largely inherited from classical antiquity. Rhetoric – a key part of the *trivium* – was deeply embedded in the educational structures of the time and it was studied either in the last years of grammar schools, or in the propaedeutic Faculty of Arts at the university level. It is hard to make a clear-cut distinction between different kinds of educational institutions in the early sixteenth century since many universities outside Italy had preliminary colleges with functions similar to those of grammar and elementary schools. Some grammar schools, for their part, could adopt the teaching curricula of universities.¹¹⁸ Moreover, unlike in Italy, in central and northern Europe, philosophical faculties were often closely connected to the three higher

¹¹⁶ Vives, Juan Luis: "Praellectio in quartum Rhetoricorum ad Herennium", 130-137 in Vives, Juan Luis: *Early Writings* 2 (eds. Ijsewijn – Fritsen – Fantazzi), Brill, Leiden 1991, 130-133: "Vir tamen hic noster [...] hominum mentes in omnes affectus inducet: animorum quorumlibet ac voluntatum imperium habebit et sine repugnantia quaquam verbis illius ac orationi parentes."

¹¹⁷ Vives: "Praellectio in ad Herennium", 132-133: "Penes Demosthenem ob eloquentiam Atheniensium ac Philippi saepius bellum atque pax fuit."

¹¹⁸ Grendler 2006, 9; Henry de Vocht 1951, 65-69.

faculties of Medicine, Law, and Theology with many humanists actually both studying and pursuing a teaching career in higher faculties.¹¹⁹ However, irrespective of the exact institutional context in which rhetoric was studied, an educational hierarchy of rhetorical books and booklets emerges together with the possible pedagogic function they were meant to serve.

A general idea of the materials in use throughout Europe unfolds by looking at the number of printed editions of rhetorical materials. It is hardly an exaggeration to claim that every early sixteenth-century student of classical rhetoric in the elementary level would have been acquainted with Cicero's *De inventione* and the pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herennium* – the book Vives was lecturing on in Paris. These two works that present rhetorical theory in a very schematic and formulistic manner were printed more than ten times per decade in every ten-year span in the early sixteenth century. Since most of the existing editions printed these two works together, the works were clearly thought of as presenting an essentially unified introduction to the secrets of eloquence. Their similarities are numerous, but the fact that *De inventione* focuses exclusively on one of the five traditional parts of rhetoric (invention), whereas *Ad Herennium* provided the pupil with a more ample knowledge of all rhetorical parts, shows that in certain ways they are complementary. If only one of the two was printed individually, it was usually *Ad Herennium* most likely due to its wider coverage of rhetorical tasks.¹²⁰ These two works were not discovered in the Renaissance, but they had a huge reception already during the Middle Ages. However, although medieval rhetoric had never lost sight of the idea of rhetoric as an art of persuasion dealing with emotion, its general developments either integrated it to the abstract *problematique* of grammar and dialectic, or applied its rules to literary production in specific genres such as formulistic letter writing (*ars dictaminis*).¹²¹

A broader understanding of rhetoric was emerging partly because these two booklets were increasingly backed up by other introductory materials to the art of eloquence by Cicero, such as *Partitiones Oratoriae* (*A Dialogue Concerning Oratorical Partitions*), *Topica* (*Topics of Argumentation*), *Brutus*, and *Orator*. These were all printed together with *Ad Herennium* and *De inventione*, and some other works in Josse Bade's 1511 Parisian edition of

¹¹⁹ Garin famously argued that Italian humanism developed outside universities, Garin 1965, 119-142. This view has been challenged even in the case of Italy. See Grendler 2002, 247-248. It has also been shown that humanist interpretations changed the way Aristotle, the most important authority on learning, was approached even in the higher faculties in fifteenth-century Italy, see Schmitt 1983. About the careers of humanists in northern European universities, see Rüegg 1992.

¹²⁰ Mack 2011, 14; Ward 1983, 145-146.

¹²¹ Murphy 1974.

Cicero's rhetorical oeuvre.¹²² As with all rhetorical materials of classical antiquity, printing patterns clearly suggest that 1510s is exactly the moment in which Ciceronian corpus is becoming increasingly available in Transalpine Europe.¹²³ In addition to the Ciceronian pedagogic corpus, more sophisticated, complex, and philosophically challenging treatments of rhetoric were available presenting a variety of issues – ranging from rhetoric's social role to its relationship to other arts. Cicero's most complete work on rhetoric, *De oratore*, not only presented rhetorical theory as a schematic system, but also reflected in a dialogical form on different aspects of the use of word. Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* – praised by many humanists – wove rhetoric together with a comprehensive programme of oratorical education, discussing its relation to all aspects of public life. Aristotle's *The Art of Rhetoric* – the first systematic treatment of rhetorical theory – offered the reader the most complete treatment of passions. Still, Tacitus's *Dialogus de oratoribus* (*Dialogue on the Orators*) offered insight into rhetoric's relationship to political developments and constitutions. This growing popularity and reintegration of the entire rhetorical corpus offered a new context for the reading of the schematic elementary materials since it enabled broader discussions on rhetorical production together with other humanist ethical, cognitive, social, and political concerns.¹²⁴

Despite the often significant differences between separate treatises, pupils across Europe would have received a largely similar overall picture of the basic structure of rhetorical theory. In these schoolbooks, the student would learn that the duties (*officia*) of an orator were to teach (*docere*), to delight (*delectare*) and to move (*movere*) the audience. Moreover, they would have learnt that the three genres of rhetoric were judicial, deliberative, and epideictic, of which the first dealt with the normative judgement of past actions. The second attended to future orientated decision-making, and the third one to the moral assessment of persons or actions through the rhetoric of praise and blame. Still, he would have been informed that the traditional skills of a successful orator were the invention of arguments (*inventio*) through places (*loci*) and commonplaces (*loci communes*); disposition, or arrangement of arguments (*dispositio*) according to the six parts of oration; style and elocution that referred both to the general

¹²² Cicero: *Opera rhetorica, oratoria et forensia, premissis indice et Ad Caium Herennium rhetoricorum libri III. De inventione que et vetus rhetorica libri II. Topicorum ad Brutum*, Bade, Paris 1511. There are six editions of these works in Paris from the 1510s, 1520s and 1530s, see Green – Murphy 2006, 110.

¹²³ Green – Murphy 2006, 107-138.

¹²⁴ The reintegration of classical rhetoric in the Renaissance has been debated. Brian Vickers has argued that Renaissance represents the reintegration of rhetoric as a true civil science after a fragmentation of the art of eloquence and rhetorical culture in the medieval context. This view has been countered by scholars such as John O. Ward who have emphasized greatly the practical nature of medieval rhetoric. Vickers 1988, 254-293; Cox – O'Ward 2006, xv-xvi. See also Murphy 1974, 361.

tripartite division of styles into grand, middle, and low, as well as to the generation of ornaments through figures and tropes. Finally, he would have learned that the two further skills of spoken oratory were memory and delivery. This framework was naturally not a clear-cut scheme of separate issues: the interrelations of different aspects of the theory were highlighted so that the invention of arguments in *Ad Herennium*, for instance, goes hand in hand with the demands of different parts of orations that aspire to specific goals. In the same vein, the disposition of the speech could incorporate ways of analysing the position of the speaker in the eyes of the audience; the first part of the speech, *exordium*, was for instance mainly about winning the listener's favour.¹²⁵

This framework of rhetorical theory was never, however, an empty generative tool, but closely linked to everything a student would have learnt in the grammar course. Its very idea was to arrange existing arguments and quotations in a way that would organize them in the most suitable way for the matter and question at hand. Because of this they refer to and are understandable only in relation to the whole set of materials incorporated into the *trivium*, providing the student with materials – Roman plays, theatrical pieces, orations, letters and practical examples for rhetorical production called *progymnasmata*. Thus, in humanist educational materials the rule-based schematic element of rhetoric was only part of a larger package that was supposed to turn pupils into able readers and producers of rhetoric, and drill into their minds the kind of maxims and classical quotations they were supposed to use in the composition of their own work. A manifestation of this was that the basic tool of material arrangement, the commonplace book, was primarily a collection of organized quotes that could be brought to mind for one's own production through the successful use of places (*loci*).¹²⁶

The Renaissance did, of course, produce some materials for school contexts, even though the bulk of Renaissance educational materials appeared later with the ascendancy of Ramism. George of Trebizond had composed in the fifteenth century, and in a somewhat Hermogenean vein, an introductory work to rhetoric entitled *Rhetoricorum libri V*, which began to be largely available north of the Alps from the late 1510s. Hermogenes's own rhetorical work, however, was not very often printed in the early sixteenth century, and even if some editions of his work might have been in use, they were not competing as alternative introductions to

¹²⁵ For classical treatments of rhetorical theory, see Skinner 1996; Vickers 1988, 1-82; Fumaroli 1980, 47-76; Mack 2011, 13-32.

¹²⁶ For the history of commonplace book, see Moss 1996.

rhetoric.¹²⁷ Rudolph Agricola's *De inventione dialectica* published for the first time in 1515 also incorporated elements from rhetorical theory into its general theory of invention. Even if some editions of relative popularity are known mostly in Paris and in some German towns, the dominant role of Roman rhetorical treatises cannot be doubted, and it was only with the work of Erasmus and Philipp Melanchthon that popular rhetorical works produced in the Renaissance were becoming available.¹²⁸ Philipp Melanchthon's *De rhetorica libri tres* (1519), *Institutiones Rhetoricae* (1521), and *Elementa rhetorices libri duo* (1529), all printed numerous times in the 1520s and 1530s, were clearly meant to be introductory works to rhetorical theory. Despite some theoretical modifications, they were not thought to be in any apparent contradiction with the Roman treatises of classical rhetoric, and were studied often with them. Giorgio Valla's *De expedita argumentandi ratione libellus*, printed by Froben in 1519, was also meant to be read together with traditional rhetorical materials, and not as a challenger or competitor to that theory.¹²⁹ Finally, Erasmus had made probably the most significant contribution to the teaching materials of grammar and rhetoric with a pronounced emphasis on production and writing. Out of his works the most important ones were a treatment of abundant style, *De copia* (1512), a letter-writing manual *De conscribendis epistolis*, a set of proverbs *Adagia* (originally printed in 1500) and his collection of exemplary dialogues, *Colloquia* (first edition in 1518). None of these works was meant to supplant classical theory on grammar and rhetoric, but to provide the student with materials covering specific fields of applied rhetoric. Thus, they did not introduce change into the theory of grammar and rhetoric but rather showed ways of putting language and materials into play in writing. They aspired to introduce stylistic, dispositional, and generic flexibility as well as historical consciousness and a new set of commonplaces into the framework of classical rhetoric.

Scientia Civilis as a Context for the Trivium

Yet, to grasp fully Vives's insistence on the social and political importance of the *trivium* in his prelection to *Ad Herennium*, one must look beyond rhetoric as a closed field of linguistic production. As seen, one of the crucial points of rhetorical theory interpreted in close union to

¹²⁷ Mack 2011, 25-26, 45-47.

¹²⁸ In Paris, Fichet had composed a work called *Rhetorica* in the 1470s. It presented most rhetorical terminology through relatively short definitions.

¹²⁹ Mack 2011, 106-122, 166, 305-306.

its grammatical basis is that it is not an empty theory of argumentation but an encyclopaedic practice that gathers all possible information from authors in order to turn that into production. Thus, rhetorical theory could only be approached together with the knowledge of the materials that provided the student and the orator material for his speech, and those materials pointed towards the themes and issues that were supposed to function as proper fields of rhetoric. What is more, in the tradition inherited from classical antiquity, rhetoric was already given a specific role not only as a general theory of language production but as a key part of civil science (*scientia civilis*).¹³⁰ This is the place where the aspiration to rule over peoples' minds through the art of persuasion was discussed in relation to civic possibilities, moral philosophy and political questions. As one could read in the first lines of Trebizond's fifteenth-century *Rhetoric*, printed in France for the first time in 1512, "the civil science by which we speak in civil questions with the assent, as much as possible, of the listeners."¹³¹ Trebizond, just as many other *quattrocento* humanist treatises on rhetoric, was always very clear about the fact that rhetoric was primarily a political genre. Mirroring this tradition Josse Bade, explicitly following Cicero, reminded the reader that rhetoric dealt with forensic and civic matters.¹³²

Already the rhetorical corpus itself reminded the reader of the civic nature of rhetoric. Cicero's youthful and schematic *De inventione* opens up with a depiction of the first civilizer-orator, who was the first to bring men together and turn them into civilized creatures with the wise and powerful use of word. It is in this initial part of *De inventione* that a moral union of wisdom and eloquence demanded by all rhetorical writers is achieved and given a distinctively social touch by insisting on its civilizing element. This union presupposed the relation of reason and language, knowledge of civic matters, and a capacity to communicate effectively. Vives himself referred to the importance of the union of reason and words in his prelection to *Ad Herennium* when asserted that what truly distinguishes man from beast is not that he conceives of rational ideas in his mind, but that he is able to communicate them to others

¹³⁰ Cicero made the point about the civic nature of rhetoric at the start of his *De inventione*, see Cicero: "De inventione" (trans. Hubbell), 1-346 in Cicero: *De inventione, De optimo genere oratorum, Topica*, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts/London 1960, i.vi.

¹³¹ Trebizond, George: *Rhetoricorum libri, in quibus quid recens praestitum, proxima facie indicabit liminaris epistola*, Valentin Curio, Basel 1522, 2: "Rhetorica est civilis scientia, qua cum assensione auditorum quo ad eius fieri potest, in civilibus quaestionibus dicimus." The link between rhetoric and civic issues could also be found in some of the school materials that were becoming popular in Paris, see for instance Vergerio, Pier Paolo: "De ingenuis moribus et liberalibus adulescentiae studiis liber", 3-91 in Kallendorf, Craig (ed.): *Humanist Educational Treatises*, The i Tatti Renaissance Library, Harvard University Press, 2002, 50.

¹³² Bade, Josse: "Iodoci Badii Ascensii in oratoriam institutionem Isagogica collectanea", introductory letter to Cicero: *Ad Caium Herennium Rhetorici seu de institutione oratoria libri IIII*, Josse Bade, Paris 1510, aii.

through signs.¹³³

Moreover, Cicero, in his other works, and most notably in *De officiis* weaved the imperative of the union of *ratio* and *eloquentia* together with the primacy of active and prudential life. In *De officiis*, the most widely read book on moral philosophy in Europe already by the Middle Ages, Cicero reaffirms that the natural bonds of society are reason and speech, “which by the processes of teaching and learning, of communicating, discussing, and reasoning associate men together and unite them in a sort of natural fraternity.”¹³⁴ Furthermore, this rhetorical activity is united with the virtues of active life for the common good, equated in Cicero with the good of the state. This way of living, dedicating oneself to civic virtue in the service of the state, was contrasted to a contemplative philosophical life that strives for the contemplation of eternal truths in relative isolation. These discussions were widely known in humanist circles, and Vives returned to them frequently throughout his career.

There was, however, another aspect of this teaching that had strong philosophico-social implications, something that was emphasized by different writers to different degrees. This aspect had to do with the fact that despite of the strong moral *ethos* of many classical defences of rhetorical practice that underlined an unbreakable union of virtue and eloquence, much of rhetorical theory discussed the very same moral philosophy and virtue as a realm of argumentative flexibility. This was explicitly linked to the fact that the point of departure for a treatment of a rhetorical question in rhetorical theory was that it was always possible to come up with arguments for both sides, *in utramque partem*, and in Cicero and Quintilian, we can find successful orators being praised for this quality.¹³⁵ Moreover, rhetorical handbooks state that political issues are always questions of honesty (*honestas*) and expediency (*utilitas*), but these terms serve as general categories or headings under which every successful argumentation of one’s case has to be placed. This is done by using the flexibility of normative terms to cater for a range of possibly opposite actions in an inventive way. However, rather than an

¹³³ Vives: “Praelectio in ad Herennium”, 130: “Beluas, quas philosophi vocarunt irrationabiles, concipere mente pleraque ut homines, nemo unquam sani sensus dubitavit. Ea vero aliis nota facere, nullis verbis queunt; significare nonnullis signis in quibusdam iisque perpaucis, difficulter quidem, satis videmus. Hinc apud Graecos sunt *aphona*, id est non vocalia dicta, quod solis hominibus utpote utentibus ratione datum sit loqui, cetera animantia sunt expertia voce.”

¹³⁴ Cicero: *De officiis* (trans. Miller), Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts/London 2005, i.xvi.50: “Eius vinculum est ratio et oratio, quae docendo, discendo, communicando, disceptando, iudicando conciliat inter se homines coniungitque naturali quadam societate....”

¹³⁵ Carneades is the classical example of an orator speaking on both sides of an issue, see Quintilian: IO, xii.i.35; Cicero: *De oratore I-III* (trans. Sutton – Rackham), 2 vols, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press 1942, iii.xxi.80; Skinner 1996, 97-99.

epistemological argument formulated in the language of philosophy, this flexibility was a presupposition of rhetorical practice. Echoing Plato's famous attack on rhetoric in *Gorgias* it was exactly the ambivalent nature of rhetoric that masked truth that people condemned in the early sixteenth century. In the 1512 Paris edition of Domenico Nani Mirabelli's *Polyanthea* printed by Josse Bade, one could read in the dedication letter a highly ambivalent description of eloquence as an art capable of the best and the worst.¹³⁶ Vives's own prelection to *Ad Herennium* also pleaded for a rhetoric that would not be separated for wisdom, truth, and made the honourable claim that in case a separation took place rhetoric would not be useful.¹³⁷ More generally, rhetoric together with poetry posed a possible threat to the unity of arts, concord, and piety in the minds of many Parisian humanists.

Harmony and Concord of all Arts and Disciplines: Framing Humanist Studies

A clear change in the teaching materials of grammar and rhetoric, and the link of *studia humanitatis* and the art of eloquence to civic and moral philosophy does not mean that Parisian humanists were primarily interested in this aspect of humanist learning. A rather broad and all-encompassing interpretation of rhetoric is visible in Vives's depiction of the scope of rhetoric in his prelection to Filelfo that argued for a union of wisdom and eloquence in all intellectual enquiries from moral to divine philosophy.¹³⁸ A view of the more famous and most widely known humanists of the French capital spearheaded by Lefèvre d'Étaples also reveals that they did not reflect on literary studies primarily in the context of civil science but linked humanism to broad and often philological questions of truth, metaphysics, Christianity, and mysticism. Guillaume Budé, one of the prominent humanists of France and the foremost expert in Greek studies, is sometimes attributed the invention of the Latin word encyclopaedia he coined in his 1508 *Annotationes in quatuor et viginti Pandectarum libros*.¹³⁹ Encyclopaedia was not understood only as a set of cross-references between different texts but comprised a more fundamental understanding of the ultimate unity of arts and knowledge in one harmonious

¹³⁶ Nani Mirabelli, Domenico: "Epistola Nuncupatoria", in Nani Mirabelli: *Polyanthea*, Josse Bade - Jean Petit, Paris 1512, AAii.

¹³⁷ Vives: "Praelectio in ad Herennium", 134.

¹³⁸ Vives: "Praelectio in Convivia", 148-150.

¹³⁹ Budé, Guillaume: *Annotationes in quatuor et viginti pandectarum libros*, Josse Bade, Paris 1508, iii: "Cum autem animadverterint omnes disciplinas inter se coniunctionem rerum & communionem habere." For a contemporary praise of Budé, see Tristhem, Johann: *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, Berthold Rembolt, Paris 1512, 217.

totality, the portrayal of which could get different forms ranging from music to more organic metaphors.¹⁴⁰ Likewise, when Vives's *Sapiens* searches for a man perfectly versed in "the circle of disciplines," what is called for here is a wisdom bringing together all different aspects of intellectual enquiry guaranteeing their encyclopaedic unity.¹⁴¹

Despite deliberately constructing the idea of scholasticism as a tradition of insignificant quibbling and propagating new learning on a number of fronts, many Parisian humanists had doubts about humanist learning. More specifically, by focusing on the question of poetry that could represent more broadly humanist literary studies, they also discussed the challenge humanism could pose to wisdom and piety.¹⁴² Poetry and Italian learning had been continuously debated ever since the famous late fifteenth-century Parisian quarrel between two Italian humanists, Girolamo Balbi and Fausto Andrelini. In this debate the end result had been the downfall of Balbi, who was accused of uncritical focus on classical eloquence and poetry and of indifference towards religious matters, whereas Andrelini had been more careful to highlight the union of classical studies and piety frequently.¹⁴³ The thematic of this discussion was more widely known: Robert Gaguin, the grand old man of the first generation of Parisian humanism, also had serious reservations concerning the moral nature of the philosophy of classical antiquity.¹⁴⁴ Erasmus, who knew Gaguin well and who had been active in Paris in the 1490s, was in 1496 of the opinion that the truths of religion could be embellished with eloquence, but was ready to remind the reader that the style should always be chaste.¹⁴⁵ Vives's own 1514 *Veritas fucata* mirrored these themes largely with the young Valencian putting his oratorical and classical skills to work in the description of the triumphs of Christ in a pronouncedly classical language.

In the work of the most famous Parisian humanist of the time Jacques Lefèvre, a

¹⁴⁰ De la Garanderie 1995, 35-36.

¹⁴¹ Vives: "Sapiens", 297: "...Vives desideret sapientem, quem se habiturum arbitratur, si vir extet qui disciplinarum circulum quam optime calleat..." Vives came back to this ideal in his *De initiis*, Vives, Juan Luis: "De initiis, sectis, & laudibus philosophiae", in Vives, Juan Luis: *Opuscula varia*, Thierry Martens, Louvain 1519, 84.

¹⁴² Poetry is frequently used as a synonym for humanist studies more generally, see for instance Erasmus, Desiderius: *Antibarbarorum liber unus*, Johann Froben, Basel 1520, 4: "Caeterum dictu pudendum, quam hanc longe optimam doctrinae portionem, stolide contemnant quidam, poetriam appellantes, quicquid ad vetustam ac politiore literaturam pertinet."

¹⁴³ Renaudet 1916, 124.

¹⁴⁴ Gaguin himself had been in Italy and knew Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino personally. Pico della Mirandola had also visited Paris in the 1480s. Parisian humanism has been a somewhat neglected object of study for some as some have noted, but some kind of an idea of the developments can indeed be reconstructed. For more information see Renaudet 1916, 90-159; Sebastiani 2010; Nauert has noticed that practically no research exists on the Faculty of Arts of the University of Paris, see Nauert 1998, 429.

¹⁴⁵ Renaudet 1916, 279; Erasmus to Hendrik van Bergen, Allen 49, 92-94.

famous commentator, and editor of Aristotle, humanist tradition is adapted in a very specific way. In the 1512 version of Trihemius's *De scriptoribus ecclesiasticis*, a sort of a biographical dictionary of the most prominent men of letters, Lefèvre is described by an anonymous writer as the French Cicero who had saved philosophy from barbarism, restored liberal arts to their former splendour, and joined unpolished philosophy with eloquence.¹⁴⁶ Lefèvre – heavily influenced by different branches of mystical tradition as well as Italian Neoplatonism – incorporated humanist studies into a philological and ultimately mystical framework. In Lefèvre's project, the wisdom of classical antiquity is of worth mainly as a propaedeutic philosophy insofar as it partakes in the truths of an ultimately mystical Christianity. Indicative of this is Lefèvre's systematic attempt to Christianize Aristotle whom he referred to often as *primus theologus*.¹⁴⁷ Moreover, his writings on educational curriculum portray humanist studies as a preparation for mystical texts.¹⁴⁸

Lefèvre's philological project too employed humanist literary tools to reach deeper layers of truth. The application of philological methods, never completely neutral but tied to the mystical interpretations he was promoting, was supposed to guarantee the emergence of the original and divinely inspired text corrupted by layers of later imperfections very often identified with the medieval commentary tradition.¹⁴⁹ Thus, humanist grammar, methods of *enarratio* and use of literary tools get a distinctive interpretation as an excavation of truth, not primarily as a civic practice. In this approach, much of the tradition of classical antiquity is infused with sanctity and mystical truth that a scholar must find and expound. The popularity of the Neoplatonism of Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola in the French capital also contributed to the mystification of literary tradition.¹⁵⁰ Marsilio Ficino's programme was largely based on recovering *prisca theologia*, the old esoteric wisdom of the pre-Socratics that was perfected by Plato and prepared for the final revelation of Christianity. Together with his distinctively neo-Platonic understanding of the history of humanity after Jesus Christ, Ficino was able to turn the philosophy of history and the reading of past texts into research on the different manifestations of one unified truth in different spheres of life. Through this project, one could finally unite wisdom, faith, religion and philosophy into a unified whole, and Ficino's

¹⁴⁶ Tristhem: *De scriptoribus*, 216. For the fame of Lefèvre see also Bedouelle 1976, 47-48.

¹⁴⁷ De Gandillac 1973, 156; Bedouelle 1976, 32-36.

¹⁴⁸ Lefèvre's *ratio studii* also underlines classics as propaedeutic for a corpus of mystical and Christian texts, see Bedouelle 1976, 47-56.

¹⁴⁹ Bianchi 2013, 144-145; D'Amico 1988, 28-30.

¹⁵⁰ Renaudet 1916, 125-145.

conceptualization of the organization of society, based on love as its binding force, is entrenched into the framework of greater harmony of the world and the sciences.¹⁵¹ As Marie de la Garanderie has argued, this was essentially “a divinisation of poetry” that revealed in various forms those ultimate truths that guided the world and human life.¹⁵² Thus, in the project of humanist grammar as a way of reading texts, there was something potentially divine; authors, poets, and words of classical antiquity are profound manifestations of truth. Hardly surprising, Vives too was knowledgeable of this dimension of humanist studies and poetry, and his reference to the “theology of the poets” in *Sapiens* reflected a deep interpretative tradition of Parisian humanism.¹⁵³

In all these interpretations, the role of civic and moral philosophy is somewhat subjected to broader metaphysical concerns within the context of which they can only be understood. In his edition of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* Lefèvre reminded the reader that the arts of moral philosophy and prudence are subjected to divine *sapientia* and *bonitas*.¹⁵⁴ As is well known, ethics and moral philosophy were in the late medieval Parisian tradition explicitly proclaimed as a philosophical discipline, and they drew on late medieval methods of *quaestio* and syllogistic procedures. However, during the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries the scholastic tradition had developed a distinctively practical approach both to moral and theological questions arising from the *auctores*, linking these quite openly to a variety of contemporary issues. This tradition, going back to Jean Gerson, could explicitly affirm the autonomy of moral philosophical problems and develop highly sophisticated responses to contemporary questions as witnessed by the work of the most famous of early sixteenth-century scholastics, John Mair.¹⁵⁵ The contribution of the more humanist minded scholars was not to affirm the autonomy of moral and civic philosophy – on the contrary, it has been argued that Lefèvre’s edition of Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, for example, tries more explicitly to connect it to Biblical and Christian materials than was the norm.¹⁵⁶ More generally, there are no defences of classical *scientia civilis* as an autonomous set of problems to be found in the

¹⁵¹ Ficino did in fact take the role of a counsellor exhibiting his humanist skills, See Rees 2002, 344-347.

¹⁵² De la Garanderie 1995, 119.

¹⁵³ Vives: “Sapiens”, 298: “Haec est poetarum sacra theologia.”

¹⁵⁴ Lefèvre d’Étaples, Jacques: “Jacobus Stapulensis reverendo patri Johanni Rellico”, introductory letter to *Liber ethicorum Aristotelis* (ed. Jacques Lefèvre), Jean Granjon, Paris 1504, “...ut disciplinas emitterent que vitam nostram cum privatam tum publicam divinorum conformi quadam bonitate formarent quam morales appellant.”

¹⁵⁵ The theological faculty itself had long functioned as consultant body of Christendom in matters of doctrine and morals, Farge 1985, 115.

¹⁵⁶ Bianchi 2013, 140-143, 148. Mair’s method for solving particular moral and legal issues has been sometimes placed within the tradition of casuistry, see Keenan 2004, 18-19.

writings of the more famous humanist writers of Paris at the time. Although rhetorical materials begin to evoke the union of rhetoric and politics, literary studies do not draw their significance primary from their assumed contribution to civic philosophy.¹⁵⁷ Vives's 1514 corpus mirrors these Parisian developments. In his production from the Parisian period, one could indeed find ideas on the civic and cognitive power of rhetoric, on the importance of active life as well as a critique of scholastic quibblings.¹⁵⁸ But equally as important, they also refer to the unity and harmony of all disciplines and to true wisdom transcending earthly life. Thus, although in 1514 Vives was excited by classical studies, and was experimenting with different styles and working with humanist minded printers, the broader understanding of the significance of humanist studies lay firmly within a Parisian framework of the harmony and concord of arts and eternal wisdom.

Louvain, Erasmus, and Dialectic.

Despite his Parisian experience, it was Vives's familiarity with the humanist tradition of the Low Countries and especially its most famous member Erasmus that was to mark his understanding of language, the *trivium* and the possibilities of humanist studies. After years of relative silence in 1519, a work entitled *Opuscula varia* by a certain *Ioannis Lodovici Vivis* appeared from the Louvain printing house of Thierry Martens, Erasmus's preferred printer in the Low Countries. The compendium of 15 texts, five of which were edited reprints of the 1514 works, witnessed a key awareness of typically Erasmian themes across the spectrum of intellectual preoccupations ranging from a fierce critique of the barbarism of scholasticism to the claim that true nobility stemmed from excellence of character and virtue, not from one's ancestors.¹⁵⁹

In reality, Vives was closely connected to the Dutch humanist at this point of his

¹⁵⁷ Even Bade, who takes his very civic definition of rhetoric from Cicero, reminds that a true orator, the *vir bonus dicendi peritus*, is ultimately perfected by divine grace, see Bade: "Iodoci Badii Ascensii in oratoriam institutionem Isagogica collectanea", aii.

¹⁵⁸ See especially *Praelectio ad Herennium*, *Sapiens* and *Praelectio in leges Ciceronis*. See also González González 1987, 187. The *Praelectio in leges Ciceronis* was printed anew in a 1519 compendia entitled *Opuscula varia* under the name of *Praefatio in leges Ciceronis*.

¹⁵⁹ Vives: PC, 114 (numbers added later, they refer not to single pages but to spreads of two pages): "Neque enim illo anno, ut multis antea, traditus est ei consulatus tanquam profusissimo suffragiorum emptori, aut potentissimo, aut maxime gratioso, aut ei qui callidissime ambiuerat, sed in illis procellis et tempestate reipublicae electus est ipse non vir nobilissimus aut ditissimus, Caeterum prudentissimus, et optimus gubernator, cui clavus commendaretur, in cuius fidem tota respublica confugeret, ut non magis consulatus Ciceroni videatur datus quam Cicero consulatui...."

life and it has been appropriately argued that around 1520 his career experienced a definite upswing.¹⁶⁰ He had probably had some connections to the Low Countries at least since 1512, and he could have well been aware of some of Erasmus's work at the time.¹⁶¹ What is certain, though, is that by late 1514 Vives had moved to the Low Countries, and by 1516 he was already well connected both to the humanist circles of the Burgundian Netherlands and to the royal court in Brussels.¹⁶² Importantly, he enjoyed the warm favour of the Republic of Letters together with its most famous representative Desiderius Erasmus. It is very likely that it was the support of Erasmus that had at least partly guaranteed Vives a favourable position at court, as well as academic visibility in Louvain and the services of the revered printer Thierry Martens. As a demonstration of his importance, Vives adopted the role of a negotiator in a well-known scholarly dispute on style, audiences, and practice of humanist scholarship between Guillaume Budé and Erasmus, respectively the leading legal and theological humanists of the time – authentic heavyweights of European humanism.¹⁶³

Vives's incorporation into Dutch humanism occurs exactly in the moment in which Erasmus had just embarked on the most prolific phase of the development of his philosophy of Christ (*Philosophia Christi*) in its various forms. *Philosophia Christi*, that explicitly united ethical philosophy and theology, aspired to cultivate the kind of understanding that would not only speak to the intellect through a set of philosophical propositions, but that could transform, mould, and reconstitute one's spirit and way of living to the standards set by Christ himself in the totality of his life (*veritas vitae*). However, as Erasmus pointed out, this philosophy did not only deal with Church reform or the purification of sacred texts: in its perfect form, it would pierce all human activities from theology to moral, legal, political, and educational realms. In his *Paraclesis*, one of the key texts uniting humanist scholarship to Biblical studies, he argued that if this philosophy reigned in princes, preachers and

¹⁶⁰ González González 2008, 30-35.

¹⁶¹ The exact chronology of Vives's movements between 1512 and 1517 has been a subject of some debate. For a good consideration of the evidence, see: González González 2003.

¹⁶² From Vives to Barlandus, DAE 3; from the magistrates of the city of Valencia to Vives, DAE 6. See also González González 2003.

¹⁶³ Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1108, 127-196; Erasmus to Vives, Allen 1111, 80-89. Both published in Erasmus: *Epistolae: ad diversos et aliquot aliorum ad illum*, apud Froben 1521, 639-644. Erasmus starts by referring to Vives as *philosophus absolutus* (*Erasmus Roterodamus Io. Lodovico Vivi philosopho absoluto...*). González González has noted that Vives was presented as a mediator in the dispute. See González González 2007, 64. Budé also published four letters by Vives, see González González 2007, 64. The close connection between Erasmus and Vives at around 1520 is generally acknowledged; see for instance Sinz 1963, 69-70. The debate between Budé and Erasmus has been analysed in Wallace 2009. The debate was widely known and portrayed as one between the two leading humanists of the time, see Tunstall to Budé, Allen 571, 5-17.

schoolmasters, than the Christian republic would be free from discord on all levels of human intercourse.¹⁶⁴ Thoroughly in this spirit, Erasmus did indeed activate some form of *Philosophia Christi* on a variety of fronts, ranging from educational materials to his *Institutio principis Christiani* that touched upon a range of issues related to virtuous government.

The concept of learned piety (*docta pietas*) central to Erasmus's philosophy of Christ incorporated classical tradition and learning into *Philosophia Christi* in a way untypical of late medieval *Devotio Moderna* and other traditions. In his *Enchiridion* and in his *De ratione studii* Erasmus portrayed a way of life and a method of study to lay Christians in a way that greatly accentuated the importance of classical tradition. His *Enchiridion* focused on countering vice through learning, prayer and the reading of the Bible that had to be prepared by true erudition.¹⁶⁵ This preparatory knowledge is largely presented in the *Enchiridion*, so much so that Erasmus himself explicitly refers to the "art and discipline of virtue" that can be spelled out in precepts and in a programmatic fashion.¹⁶⁶ Although he expresses some reservation with regards to poetry and the poisonous side of humanism in a Parisian vein, the fact that Erasmus goes on to argue for a fully-fledged humanist training points to at least two ways in which humanist learning could, in his understanding, be of use. First, as a way of providing the student a necessary literary education to the secrets of the allegorical, and ultimately true, levels of the Scriptures, and secondly as a morally edifying educational pattern in itself.¹⁶⁷ Throughout his work, starting from his *Antibarbari*, Erasmus defended a position according to which the pagan authors, if brought together with the spiritual awakening in Christ and assimilated in the right spirit, will be edifying, and stand in harmonious unity with sacred texts.¹⁶⁸ This ethico-Christian interpretation of classical knowledge is remarkably permissive as to the pagan tradition since it can adopt almost everything, and *De ratione studii*, Erasmus's sketch for a school curriculum,

¹⁶⁴ Tracy 1996, 110; Erasmus, Desiderius: "Paraclesis", in *Novum Instrumentum*, Johann Froben, Basel 1516, unnumbered, fourth page from the start. This is reiterated in many works of the time, see for instance Erasmus, Desiderius: "Paolo Volzio", in Erasmus: *Enchiridion militia Christiani, saluberrimis praeceptis refertum*, Johann Froben, Basel 1518, 12-14.

¹⁶⁵ Erasmus, Desiderius: *Enchiridion militia Christiani, saluberrimis praeceptis refertum*, Johann Froben, Basel 1518, 10-21.

¹⁶⁶ Erasmus: *Enchiridion*, 44: "est autem omnino virtutis ars quaedam & disciplina..."; Erasmus: *Enchiridion*, 36 (English translation from Erasmus: *Spiritualia*, Collected Works of Erasmus 66 [ed. O'Malley], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1988, 54).

¹⁶⁷ Erasmus: *Enchiridion*, 18-19: "Apiculae exemplo, per omnes veterum hortulos circumvolitans, praeteritis venenis, succumb modo salutarem, ac generosum exuxeris animum tuum, ad communem quidem vitam, quam Ethicam vocant, reddideris non paulo armatiorem. Sunt enim profecto & illorum Palladi sua quaedam arma, neutiquam contemnenda."

¹⁶⁸ Erasmus: *Antibarbarorum liber*, 81. Erasmus understood reading as a spiritual exercise in itself. The usefulness of reading depends ultimately on the spirit in which it is undertaken, since the mere letter of the text can never fix its meaning. See De la Garanderie 125-127.

is in fact a presentation of a pronouncedly classical syllabus for an educational context.

The usefulness of classical knowledge was not, however, merely ethical and preparatory since the literary and rhetorical dimension of classical examples was also widely adopted for the production of language in Erasmian circles. In Erasmus himself, one finds arguably one of the most acute users and theoreticians of words, style, and rhetoric who never ceases to claim that whatever sophistication a rhetorical composition reaches, it does not necessarily put into question Christian truth. If the rhetorical and grammatical tools together with the moral and civic philosophy of classical antiquity are put into use in the spirit of Christ, they can be of enormous use. Thus, Erasmus's lay piety adopts most classical traditions quite unproblematically but in a pronouncedly ethical form, and it is the ethical and pious nature of those engaging with and using classical materials that is judged decisive.¹⁶⁹ In this framework, all moral and civic philosophy of the Ancients can be resuscitated side by side with the philosophy of Christ. Moreover, Erasmus's interest in classical literature was far from abstract: his educational materials, rhetorical works and own production were in fact incorporating classical tradition on all domains of life in an inventive way.

However, all other branches of learning were ultimately subjected to Erasmus's Biblical hermeneutics, culminating in his 1516 and 1519 editions of the New Testament (1516 *Novum instrumentum*, 1519 *Novum testamentum*), the latter of which included Erasmus's own Latin translation in the place of the Vulgate. Erasmus's project of purifying the fountains of Christianity was, however, highly controversial from the very start. It represented the ultimate humanist transgression of boundaries to the realm of theology dominated by scholastic learning, creating an outright confrontation between the reach, limits, and possibilities of humanist literary methods. One of the first and better-known discussions took place between Erasmus and the Louvain theologian Martin Dorp.¹⁷⁰ What started as a discussion on Erasmus's *Moriae Encomium* is deliberately broadened to a far-fetching critique of humanist method in Dorp's second letter to Erasmus. The discussion echoed a widely printed playful exchange of letters between Pico della Mirandola and Ermolao Barbaro who had discussed the relative merits of humanism and scholasticism in rather Platonic terms. Pico, in a satirical letter to Barbaro, based his argument on the separation of wisdom and eloquence making claims also about the

¹⁶⁹ Dorp parodied Erasmus's tendency to refer back to his conscience and intentions in explaining what he was doing and why he was using elaborate literary tools, see Dorp to Erasmus and Erasmus to Dorp, Allen 304, 42-51.

¹⁷⁰ Dorp and Erasmus were friends, and it is possible that the discussion was partly staged. At least it was made deliberately public by Erasmus, see Jardine 1993, 180-187.

potentially destructive implications of rhetoric as an art quite alien to the clarification of truth, and suitable only for the *forum* and masses.¹⁷¹

Dorp too evokes the classical distinction of humanist studies as dealing with the elegance of the words and traditional theology based on the science of things (*rerum scientia*) provided by dialectic likening humanist theology to grammar and “frivolous poetry.”¹⁷² Deliberately attacking the humanist union of eloquence and wisdom Dorp argued that linguistic barbarism and wisdom were in fact compatible: “But who except a perfect fool would not rather be wise even if he were to be a shining example of barbarism, than write beautifully without wisdom?” Dorp asks implying the answer.¹⁷³ Thus, he is adamant in his defence of the division so dear to the traditional learning between grammar as the science of symbols and dialectic as the science of things and their relations providing a staunch defence of the dialectical method of *quaestiones* in shedding light on the obscure passages of the Scriptures.¹⁷⁴ If the separation is undone in theology and one relies only on Erasmus’s philology, then getting to the ultimate layers of the Scriptures is practically impossible since meaning can never be stabilized through humanist literary tools; the endeavour will always turn into an endless interpretative project that is potentially threatening to Christian dogma. Hence, humanist philology that attacks the *Vulgate* and the tradition built around it is, without the true science of dialectic and commentary tradition, utterly incapable of guaranteeing truth opening a true Pandora's Box of the possibilities of an infinite number of interpretations.¹⁷⁵ The fact that this is discussed in the language of method makes it a very general claim that is applicable to other domains outside of theology: literary studies are about the beauty of words whereas the science of things belongs to the true science of sciences, dialectic.

Erasmus’s and Dorp’s discussion was not an isolated exchange of ideas but

¹⁷¹ Della Mirandola, Pico: “Iohannes Picus Mirandulanus Hermolao Barbaro suo”, in Della Mirandola, Pico: *Auree epistole*, Antwerpen, Thierry Martens 1509, B-Ci (Signature marks have been used in the absence of page numbers). Pico's letter to Barbaro was printed frequently as part of a collection of letters entitled *Auree epistole*. In Paris there are at least three editions of the work prior to 1514. Plato's work was also available in the French capital. See Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC)

¹⁷² Dorp to Erasmus, Allen 347, 133.

¹⁷³ Dorp to Erasmus, Allen 347, 128: “Quis enim nisi stultissimus non malit recte sapere, etiam si pater futurus sit barbariei, quam citra sapientiam vel optime dicere.” (English translation from Erasmus: *The Correspondence of Erasmus*, vol. 3 [trans. Mynors – Thomson], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1976, letter 347, 79-81).

¹⁷⁴ Dorp to Erasmus, Allen 347, 133-135.

¹⁷⁵ Dorp makes this point very clearly in the first letter, see Allen 304, 119-140. Jacobus Latomus, a doctor in theology, made similar points about right theology that should be based on a philosophical method and on the existing commentary tradition in his attack against the Collegium Trilingue *De trium linguarum et studii theologici ratione dialogus*, See Latomus, Jacobus: *De trium linguarum et studii theologici ratione dialogus*, Michael Hillen, Antwerpen 1519, Aii-Aiii. In the absence of page numbers I have used signature marks to identify quotes. It indicates the next signature mark following the quote.

mirrored a larger process in which the relationship between scholasticism and humanism was growing increasingly antagonistic, above all in the academic context of Louvain. In the Brabantian town, Erasmus was both backed up as well criticised by programs that often were of collective nature, and his Biblical program had an institutional dimension to it in the *Collegium Trilingue*, an autonomous institution founded for the study of all three Biblical languages under the auspices of the University of Louvain in 1517. The *Collegium* was a realization of an older dream of providing the students of Louvain with the knowledge of all Biblical languages, and its connection to Erasmus's own project of Biblical studies was quite explicit. It resonated well in the longer tradition of Louvain humanism that had had its initial contacts with Italian humanism in the late fifteenth century: many of the questions about poetry, grammar, and the merits of Italian humanism had been raised in Louvain just like in Paris, and conscious efforts to renew grammar education had been undertaken. Despite the fact that the *Collegium* represented a certain continuum in the humanist interests of the University, the whole project turned out to be ridden with internal conflict and strife, and the question of the right method of theology was fiercely debated based on Erasmus's project.¹⁷⁶

Thus, in 1519 when Vives published his *Opuscula varia* in Louvain, he was in the epicenter of polemics where the classical dichotomy between scholasticism and humanism is transformed into a highly significant question of theology and, ultimately, of the limits and possibilities of humanist learning. The central piece of his work, *In pseudodialecticos*, drew heavily from Thomas More's answer to Martin Dorp and deliberately attacked the crown jewel of theological learning: the dialectical method. Vives's *In pseudodialecticos*, lavishly praised by More and Erasmus, did become a kind of a largely supported humanist critique of scholastic dialectical method, the arguments of which could have been approved by most members of the Louvain humanist circles.

***In Pseudodialecticos* in the Context of Humanist Dialectic**

In pseudodialecticos appeared for the first time in 1519 in Louvain and it can be considered Vives's main venture to the academic and educational disputes of the time. Its contribution

¹⁷⁶ For the renewal of grammar teaching in the Burgundian Netherlands, see Ijsewin 1988, 168-171. For a comprehensive treatment of the foundation of Collegium Trilingue, see: De Vocht, Henry: *History of the Foundation and the Rise of the Collegium Trilingue Lovaniense, 1517 – 1550*, Bibliothèque de l'Université, Bruxelles 1951.

happened mainly in the field of dialectic – the most fundamental scholastic method for developing and solving questions. The scholastic tradition Vives satirically describes in *In pseudodialecticos* disregards the constructive and practical elements of scholastic casuistry focusing more specifically on the kind of terministic logic found in Paris and Louvain that aspired to build a meta-theory of meaning (*suppositio*) based on mapping the possible semantic interpretations a term could possess in a sentence.¹⁷⁷ The choice of dialectical method and teaching as the subject of the work had consequences. First, it was outright polemical, and put into question the learning of the higher faculties, challenging the existing institutional and intellectual hierarchy and aligning Vives strongly with the humanist circles of Louvain. Secondly, the problem of method did not restrict Vives to one single subject or question; the reader of *In pseudodialecticos* really gets the idea that what is at stake in dialectical method is the totality and unity of the *trivium*, education and knowledge. *In pseudodialecticos* did not represent this line of thought in isolation within Vives’s oeuvre; some other works of the time also accentuated the importance of dialectic. In his printed inaugural lection to Cicero’s *De legibus* and *De officiis*, Vives united legal practice and natural law closely to a dialectical method that looked suspiciously Ciceronian in its outlook. The Valencian humanist argued that the part of philosophy responsible for legal reasoning should be dialectic adding a long quotation of Cicero’s *Brutus*, where the method described is a dialectic of invention and division that connects particular cases to more general knowledge.¹⁷⁸

What really sets *In pseudodialecticos* apart from the 1514 corpus, from *Sapiens* and the *Praelectio* to Cicero, is its open and much more specific defiance of the dialectical method used traditionally to define questions of truth and falsehood. Concerning its contribution to dialectic, *In pseudodialecticos* has been read in various ways in the existing scholarship: it has been described both as an invective lacking in philosophical depth and as an exceptionally perceptive understanding of the shortcomings of late scholastic method.¹⁷⁹ In

¹⁷⁷ Fantazzi 1979, 17-20.

¹⁷⁸ In the margins of the 1519 edition one could read that “Dialectica necessaria iuri philosophia laudes” Vives: PC, 111; Cicero: “Brutus” (trans. Hubbell), 1-296 in Cicero: *Brutus – Orator*; Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1939, xli-xlii.152-154. The point about dialectic was made already in the 1514 version, see González González 1987, 173.

¹⁷⁹ For predominantly positive assessments, see Fantazzi 1979; Waswo 1987. Waswo has even connected *In pseudodialecticos* with a radical shift in semantics from foundationalism to more rhetorical philosophy. For a more negative assessment see: Ashworth 1974. For a rather negative assessment of humanist dialectic in general, see Perreiah 1982, 20-22. A recent reading of Perreiah audaciously claims that *In pseudodialecticos* is not a polemic but an introduction to the semantic problems it is mocking. There are very strong reasons to believe that this was not Vives’s intention. Even though the work could have been used for this purpose and it would invite the reader to consider its examples, this reading would be hard to square with Vives’s overall critique of

what follows, my intention is not to assess the depth of Vives's critique, but to situate it in the larger framework of the utility of dialectical learning and its relations to other disciplines. Nevertheless, it is clear that Vives's attack on method was not meant to put into jeopardy the relationship between dialectic, philosophy, and truth in any way: independently of what it conceptually does to the process of clarifying truth, Vives never ceases to argue that dialectic deals essentially with truth. This is firmly in line with the traditional interpretation of dialectic as well as with the larger humanist claim that their literary methods did not jeopardize the excavation of truth, but rather facilitated it.

In the heart of *In pseudodialecticos*, one finds a humanist philosophy of language focused on historical semantics to the detriment of formal ones. Vives does pick up the idea that dialectic is effectively an analysis of ordinary language, and much of the argument is dedicated to the development of the different ramifications of this theme. The basic idea Vives wants to convey to the reader is an amplification of the idea that dialectic is an art of words.¹⁸⁰ Underlining dialectic as an art of words accentuates what it should be about: it should find logical relations based on language use rather than invent its own set of rules. The reader is told that the logical rules of Spanish and Latin are different, that the object of analysis of dialectic is comparable to rhetoric and grammar, namely ordinary languages, and that logic is not a science that subordinates words to meaning and content, but an art that has to do precisely with existing words.¹⁸¹ Thus, the task of dialectic is to describe logical, argumentative, and semantic relations as they appear in classical Latin in the writings of the best authors and to extract rules based purely on them. The distinction so cried out for by Dorp between rhetoric as the art of the beauty of words and dialectic as the science of things or their mental representations is explicitly blurred, and the whole process of constructing a meta-language in which problems of things could be approached is systematically denied. Despite the fact that Vives recognizes that words signify conventionally, he insists strongly on the primacy of classical languages and

scholastic dialectic that takes place in a growingly conflictual climate, Perreiah 2014, 7.

¹⁸⁰ Vives, Juan Luis: "In pseudodialecticos", 272-286 in Vives, Juan Luis: *Opera Omnia*, vol. 1, Episcopus, Basel 1555: "...non potius si ars, quae non de rebus aliis quam de verbis disputat..."

¹⁸¹ For predominantly positive assessments, see Fantazzi 1979; Waswo 1987. Waswo has even connected *In pseudodialecticos* with a radical shift in semantics from foundationalism to more rhetorical philosophy. For a more negative assessment see: Ashworth 1974. For a rather negative assessment of humanist dialectic in general, see Perreiah 1982, 20-22. A recent reading of Perreiah audaciously claims that *In pseudodialecticos* is not a polemic but an introduction to the semantic problems it is mocking. There are very strong reasons to believe that this was not Vives's intention. Even though the work could have been used for this purpose and it would invite the reader to consider its examples, this reading would be hard to square with Vives's overall critique of scholastic dialectic that takes place in a growingly conflictual climate, Perreiah 2014, 7.

authors spearheaded by Cicero as standards of correct language usage following a path set by Lorenzo Valla, the most influential Italian *quattrocento* humanist writer on dialectic.¹⁸²

One of the strategies employed by Vives is not only to show that the scholastic tradition personified in Peter of Spain, writer of a widely used schoolbook on dialectical reasoning, does not only twist classical Latin but is fundamentally at odds with the project envisioned by Aristotle, the very hero of dialectical tradition.¹⁸³ Throughout, Vives underlines the inductive and descriptive character of Aristotle's dialectic as an analysis of logical and semantic properties as they appear in language use, an interpretation of the Stagirite Vives might have taken from Lefèvre d'Étaples. However, what is truly important for Vives is that the philosophical mistake of scholastic dialectic has far-reaching consequences for the utility of dialectic, language, the *trivium*, and learning in general. Concerning Aristotle, Vives argues that *Organon*, a set of six books that contained all Aristotelian logic and constituted the basis for medieval commentary tradition, should be taken literally as an instrument, as a tool for reaching ends that are more important.¹⁸⁴ And since it is a tool (*organon*), a mere focus on its perfection would be as stupid as it would be for a shoemaker to dedicate all his time to the betterment of his tools.¹⁸⁵

The possible use and utility of scholastic pseudo-dialectics is assessed in thoroughly negative terms. It does not serve pedagogical purposes since it fails to sharpen the mind and, more importantly, it severely harms the possibilities of language to perform its social and communicative function. In a satirical critique of the conceptualist position, he reminds that if words would mean what each individual understands them to mean, "We would end up in a situation where no one would understand each other because everyone would put a personal meaning to a word and not the meaning, authorized by use generally assigned to it."¹⁸⁶ Whereas

¹⁸² Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 277: "At hunc abs quibus autoribus petunt homines ignari? Non a Cicerone, non a Quintiliano, non etiam a Boetio, hominibus latinis, quibus credi latinis in rebus oportet, sed a Petro Hispano, seu si quis fuit alius ante ipsum." There was a strong consensus that words signified conventionally, not because of any natural relation with the world. The notable exception to this was the tradition of Kabbala. See Vickers 2002.

¹⁸³ Using a similar strategy, Dorp argued that Erasmus's views on dialectic were against Erasmus's own heroes, St Augustine and St Jerome, see Dorp to Erasmus, Allen 347, 246-264.

¹⁸⁴ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 279-280.

¹⁸⁵ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 282: "Quis ferat pictorem in componendo penicillo, in terendis coloribus: sutorem in acubus, in subulis, smilliis caeterisque cultris acuendis, in torquendo incerandoque filo, in setis illi addendis totam aetatem consumere?"

¹⁸⁶ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 276: "Quod si legem unusquisque de verbis feret, ut apud se significant, quid attinet, non dico Latinam linguam, sed ne ullam prorsus addiscere, quum illud facilius sit, verba id demum significare, quod unicuilibet visum fuerit, & quot erunt mente concipientes, tam varios habebunt significatus. Ita tandem, ut nemo alterum intelligat, quum unusquisque verbis suo more utatur, non communi."

all other arts present a claim to practical or contemplative ends, dialectic cannot claim either. The only people one could speak to using dialectical language would be ones' own disciples, and the claim about dialectic producing science (*scientia*) is brushed aside.¹⁸⁷ Its claim to truth is contrasted to the clearness and simplicity of Vives's own language, and the whole practice is described as aspiring to cunning victory in debate, rather than truth.¹⁸⁸ Finally, its knowledge cannot be put to use by other disciplines, it does not perform its supportive functions for other domains of intellectual life.

Omitting completely the casuistic method represented by John Mair, Vives goes to considerable lengths in describing how professional dialecticians are completely ignorant of all practical matters related to a life of *negotium*. This is, naturally, a serious mistake since it is exactly in these fields that the tool should be put into use. When confronted with social life, "you would think that they have been transferred to a new world, it is to that extent that they are ignorant about life and common sense."¹⁸⁹ After claiming that setting aside their external appearance there is little humanity in these dialecticians¹⁹⁰, he goes on to argue that "they are most inept for undertaking negotiations, for taking part in embassies, for the administration of affairs, be they public or private, and for the handling of people's souls."¹⁹¹ The reason for this is:

"They do not cultivate the kind of arts that teach all these things that form the soul and human life: for example, moral philosophy, which adorns customs and minds, history, the mother of knowledge, and experience of things, namely prudence. Oratory, that teaches and governs life and opinion, and politics and economics on which the guiding of familial and city affairs is based."¹⁹²

¹⁸⁷ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 282.

¹⁸⁸ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis* 1555, 274, 283: "Ita turbato eo qui cum certant, mira et inusitata vocabulorum forma atque ratione, miris suppositionibus..."; "...quam etiam causam fore suspicor, cur hanc meam epistolam, tanquam rem nimis sacram atque reconditam non multi ex ipsis attingent, cum tamen nihil a me clarius, nihil apertius scribi latine potuerit." See also the part on Augustine, Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 280-281.

¹⁸⁹ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 282: "In alium quendam orbem perductos eos esse credas, ita usum vitae & communem sensum ignorant."

¹⁹⁰ Cicero highlights that man's ability to speak is what ultimately makes him superior to beasts, see Cicero: "De inventione", i.v.

¹⁹¹ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 282: "...ut negociis gerendis, legationibus obeundis, admisitrandis rebus aut publicis aut privatis, tractandis populorum animis ineptissimi sint..."

¹⁹² Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 282-283: "Neque enim iis sese artibus tradunt, quibus haec omnia percipiuntur, quaeque & animum, & vitam humanam instituunt, cuiusmodi est philosophia moralis, quae mores mentemque ornat, historia, quae mater est rerum cognitionis & usus, id est prudentiae. Oratoria, quae vitam sensumque comunem & docet & moderatur. Politica facultas, & Oeconomica, quibus civitatum rerumque familiarium status & regimen constat."

In other words, the dialectic taught at universities is not a suitable education for any kind of practical or active life (*vita activa/negotium*) based on *studia humanitatis*, and since dialectic is solely a tool for other disciplines this is a significant failure indeed.

Although *In pseudodialecticis* does not present a large constructive idea of what dialectic should be about, it makes clear what should be demanded of dialectical education. The basic idea underlined by Vives is its propaedeutic nature; it should serve as the basis for all other arts.¹⁹³ Throughout *In pseudodialecticis* dialectic is discussed in a close union with the other arts of the *trivium* dealing with words (that is, rhetoric and grammar) pointing out their differing tasks in the analysis of the language of classical *auctores*.¹⁹⁴ It is to be noted that Vives's focus most certainly is not on theology in *In pseudodialecticis*. He does of course contrast the dialectical theology of scholastics to the simple and understandable theology of Saint Augustine – a reference to one of the most venerated Church fathers that would have been understood as pointing to Erasmus's theological programme by any Louvain reader.¹⁹⁵ But this is rather a passing reference than the a central argumentative thread, and he is not concentrating on questions of Biblical exegesis and theology in the same way Erasmus had been doing in his letter to Dorp, and in his 1516 and 1519 editions of the New Testament where humanist literary tradition is turned into Biblical hermeneutics. Moreover, *In pseudodialecticis* does not concentrate on the philosophy of Christ eloquently pictured by Erasmus in his 1518 letter to Paul Volz. In taking this road, Vives is partly circumventing and setting aside the prevalent trend in Louvain context to discuss literary studies and classical languages in relation to theology as exemplified by Petrus Mosellanus's famous and polemical *Oratio*.¹⁹⁶ A reader of Vives's *In pseudodialecticis* gets the idea that what is at stake is the usefulness of the *trivium* in all domains of life, ranging from the reading of Scriptures to the *trivium*, *studia humanitatis* and, ultimately, a life of *negotium*. The ideal of *negotium* should be understood in a relatively broad sense: it is the performance of active life in the service of the commonwealth or Christendom. It does not denote merely the actions of a citizen in the service of the commonwealth, but all actions of social and political utility that an entire generation of humanists starting from Erasmus and Vives exemplified in their own activities.

¹⁹³ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 281: "Ars enim est dialectica, quae non sua causa addiscitur, sed ut reliquis artibus adminiculum praestet, & quasi famuletur."

¹⁹⁴ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 274.

¹⁹⁵ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 280-281.

¹⁹⁶ Mosellanus, Petrus: *Oratio de variarum linguarum cognitione paranda*, Johann Froben, Basel 1519, 5-6; Sowards 1993, xxix.

Even though very little is told about the constructive alternative in dialectic, the only humanist treatment on dialectical reasoning Vives could have had in his mind was Rudolph Agricola's *De inventione dialectica*, lavishly praised by the Spaniard starting from the early 1520s.¹⁹⁷ In truth, there was not much to choose from. In Paris, the centre of printing business outside Italy, Trebizond's *Dialectica* printed in 1508, and Lorenzo Valla's very polemical *Repastinatio* (Paris 1509, Bade) were the only important humanist dialectical treatments. Mirroring the lack of materials, Erasmus in his *De ratione studii* from 1511 recommends Aristotle solely as a good introduction to dialectic.¹⁹⁸ However, by 1520 many Erasmian humanists were indeed enthusiastic about Agricola's work, with the jurist Cantiuncula taking his understanding of topics directly from Agricola.¹⁹⁹ In 1515, the first printed edition of Rudolph Agricola's *De inventione dialectica* – the leading humanist textbook on dialectic in the 1520s and 1530s – saw the light in Louvain through the printing house of Thierry Martens, the favoured Dutch printer of Erasmus and Vives. The edition was prepared by a group of humanists from the Louvain circle, most notably Alardus Amsterdamus, together with the famous member of the faculty of theology, Martin Dorp, who despite of his disagreements with the scholar from Rotterdam in 1515 – 1516, was favourable to many aspects of the Erasmian programme. Dorp's name appeared on the title page, supposedly to give the weight of a professional theologian and logician.²⁰⁰

The possible advantages of Agricola's treatment for Erasmus's and Vives's humanism were not merely philosophical but closely tied to its very hands-on usefulness for writing. *De inventione dialectica* is not only a technical treatment of argument, but a work that teaches and shows the reader possible ways of reading, talking and writing in a convincing manner that fulfils the rhetorical task of teaching (*docere*). In the heart of *De inventione dialectica* lies the use of topics for investigating questions. Throughout the treatise, Agricola offers the reader tools for analysing particular and general questions as to their terms and propositional structure, and ways of combining particular questions typically treated in rhetoric to general questions found in dialectic. As an example of a general question Agricola analyses "whether a philosopher should take a wife" by running through all the possible headings (*loci*,

¹⁹⁷ In his commentaries on Augustine Vives praises Agricola lavishly, see Vives: VCA, ii-xxi. For a study on Agricola and Vives, see Noreña 1986.

¹⁹⁸ Erasmus, Desiderius: *De ratione studii, ac legendi, interpretandique auctores libellus aureus*, Matthias Schürer, Strasbourg 1513, iii.

¹⁹⁹ Cantiuncula, Claudius: *Topica*, Andreas Cratander, Basel 1520, part entitled *De origine locorum deque ipsorum utilitate, ex Rodolpho Agricola*, between the dedicatory epistle and the work.

²⁰⁰ For an analysis of the project, see Jardine 1993, 83-98.

topoi) that offer information about philosophers and wives, starting from their definitions to a range of other relations that can provide material on both terms.²⁰¹ The aim is to find a middle term that connects or disconnects philosopher and wife and build a connection or a disconnection between the two terms. This method has a wide range of applications: it is applied not only to simple questions, but also to all cases where a question is involved as well as to the reconstruction of the decisive question found in texts analysed in the classroom.

Agricola's dialectic could thus offer the most general tool for analysing terms, propositions, and arguments based on topical descriptions. Despite being entitled *De inventione dialectica*, Agricola's treatment operated somewhere on the borderline between rhetorical and dialectical traditions, incorporating particular questions and a range of phenomena dealing with the speaker, the recipient, and other contextual issues into its subject matter.²⁰² Dialectic, the art of things, and rhetoric, the art of words, are thus irreducibly bound together: dialectic is the most general tool that can be used in analysing a question by recovering through topics all the possible materials and quotations on the issue, and moulding it to fit with the requirements of the particular context where language is required. For a student trained in humanist grammar it would offer a tool for organizing his material under topics (*loci*), and instruction for their inventive use in his own production. Agricola himself was very clear about the connection of headings and production. His *De formando studio* printed by Thierry Martens in Louvain in 1511 – and highly popular in the 1510s and 1520s – argued explicitly that one of the main goals of collecting and arranging headings and commonplaces was that it allowed the student to treat any theme in a personal and inventive way. He states explicitly that if one only did all this for containing information, we would be like books ourselves, and that it is in one's own production where “seems to lie the main fruit of the long effort and care that we put into studying.”²⁰³ Quite simply, dialectic should be the best and most general organizational tool for the generation of writing and arguments.

Nevertheless, what should not be forgotten is that *De inventione dialectica* does not create topical descriptions in a vacuum, it rather points to existing materials that have an authoritative say on the matter. Thus, dialectic is inseparable from its content: its system of

²⁰¹ This method provides a comprehensive topical description of a term.

²⁰² Agricola restricted rhetoric to elocution incorporating other elements of rhetorical theory into his dialectic.

²⁰³ Agricola, Rudolph: *De formando studio*, Merten de Keyser, Antwerpen 1532, 17: “quando hic praecipuus esse videtur longi laboris, sollicitudinisque in studia collatae, fructus. Quid si nihil ipsi ad posteros mandare poterimus, nihil extra ea, quae didicimus, ad praesentes proferre, quid tandem inter librum, & nos intererit.” (English translation from Agricola, Rudolph: *Letters* [eds. and trans. Van der Laan – Akkerman], Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Tempe 2002, 213).

places (*loci*) only organizes material that present a claim to be authoritative under each heading. This provides some insight into the way in which grammar, rhetoric, and dialectic could be interconnected in the production of language since it is the material places (*loci*) pointed to that is learned in the grammar course. Understood in this way, dialectic represents a generalization and a continuum of all other humanist materials, and everything learned in the grammar course. In addition to the examples of classical tradition, all Erasmian school texts, and especially his *Adagia* and *Colloquia* become significant. These works do not offer deep insight into the organizational principles and aims of rhetoric, but provide ample content and examples to rhetorical production and writing. Thus, they presuppose the irreducibly intertextual nature of rhetorical production; since the classificatory categories and places of rhetorical handbooks and Agricola's *De inventione* always refer to existing argumentative patterns and materials, it is very important to rewrite the materials a rhetorical or dialectical invention would bring to the mind of the student. In short, Erasmus himself becomes one of the *auctores* to which headings point.

Adagia, explicitly woven into a rhetorical framework, is a very good example of this since it pictures proverbs as the generally accepted opinions that serve as the starting point for rhetorical composition. *Adagia*, the famous collection of proverbs printed for the first time in 1500, enlarged and changed in subsequent editions, served at least four main purposes according to Erasmus's words: philosophy, persuasiveness, grace, and charm in speech, and the understanding of the best authors.²⁰⁴ This presentation underlies the multipurpose nature of Erasmus's understanding of proverbs that can serve both as ornaments (*elocutio*), and as the kind of generally accepted opinions that since Aristotle's time had had the claim to form a good starting point for rhetorical invention (*inventio*), and that guarantee knowledge of things (*res*) or material as Erasmus understood it. What is significant in Erasmus's *Adagia*, however, is the fact that they are presented, increasingly in later editions, with explanatory texts to the proverbs and with indexes classifying them for use. These texts were not only lists of references to the tradition but aspired to present Erasmian moral, Christian, and political philosophy in a form that could be woven into educational patterns, teaching methods and, ultimately, to pupil's own production by controlling the web of references arising from proverbs. Thus, it is not surprising that Erasmus had insisted that in his *De ratione studii* that the topics should not be studied

²⁰⁴ Erasmus, Desiderius: *Adagiorum chiliades tres, ac centuriae fere totidem*, Venezia, Aldo Manunzio 1508, 2: "Conducit autem parcemiarum cognitio, cum ad alia permulta, tum potissimum ad quatuor, ad philosophiam, ad persuadendum, ad decus, & gratiam orationis, ad intelligendos optimos quosque autores."

“vacuous in content and dull in form.” Rather they should be united to substantial knowledge of other studies and to the description of general maxims that could be moral in their outlook.²⁰⁵ What dialectic can and should bring to all this would be an ability to organize material in a systematic and general way, and to provide procedures for recovering it for specific purposes. Thus, the interaction between the theoretical side of the *trivium* to the materials and contents used is crucial: theory organizes, classifies, and brings to mind but only the kind of materials and examples that have an authoritative status on the matter. School materials and examples provide the basic way of socializing ideas in the educational context – a point that Erasmus and Vives knew more than well. This provides the basic framework for thinking about and socializing linguistic production inside of which Vives operates throughout his life.

As Erasmus’s school materials make abundantly clear, the situations in which disciples should be able to use language cover a wide range of issues, not excluding politics. The overall importance of *Adagia* to Erasmus’s ethical and Christian philosophy is, of course, beyond any doubt. There is, however, a growing awareness that some of the central proverbs were among many other things of civic importance, with Silvana Seidel Menchi describing some of the central adages as being political.²⁰⁶ Thus, basic ideas of Erasmus’s civic and social thought are clearly woven into some of the most central proverbs that are amplified into authentic essays, and some of the contemporaries noted their social and political dimension.²⁰⁷ One good example was *Dulce bellum inexpertis* that presented a strong pacifist treatment of warfare in an approachable form to students. For anyone writing about war and searching for arguments under the heading of *bellum*, it would offer valuable Erasmian material for the construction of one’s own argument.

Civic Philosophy and Life of *Negotium*

Unlike his 1514 *Sapiens* that had referred to a contemplative ideal, the harnessing of the *trivium* to utility for life went hand-in-hand with a strong focus on moral and civic philosophy in Vives’s circa 1520 texts composed in the context of the academic life of Louvain. His *De initiis et sectis*

²⁰⁵ Erasmus: *De ratione studii*, v: “Hinc iam thematis iis exerceri debent, in quibus illud in primis cavendum, ne (quod fieri solet), aut sensu sunt inepto, aut sermone inlusivo....” (English translation from Erasmus: *Literary and Educational Writings*, vol. 2, Collected Works of Erasmus 24 [ed. Thompson], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1978, 676).

²⁰⁶ Seidel Menchi’s selected edition of some of the most important adages is entitled *Sei saggi politici in forma di proverbi*. See also Puig de la Bellasca 2000, 13-16.

²⁰⁷ See Zasius to Erasmus, Allen 344, 26-36.

et laudibus philosophiae, printed in the *Opuscula varia* together with *In pseudodialecticos*, accentuated the unity of all philosophy, while simultaneously underlining greatly the importance of its moral and civic branch.²⁰⁸ In the very first lines of the work, philosophy is described as “the greatest gift that the immortal Gods gave us,” and that “only philosophy can make men perfect and lead them to good life.” The next phrase united the gift of philosophy with the search for truth.²⁰⁹ In addition to emphasizing the unity of all arts, Vives throughout *De initiis* reminds the reader that the greatness of both moral and natural philosophy lies on their usefulness for human life.²¹⁰

Vives argues, following more Diogenes Laertius than the Italian Neoplatonics that after the great flood, truth was approached in a number of ways by a plethora of men from a variety of people, such as the prophets, priests, druids, magicians and many others who took an interest in questions of eternal wisdom.²¹¹ These various men are explicitly equated with the first mythical wise of the Greek, and with the first philosophers who focused on the secrets of nature. With the Greek, the mysteries of skies, music, poetry, and arithmetic were unraveled and the gaze turned towards earthly matters.²¹² Even if music was in the first place responsible for the birth of communities (*communitas*) and human associations (*societas*) through its unifying and civilizing force and its harmonious powers, true medicine of the soul (*medicina animorum*) is attributed to various wise lawgivers. They benefited different peoples and nations “not only by producing laws but by setting forth the examples of their own lives for all to imitate, something more elevated by far than their laws,” and they “had no desire to be exempt from those laws.”²¹³ Following Cicero, Vives grants the palm for the invention of moral

²⁰⁸ The originality of the text has sometimes been over-emphasized since much of it is based on extracts of Diogenes Laertius’s *The Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*, as well as on Cicero, see Matheussen – Fantazzi - George: 3-5; Casini 2006, 25. Noreña made a more audacious claim in the 1970s calling it “One of the first modern sketches of a critical history of philosophy.” Noreña 1970, 149.

²⁰⁹ Vives: “De initiis”, 79: “Inter omnes qui altius mortali humilitate exeruere sanctissima atque divina capita, constat, unam philosophiam munus illud esse, quod a diis immortalibus maximum optimumque nobis donatum est. Quae sola homines reddere perfectos potest. Et ad bene beateque vivendum, quae summa est votorum omnium, perducere.”

²¹⁰ Vives: “De initiis”, 88 “...esse ipsam [philosophia] pulchram iucundamque animis humanis, esse commodam et in primis utilem atque adeo unam rerum omnium maxime necessariam usibus totique vitae nostrae.”

²¹¹ Vives: “De initiis”, 80; Della Mirandola, Pico: *Conclusiones nongentae, in omni genere scientiarum*, Johann Petreius, Nürnberg 1532, 12-22.

²¹² Vives: “De initiis”, 80-83. The idea of Orpheus as a creator of harmony among people was used in classical period and in the Renaissance to defend poetry and literature, see Spies 1999, 55.

²¹³ Vives: “De initiis”, 83: “Nam populos gentesque suas ita prudenter, ita sancte instituerunt, ut non ferendis solum profuerint legibus, sed exemplo vitae omnibus ad imitationem expositio, multo suis legibus augustiore. Neque enim soluti iis legibus esse voluerunt quibus alios devinxerant et obligarant....” Politics as medicine of the mind is a prominent idea in Greek thought, see Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics* (trans. by Rackham), Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1962, i.xiii.1-8.

philosophy to Socrates, who was “the first to take philosophy [...] and apply it to daily life and customs both of states and of individuals,” and who promoted the idea that “people should turn themselves wholeheartedly to the adjustment of their lives.” For this reason he was considered the wisest man in Greece.²¹⁴ After lavishly praising the utility of natural sciences for social living, he comes back to moral philosophy: “the study of how each person is to order his life, of how to govern both public and private matters” that restores our life to its humanity.²¹⁵ Ultimately in Vives’s *De initiis*, all philosophy and knowledge of visible things leads to the knowledge of the “immortal Prince of the Universe,” the greatest of truths which will enable one to live happily in peace, undisturbed by the world of fortune.²¹⁶ Thus, a strong defence of civic philosophy, interpreted as medicine of the mind, is woven together with an ultimately teleological and religious framework.

In addition to *De initiis*, Vives greatly underlined the figure of Cicero in a number of texts from this period. He is not only the hero of *In pseudodialecticis* as the most revered example of classical Latin, but also the protagonist of Vives’s *Praelectio in leges Ciceronis*, as well as his *Somnium* compendium. Vives added a lengthy and eloquent biography of Tully in the 1519 edition of the text originally printed in 1514, a true piece of epideictic rhetoric composed in the grand style.²¹⁷ The Cicero encountered here is primarily a man of affairs, an example of a statesman putting his intellectual tools to collective good. Despite the obvious literary aspirations that lead Vives to a rather militant and eloquent description of Cicero’s career, the core of the praise – never morally neutral for the humanist way of thinking – can be taken as an example of good conduct. According to Vives, the pronounced reason for adding some biographical notes was the example of the commentary tradition of classical antiquity where this had been a common practice.²¹⁸

²¹⁴ Vives: “De initiis”, 85: “Socrates primus philosophiam in coelis elementisque versantem & divagantem ad civitatum atque hominum singulorum usus vitamque devocavit, ut ea primum mortals scirent quae scire....”; “...ad morum compositionem [...] totos sese converterent.”; Cicero: *Tusculanae disputationes*, (trans. King), Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts/London 1960, v.iv.10-11.

²¹⁵ Vives: “De initiis”, 89: “Iam et illa Deus immortalis cuiusmodi sunt de moribus uniuscuiusque componendis, de gubernandis rebus & publicis & privatis.”; “Per haec enim vita nostra humanitati suae reddita est, per quae docemur iusticiam, prudentiam, fortitudinem, adde etiam modestiam in omnibus rebus & temperantiam, in dictis et factis constantiam atque modum.”

²¹⁶ Vives: “De initiis”, 89: “Itaque quum per totam rerum naturam late fuerimus pervagati illum tandem ex visibilibus istis rebus invisibilem mundi principem omnipotentem, aeternum, immortalem inveniemus....”

²¹⁷ Vives: PC, 113, “Iam vero illam partem video meae praefationi veterum interpretum instituto de esse, qua de auctore ipso nonnulla dicuntur, quam addam aequidem ex more magis quam necessitate....” Vives was most probably more familiar with Cicero than any other classical writer in his youth, see Matheussen 1998, 107.

²¹⁸ This practice had been resuscitated by Italian humanism. Leonardo Bruni for instance had already written a biography of Cicero entitled *Vita Ciceronis*.

Vives opens the description with a lengthy appraisal of Cicero's natural capacities for all the liberal arts and praises his adherence to and talent in “poetry, philosophy, and oratory, which at the time in Rome was highly esteemed and considered” and underlines that “he [Cicero] put all his knowledge to the service of the Republic.”²¹⁹ Unlike those who trust in the mere lineage as a source of glory, Cicero focused all his labour, diligence, and ambition for doing honour to his father’s name. His career advanced with considerable pace reaching its apex with his election to consul in a year when the office “was not given to the biggest buyer of votes nor to the most influential, popular, ambitious or astute person; but in the middle of such a raging storm that was pestering the Republic, they elected the person who was not the most noble, nor the richest but the most prudent and the best man of affairs.”²²⁰ Vives is also firm in his defence of Cicero against possible critique: to those who call his prudence *leggerezza*, he reminds “the wise cautiousness with which he acted on the *forum*, and his flexibility to adapt to circumstances.”²²¹ Ultimately, Cicero was a fierce defender of the liberty of the Republic. In doing this, he put his eloquence and wisdom systematically into what was undoubtedly a life of *negotium*.²²²

In his *Veritas fucata* from 1520 and in his *Somnium* compendium, Vives further elaborated on the place of language in mediating truth and wisdom in the world of error. *Somnium* – a set of texts built around Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis*, a surviving fragment of Cicero’s *De republica* – contained Vives’s fictional commentaries entitled *Somnium* and *Vigilia* on Cicero’s text. In Vives’s *Vigilia*, an *enarratio* of Cicero’s texts, the dream of Scipio Africanus presents an amplification of some of the themes of the original text to long discussions on virtue, glory, and a range of other Erasmian issues. In Vives’s *Somnium*, Cicero is harnessed to speak for the humanist cause against the dreams of the scholastics.²²³ During a fictional speech,

²¹⁹ Vives: PC, 113: “Nactusque ingenium tale, quale Plato fingit liberalium omnium artium capacissimum, ad nullum litterarum genus ineptum, poesi, philosophiae, dicendique arti, qui erat tunc in urbe ad summos honores gradus, totum sese tradidit...”

²²⁰ Vives: PC, 114: “Neque enim illo anno, ut multis antea, traditus est ei consulatus tanquam profusissimo suffragiorum emptori, aut potentissimo, aut maxime gratioso, aut ei qui callidissime ambiuerat, sed in illis procellis et tempestate reipublicae electus est ipse non vir nobilissimus aut ditissimus, Caeterum prudentissimus, et optimus gubernator, cui clavus commendaretur, in cuius fidem tota respublica confugeret, ut non magis consulatus Ciceroni videatur datus quam Cicero consulatui...”

²²¹ Vives: PC, 114: “Qui vero timidum ipsum levemque appellant, ii rationes temporum vitaeque Ciceronis non considerant, et maligni rerum omnium interpretes Ciceronis prudentiam scientiamque utendi foro et sese tempori accommodandi laevitatem vocant rigidam illam Catonis gravitatem inflexibilem in proposito perseverantiam vocaturi coecam et obstinatam pertinaciam.”

²²² At the time, one of the only Dutch texts praising a Ciceronian understanding of the active life was Jacobus Canter’s late fifteenth-century *Dialogus de Solitudine*, see Tilmans 2002, 112.

²²³ This story presents a dichotomy between the soldiers of the day and the soldiers of the night. In the soldiers of the day represented by one of the three *Fates* Athropos one finds a very familiar selection of Church fathers and

Cicero argues that it was he who gave Greek philosophy Roman citizenship, and he laments that people take all of his philosophy to be mere grammar.²²⁴ In a later section called *Argumentum Somnis Scipioni Ciceronianis*, Cicero unites his republic with that of Plato, but with the difference that his Roman treatment accounts for how different *ingenia* demand different motivational principles.²²⁵ Thus, Roman philosophy of prudence and rhetoric could offer ways of moulding eternal truths to the different *ingenia* of the people.²²⁶

By 1520, the philosophy of language *usus* defended vehemently in *In pseudodialecticos* was closely linked to three issues in Vives's mind. First, one finds a redefinition of the *trivium* on a very practical level, which builds a close connection between all linguistic arts. This model facilitates reading, textual analysis, collection of arguments and commonplaces, and ultimately aspires to production, as is remarkably witnessed by Erasmus's rhetorical and grammatical materials that taught people to write. Secondly, the reform of the *trivium* is connected to a larger reflection on the contexts in which language should perform its social role. Despite looking for a union of wisdom and eloquence in almost all domains of life, Vives's 1520 experiments with linguistic styles, as well as his humanist admiration for a life of *negotium*, both point to a pronounced interest in civic and moral philosophy as the domain in which language should be put into use.²²⁷ Thirdly, this life of *negotium* appears primarily as a way of transmitting wisdom in a world of discord, one in need of medicine for the soul. Thus, conceptually, a life of *negotium* is closely connected to the teaching of concord and harmony in a world of discord. The conceptual implication in his 1519 *Opuscula varia* was closely linked to practice; throughout the 1520s, Vives dedicated all his efforts to putting his linguistic skills to use in his life of *negotium*.

Greek and Roman philosophers and speakers: Saint Paul, Saint Jerome, Saint Ambrose, Saint Augustine, Saint Hilary, John Chrysostom, Aristotle, Plato, Demosthenes, Cicero, Vergil, Pliny, Seneca, Livy, Quintilian and Cicero, who represent intellectual aristocracy. In Plato's *The Republic* Athropos sings about the things to come, thus Vives's selection was not coincidental. In the soldiers of the night one finds Ockham, Swineshead, Gregory of Rimini, Paul of Venice, William Hentisberus, Peter of Spain, Duns Scotus and the Italian jurists Accursius, Bartolus, Baldus. Of this group, composed of dialecticians and jurists, Scotus is singled out as the one who embraced sleep to the point of madness, Vives, Juan Luis: "Somnium Scipionis", in Vives, Juan Luis: *Somnium. Est praefatio ad somnium Scipionis Ciceronis. Eiusdem vigilia. Quae est enarratio somnii Scipionis Ciceronis*, Johann Froben, Basel 1521, 30, 35.

²²⁴ Vives: "Somnium", 46-47: "Et perfeci, nisi vehementer fallor, ne quicquid esset philosophiae, solis Graecis literis contineretur, quae iam velut Romana civitate per me donata est...."; "...qui nihil quod meum sit philosophiam esse volunt, omnia grammatica esse unica sententia pronunciant."

²²⁵ Vives: "Somnium", 51-52.

²²⁶ Dominic Baker-Smith has also underlined the Ciceronian Baker spirit of the text in its call for a life of *negotium*, see Baker-Smith 1976, 241-242.

²²⁷ Vives: "De initiis", 87.

3. The Republic of Letters and Counselling

Chapter three sets aside the educational debates of Chapter two, and moves on to consider the ways in which language could be put into use in a life of *negotium* – especially in counselling. The chapter discusses three interrelated issues: first, it describes the Erasmian Republic of Letters as a social and cultural practice that has to be understood as forming the background of Vives’s work, fame, authority, and *ethos* throughout his career. While the Republic of Letters predominantly focused on theological and educational questions related to Erasmus’s major projects, the men of letters also discussed peace, war, and good rule. Closely linked to this civic dimension, the chapter argues as its second point that in the 1520s Vives uses his authority primarily for counselling, which can be seen both as the immediate giving of advice, and as an attempt to set the general framework for the judgement of princely action. Lastly, it analyses Vives’s short piece on rhetorical theory, *De consultatione*, which was an adaptation of the tradition of symmetrical deliberative rhetoric intended for republican settings to a princely context. This rhetoric takes place in a pronouncedly asymmetrical environment in which recognizing hierarchy and understanding the mind of the prince are of utmost importance for a successful use of language.

***In Pseudodialecticos* as a Rhetorical Piece**

Vives’s *In pseudodialecticos* put forward a humanist critique of the scholastic *trivium* and especially its dialectical method, siding Vives with major northern humanists. There is, however, an additional dimension that further accentuates the reading of *In pseudodialecticos* as a defence of all ramifications of Erasmian humanism; the highly rhetorical nature of the text linked to its possible audience. As Martin Dorp had pointed out in his second letter to Erasmus, he was not only unsatisfied by the content of Erasmus’s claims but also by the rhetorical and persuasive modality of his writing.²²⁸ Similarly, what was possibly provocative about *In pseudodialecticos* was not only its interpretation of dialectic but the rhetorical element of the treatise. *In pseudodialecticos* is essentially an oratorical piece, and whatever the philosophical

²²⁸ Dorp to Erasmus, Allen 347, 12-14: “Cave tamen rhetoricis utare persuasionibus, quibus scio quiduis dacias credible; sed rem ipsam, ipsum ferias articulum.”

force of it was, it would not necessarily have been devastating for the scholastic method because it revealed the internal impossibilities and contradictions of the dialectical system to a Louvain or Paris theologian. It is rather framed as an eloquent social critique, and as a satire of the outcomes of scholastic dialectic, understood as an educational and epistemological paradigm. Thus, the primary audience of the work is not the intellectual elite of the theological faculties of main European universities, but most probably boys and young men entering the Arts Faculties of academic institutions. *In pseudodialecticis* is not framed as a move in a purely academic debate; it partakes in the satirical tradition of More and Erasmus, and hence the philosophical depth of the argument was not necessarily of primary importance. Revealingly, Vives presents the work as advice to a friend on the merits of scholastic and humanistic dialectic respectively, stating that “...if I have any good effect on you, I can also hope to exercise an influence on a great number of the young men who are your disciples.”²²⁹ Furthermore, the structure of the work based on a dichotomy of obscure scholasticism and humanism strongly underlines the importance of *In pseudodialecticis* in a broader narrative. This story is about the rebirth of humanist studies and culture in general. Vives’s personal conversion from the darkness of scholasticism to the light of humanism is deliberately woven into the overall narrative.²³⁰

In other words, *In pseudodialecticis* is not opening up a discussion with those committed to the traditional dialectical method, but is a piece that turns them into a hilarious theme in a satire meant for humanist readers. All the humorous examples of the possible manipulations of the supposition theory paint a picture of dialectic as an absurd trickery of words and sophistry. On a more general level, it has been argued that humanist critique of scholastic dialectic rarely assessed its merits as a totality, or as a system where different logical concepts would be interrelated, but focused instead on separate elements that could be turned into an entertaining take on scholastic language, and on critique of the figure of scholastic himself.²³¹ Rather than engaging in a systematic critique of all aspects of a theory, humanists often picked elements for their own purposes, and aimed at their own audiences. Firmly in this tradition *In pseudodialecticis* presupposes an audience that would support its claim as to the

²²⁹ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 284: “Scripsi quoque ad te eam ob causam [...] tum etiam quod cum in te profecero, proficiam partier in ista multitudine iuvenum, quae te sectatur...”

²³⁰ Vives: *In pseudodialecticis*, 272-273, 283-286. Edward George has also argued that *In pseudodialecticis* is not an internal critique of dialectic but that it focuses primarily on social issues. See George 1992, 131.

²³¹ Perreiah 1982, 11-12. Perreiah does argue that Valla and Vives engage with the system *in toto* but in the case of Vives that seems to be an overstatement. In no text that I know of does Vives make the connection between different aspects of scholastic theory, that is *summae, suppositio, consequentia, probatio*, for instance.

barbarisms of the scholastic method.

What is more, individual treatises such as *In pseudodialecticis* did not engage in polemics in isolation. Not only did they point to some of the most widely employed commonplaces in humanist literature of the time, but the persuasiveness of the text could be backed by right kind of introductory and dedicatory letters that wove them together with a larger humanist programme. This was not completely new. As Erika Rummel has argued, some of the possibilities of collective projects had first surfaced in the context of the so-called Reuchlin affair in the 1510s. What had started as a more local and restricted question of the heretic nature of Jewish literature, had evolved into the defining dispute on questions of learning and method in the 1510s, during which the divide between two academic cultures was consciously constructed. In the debate, Johannes Reuchlin, the leading Hebrew scholar of Europe, harnessed collective humanist support for his cause by way of a published letter collection entitled *Clarorum virorum epistolae*, printed in 1514. The collection that comprised letters from some of the most prominent humanists of the time was republished in 1519 under the name of *Illustrium virorum epistolae* in an extended version that included four letters by the leading humanist of the time: Erasmus. During the Reuchlin affair, much of the issues related to the use of humanist methods, and the interpretation of the Bible were hotly debated. Equally as importantly the debate was not conducted in closed academic circles, it was rather constructed as a dispute between two European intellectual groups, both to which a set of arguments, practices, and followers are attributed.²³²

In many instances, a dispassionate treatment of the theme was transformed into a question of the credibility of the opponent, an attack on his *ethos* in an attempt to draw a wider audience to one's side, and to effect general opinion. Reuchlin's own activities also centred on mobilizing collective forces not directly linked to the debate itself – something his adversaries were keen to point out.²³³ Throughout the debate, the authority of theological faculties of main universities to pass judgement on the matter was refuted. Furthermore, throughout the discussion a difference of opinion concerned not only particular issues discussed and the authority to judge, but also the very method of discussion as well as good practices of

²³² Even if the debate in the letters was constructed along these lines, the whole nature of the humanist scholastic debate has been discussed to a great degree. James Overfield has claimed that there never was a European wide humanist scholasticism debate and that the Reuchlin affair was primarily about anti-Semitism. Rummel, on the other hand, stated that in the early sixteenth century the humanist scholasticism debate was the primary intellectual debate of Europe. Nauert has adopted a middle position although he seems to be somewhat closer to Rummel. See Overfield 1984; Rummel 2002; Rummel 2008; Nauert 1998; Ménager 2008, 45-54.

²³³ Rummel 2002, 19, 152-157.

argumentation. During the Reuchlin affair, the importance of printing for creating common projects was becoming visible.²³⁴

Erasmianism as a Common Project for Intellectual Authority

Despite Erasmus's ambivalent feelings about the dynamics of the Reuchlin case, some of the methods for building collective projects were becoming more common at the turn of the 1520s.²³⁵ These collective projects of men of letters were a more public continuum of an older network of the learned and the wise, that is, the Republic of Letters – a term coined in early fifteenth-century Italy. The activities of the humanist Republic of Letters consisted in sharing information and opinions, as well as cultivating discussion through oral and literary means; it provided a shared intellectual space based on private discussions and letter writing, which facilitated the emergence of a certain kind of distinctive identity of the men of letters. This network could serve a wide range of purposes, ranging from the discussion of intellectual matters to the enhancement of each individual's cause and career in different ways. It also offered a context where intellectual and spiritual qualities could be cultivated in the literary company of like-minded men of letters, a space that in the tumultuous decades of the early sixteenth century represented a retreat from worldly affairs to a realm of trust and comfort.²³⁶ Simultaneously, however, it provided a collective space where the most important social, religious, and political questions could be discussed independently from more local allegiances, and in a more dispassionate manner. Thus, in addition to all the geographical, hierarchical, and personal contexts in which different humanists operated, there is a claim for a separate space, the Republic of Letters, in which things should be discussed with respect to the rules of conversation cultivated among men of letters. Contemporaries acknowledged the social, cultural, and political importance of the Republic. As Guillaume Budé in his 1517 letter to Thomas More argued, humanist correspondence could be likened to embassies that maintained peace between allied monarchs.²³⁷ Common humanist projects that led to – among other matters – the Universal Peace of 1518, were external signs of this.

It has often been noted that the concept of the Republic of Letters takes shape in

²³⁴ Charles Nauert has greatly emphasized this, see Nauert 1995, 137.

²³⁵ Erasmus to Reuchlin, Allen 300, 21-24; Ménager 2008, 40-50; Bietenholz 1975, 183-185.

²³⁶ Furey 2006, 1-13.

²³⁷ Gadoffre 1997, 344-345.

early sixteenth-century context under the guidance of the prince of the humanists: Erasmus.²³⁸ A great part of this is that what had been before predominantly an invisible sphere based on private letters and discussions, becomes partially public with the printing press. Starting from the 1510s some of the activities of this humanist circle are deliberately made known in a filtered form to different audiences through the publication of selected materials.²³⁹ This publicity should not be seen as being synonymous with northern humanism as an intellectual paradigm, nor with the totality of those participating in the literary network of the Republic of Letters, but as a specific social phenomenon centred on a group of humanists in the Low Countries. It was with the intellectual guidance of Erasmus, physically located in Louvain, that the idea of a common European wide humanist programme was created by universalizing local debates on education, theology, social and political reform.²⁴⁰

This particular form of Erasmian Republic of Letters appears in a specific moment, in the mid-1510s, and coincided with the larger cause of northern humanism that was implemented in school and university contexts at an ever-increasing pace.²⁴¹ The public creation of the Republic of Letters had, however, forms of production that were specific to it. First, the emergence of a distinctively Erasmian Republic of Letters presupposed a larger humanist network that was ready to acknowledge the man from Rotterdam as the prince of humanism.²⁴² At least from 1515, the humanist from Rotterdam is lifted to the centre of the movement, – a role and status a number of German, French and English humanists enhanced with their own

²³⁸ Bots 2005, 9.

²³⁹ Jardine employs often the notion of circles rather than the Republic of Letters. She argues that the self-awareness of a European intellectual is constructed through a deliberate generalization of local debates, see Jardine 1993, 3-26. Yoran uses systematically the idea of Republic of Letters to highlight its autonomous claim, see Yoran 2014, 258. The notion of a circle captures the personal dimension of the process very well, whereas the concept of the Republic of Letters highlights the normative claim made by these circles. Humanists were very well aware that the presentation of the circle in public contexts followed different rules from private discussions, see Jardine 1993, 5, 9; Seidel Menchi 2014, 81.

²⁴⁰ Jardine 1993, 11-14. Erasmus was aware that his assessment of different people could affect the judgement of posteriority on their merits, see for instance, Erasmus to Leo X, Allen 446, 79-86.

²⁴¹ One thinks of John Colet's Saint Paul's school, Wolsey's Cardinal College at Oxford, The University of Alcalá in Spain, Collegium Trilingue in Louvain, the humanist project in late-1510s France that only materialised in 1530 in the form of Collège de France to mention but a few. See McConica 1965, 78-86; De Vocht 1951; Fumaroli 1992, 9-24; Bataillon 1991, 11-46.

²⁴² The study does not take a strong stance on the extension of the Republic of Letters, which would be predominantly an empirical question. However, a distinction should be made between those who are publicly presented as members of the Erasmian Republic of Letters and the majority of men of letters who, although likely reading Erasmus and supporting the Erasmian cause, are not linked to Erasmus or to the collective activities of the Republic. This public form of the Republic of Letters is thus a socially more exclusive space consisting of a relatively limited number of named individuals. However, it is clear that the Republic of Letters in itself is in constant fluctuation with people participating and enjoying publicity to a different degree and in different times. Thus, in absence of any institutional structure, its limits to the larger humanist movement are always in flux.

writings.²⁴³ All of this coincides with Erasmus's rise to the apex of European humanism and to the leading brand of printing industry – partly dependent on larger humanist circles that presented him as the torchbearer of new learning north of the Alps.²⁴⁴

Ultimately, the presentation of the praise of other humanists to a larger audience was dependent on the possibilities of sharing that image using the printing press; it is indeed through printing that the older humanist practice of epistolary dialogue can be made public. Erasmus himself was famously connected to the most important printers of his time, and spent a significant share of his worldly existence in the actual production of books. It is very much in the printing presses of Froben in Basel and Thierry Martens in Louvain that the idea of a collective programme is created.²⁴⁵ What emerges from the printing patterns of these two printing houses is a clear indication of an almost total service to the Erasmian cause – a fact greatly helped by Erasmus's commercial success that turned him to the biggest brand of the literary world before the Reformation.²⁴⁶

The production of a common humanist cause was aided by an understanding of the possibilities of printing in framing and constructing collective projects. The structure of the editions produced was of help since they allowed for a number of cross-references to other humanist works in the materials accompanying the main text. The habit of framing works and weaving them into a more general humanist cause through introductory letters and prefaces was a typical method of connecting individual works with a more general programme.²⁴⁷ Hence, a work like More's *Utopia*, printed in Louvain by Martens in 1516 and consequently by Froben

²⁴³ Starting from 1514, a year after which large parts of Erasmus's correspondence have survived, this is clear. See the letter sent in the name of the literary society (*socialitas literaria*) in Strasbourg: from Jakob Wimpfeling to Erasmus, Allen 302. The praise intensifies after his New Testament, see Reuchlin to Erasmus, Allen 418, 11-21; Hermann, Count of Neuenahr to Erasmus, Allen 442; from John Colet to Erasmus, Allen 423, especially 47-49; from Ulrich von Hutten to Erasmus, Allen 365, 1-14; From Budé to Erasmus, Allen 522, 28-36. Erasmus was aware of his fame very early on and he admitted that the opinion held of him was dependent on the depiction of his friends, see Erasmus to Dorp, Allen 337, 10-20; Erasmus to Budé, Allen 534, 9-11. The claim about an international community of scholars obviously does not mean that much more locally bound manifestations of humanist trends were not to be found. See for instance Goudriaan 2003.

²⁴⁴ Pettigree 2010, 65-106. Dorp also makes a reference to the name of Erasmus as a synonym of scholarship, see Dorp to Erasmus, Allen 304, 1-2.

²⁴⁵ Tracy 1996; Jardine 1993, 23-26. See appendix about the printing activities by Martens and Froben in 1515 – 1522.

²⁴⁶ For the importance of Erasmus to his printers, see Vanautgarden 2014, 105-114. Pettigree 2010, 65-90; Eisenstein 1983; Erasmus was very well aware of the commercial side of printing as well as of how it could affect the form of the book. See Erasmus to Vives, Allen 1531, 36-39. About the process of printing Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* and how Froben and Erasmus were actively pushing for the project, see Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1256, 93-100; 1271, 40-53; 1281, 84-87; 1303, 1-25; 1306, 8-19; 1362, 41-44; 1613.

²⁴⁷ For a perfect example of, see Erasmus to Capito, Allen 541, 54-59. The letter was printed in *Epistolae elegantes* in 1517.

in Basel in 1518, was a common project in which Erasmus, together with a number of other Dutch humanists, participated. Equally as important, in addition to being a common project, it is also presented as such by a number of introductory letters from some of the more famous humanist names of the time.²⁴⁸

A special place, however, should be reserved to Erasmus's published letters where Vives is also included.²⁴⁹ Editions of Erasmus's letters begin to appear starting from 1515 and they constitute one of the basic ways of presenting the Republic of Letters engaged in a common responsible dialogue on a number of shared issues.²⁵⁰ From the very start, the Erasmian editions of letters are pronouncedly international with 1519 *Farrago* presenting Erasmus's correspondence with Thomas More, Guillaume Budé, John Colet, Philipp Melanchthon and tens of other leading European humanists.²⁵¹ Thus, a reader of *Farrago* would find the most important humanists of the Tudor, French, Papal, and Habsburg courts entering into a friendly, supposedly intimate, dialogue on a number of issues, a dialogue that is then divulged to a wider audience. The bulk of the discussion concerns the faith of humanism and Erasmus's theological programme, and the advancement of humanist studies in educational contexts, but the pressing political issues of the time such as peace and warfare are never absent.²⁵² In this way, printed letters and treatises such as Erasmus's *Institutio principis Christiani* and Thomas More's *Utopia* point towards a common humanist cause that turns the collective intellectual credibility and authority of the Republic of Letters into what is at times a critical attitude towards actual educational, religious, and secular authorities on a European scale.²⁵³

²⁴⁸ At least in one of the first three editions of *Utopia* one could find letters from Budé to Thomas Lupset, a letter from Pieter Gillis to Jerome Busleyden, More's letter to Pieter Gillis, Erasmus's letter to Froben, More's letter to Pieter Gillis and John Desmarais's letter to Pieter Gillis. In addition to this, we know that a number of humanists from Erasmus himself to Gerad Geldenhouwer participated in the editing project. See Geldenhouwer to Erasmus, Allen 487; More to Erasmus, Allen 461, 1-3; Gillis to More, More to Gillis. Recently the Dutch dimension of the text has greatly been emphasized in Vermeir 2012.

²⁴⁹ Halkin 1983; Jardine 1993, 14-20; Jardine 2014, xi-xiii.

²⁵⁰ Heesakkers 2005, 39.

²⁵¹ Erasmus: *Farrago*, 2. In the page two the most prestigious humanists included are mentioned. In the end of the work there is a more detailed index of all the letters.

²⁵² Tracy 1996, 95-96. Erasmus himself could point out that what differentiated his philosophy from traditional theologians was its usefulness, which had a distinctive political dimension. Erasmus to Budé, Allen 421, 88-89: "In libello De Pirincipo Christiano ea praecipio quae nemo theologorum ausit attingere." Vives's letters discuss political issues frequently in the 1520s, and they reveal that he is contact with all major European courts, see for instance Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 167.

²⁵³ See Yoran 2010, 37-68; Yoran 2014, 257-260. Many agreed with the basic message of *Institutio principis Christiani* and understood it as a critique of princes, see Colet to Erasmus, Allen 423, 21-25. This letter was printed in the 1516 *Epistolae ad Erasmum*.

Vives and the Republic of Letters

The case of Vives's early career is in some ways paradigmatic and the support of Erasmian circles of the Low Countries for the Valencian humanist from the late 1510s to 1522 was unconditional, even though the young scholar might have not become a close personal friend of Erasmus and Thomas More.²⁵⁴ However, here one has to differentiate between two dimensions of support that were intrinsically linked to one another. First, it was with the help of humanist friends that Vives obtains importance in the academic world of Louvain and in the Habsburg court, where he is promoted as a gifted tutor by Erasmus. Secondly, it is only with the help of the Erasmian circles that Vives becomes a literary humanist of any note. This is important: the figure of Vives throughout his life is hardly separable from Vives the writer – one of the foremost specialists of humanist learning outside Italy. This intellectual prestige was not achieved in the existing institutional frameworks: Vives most likely never achieved an academic degree. Thus, it is only in the context of the Erasmian Republic of Letters that Vives can appear as a writer of great importance.²⁵⁵

As Lisa Jardine has convincingly shown Vives's journey to the apex of European humanism comprised elements not directly controlled by the young Valencian, since from 1517 he is systematically portrayed as an emerging star of the humanist movement by Adrianus Barlandus, Thomas More and most of all by Erasmus – present in Louvain at the time.²⁵⁶ Interestingly, the kind of publicity offered to Vives in these years did not picture him as a philologist or a Biblical scholar, but as a philosopher of the *trivium*, knowledgeable on dialectic, rhetoric, and civic and moral philosophy. In 1520, a selection of Erasmus's correspondence, *Epistolae aliquot selectae ex Erasmicis per Hardianum Barlandum*, appeared in the press of Thierry Martens in Louvain dedicating some attention to the promising young Spanish scholar in the form of a letter from More to Erasmus, and a short response of the latter.²⁵⁷ The praising of Vives's humanist skills in More's letter takes a more particular turn when the English humanist moves to the presentation of Vives's two main publications from 1519 and 1520, that

²⁵⁴ Fantazzi has argued that Erasmus's support to Vives was never unconditional, see Fantazzi 1981.

²⁵⁵ Vives was widely known and read already in the 1520s, but his prestige grew even greater in the 1530s and especially after Erasmus's death when Basel printers adopt him, see González González 1987, 43; González González 2007, 66-67, 103-111; Fantazzi 2014, 156-157.

²⁵⁶ Jardine 1993, 17-18. Already Sinz talks about "a common cause" and portrays Vives as a "lifelong Erasmist." Sinz has also noted that in his *Apologia qua respondet duabus invectivis Eduardi Lei*, Vives is presented as a member of the Erasmian circles. See Sinz 1963, 68-70.

²⁵⁷ Jardine 2014, xii-xiii.

is, *In pseudodialecticos* and a set of fictional oratorical exercises, *Declamationes Quinque Syllanae*.

The Vives of *In pseudodialecticos* is presented as following brilliantly the path set by More himself, in making explicit the absurdities of scholastic logic and bringing Vives some academic credibility as a skilful dialectician. However, the first and larger part is dedicated to Vives the orator.²⁵⁸ More begins his praise with an imaginary description of how he accidentally came to see some of Vives's texts and was charmed by them.²⁵⁹ Then he moves on to the presentation of the qualities of the *Declamationes* that most impressed him, pointing out first that Vives is not depicting the political situation surrounding Sulla as a mere outsider but makes it truly alive through his oratory, and, secondly, that Vives's declamations manifest an extraordinary union of eloquence with good knowledge of all other arts. Thus, in More's assessment a union of wisdom and eloquence so cried out for by northern humanists is fulfilled in Vives's *Declamationes*.²⁶⁰ In addition to this, More's praise highlights Vives's capacity to create *energeia*, to bring the situation alive in the form of a painting. Thus, what is attained in *Declamationes* is not just a collection of aphorisms in the style of Erasmus's *Institutio*, but an example of how to put all that into a continuous speech that takes into account all contextual phenomena in accordance with the rules of rhetoric. This was a great compliment indeed, and firmly in line with what Quintilian – one of the foremost authorities on rhetoric – understood to be the key point about declamations.²⁶¹

If Vives's *Declamationes* was surrounded by external hype in the form of the published letter exchange between More and Erasmus, the internal composition was also meant to underline the importance of *Declamationes*. In the first edition from 1520, printed in Antwerp by Michael Hillen, *Declamationes* is preceded by two introductory letters, the first of which is composed by Erasmus and destined to the Count Hermann von Neunahr. In the letter, the Dutch humanist presents his own eulogy of *Declamationes* as not so different from More's. After praising the noble and learned spirit of Hermann, and undertaking some publicity for his own theological project at Louvain, he moves on to Vives's work. Erasmus claims that Vives has revived the art of *declamare*, something that not even Italian humanists had achieved, and that

²⁵⁸ More to Erasmus, Allen 1106, 63-81; Erasmus to More, Allen 1007, 6-13. Published in *Epistolae aliquot selectae ex Erasmicis per Hardianum Barlandum*.

²⁵⁹ More to Erasmus, Allen 1106, 21-35. Vives and More actually knew already each other, see Jardine 2014, xii.

²⁶⁰ More to Erasmus, Allen 1106, 35-62.

²⁶¹ Quintilian: IO, ii.vi; ii.x. Quintilian also discusses declamations in relation to deliberative rhetoric, see Quintilian: IO, iii.viii.51-70.

the Spaniard had succeeded in practising the genre in a way that differs from the rantings of others.²⁶² He is praised because of his rhetorical skill in treating a serious matter – and even though his “discovery and presentation of the argument” are taken for granted, considering Vives's experience in philosophy, what makes Vives's declamations ultimately unique is the union of rhetoric and philosophy, eloquence and wisdom.²⁶³ Thus, like More, Erasmus underlines that in Vives the age-old Ciceronian dream is fulfilled, an achievement that makes him different from those whose focus is on eloquence without rhetoric, and from those whose wisdom does not meet the standards of rhetorical composition – that is to say, the scholastics.

The purpose for the publication of the letter from the most famous humanist of Europe could obviously aid sales on the book market, but it simultaneously contributed to the creation of the right kind of *ethos* for Vives to emerge as an intellectual authority and writer on the *trivium* and on civic philosophy more generally. Hence, a Spanish humanist in his late 20s, without any significant formal qualifications from any academic institution is elevated to the zenith of the Republic of Letters by two humanists portraying Vives as someone capable of surpassing them.²⁶⁴ Vives himself returned the favour very explicitly to some of the leading humanists who had contributed to the construction of his intellectual figure in his commentaries on Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, where he not only praised Erasmus but also dedicated a significant section to the *laudatio* of a number of humanists including Guillaume Budé.²⁶⁵

In addition to being systematically propped-up by humanist circles, some of his writings were published by Erasmus's favourite printers, such as Thierry Martens in Louvain, Michael Hillen in Antwerp, and more importantly, Johannes Froben in Basel.²⁶⁶ Moreover,

²⁶² From *declamare*, Erasmus constructs here a word pun with *clamare*, Erasmus to Count Hermann, Allen 1082, 24.

²⁶³ Erasmus to Count Hermann, Allen 1082, 24-59: “Iam acumen in reperiendis ac tractandis probationibus minus admiror, cum in omni pene philosophiae parte sit diu felicissime versatus....”; “...non video tamen in quo reperias tantum eloquentiae cum tanta philosophiae cognition coniunctum.”

²⁶⁴ Vives was, naturally, not the only one to get these kinds of laudatory words. Erasmus praises others in letters that are published on a number of occasions. See for instance Erasmus to Reuchlin, Allen 471. The letter to Reuchlin was printed by Reuchlin himself in *Illustrium virorum epistolae*. For the way in which Erasmus tried to help young humanists in their career, see for the instance the case of Glareanus, whom Erasmus is clearly promoting as one of the foremost mathematicians advancing his career. See Erasmus to Glareanus, Allen 440, 1-10; Glareanus to Erasmus, Allen 463, 34-52; Erasmus to Wolfgang Capito, Allen 541, 58-59; Ludwig Baer to Erasmus, Basel, Allen 582, 33-3; Erasmus to Etienne Poncher, Allen 528, 53-120; Erasmus to Urbanus Regius, Allen 394, 6-35; Erasmus to Zwingli, Allen 404, 9-14.

²⁶⁵ Vives: VCA, ii.xvii: “Qui viro [Budé] Gallia acutiore ingenio, acriore iudicio, exactiore diligentia, maiore eruditione nullum unquam produxi; hac vero aetate nec Italia quidem.” A number of other contemporary humanists are also mentioned in the work. Moreover, in one of his letters to Cranevelt Vives writes how lucky he has been in being adopted by Erasmus, Budé and More as one of their followers. Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 13, 11-22.

²⁶⁶ Froben printed Vives's compendia built around *Somnium Scipionis* in 1521 and Vives's edition of Augustine's *De civitate Dei* in 1522. Martens published two editions of his *Opuscula varia* in 1519 and 1520 as well as his

Vives most certainly was one of the defendants of the Erasmian cause in the court of Charles V in around 1520, and his letters to the Dutch master never fail to mention how Vives had enhanced Erasmus's reputation and cause in the imperial milieu.²⁶⁷ However, after the relative failure of a project commissioned by Erasmus, Augustine's *De civitate Dei* printed by Froben, something changes and Vives is to a certain extent shut out of Erasmian publicity.²⁶⁸ Not only is he not published any longer by Basel's printing houses prior to Erasmus's death in 1536, he is also not supported by Erasmus's publicity campaigns. As a glaring example of this, in the Dutch humanists' *Ciceronianus* from 1528, where all the important humanists of the time are presented and critically assessed, Vives is not mentioned – something that the Spanish humanist noticed and gently bemoaned.²⁶⁹

There is also a strong sense that Vives consciously opts for a different road compared to the Dutch master in the 1520s by taking a more cautious approach to publicity. This can be seen in a number of fronts, one of which being his letter writing that apart from certain openly political letters destined to the most potent men of Europe, is not made public. Furthermore, his letters are more private, less eloquent, and rhetorical in general – and probably not destined for publication in the first place.²⁷⁰ As to his own works, he does not engage in any significant staging of his own literary production through laudatory introductory letters from other humanists and he does not write such letters himself.²⁷¹ From what little is known, his relations with the printing world were less intense compared to those of Erasmus's and he spent significantly less time in the actual production of books than did the Dutch master.²⁷² Moreover, Vives seems to be very wary of public confrontation during the 1520s in his mode of writing, taking as his motto the famous *sine querela* (without quarrel). This was very different from Erasmus's satirical and at times aggressive strategy of the 1510s and 1520s, as well as from the style Vives himself had employed in his youthful *In pseudodialecticos*. In a sense, and despite his close connections to power, Vives's public *ethos* in the 1520s and 1530s is built rather on a

Veritas fucata in 1523. Martens also printed his 1523 *Declamationes duae*.

²⁶⁷ Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1256, 1-73; Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1281.

²⁶⁸ Tournoy 1994; Fantazzi 2014, 148-157; Moreno Gallego 2006, 118.

²⁶⁹ Erasmus to Vives, Allen 2040, 11-14; Vives to Erasmus, Allen 2061, 13-27. Vives is included in the second edition from 1529.

²⁷⁰ Fantazzi 2002.

²⁷¹ There are some cases when despite heavy editing Vives did not change the date of his dedicatory letters. These are definitely staged letters in the sense that they do not reproduce the original one. Probably the most glaring example is the case of *Declamationes*. In the 1538 edition, the original dedication letter is substantially altered yet the date remains 1520.

²⁷² For Vives and the printing world, see Tournoy 1994.

certain seriousness and distance from the pressing issues of the time, which allows him to give counsel and comment from the position of a more detached erudite.

There are many possible reasons why Vives did not follow Erasmus in turning himself into a public brand – ranging from differences in personality traits, to Vives’s Jewish background. In theological and religious questions, this background did not exactly encourage a public role in a highly conflictual moment in European religious history.²⁷³ What is more, Erasmus’s publicity is rather an exception than a rule; no other Catholic humanist of the time comes even close to Erasmus’s popularity in the printing market. However, Vives, despite his hesitance toward publicity, still held a place among the most widely printed writers of the time. It is also possible that Vives grows wary of the threats inherent in Erasmus’s strategy that led the Dutch humanist into a series of conflicts in the tumultuous decade of the 1520s. At this time, it became common to unite humanist literary methods to the Reformation. Under this pressure, Erasmus complained repeatedly about the misreading his opponents made of his texts, and Vives often discussed with the Dutch master the difficulties in controlling the meaning of one’s own work.²⁷⁴ Moreover, in the first decades of the sixteenth century, the public dimension of the Republic of Letters is almost inseparable from the figure of Erasmus, and its fortunes can hardly be separated from the faith of the Dutch humanist. Thus, with the problems Erasmus was facing in the 1520s, the idea of undertaking public common projects becomes more difficult and the collective publicity campaigns lose some of the force of the period around 1520.

Nevertheless, although Vives did not become the new Erasmus, all his activities throughout the 1520s and 1530s reveal a close connection to the most important men of letters of Europe ranging from Guillaume Budé and Thomas More to Juan de Vergara. What changes is rather the degree of publicity of these activities, and their presentation to a larger audience. Thus, Vives continues to write about all social, political, academic, and even religious issues in his private correspondence with other men of letters, and there is a strong sense that the Republic of Letters continues to provide him with a space for intellectual reflection, as well as a place where difficult matters can be discussed with relative freedom. Furthermore, Vives’s identity as a member of a common humanist movement cannot be doubted; his support to the

²⁷³ In 30.8.1529 he wrote to Erasmus and explained how he did not care about fame and glory as he used to, see Vives to Erasmus, Allen 2208, 18-36.

²⁷⁴ Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1256, 76-89; Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1362, 13-21; and especially Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1732, 9-39. Erasmus himself became progressively aware of the dynamics of public disputes and of how hard it was to control them. However, he found equally hard to live up to the ethical standards of public debate he was actively promoting, see Bietenholtz 1975.

cause of Erasmian humanists in Spain around the debate of Valladolid in 1527 was unconditional.²⁷⁵ Moreover, it is clear that his epistolary exchange with other humanists provides him with an unofficial channel for talking not only about scholarly matters but also about politics with a range of significant humanists in a variety of courts.²⁷⁶ It is, however, possible that Vives's public role after the breakup with Erasmus remained more limited in European humanist circles.

When Vives himself reflected on the life of the true erudite in his 1531 *De disciplinis*, he presented the learned man very much as a member of the Republic of Letters: an erudite discusses his projects with others to get their opinion, partaking thus in the collective discursive activities of humanists. However, he should avoid all disputes in his focus on truth, and not victory, he should publish little, and only after consulting friends in order to avoid public attacks. Moreover, he should not keep re-editing his work because it obscures the intention of the writer. The relation to what had happened to the great Dutch humanist in the 1510s and 1520 was too close to go unnoticed by the reader.²⁷⁷

Vives, an aspiring Counsellor.

At a moment when Vives becomes incorporated with Erasmian circles, there were at least two contexts he was active in: one was the academic life of Louvain, present in his *Opuscula varia, Declamationes, Veritas fucata* and *Somnium* compendium, the other one was the court. Thus, in a moment in which Vives is increasingly interested in *studia humanitatis* and life of *negotium*, he himself is educating men for powerful positions, and performing the duties of a counsellor. Already in late 1516, the city of Valencia had approached Vives as a man capable of speaking at court for a matter concerning the recently founded *Studium Generale* of Valencia, where Vives himself had studied before moving to Paris in 1509.²⁷⁸ Starting most likely from 1517, Vives was tutoring the young Guillaume de Croy, and the very same year one finds Vives writing speeches in the context of the peace negotiations between the Emperor Maximilian,

²⁷⁵ See Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1836, 15-71; Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1847, 61-141; Vives to Vergara, CHE xii.

²⁷⁶ See Vives's letters to Juan de Vergara, CHE xii; CHE, 2; Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1306; Vives to John Longland, Vives, Juan Luis: "Ioannes Lodovicus Vives D. Ioanni Episcopo Lincolniensi", in Vives, Juan Luis: *De Europae dissidiis, & Republica*, Hubertus de Croock, Brügg 1526; Vives to Budé, MA VII, 218-219.

²⁷⁷ Vives: DD, 390-391; 396-399. Some of these points he had already made in his private correspondence, see Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1732, 9-39.

²⁷⁸ City of Valencia to Vives, DAE 6. Valencia also approached directly King Charles in November 1517 on the matter mentioning Vives as someone the king must have known. City of Valencia to Charles, DAE 7.

young Charles and Francis I in Cambrai.²⁷⁹ Early in 1519, Erasmus promoted Vives as the best possible tutor to Charles's brother Ferdinand who had arrived to the Low Countries in 1518 from Spain.²⁸⁰

All these connections were of great importance. As a tutor of Guillaume de Croy, cardinal, archbishop of Toledo, and the nephew of the even more famous Guillaume de Croy, Lord of Chièvres, Vives most certainly enjoyed the hospitality of some of the most powerful men in the court of the new Emperor, Charles V. Moreover, the tutorship of Ferdinand must have been a flattering offer indeed considering the importance of the person. It dealt with one of the potentially most important and powerful figures of the future, since the young prince was destined to serve in a political office, although there was no certainty about what region would be granted to him. Margaret, the regent of the Burgundian Netherlands, even promoted Ferdinand as a potential candidate for the imperial crown in 1518 – 1519, a plan that his brother Charles refused categorically.²⁸¹ As a reflection of his position, in his letters both to his best friend, the lawyer Franciscus Cranevelt, and to Erasmus, the mood is openly optimistic, and Vives is not shy in representing himself as someone capable of promoting the cause related to a possible position of Cranevelt at the court during the summer and spring of 1520.²⁸²

However, in around 1520 Vives was not sure about what road to choose in his life and consulted Budé on the matter.²⁸³ One thing was certain for the young Valencian: as a *converso* whose family had had problems with the Inquisition, he wanted to avoid theology. In his letters to Cranevelt in 1520 Vives expresses his opinion on the current state of theology in a very direct manner stating that for “a free mind” it was a path “full of rocks.” In another letter, Vives claimed that questions related to the burning of Jewish books (the Reuchlin affair) and to Luther did not really interest him at all.²⁸⁴ In fact, it is mainly in his introduction to the commented edition of Augustine's *De civitate Dei* that Vives explicitly unites himself with

²⁷⁹ González González 2008, 42-43.

²⁸⁰ Erasmus to Parra, Allen 917, 20-45. Vives's first letter to Croy is a dedication to his *Meditationes in septem Psalmos peitentiae* from 1518. Very little has been written on the relationship between Vives and Croy, see Allen XII, 72. The importance of Ferdinand is clearly reflected in the fact that Erasmus, in an introductory letter to Jean le Sauvage, mentions Ferdinand as the recipient of the Froben edition of his *Institutio Principis Christiani* from 1518, Erasmus, Desiderius: *Institutio principis Christiani, Johann Froben, Basel 1518*, 4 “Audio Ferdinandum illustrissimum feliciter ad nos appulisse, ei libellum de principe instituendo instauravi.”

²⁸¹ Koenigsberger 2001, 106-107.

²⁸² Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2 16. Vives actually spent time in the court, See Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2 15. For a general biography of these years see González González 2008, 41-46, 53-55; Noreña 1970, 67-75.

²⁸³ Budé to Vives, Budé 1557, 289-290.

²⁸⁴ Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2 20; CRA2 26. The burning of Jewish books is an explicit reference to the Reuchlin affair.

Erasmus's theological programme of polishing the fountains of Christianity.²⁸⁵ Moreover, despite having a number of lawyer friends such as Nicolas Bérault, Cranevelt, and Thomas More, Vives never studied jurisprudence in depth.²⁸⁶

Despite Vives's engagement with the teaching of *studia humanitatis*, and his continuous interest in the future and practice of education, the years around 1520 witness a will to secure a place close to the most powerful men of Europe. Another recurrent theme in his letters from the time is his dissatisfaction with teaching, and a deep frustration with the academic life of Louvain.²⁸⁷ When Vives's life took a dramatic turn in the January of 1521 with the death of his patron Guillaume de Croy, his urge to find a place close to real seats of power is manifest.²⁸⁸ Despite an offer from the University of Alcalá to be the successor of the famous Spanish humanist Antonio Nebrija, Vives eventually chose to go to England in 1523.²⁸⁹ His trip and stay on the island did have an academic dimension: he was actively teaching in Christ College, the crown jewel of Cardinal Wolsey's project for the revival of humanist studies at Oxford.²⁹⁰ However, right from the start Vives was looking for a place at court, as his letters amply testify. Moreover, his introduction to his English patrons, of whom the Spanish Queen Catherine had been financially supporting Vives already in 1521, was that of a potential counsellor. The first dedication in the English context was that of St Augustine's monumental *De civitate Dei* to Henry VIII himself. In the introductory letter dedicated to Henry VIII, Vives deliberately situates the work in the tradition of Varron, Sallust, Livy, and Cicero's *The Republic*, together with modern Italian humanists emphasizing its role as a social and political text, although the more general preface connects it quite explicitly to theology.²⁹¹ In December 1523, it was Cardinal Wolsey's turn to be noticed by Vives in the form of two orations by

²⁸⁵ Already in the introductory letter by Johannes Froben directed to the reader Froben reminds that the work shows "quantum Theologia debeat bonis literis" making the commonplace union between humanist philology and theology integral. Vives: VCA, 1522, title page. Vives discusses the influence of Erasmus at length in the introduction. The introduction also shows how Vives is incorporated into the overall programme of Erasmian theology while simultaneously showing Vives's reservations regarding his expertise in theology. Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 5; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 8, 10-19; Vives: VCA, *praefatio*. See also González González 2008, 53-55; Noreña 1970, 132-137.

²⁸⁶ He was interested in it at the time, Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2, 7; CRA2, 20, CRA2, 26.

²⁸⁷ Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2, 55; CRA2 61.

²⁸⁸ Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2, 38; CRA2, 41; CRA2, 47; CRA2 55; Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1222, 15-23; Erasmus to Budé, Allen 1184, 14-15.

²⁸⁹ Vergara to Vives, CHE 9, 247-248; University of Alcalá to Vives, CHE xi, 260-261. Vives was also at some point offered the post of the tutor of Duke of Alba's children. On Vives's possible economic interest as a member of a family of merchants, see Sinz 1963, 80. Henry de Vocht suggested that Vives was looking for *otium ad vitam studiosam*. His later activities amply testify that he was looking for a place in the court, see De Vocht 1934.

²⁹⁰ Vives, Juan Luis: "Vives Thomae cardinali", Vives, Juan Luis: *De Europae dissidiis, & Republica*, Hubertus de Croock, Brügge 1526; de Vocht 1934, 1-10.

²⁹¹ Vives to Henry VIII, in Augustine: *De civitate Dei*, Johann Froben, Basel 1522.

Isocrates on the merits of monarchy and republic, translated by Vives. The introduction with the selection of the theme highlights clearly Vives's aspirations to be considered a civic philosopher and adviser. Only Queen Catherine was to receive a dedication to a work on female education – a natural choice considering Vives's views on the marginal public role of women.²⁹²

The Possibilities of Political Influence in Humanist Circles

In around 1520, the idea of putting humanist skills into practice in counselling was gaining momentum for Vives. However, counselling in early sixteenth-century context could mean different things for humanists, and if one accepts a recent characterization of Vives as adopting the role of a relatively independent counsellor in the period under discussion, it is important to understand what the dynamics of this kind of counselling were.²⁹³ First, inside the confines of traditional direct counselling in central questions of war and peace, most humanists had limited possibilities of influence. The decision making processes in all European princely courts at the time were not clearly systematized, despite the incipient institutionalization of central administration, and the existence of certain councils, most notably privy councils, for the most important affairs of the state.²⁹⁴ In practice, power continued to be inseparable from personal relations with the prince, and in the case of Charles V, for instance, one can perceive a certain change not only with regards to persons using power close to him, but also with respect to the specific functions these people were officially embodying in the court and in the administration.²⁹⁵ Some powerful offices such as secretaries or even chancellors were indeed often occupied by people with humanist education, but although Vives might have dreamt of a position of that sort, he most certainly never reached the direct political influence of people like Mercurio Gattinara, Thomas Wolsey, Alfonso de Valdés, Thomas More, or Guillaume Budé. Equally as important, some influence in the court could well be conducted indirectly through patrons or powerful friends as a member of their circle or household. Thus, even if Vives's access to both Charles V and Henry VIII was often limited, he did have some direct contact with men close to princes, and it is partly in this light that his career choices in the early 1520s

²⁹² Vives to Thomas Wolsey, "Vives Thomae cardinali" (printed as an introductory letter to Isocrates's speeches in *De Europae*).

²⁹³ Curtis 2008, 114.

²⁹⁴ Headley 1983, Chapter two; Martínez Millán 1992, 11-24; Vermeir 2009; Blockmans 2002, 127-136; Richardson 2002, 113-114.

²⁹⁵ Headley 1983: 31, 38.

should be understood. Croy was a good example of this, and in the early 1520s, one finds Vives exchanging letters that show closeness and friendship with George Halewyn, Lord of Praet and Juan de Vergara – all members of Habsburg circles. Thus, the possible influence of Vives could, in addition to direct counselling, occur through his patrons whom he tried to educate and direct either in the role of a tutor (the case of Croy) or as an intellectual friend or client (the case of Halewyn). In the end, his efforts to be close to power lead him to hold a position very close to the Spanish Queen Catherine of Aragon in the English court, culminating in the central role Vives played in the defence of the queen in the royal divorce process in the latter part of the 1520s.²⁹⁶

However, there is another dimension to counselling that transcends the confines of the oral world, and that is highly significant in the case of Vives. The Vives we know today operates also in the literary world of men of letters that has some importance at least in three ways. First, part of his authority and *ethos* was created in print: the man who will “surpass Erasmus” and who prepared an edition of the monumental *De civitate Dei* must have been known as a writer of note in major European courts. Secondly, much of his literary activities of the 1520s are in fact outright counselling. He is using his pen to address Henry VIII, Charles V, the Pope, and the Lord Chancellor Wolsey on fundamental questions of war, peace, and the unity of Christendom. Thirdly, and very importantly, the fact that the political deliberations that have survived were published in the 1520s adds another dimension to Vives’s counselling, since printing significantly broadens the potential audience of political deliberations. Although publishing a political deliberation was partly a way of drawing the attention of the prince and the court to what the Spaniard considered important, it simultaneously turned the potential readers of these deliberations into spectators of political action.

Understood in in this light, a central purpose of the publication of these political texts was to reproduce the standards with which a somewhat larger audience could assess politics.²⁹⁷ In this way, Erasmian political literature did not only try to affect direct decision making, but also to set the conceptual framework within which decisions could be made and judged. The promise of human glory and the threat of tyranny were present in a literature that

²⁹⁶ De Vocht 1934; González González 2008, 55; Adams 1962, 270-271. In a letter to Erasmus Vives writes about his relative importance in the court, linking it to the protection of the household of the prince Ferdinand, Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1256, 64-66: “nam neque me infimum omnium censet, et ago ut sim de familia Fernandi.”

²⁹⁷ Curtis has also noted the tendency to speak to a wider audience by publishing texts dealing with monarchical deliberations. See Curtis 2011, 32.

could, in addition to deliberative rhetoric, draw on the epideictic rhetoric of praise and blame; this epideictic rhetoric framed expectations for the future by applauding the virtuous nature of government.²⁹⁸ Erasmus, for instance, perceived his political laudation of Philip IV the Handsome entitled *Panegyricus* exactly in this way as he elaborately explained in his *Apologia* for the text.²⁹⁹ Moreover, when Erasmus elaborated on what would be expected from his *Institutio principis Christiani* dedicated to the young Charles, he pointed out that he did not give practical advice on this or that matter, but wanted to explain the sources from which good advice arises.³⁰⁰ The result, *Institutio principis Christiani*, not only discusses the formation of the prince, but the totality of culture surrounding him – from the selection of counsellors to the statutes and sobriquets dedicated to him. Thus, *Institutio* is first and foremost second-order counselling, it does not aspire to deliberate on a specific action but to instruct the ruler more generally of what is expected of him. What is more, a crucial part of *Institutio* ensures these standards are deliberately made public, since the work was printed numerous times in the 1510s. Equally, Vives's *De bello, & pace*, a printed letter to Henry VIII, can be read as a public monument to a good ruler that promises glory in exchange for good governance. In a paragraph on the importance of the exemplar nature of the prince, Vives not only reminds the monarch that his example has persuasive force that emanates to people, turning them into good men, but also implies that the monarch is constantly watched. As Vives reminds the monarch, nothing, “impedes that what the monarch does is communicated to the people,” and that the monarch should think of himself as being, “in a theatre full of people, where his acts and words do not remain hidden.”³⁰¹

This broader notion of politics highlights that politically significant action is not restricted to the confines of deliberative rhetoric, to actual decision-making in some particular situations, since the activation of other resources of rhetoric and the printing of deliberations

²⁹⁸ Rebhorn 2000, Chapter II; Vickers 1988, 54-62, 285; Agricola: *De formando*, 7.

²⁹⁹ Erasmus to Jean Desmarais, Allen 180, 39-56; see also Erasmus to Dorp, Allen 337, 88-91. The close relationship between panegyrics and deliberative rhetoric was well known to Roman orators. Panegyrics praised what deliberations suggested as a course of action see Quintilian: IO, iii.vii.28.

³⁰⁰ Erasmus to Henry VIII, Allen 657, 57-60: “Postremo, quando in consiliariorum ordinem ascitus eram, visum est protinus hoc officio meo respondere muneri, et non una aut altera in re consulere, sed consiliorum omnium ceu fontes quosdam ostendere, egregiae quidem indolis sed adhuc puero Principi.”

³⁰¹ Vives, Juan Luis: “De regni administratione, bello, & pace”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *De Europae dissidiis, & Republica*, Hubertus de Croock, Brügge 1526, xiii: “Sic princeps affectus suos omnes in civitatem transfundit, & ad eius exemplum tota sese comparat multitudo. Quocirca illud est optimo Principi curandum, & in quae tantum nomen merito competat, ut talae ipse se & publice, & privatim praebeat, quales velit subditos habere, positumque sese arbitretur in refertissimo teatro, ubi nullum eius factum, vel dictum occultum sit. Nec tenebrae, aut solitudo obstat, quominus in vulgus dimanet, quicquid egerit.”

could influence and control the conceptual framework inside of which actual politics should be assessed and discussed. Even though the actual constitution of the potential audience could vary from one country to another, and its range is never specifically determined, one can well imagine that in the civic culture of the Burgundian Netherlands – based on the idea of *consensus* between princes and Estates – humanist rhetoric would find receptive readers in the relatively populous town patriciate.³⁰² The idea of audience Erasmian humanists held was, of course, a far more exclusive one than the more popular literary culture blossoming in the Reformation context of the 1520s, and they never ceased to address their audience in classical Latin.³⁰³ But inside a Latin speaking world, the social aspect is further accentuated by the fact that the basic commonplaces of monarchy and tyranny activated in deliberations and advise books are intentionally socialized both in Erasmus's and Vives's educational materials, so a potential reader would indeed be familiar with them.³⁰⁴ The fact that political works could well be printed with marginal differences in different contexts with different political practices shows that they were not necessarily considered to be tied to any particular political system or culture.³⁰⁵ Thus, humanist texts could address different audiences interested in the limits of princely power and tyranny, independent of specific institutional arrangements.

***Ethos* and Authority**

To appear as a possible counsellor both in the oral and written world required that a humanist possessed *ethos* and credibility in the eyes of his potential audience. Even though much of *ethos* was constructed in different orations and speeches to the prince and the people, in personal relations and networks of patronage, at least one part of Vives's *ethos* and authority stemmed from his printed oeuvre. This takes us back to the Republic of Letters as its collective enterprise, with its claim to autonomy and rationality could endow its members with *ethos* and authority to present themselves not only as scholars, but also as useful counsellors. The collective enterprise of creating a web of references between individual authors and works vested different

³⁰² For a history of the development of the civic culture of the Low Countries, see Koenigsberger 2001; Van Gelderen 1992, 13-30. Regarding the Dutch dimension of Vives's political texts, it is significant that all of the letters dealing with English politics were printed in the 1526 compendia *De Europea dissidiis* in Bruges. Vives clearly thought them potentially relevant for a Dutch audience as well.

³⁰³ Blockmans 2002, 41-42.

³⁰⁴ Erasmus's *Adagia* and Vives's *Linguae Latinae exercitatio* are good examples of this.

³⁰⁵ Erasmus thought of his *Institutio principis Christiani* equally applicable to the English context, which being a kingdom greatly differed from the mixed system of the Burgundian Netherlands, see Clough 1981.

humanists with authority that was partly emanating from the common project. There was, however, a way in which the process of building authority could be given a distinctively rhetorical interpretation in the concept of *ethos* that underlined the importance of the speaker or writer as a potential source of persuasion. In reflecting on *ethos*, humanists could draw on the tradition of classical rhetoric that offered ways of thinking about the speaker as a source of persuasion.³⁰⁶ In the Aristotelian model the three sources of persuasion (*pisteis*) were *logos*, *pathos* and *ethos*, the last of which referred to the character of the speaker. This character was essentially revealed in the act of speaking as virtue and a certain disposition towards political deliberation, as well as the practice of oratory in general. Furthermore, Aristotle's *Rhetoric* pointed towards his *Politics* and *Nicomachean Ethics*, linking *ethos* closely to his political philosophy: the social and intellectual responsibility of the speaker was supposed to guarantee rhetoric would not be turned into a purely technical instrument of persuasion, but would retain its character as a truthful and responsible civic practice.³⁰⁷

In Roman rhetoric, the moral dimension of *ethos* is never lost but much of the focus is on the production of *ethos* through carefully described rhetorical techniques – an element not completely absent from Aristotle either. Roman oratory contributed to the understanding of *ethos* primarily in two ways. First, Roman oratory turned the analysis of character, namely *ethos*, into an analysis of all the persons involved in a rhetorical situation, probably because of its focus on judicial rhetoric. In Cicero, Quintilian and in rhetorical handbooks there is a very strong understanding that the mastering of the character of the persons is of utmost important for the judgement of a speech or an action.³⁰⁸ Secondly, the extension of *ethos* was transformed. In Aristotle, it is primarily a creation in speech itself that reveals the ethical nature of the speaker. Roman orators were much clearer about the fact that some issues precede the rhetorical situation and give authority to certain persons involved, and that the idea of a good man (*vir bonus*) who can succeed in speaking also points to his status as a member

³⁰⁶ For general treatments of *ethos*, see Skinner 1996, 128-133, Vickers. 1988, 19-20. The basic Latin equivalent of *ethos* is *mos* (pl. *mores*) but in many treatments other words are employed and Roman rhetoricians were well aware that no single Latin covered the semantic extension of *ethos*. For instance, in his major treatment of *ethos* in *De consultatione* Vives is capable of referring to the authority of a counsellor (*autoritas*) or the totality of life (*vita tota*) as well as simply referring to the virtues of the counsellor that can be considered as sources of persuasion inside the confines of *ethos*, see Vives: DCO, 244-245. More generally on the problem, see May 1988, 5-6.

³⁰⁷ This side of Aristotle's rhetorical theory has been emphasized to a great extent. See for instance; May 1988, 1-2, 9; Smith 2004. Aristotle: *Art of Rhetoric* (trans. Freese), Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1959, i.ii.3-6; Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, book I; Aristotle: *Politics*, (trans. Rackham), Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1959, i.i.10-11.

³⁰⁸ Quintilian: IO, iii.vii; Cicero: *De oratore*, ii.xlii-xliii; Rees 2010, 137-139.

of the optimates.³⁰⁹ As Quintilian argued in his treatment of deliberation: “The personality of the adviser also makes a lot of difference. If his illustrious past, his noble family, his age, or his fortune raises expectations, we must take care that what is said is not out of keeping with the man who says it.” The opposite situation, for its part, requires a humbler tone.³¹⁰ Even though this authority can be constructed, or at least brought to mind in the speech itself, because of the irreducibly flexible nature of all rhetorical production, things like the speaker’s dignity, reputation, and achievements always point to the actual social position and reputation of the speaker. These set a framework for the role he can adopt and, ultimately, to his rhetorical possibilities.³¹¹

Humanists knew well the importance of *ethos*, understood as authority, and discussed it frequently. In Vives’s *De consultatione*, authority was treated explicitly together with rhetorical possibilities. But it was in his later *De pacificatione* (1529) and *De disciplinis* (1531) that Vives analysed the concept at length.³¹² There is no doubt that authority in all of Vives’s literature combines different layers of meaning. In his *De pacificatione*, it is portrayed as one of the key instruments or faculties that can enhance peace, and it is not completely detached from the acknowledged institutional and social arrangements of power. Thus, different duties related to one’s social and institutional position hold different kinds of authority that can be used for the enhancement of the cause of European peace. Moreover, in his *De disciplinis* authority clearly refers primarily to *auctores*, the classical sources of wisdom whose authority is confirmed by the tradition.³¹³

Side by side with these connections, authority can, however, be discussed as an ethical concept that is juxtaposed to the current sources of institutional and hierarchical authority, and especially the nobility whose authority should emanate from their virtue and not from their established social position.³¹⁴ Moreover, authority can be discussed in a contemporary context with reference to what creates authority to one’s message. In Vives’s *De*

³⁰⁹ Reborn 1993, 252; Cicero: *De oratore*, ii.xl.iii; Wisse 1989. Aristotle does mention in his *Rhetoric* that some parts of *ethos* precede the production of the speech in presenting what qualities people tend to admire, see Aristotle: *Rhetoric*, i.v.

³¹⁰ Quintilian: IO, iii.viii.48: “Multum refert etiam quae sit persona suadentis, quia, ante acta vita si inlustris fuit aut claris genus aut aetas aut fortuna adfert expectationem, providendum est ne quae dicuntur ab eo qui dicit dissentiant. At his contraria summissiorem quandam modum postulant.”

³¹¹ May 1988, 6-12; Wisse 1989, 245-248; Cicero: *De oratore*, ii.xliii.182. For an analysis of the different meanings of authority in Roman thought, see Krieger 1977, 257-260.

³¹² Vives noted the persuasive dimension of authority in his rhetorical *De ratione dicendi*, see Vives: DR, 111.

³¹³ Vives: DD, 596-600.

³¹⁴ Vives: DP, C.

disciplinis, authority is one of the topics covering a wide range of issues that lend believability and credibility to one's message – covering not only social positions, but also a range of ethical and Christian qualities that create trust and not only obedience. Unsurprisingly Vives, referring primarily to philosophers, goes on to argue that among men it is the wise and the honest who have the greatest authority to convince, thus describing their activities in very Erasmian terms.³¹⁵ More generally, Vives continuously argued that the most persuasive argument was the integrity of one's life – a point that could be found already in classical thought, and that was reiterated in Pico's letter to Ermolao Barbaro.³¹⁶ This idea had, of course, a distinct interpretation in Erasmian circles that always underlined the truth of one's life in contexts detached from immediate persuasion; the truth revealed in one's moral life follows the example of the *veritas vitae* of Christ.³¹⁷ The undeniable ethical and spiritual dimension of one's life that holds transformative power over others is hugely important for Vives too, as he made very clear on numerous occasions.³¹⁸

However, the double nature of *ethos* as a true ethical condition and as an instrument of persuasion was well known to Vives, and he was well aware that these two did not necessarily go together: the persuasive dimension of *ethos* did not stem from one's moral character in any straightforward and transparent way. Vives highlighted this in his rhetorical *De consultatione*. In this work, following Quintilian, Vives argued that the famous Roman maxim according to which only a good man can be an orator is partly true, but only because a man who is considered not good would not be persuasive.³¹⁹ What is presupposed here is that the authority one's life is related to the judgement of the one we are persuading, and that judgement can radically diverge from what should be considered truly good, as Vives made perfectly clear in his *De consultatione*. In a similar spirit, in his *De pacificatione* Vives could discuss authority

³¹⁵ Vives: DD, 597: “Ex genere humano praecipui, & gravissimi ad fidem ponderis sunt sapientes, ac probissimi homines: velut philosophi, quique humanum genus paterna quadam charitate complectuntur: tales interpretamur esse rectores patriae, legum latores, & eos a quibus populi, atque civitates formantur ad virtutem & recti custodiam.”

³¹⁶ Vives: DCO, 244: “...Vitam maxime persuadere. Nec est quod perinde avertat homines apersuasione, quam si vitam dictis videant dissentire.”; Della Mirandola, Pico: “Iohannes Picus Mirandulanus Hermolao Barbaro suo”, ci: “...tribus maxime persuadetur, vita dicentis, veritate rei: sobrietati orationis...”. For Isocrates, see Vickers 1988, 158.

³¹⁷ Erasmus makes the case strongly in his letter to Paul Volz, Erasmus: “Paolo Volzio”, 4.

³¹⁸ Vives: DP, E3: “sic mundus conversus est ad rectam pietatem, quum homines viderent eosdem se habere, operis auctores, quos consilii, nec ab oratione vitam discrepare, quod vicium quum in professoribus humanae esset sapientiae animadversum, omne fere detraxit pondus illorum praeceptis.”

³¹⁹ Vives: DCO, 244-245: “Caput est apud Quintilianum, in extremo libro, non posse oratorem nisi virum bonum esse, quum aliis de causis, tum vero quod non persuadebit, nisi credatur talis...”

as an instrument relative to the judgement of the audience.³²⁰

However, to mould one's *ethos* according to the respective ideas on authority different audiences possessed was facilitated by the communication of one's ethical nature, integrity, and authority more generally. Many humanists were well aware that part of authority emanated from one's position in the established hierarchy. Erasmus himself acquired a doctorate in theology at the University of Torino in less than month, explaining that he did this largely to gain authority.³²¹ However, part of non-institutional authority could also stem from one's recognition by the Republic of Letters. The extent to which Erasmus's authority and importance as the prince of humanists was recognized by the most powerful rulers of the time is revealed by the fact that the famous Dutchman was lured to all major European courts at some point of his career.³²² Erasmus himself was also exchanging letters with different patrons from the position of the autonomous leader of the Republic of Letters after serving as a counsellor of young Charles in around 1516.³²³ More generally, collective mastering of personal image through cross-reference, introductions, and introductory letters does contribute to rhetorical authority. It is partly with the backing of the Republic of Letters that humanists could appear as true *auctores* and authorities –wise men that really should have an authoritative say. Thus, the common humanist project of the Republic of Letters gets a distinctive interpretation in the light of rhetorical theory. It presents a plea to intellectual authority that had an actual theoretical basis in classical rhetoric. The presentation of each other's life and intellectual qualities in print was somewhat important for a successful realization of a variety of rhetorical tasks in different spheres of life.

³²⁰ In *De pacificatione*, he argues that the authority of the nobility emanates from the multitude, Vives: DP, C: "...quam auctoritatem nacta est a multitudine...."

³²¹ Erasmus to Anna van Borssele, Allen 145, 105-136; Erasmus to Jan Obrecht, Allen 201, 4-7. For a more detailed description of this process, see Grendler 2006, II, 42-64. Erasmus's formal qualification as a doctor of theology was not considered very highly by Paris theologians and his other adversaries in the religious debates of the 1520s.

³²² For Francis I and Erasmus, see Erasmus to Budé, Allen 534, 1-31; Budé to Erasmus, Allen 522; 896, 86-93; Erasmus to Etienne Poncher, Allen 529; Erasmus to Francis I, 533, 27-36; Tunstall to Erasmus, Allen 572, 30-52; Erasmus to Budé 906, 491-498. For Erasmus and Henry VIII, see Erasmus to Wolsey, Allen 577, 6-12. For Erasmus and Charles, see Erasmus to Leo X, Allen 446, 16-24; Erasmus to Budé, Allen 480, 6-7; 531, 505-516; Erasmus to Lord Mountjoy 486; Mountjoy to Erasmus, Allen 508, 7-16; Erasmus to Luigi di Canossa, Allen 538, 7-10; Germain de Brie to Erasmus, Allen 569, 116-123; Beatus Rhenanus to Erasmus, Allen 556, 5-14. For a 1520s attempt to bring Erasmus to Spain, see Vergara to Erasmus, Allen 1814, 444-455; Erasmus to Fonseca, Allen 1874, 85-93. For 1520s attempts by Gattinara to convince Erasmus to support the imperial programme of the court, see Headley 1983, Chapter five; Van Gelderen 2005. His symbolic political importance was recognized in more local debates, for Erasmus and Poland, see Tracy 1996, 194. For Charles and Erasmus, see also Blockmans 2002, 17-21.

³²³ See the previous footnote.

Self-concealment, Friendship and the Republic of Letters

Despite the tension between *ethos* as a rhetorical fabrication on the one hand, and as a moral category on the other, the ethical nature of all Vivesian and Erasmian philosophy is quite evident. Different branches of thought from education and pedagogy, to theology and civic philosophy come together ultimately only in the *vir prudens*. Reading, writing, interpreting and thinking are dependent on the ethical qualities and pious nature of the one engaging in these activities. In a perfect state, the use of language too should mirror one's ethical character in a transparent way so that no break between the interior and the exterior should take place.

However, this transparency was conditional, and Erasmus himself was very clear that art could be employed by those who were virtuous. Erasmus had explicitly treated the issue of self-hiding in his adage *Sileni Alcibiadis* where the Dutch humanist discussed Greek statuettes, *Sileni*, that despite of their comic exterior held a hidden deity inside. The metaphor is presented in order to illustrate the highly positive self-concealment, as epitomized by Socrates.³²⁴ Erasmus's own dream to be the Lucian or the Socrates of the age – a role he famously performed in his *Encomium Moriae*, revealed a constructive understanding of this Socratic fool – a jester whose foolishness could reveal deep truths about the stupidities of his time on all spheres of life. What distinguishes him from a flatterer, however, is his deep commitment to the basic goal of rhetoric, namely teaching (*docere*) truth to others: it is the belief in the truly Christian God-like inner constitution of the fool and his intention to participate in the reform of others that makes self-concealment and the veiling of truth possible in Erasmus's mind.³²⁵ The flatterer, thus, is not only analysed in relation to the discrepancy between thought and speech, and interior and exterior, but also with respect to his corrupted inner constitution, namely a twisted character that impedes a truthful judgement of the nature of things.³²⁶ This general model of ethical dissimulation is applicable to different contexts; in addition to *Sileni*, Erasmus discussed self-concealment in politics, recognizing the importance of dissimulation also in the practice of counselling on the condition that the counsellor does not enhance evil things.³²⁷ Thus, a truly virtuous spirit could indeed employ literary devices in an

³²⁴ Erasmus, Desiderius: *Sileni alcibiadis*, Basel, Johann Froben 1517, 2; Snyder 2009, 52.

³²⁵ Erasmus to Dorp, Allen 337, 91-114, 163-166, 204-214. Erasmus's use of invective was in this sense deeply epistemological; it revealed truth. See Furey 2005.

³²⁶ As Chomarat has emphasized, in Erasmus inner piety and the art of rhetoric destined to teaching are combined. See Chomarat 1981, 20-25.

³²⁷ Tracy 1996, 117-118.

inventive way, he could break transparency to teach the world, and the kind of ethical adviser practicing some form of self-concealment is to be found in much of humanist literature from Erasmus's playful and satirical *Moriae encomium*, to More's *Utopia* and Vives's political writings.³²⁸

Vives himself was equally interested in giving truth a mask in certain contexts. In 1521, Vives published a completely altered text under the name of *Veritas fucata*. In the new treatment (the complete title was *Veritas fucata sive de licentia poetica*) some of the themes relate loosely to the line set in the 1514 text, published under the same name *Veritas fucata*. In some ways, one could argue that the second text presents a solution to the first. Whereas in the youthful *Veritas* Vives argued playfully that every attempt to embellish truth is a fundamental divergence from and distortion of it, the second text intends to come up with a solution and set of conditions under which the union of truth with poetry and literature is possible.

From the very start, the difference to the 1514 treatment is clear. The text is set as a dialogue between Vives and Juan de Vergara, a selection that underlies the non-academic dimension of the treatment in comparison with the first one that had taken place in the halls of the Paris University.³²⁹ Soon enough, the discussion is taken down from the heights of *Philosophia Christi* by Juan de Vergara, who wishes to talk to the Valencian “in a simple manner and starting from the common use of words,” moving on to a presentation of an allegorical story built around two camps, those of Truth, and those of Error.³³⁰ In the story, the naked simplicity of Truth is juxtaposed to the extravaganza, make-up and twisted nature of Error accompanied by many vices, and not an insignificant number of people, all of whom decorate themselves with wrong names, “denying proper ones,” putting up a show of an ultimately flawed rhetorical redescription. Thus, among other lies, “falsehood was called negligence, perjury stating truth, guile prudence.”³³¹ In striking opposition to this, in the followers of Truth no rupture occurred

³²⁸ More, Thomas: *De optimo reip. statu deque nova insula utopia libellus vere aureus, nec minus salutaris quam festiuus*, Johann Froben, Basel 1518, 61-62; Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xiii-xiiii.

³²⁹ Vergara was most certainly Vives's closest Spanish friend in the court of Charles V in the early 1520s. He had served as a secretary to Cardinal Jiménez, one of the most influential people in Spain at the time, in 1516 – 1517 and he was sent to the Low Countries in 1520 to inform Cardinal Croy about the state of affairs in Toledo thus meeting Vives's protector. In January 1521, he became Charles V court chaplain and during the 1520s, after some initial problems with Erasmus on the Zúñiga affair, he became the most important advocate of Erasmus's cause in Spain. See BR III, 384-387; Bataillon 1991, 127-134, 167-168, 256-257.

³³⁰ Vives, Juan Luis: “*Veritas fucata, sive de licentia poetica, quantum poetis liceat a Veritate abscedere*”, 518-531 in Vives, Juan Luis: *Opera Omnia* (ed. Mayans y Siscar), tomos II, Valencia 1782, 518; Vergara says: “Tu hic plane altiora quaedam spectas; ego tibi simpliciter et ex usu vulgari hominum loquor.”

³³¹ Vives: “*Veritas*”, 520: “...mendacium vocabatur negligentia, perjurium asseveratio veritatis, astutia prudentia...”

between the real nature of things and the names with which they were evoked, and everything was “naked, open, simple, certain, solid [...] truthful.”³³²

Unlike in the 1514 *Veritas fucata* where the structure is quite a static one, here some significant developments loosely coincide with historical phases. Thus, in the party of Truth an original dispute between different philosophers is cleared away by a manifestation of Christian truth. Some problems arise, however, when Truth – with its maternal affection for everyone – gives “great men” and, most notably Plato, the task (*negotium*) of persuading soldiers of Error to change camps.³³³ However, these negotiations with Plato as the leading spokesperson of Truth come to an unfruitful end with the soldiers of Error, and poets represented by Homer. But amongst the soldiers of Error (*falsiani*) a tumultuous encounter takes place where it is agreed that an embassy should be sent to Truth to negotiate a peace treaty under certain conditions – the most important of which was that Truth should obey Error: people “with delicate ears and education should not suffer the roughness and uncultured nature of Truth without the offence of arrogance.”³³⁴ Homer, together with Hesiod, Lucian, and Apuleius is sent to undertake the negotiations. Quite amazingly, Homer in the negotiations convinces Truth of the necessity to conceal its naked beauty, the unveiling of which according to one of Homer’s many arguments, would cause men some additional satisfaction because of the effort put into it.³³⁵ When Truth expresses its will to “show itself naked,” arguing that if it was perceived directly by men it would excite love in everyone, Homer does not deny this. However, the Greek poet argues that he “knows the habits and character of his people,” implying strongly the necessity of concealment on these grounds.³³⁶

When Homer is awaiting the final verdict and decision of Truth, and is led through the different places of the Palace of Truth, he prays to be taken to Plato's *Republic*, which turns out to be a desolated architectural masterpiece with Socrates and Plato as its only inhabitants. After thinking through the matter overnight, Truth reveals its decision to accept Homer's offer with ten different clauses that are explicitly spelled out. These clauses include ideas about the

³³² Vives: “Veritas”, 520: “Cuncta erant in porticu Veritatis contraria, nam illic nuda erant omnia, aperta, simplicia, certa, solida, et, quo maxime veritati similia, vera....”

³³³ Vives: “Veritas”, 521-522: “Veritas [...] dedit magnis quibusdam viris negotium, et in primis Platoni, ut illos deserto Falso cum impurissimo et teterrimo comitatu ad Veritatem transire adhortaretur....”

³³⁴ Vives: “Veritas”, 522: “...homines tam delicatis auribus, et educatione, aspera illa et rudia Veritatis pati sine offensione insolentiae non posse....”

³³⁵ Vives: “Veritas”, 522-526.

³³⁶ Vives: “Veritas”, 525: “Veritas se libentius nudam acturam respondit.”; “Homerus se non dubitare ita esse quae Veritas diceret, ait, ceterum nosse se mores, et ingenia sui populi; illa se habere mandata, quibus repudiatis transigi vix quicquam posset....”

limits of poetical and literary education framing the ultimate conditions under which the union is possible and beneficial, thus presenting Vives's solution to the age-old problem of poetry and truth.³³⁷ In the very last part of the dialogue following Vergara's presentation of the allegorical history, Vives puts forward his concern about the incapacity of poets to pursue their task inside these limits, a concern Vergara encounters with a great degree of optimism since the limits provide ample space and liberty for poetical invention. In a personal turn, Vives the interlocutor claims, referring to literary invention, that if he himself cannot "give birth to great and bright offspring," he will at least teach the duty and office of a writer to others.³³⁸

Veritas fucata is full of implications. First, the turn to Homer after the failure of Plato is significant. It has to be remembered that, famously, Plato was highly esteemed by Vives and a number of other humanists at the time.³³⁹ Thus, in *Veritas fucata*, Plato does not come to symbolize flawed philosophy, that is, scholasticism, but all philosophy deprived of its rhetorical capacities and ability to convince. If anything, Plato – the primary spokesperson for Truth – represents ultimately truthful philosophy that has to be tailored to the *ingenia* and educational background of the *falsiani* with knowledge provided by Homer and the poets. Secondly, even if this overarching story about the handshake between poetry and truth could be read in the context of the rebirth of the arts, and most of all poetry in the academic environment, Vives's treatment of the theme underlies some important issues transcending the purely academic context.³⁴⁰ The selection of the protagonists is quite revealing. Vergara is one of Vives's influential friends in the court of Charles V, who in the first part of the dialogue initiates the story by shifting the attention from the heights of *Philosophia Christi* to the language of *vulgus*. The presence of Apuleius and Lucian as helpers of Homer is hardly an insignificant one. The latter was, of course, one of the special heroes of the humanists in the 1500s and 1510s that represented Erasmus's Socratic dream of the enigmatic and satirical revelation of deeper truths, which provides an additional – even playful – element to the option offered by the poets. In the same vein, Apuleius was not primarily a poet but a satirist whose *Asinus aureus* was one of the most famous Latin works in prose.³⁴¹

³³⁷ Vives: "Veritas", 526-531.

³³⁸ Vives: "Veritas", 531: "Si ipse nihil magni et praeclari foetus possum parere, at saltem ad pariendum alios adhortabor...." He quotes Horace to make the second point, Vives: "Veritas", 531: "Munus et officium, nil scribens ipse, docebo...."

³³⁹ Vives's works in the years around 1520 are full of praise for Plato. See for instance Vives: VCA, vii.xv. For a good treatment of the theme, see Margolin 1998, 15-28.

³⁴⁰ In the Parisian debate over humanism the question was often framed as a question on poetry, see Chapter two. Thus, the academic connotations of the debate must have been evident for all the readers involved.

³⁴¹ The importance of Lucian and Lucianic satire for Erasmus and number of other humanists is well known, see

Even more importantly, the dialogue makes very clear that Vives is not discussing poetry as a narrowly defined metrical art, but as something representing the whole range of humanistic literary studies. After treating the relation of truth and the liberty of rhetorical invention in historically remote themes, Vives moves on to argue that “everything that looks into customs or for the utility for life is left free for writers,” mentioning explicitly the genres of apologue, comedy and dialogue.³⁴² The truths of different arts have to be respected, but in conditions eight and nine, the emphasis is put on *decorum* that cannot be separated from moral philosophy or customs and utility.³⁴³ *Veritas fucata*, thus, highlights greatly that under certain conditions things have to be given a fictional form in all domains of life.³⁴⁴ The work is essentially a plea to mould truth to meet the requirements and imperfections of the real world under the guidance of *decorum*. This is not far from what Erasmus had claimed in the dedicatory letter to his thoroughly satirical *Moriae encomium* where the Dutch humanist had reminded the reader of the importance of Christian *decorum* that should be free but not licentious in its critique of the stupidities and errors of human life.³⁴⁵ In his *Somnium* compendium, Vives had made similar points about the capacity of Cicero’s Roman philosophy to mould Greek philosophy to a variety of *ingenia*. Once again, this did not diverge from Erasmus’s assessment of Roman philosophy. In the 1523 edition of *Tusculanae Disputationes* (*Tusculan Disputations*) Erasmus himself had hailed Cicero as the one who had brought philosophy to the understanding of the people (*vulgus*), but who philosophically did not diverge from Greek thought.³⁴⁶ Throughout *Somnium* Vives underlines that what is at stake in the abstract debate between humanism and scholasticism is the relevance of literary studies and language, a relevance that is not only tied to Biblical motives but to the active influence of civic and moral philosophy on all domains of life.³⁴⁷ In a fictional form, Vives underlines that for truth to stand a chance in the world of error it has to shake hands with literature, rhetoric, poetry and resort to self-

for instance Margolin 1999, 224, 233; Fumaroli 1980, 94. Erasmus also translated Lucian. For Thomas More and Lucian see Baker-Smith 2009, 168-169.

³⁴² Vives: “Veritas”, 528: “...quaecunque vel ad mores spectabunt, vel ad aliquem vitae usum, libera relinquentur scriptoribus...”

³⁴³ See conditions eight and nine, Vives: “Veritas”, 529.

³⁴⁴ This last point is emphasized also by Gómez-Montero, Gómez-Montero 1995, 87.

³⁴⁵ Erasmus, Desiderius: *Moriae encomium*, Matthias Schürer, Strasbourg 1511, letter to More: “Stulticiam laudavimus, sed non omnino stulte. Iam vero ut de mordacitatis cavillatione respondeam, semper haec ingeniis libertas permissa fuit, ut in communem hominum vitam salibus luderent impune, modo ne licentia exiret in rabiem.”

³⁴⁶ Erasmus, Desiderius: “Ad Ioannem Vlattenum”, in Cicero: *Tusculanae quaestiones*, Johann Froben, Basel 1523, A3.

³⁴⁷ Biblical motives are not absent from the preface to *Somnium Scipionis*, and interestingly, it is Cicero who mentions some typically Erasmian themes, Vives: “Somnium”, 38-39.

concealment that speaks to the *ingenia* of the people. This is what Vives as a person in the dialogue *Veritas fucata* commits to in the end.

This self-concealment should not, however, be practiced in all contexts; it was needed when one was engaging with erroneous judgement and it was something fellow humanists would recognize as ethical dissimulation. Erasmus, who often pleaded to his own conscience in justifying self-concealment and literary choices, was very clear that the wise and posterity would see through his disguise and would indeed understand his true intentions and the meanings he wanted to convey.³⁴⁸ As the Dutch humanist elaborated at length in his defence of *Moriae encomium* to Martin Dorp, self-concealment, rhetoric, and satire could be employed when one was confronting a world ruled by folly and error. However, in discussions with friends and learned members of the Republic of Letters other rules of discussion should apply. Indeed, friendship and membership in the Republic of Letters were conceptually very closely interlinked. The Republic of Letters uses the notion of friendship constantly in defining the reciprocal relations of its members; it was essentially a consortium of friends tied together with the bonds of fidelity and trust.³⁴⁹ The language on friendship inherited from the classical tradition emphasized both in its Aristotelian and Ciceronian forms the reciprocal and symmetrical nature of friends, which was ultimately based on a certain sympathy of souls. This kind of friendship was ethical and virtuous since the very notion of exclusive friendship found in the classical tradition presupposed the ethical character of the people cultivating it.³⁵⁰ As Vives emphatically declared in his letter to the Bishop John Longland, only “a good man can be the friend of a good man,” whereas a bad man cannot be a friend of anyone.³⁵¹

In Vives and Erasmus, one finds of course a notion of an ultimately universal community of Christian friends that comes together in the love of God manifest in Vives’s commentaries of St Augustine’s *De civitate Dei* where he states: “For they say that everyone is

³⁴⁸ Erasmus to Pirckheimer, Allen 856, 58-61; Erasmus to Maarten Lips 899, 18-20; Erasmus to Jan Slechta 950, 34-36. At times Erasmus raises his conscience above the judgement of his supporters but even then he reminds that the judgement of the good agrees with his conscience, see Erasmus to Draco, Allen 942, 16-21.

³⁴⁹ In Vives’s letters *amicus* is one of the recurring terms in referring to Erasmus, Budé, Cranevelet and many others. Furey has emphasized this side of the Republic of Letters, see Furey 2006, 4-13.

³⁵⁰ Lochman & López 2011, 1-15. Vives in his *Introductio ad sapientiam* makes the point about good character as the presupposition of friendship. Vives, Juan Luis: “Introductio ad sapientiam”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *Introductio ad sapientiam satellitium sive symbola, epistolae duae de ratione studii puerilis*, Simon de Colines, Paris 1527 (in the case of *Introductio ad sapientiam*, numbers refer to proverbs), 418: “Sed vera & solida & duratura amicitia tantummodo est inter bonos, inter quos facile amor coalescit.”

³⁵¹ Vives to Longland, “Ioannes Lodovicus Vives D. Ioanni Episcopo Lincolniensi” (printed in *De Europae*), lxx: “...solus bonus bono amicus est, malus nec bono amicus est, nec malo.”

united to everyone else by nature, so that everyone is naturally friends with everyone.”³⁵² Yet, an equally typical use of the word referred to the exclusive classical sense reserved for similar souls, and the word is systematically employed in Vives’s work and letter-exchange exactly in this way. Budé’s and Erasmus’s famous exchange in the late 1510s tackling questions of style, audience, and intellectual community has one of its grandest moments when Budé proposes to the Dutch humanist that “they should share friends.”³⁵³ Ultimately, a participation in the friendly activities of the Republic of Letters could be seen as an external sign of a good, virtuous, and noble character that was revealed in one’s engagement with other Erasmian humanists.³⁵⁴

The definition of the Republic of Letters as an association of friendship has a distinctive importance for language use since it points to a certain classical model of conducting discussions. When Vives in his *De conscribendis epistolis* defined letters as *sermo absentium per literas* (conversation of those who are absent through letters), linking them to friendship, he was pointing to a notion of conversation (*sermo*) that in Cicero is contrasted to rhetorical language (*oratio*).³⁵⁵ In a number of writings, Cicero makes the distinction between passionate rhetoric meant for the multitude and a calmer philosophical conversation with epistemological goals.³⁵⁶ In *De officiis*, the Roman statesman contrasted *oratio* and *sermo*, arguing that *sermo* was a more informal discussion meant for social gatherings or friendly intercourse. *Sermo* could discuss politics, domestic affairs, arts, and learning, but in an unemotional way. This separated *sermo* from deliberative and judicial rhetoric that strove for immediate action using passion. But most importantly, *sermo* is no one’s possession and others should not be excluded from it – it is a dialogue where the other person has to be recognized as a subject or a partner in the

³⁵² Vives: VCA, x.iii: “Nam unumquemque hominem cuius alteri a natura conciliatum esse dicunt, ita omnes inter se sunt natura amici. Porro inter leges amicitiae illm ponunt de primis, ut amicus amicum nos secus diligit quam se, nam & alterum se esse putat.” Erasmus also evokes a radical Christian community based on friendship and community of goods in his adage “Amicorum communia omnia”, Erasmus: *Adagia*, 5-6. Erasmus refers to this in his *Querela Pacis* where he talks about human possibilities of a general concord, Erasmus, Desiderius: *Querela pacis, undique gentium eiectae, profligataeque*, Andreas Cratander & Servas Kruffter, Basel 1518, 6-8.

³⁵³ Wallace 2009, 225-226.

³⁵⁴ Totality of life has these two directions, it is the ultimate revelation of one’s ethical and spiritual nature, but since others judge it through its external signs, it can potentially carry a rhetoric of its own. Chomarat, among others, has noted the importance of exemplifying spirit in one’s life in Erasmus’s theology, See Chomarat 1981, 17. It should be noted that the Republic of Letters provides a social setting in which character is revealed building a close connection to the supposedly intimate and pious of a humanist and the settings in which it can be externalized.

³⁵⁵ Vives, Juan Luis: “De conscribendis epistolis”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *Brevissima maximeque compendiarum conficiendarum epistolarum formula compendium Joannis Ludovici vivis valentini de conscribendis epistolis, libellus vere aureus. Eiusdem argumenti D. Erasmi Roterodami compendium, ab ipso autore denuò recognitum*, Thomas I Platter & Balthasar Lasius, Basel 1536, 3: “Epistola est sermo absentium per literas....”

³⁵⁶ See Cicero: *Adacemica*, ii.iii; Cicero: *Disputationes*, ii.i-ii.iii.

conversation.³⁵⁷

In spite of the obvious Christian resonance of *sermo*, preferred to *verbum* by Erasmus in his translation of *logos* in St John's Gospel (a choice that accentuated the communicative dimension of Christian religion incarnated in Christ), the two classical modes of discussing were well known to humanists.³⁵⁸ Erasmus, for instance, revealed his mastery of the genre of civil dispute in his *De libero arbitrio*, thoroughly analysed by Marjorie Boyle O'Rourke in her *Rhetoric and Reform: Erasmus' civil dispute with Luther*. The idea of an essentially civilized discussion proposed by Erasmus as the ultimate genre and way debating the matter with Luther over free will, was the kind of investigative Ciceronian dialogue that is ultimately made possible by a number of factors – one of which is a certain idea of a trustworthy character of participants in conversation.³⁵⁹ Erasmus, on the first page, frames the discussion as a conversation between friends, inviting Luther to the community of virtuous scholars to discuss the issue, a strategy that stands in sharp contrast to many of his earlier and polemical writings against scholasticism, such as *Moriae* or *Antibarbari*.³⁶⁰ The importance of friendship for the conceptualisation of rhetorical discussion is clearly discernible in humanists' understanding of their own language usage. Not only is epistolary exchange conceptualized as *sermo*, but also Vives's *De ratione dicendi* makes the distinction between an unemotional discussion among philosophers and a true oration dealing with passion very clearly.³⁶¹ In his *De consultatione*,

³⁵⁷ Cicero: *De officiis*, i.xxxvii-xxxviii.

³⁵⁸ For Erasmus's translation, see Jarott 1964, 35-38. Erasmus made the distinction in the very start of his response to Lucian's *Tyrannicidae*. Erasmus, Desiderius: "Declamatio, lucianicae respondens", 136-175 in Erasmus - Lucianus: *Luciani Samosatensis Saturnalia, Cronosolon, id est, Saturnalium legum lator, Epistolae Saturnales, De luctu, Abdicatus, Icaromenippus seu Hypernepheus, Toxaris siue Amicitia, Alexander seu Pseudomantis, Gallus seu Somnium, Timon seu Misanthropus, Pro tyrannicida declamatio, Erasmi declamatio, Lucianicae respondens, De ijs qui mercede conducti degunt, Dialogi XVIII. Hercules Gallicus, Eunuchus seu Pamphilus, De Sacrificijs, Conuiuium seu Lapithae, De Astrologia, Des Erasmo Roterod. interprete*, Johann Froben, Basel 1521, 136: "Si mihi causa haec iudices, apud concionem popularem, quae studiis potius, quam exacto rerum iudicio duci conseruit, esset agenda, ac non magis apud iudices ex honestissimis ordinibus delectos, nimitum gravissimos sapientissimosque...."

³⁵⁹ Boyle O'Rourke 1983, 5-42.

³⁶⁰ Erasmus, Desiderius: *De libero arbitrio diatribe, sive collatio*, Michael Hillen, Antwerpen 1524, a2: "Cui tametsi iam non ab uno responsum est, tamen quando ita visum est amicis, experiar et ipse, num ex nostra quoque conflictatiuncula veritas reddi possit dilucidior" (In the absence of page numbers I have used signature marks to identify quotes. It indicates the next signature mark following the quote.). Gary Remer has also connected Erasmus's defence of the free will to the Ciceronian ideal of epistemological discussion between the like-minded found in *Tusculanae Disputationes*. This kind of epistemological dialogue aspires to clarifying a truth that is thought of as one, not many. Thus, difference of opinion is possible only if the ultimate truth is still in doubt. See Remer 1994, 334-335; Cicero: *Disputationes*, ii.i.4, ii.iii.9, i.xlvii.112; Cicero: "Academica" (trans. Rackham), 399-659 in Cicero: *De natura Deorum, Academica*, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts/London 1961, ii.iii; Cicero: *De Officiis*, i.i.3, ii.ii.8; Cicero: *De finibus bonorum et malorum*, (trans. Rackham), Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts/London 1961, ii.vi.17; Cicero: *De oratore*, i.xviii-xix.

³⁶¹ Vives: DR, 90: "Orationem philosophorum mollem esse ac umbratilem Cicero perhibet, nec verbis, nec

Vives also noted that with a friend one could speak more openly.³⁶² Vives's *In Pseudodialecticos*, framed as a letter, partakes in the discourse of exclusive friendship in arguing, in the very first lines, that the content of the letter was borne out of the criticism of some close friends with whom one could discuss in a friendly tone.³⁶³ Moreover, in his later *De disciplinis*, in discussing the life of the erudite, Vives strongly underlined the fact that truth reveals itself through dialogue with both ancients and contemporary writers and that it, according to him, is “no body’s property.”³⁶⁴ Furthermore, many of his letters testify how these friendly discussions between scholars on serious issues were conducted in a non-adversarial tone, and in a tolerant spirit.³⁶⁵ Of course, the connection between character, friendship and *sermo* is not is not an empirical one, but an idealized model of conduct that was in practice frequently violated even among leading humanists.³⁶⁶ However, the idealized claim is clear; with the circle of friends of the Republic of Letters and with other men of letters, rules of *sermo* should apply, whereas in communication with others the art of rhetoric and other literary dissimulation could be required by a virtuous and learned member of the Republic of Letters.

Utopia and the Problem of Counselling

As Erasmus’s defence of *Moriae encomium* to Martin Dorp made perfectly clear, princely courts were not free from the reign of folly, and one was in need of literature, satire, and rhetoric in dealing with them.³⁶⁷ However, self-concealment and rhetoric applied to the specific context of princely courts was far from unproblematic and Thomas More’s *Utopia*, one of the most widely known humanist political treatises of the time, offered a highly nuanced interpretation of counselling and rhetoric in princely contexts. In the form of a dialogue conducted in the spirit of *sermo*, the questions of counselling and rhetoric are given a distinctively political treatment in *Utopia* as framing the most basic problem of humanist active life: how to counsel successfully the prince without becoming a corrupt flatterer.

sententiis instructam popularibus, nec iunctam numeris, sed solutam liberius, ut sermo potius, quam oratio mereatur dici.” See also Vives: DR, 108.

³⁶² Vives: DCO, 248: “Apud amicum familiarem, apertius...”

³⁶³ Vives: *In pseudodialecticos* 1555, 272: “Neque enim duxi diutius differendum, quo minus redderem te certiolem, quid iam pridem expostulant mecum homines doctissimi, et amantissimi mei. Quibus cum familiariter dum commentor incidimusque in mentionem renascentium literarum...”

³⁶⁴ Vives: DD, 398: “Veritas [...] nullius est propria, sed communis omnium...”

³⁶⁵ Vives to Grynaeus, DAE 174.

³⁶⁶ The late 1510s argument between Erasmus and Budé is a good example.

³⁶⁷ Erasmus to Dorp, Allen 337, 84-120, 184-191.

More's *Utopia* treated the problem in the first part at length. The work that was printed in Louvain was also promoted as the most important work on politics by the Louvain circle of humanists, and considered of great importance by Vives; he mentions it as one of the few political texts worth reading in his later *De disciplinis*.³⁶⁸ A complete clarification of More's own intention and commitment to the views presented by Hytholday, Gillis, and More as a person in the dialogue would might be next to impossible. However, for our present purposes it may suffice to show the presence of certain problems on counselling presented by More in the first book of *Utopia* without taking a strong view on the specific solution he gave to the problems posed.³⁶⁹

Utopia's first part presents a conversation between a sailor who has first-hand knowledge of the island of *Utopia*, Raphael Hythloday, Pieter Gillis, and Thomas More himself. After a lengthy detour to questions of theft, poverty, and private ownership, Thomas More and Hythloday come back to the original theme of the dialogue, started by Pieter Gillis's initial remark that Raphael should put his knowledge to the service of a prince as a counsellor. This suggestion is ironically rejected by Hythloday since "the difference [between service and servitude] is only a matter of one syllable."³⁷⁰ When they return to the theme of the relative merits of *negotium* and *otium*, and the possibilities of counselling towards the end of the first part, the theme is amplified and treated in an interesting manner. As is well known, the question of active life had a long history in the humanist tradition that often drew explicitly from Cicero's widely read *De officiis* where the Roman statesman argued that the life of *negotium* was of more importance and demanded greater abilities of its practitioner than a life dedicated to *otium*. Furthermore, Cicero countered in *De officiis* those who claimed that a life of *negotium* was a perversion of true philosophy, by arguing that a wise man can and should indeed take an active role in the stage of politics, drawing a parallel to the vocabulary of theatre.³⁷¹

³⁶⁸ Vives: DD, 373-374.

³⁶⁹ What More might have intended to say in the work has been debated throughout history. John Stuart Mill's, Karl Kautsky's and William Morris's philosophical interpretations emphasizing utilitarianism, socialism and communism respectively have been followed by more historically nuanced explanations. See for instance Skinner, Quentin: "Sir Thomas More's *Utopia* and the Language of Renaissance Humanism", 123-157 in Pagden, Anthony (ed.): *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe*, Cambridge University Press, 1987; Bradshaw, Brendan: "More on *Utopia*", 1-27 in *Historical Journal* 1981; Hexter, J.H: *More's Utopia. The Biography of an Idea*, Princeton University Press, 1952; Surtz, Edward – J.H Hexter: *The Complete Works of Thomas More*, vol. 4, Yale University Press 1965; Fenlon, Dermot: "England and Europe: *Utopia* and its Aftermath", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* XXV, 1975.

³⁷⁰ More: *Utopia* 1518, 32: "...mihi visum est servias regibus, sed ut inservias. Hoc est, inquit ille, una syllaba plusquam servias." (English translation from More, Thomas: *Utopia* [eds. Logan – Adams], Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002, 13).

³⁷¹ Cicero: *De officiis*, i.vi.19, i.ix, i.xxii, i.xxxi.114.

Hythloday, who argues for the impossibility of expedient counselling and for the merits of contemplative life, makes the first move by presenting two hypothetical situations of actual counselling. In the first, a discussion on French foreign policy is portrayed, a discussion in which other counsellors seek methods for broadening the power and the territory of the French king through cunning and perfect domination of traditional methods of *realpolitik*. Here Hythloday, instead of answering the original question, would try to reframe it by arguing that it is not expedient to enlarge territory and power in the first place, and that all effort should be focused on governing the territory given to the prince in question. In the second example, reminiscent of the first one, Raphael is forced to argue against a mass of counsellors on the possibilities of filling the treasury of the king through manipulation of existing laws, the value of money, make-believe wars, legislation, and the interpretation of laws to the prince's advantage. Against counsellors who agreed on the principle that the king should maximize his treasury, Hythloday would have to try to argue that these policies are both dishonourable and ruinous to the king, whose duty lies in the perfecting of his people and in the guarding of their pursuit of the good life.³⁷² After the presentation of these examples, he concludes by stating that his listeners “would turn deaf ears to me [Hythloday].”³⁷³

Thomas More, the person in the dialogue, answers by arguing for the rhetorical philosophy of Cicero: “There is another philosophy, better suited for the role of a citizen, that takes its cue, adapts itself to the drama in hand and acts its part neatly and appropriately.”³⁷⁴ He is ready to grant that it is impossible to make everything good in a corrupted world, but the rejection of the ideal of complete transformation should not make the humanist to abandon the commonwealth since they can try to make things bad as little as possible. More, thus, restricts the role of rhetorical philosophy to the incomplete world that takes for granted the less-than-perfect nature of the people we might encounter at court – including the prince himself. Hythloday, however, is not convinced. According to him, either one speaks the truth or adjusts ones methods to the way people already live and understand the world, which is to confirm the error. There simply is no way to reform people who persist in their corrupted nature through

³⁷² More: *Utopia* 1518, 50-61.

³⁷³ More: *Utopia* 1518, 61: “Haec ergo atque huiusmodi si ingererem apud homines, in contrariam partem vehementer inclinatos, quam surdis essem narraturus fabulam.” (English translation from More, Thomas: *Utopia* [eds. Logan – Adams], Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002, 34).

³⁷⁴ More: *Utopia* 1518, 61-62: “Sed es talia philosophia civilior, quae suam novit scaenam...” (English translation from More, Thomas: *Utopia* [eds. Logan – Adams], Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002, 34-35).

any kind of indirect rhetorical approach.³⁷⁵ At the heart of the problem, there lies a specific problem of all rhetorical theory stemming from the tension between the obligation to teach, and the fact that teaching was possible only if one could ground it in the opinions the audience would accept. This problem was at the centre of Vives's reflection on rhetoric in his *De consultatione*.

***De consultatione* as reassessing Deliberative Genre in a new Context**

In 1523, Vives composed a short work on rhetoric for the Lord of Praet, Vives's and Erasmus's friend who had been active in Charles's privy council since 1517, and who had undertaken the role of a resident ambassador in England in 1523. The work, entitled *De consultatione*, presents a theory of rhetorical counselling which incorporates some of the classical tradition of deliberative rhetoric in a flexible way into its precepts. The work has rarely received significant attention in the existing scholarship. When it has been touched upon, the reception has been somewhat mixed and confused because of the conflict between Christian humanism and the highly technical tone of *De consultatione* that presents the use of word as an internal question of rhetoric and persuasion.³⁷⁶ Like More's *Utopia*, which can be read as a participation in an internal dispute of civic philosophy on true virtue and active life, Vives's *De consultatione* can well be placed in the internal tradition of deliberative rhetoric.³⁷⁷ However, simultaneously it points to a larger understanding of rhetoric as a practice of the world of discord, the necessity of which is predicated on the breakdown of concord.³⁷⁸ Within this general framework of politics, *De consultatione* approaches rhetorical theory from the vantage point of the problems inherent in counselling as a civic practice, and offers the best possible insight into how Vives understood the dynamics of asymmetrical political discussion and persuasion between a counsellor and a ruler in a princely setting. The theoretical model Vives offers the reader stands

³⁷⁵ More: *Utopia* 1518, 61-65.

³⁷⁶ Mack has described the ethical tone of the treatise as awkward since Vives, in addition to emphasizing the spontaneous persuasiveness of ethical life, gives detailed information on how to construct an appearance of it in speech or in writing, see Mack 2008, 253. Noreña does not analyse *De consultatione* in depth even though he calls it "an important political treatise on diplomacy and negotiations", see Noreña 1970, 86. E. George also comments on the movement between descriptive and normative points; see George 1992, 142. Some interpretations seem to me very curious. Adams for instance argues that in *De consultatione* Vives "sets forward [...] his ideas on conciliation between princes." Adams 1962, 235.

³⁷⁷ Skinner has placed *Utopia* in the context of Renaissance *scientia civilis*, see Skinner 2002, vol. 2, 224-226.

³⁷⁸ In *De ratione dicendi* rhetoric belongs to a postlapsarian world of corruption, a fact that creates a close nexus between the fall, passion, and the necessity of true rhetoric, Vives: DR, 107-108. For a more detailed analysis, see Chapter eight.

in stark contradiction with Ciceronian *sermo*, and draws heavily on the tradition of emotional and passionate rhetoric. This implies an understanding of the prince not as a participant in conversation, but as an object of persuasion touching consequently upon all the questions related to the power relationship between the prince and the counsellor. In short, *De consultatione* is an insight into the world of the counsellor who has to operate in a world of discord and passion through persuasive language. Even though the work was published only in 1533, and the exact outlook of the 1523 manual is impossible to retrace, many aspects of the work strongly suggest that its overall structure coincides with the 1523 manual.³⁷⁹

If *De consultatione* is analysed as something more than just a purely technical instruction for the practice of counselling, it has to be situated inside the Erasmian claim of ethical advising. There are a number of issues that link the work to the fundamental Erasmian duty of teaching (*docere*). First, there are moments when Vives's voice explicitly pleads for ethically responsible rhetoric, as do many handbooks of the classical tradition.³⁸⁰ Thoroughly in this spirit, he strongly emphasizes the ethical nature and character of the counsellor in writing that “whoever gives counsel on a number of issues should be well equipped with judgement and prudence,” and that he “should be very skilled in everything related to what is honest and what is expedient.”³⁸¹ Secondly, Vives tries to rewrite the categories of the honest and the expedient that framed all political deliberations in Roman tradition by filling the category of the honest with Christian concepts suitable for contemporary counselling. In all rhetorical theory, arguing one’s case in deliberations was based on one’s possibilities of showing the honest as well the useful nature of the course of action suggested. In Vives’s *De consultatione*, the category of honesty is placed within a Christian framework. The Valencian argues: “In the category of the honest everything related to God should be most powerful – things such as piety, flame for higher things, cognition of and adoration for that omnipotent nature. Eternal life consists of knowledge of these things according to Jesus in the Gospels.”³⁸² Thirdly, one has to

³⁷⁹ It is clear that Vives never made an effort to merge its precepts together with his 1530s literature on rhetorical theory. Differently from 1530s literature, *De consultatione* focuses almost exclusively on rhetorical *inventio*, not on *elocutio*. For opinions on the problem, see George 1992; 142-143; Van der Poel 1991; Rodríguez Peregrina 1996, 350-351.

³⁸⁰ Cicero: “De inventione”, i.iv.

³⁸¹ Vives: DCO, 243: “Ex his quae in nobis sunt posita, satis ut puto intelligitur, oportere cum qui multis de rebus consilium daturus est, plurimum & cordis habere, & prudentiae, calentissimum esse ingenii, tam multiformis & varii animantis hominis: tum consultissimum totius honestatis atque utilitatis.”

³⁸² Vives: DCO, 241: “In honesto potissima esse convenit, quae ad Deum pertinent, huius generis sunt pietas, ardor rerum supremarum, cognitio, & adoratio illius omnipotentis naturae: quam cognitionem Dominus in Evangelio pronuntiat esse vitam aeternam.”

bear in mind how rhetorical invention works. Since invention is a somewhat structured way of organising and collecting material for whatever questions asked, by its very nature it refers to the whole set of political, educational and rhetorical literature available, as Vives points out when he described invention not as a closed set of all possible arguments but as a tool that indicates possible sources of argumentation.³⁸³ Hence, invention is practiced in order to bring to mind exactly the kind of political precepts, maxims, and ideas that Erasmian as well as more generally humanist educational and political literature had promoted in the preceding years. The union, thus, to the whole set of political and ethical literature is integral – no rhetorical invention would be possible without presupposing that the questions arising from the invention somehow refer to existing examples and answers. In some ways, thus, the book is thought to be a way to organise and collect existing materials for the particularities of a rhetorical situation.

Fourthly, Vives originally composed the work in the form of a manuscript on the petition of his friend, one of the humanist-minded members of the court, the Lord of Praet. This probably in Vives's mind guaranteed the unproblematic character of the people reading the work and using its precepts. In other words, the potential readers were understood to be members or friends of the Erasmian community of wise, which in itself implied a certain notion of moral character. Controlling rhetorical performance merely by rewriting rhetorical theory, places, and commonplaces is always insufficient because of the irreducibly dynamic nature of all rhetorical production. This is why it is ultimately character that guarantees the responsible use of the dissimulative art of rhetoric. Furthermore, even when Vives decided to print *De consultatione* with his *De ratione dicendi* it is clear that he meant it for a relatively constricted audience.³⁸⁴

Thus, *De consultatione* appears as a booklet that mitigates between the world of concord of the counsellor, and the passionate discord of the one advised, by employing rhetorical precepts. Just as More's *Utopia* had shown, this was full of tensions. One of the main points of the difficulties of counselling in the first part of *Utopia* is that inside the maxims the prince would accept as premises it is hard to defend a moral case. This problem was widely recognized by classical sources. Already in classical rhetoric the question of what kind of opinions should form the basis of rhetorical argumentation was very much present, since all authorities on the matter somehow followed Aristotle in that rhetoric always takes as its point of departure generally accepted opinions.³⁸⁵ Cicero in his *De Oratore* had also argued strongly

³⁸³ Vives: DCO, 243: "...admonuisse de capitibus, & velut fontes indicasse contentus."

³⁸⁴ See Chapter eight.

³⁸⁵ Aristotle: *Rhetoric*, i.i.12; ii.xviii.2. In Aristotle, dialectic the counter part of rhetoric also starts from the

that excellence in rhetoric depended on its capacity to adapt to common usage, and to the mental capacity of the untutored.³⁸⁶ Depending on the audience and the social structure of generally accepted opinions that could be popular or more exclusive, rhetorical theory could potentially deal only with socially accepted values and truths, bringing with it a distinctively social touch that could or could not be accentuated in particular treatises.³⁸⁷ In Vives's *De consultatione*, the generally accepted opinions are mostly reinterpreted as the princes' world of ideas.³⁸⁸ Thus, despite of the plea that the category of honesty is based on Christian concepts, one has to be aware that the deliberator is not able to judge rightly on the nature of things. Thus, one has to start from the kind of general maxims he would accept, and argue one's case inside these limits without turning into a flatterer.³⁸⁹

A similar tension could also be discussed through the age-old question of the relationship between the honest and the expedient by connecting them to the level of the audience.³⁹⁰ Vives, like most writers on rhetoric, strongly defends the union of the expedient and the honest, and vehemently reminds the reader that they have to go together, although the Roman *populus*, according to the Valencian, proclaimed expediency as more important.³⁹¹ Here Vives follows a long tradition of humanist thought that tried to argue for the exact congruence of the two in politics – a view that could be traced back to Cicero's *De Officiis*.³⁹² There was, however, an acute awareness that in the performance of counselling itself, the honourable and the expedient could be in contradiction – something that was connected to the level of understanding of the audience. Quintilian had touched upon the problem uniting it exactly with

opinions of the wise, see Aristotle: "Topica" (trans. Forster), 265-739 in Aristotle: *Posterior Analytics, Topica*, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1960, i.i. In Roman tradition this is rarely put into explicit words yet all treatises of deliberative rhetoric are places to gather communal opinions and ways of arguing for the orator.

³⁸⁶ Cicero: *De oratore*, i.iii.12: "... [oratory] is concerned in some measure with the common practice, custom, and speech of mankind, so that, whereas in all other arts that which is most excellent which is farthest removed from the understanding and mental capacity of the untrained, in oratory the very cardinal sin is to depart from the language of everyday life, and the usage approved by the sense of the community."

³⁸⁷ Cicero makes the difference between popular and exclusive audiences explicit; see Cicero: *De finibus*, ii.vi.17. See also Peltonen 2012, 27-41.

³⁸⁸ Quintilian: IO, iii.viii.38-39.

³⁸⁹ This tension was recognised by many contemporaries, see for instance Fonseca to Erasmus, Allen 2003, 70-72: "Sed plenum periculi est negotium, plenum difficultatis. Aut enim optimatibus foede assentandum, aut eorum moribus conutium odiose faciendum."

³⁹⁰ See for instance Quintilian: IO, iii.viii.2.

³⁹¹ Vives: DCO, 253, 254: "Olim Romanus populus saepe numero in deliberationibus illud usurpabat, Vincat utilitas."; "Execrabatur Socrates, qui primus honestum & utile natura coherentia opinione disiunxisset...."

³⁹² In *Ad Herennium* their possible contradiction is depicted, see *Ad Herennium* iii.v. In *De officiis* Cicero argues for their congruence, see the book III and especially Cicero: *De officiis*, iii.xxxiii.119. In his commentaries on Augustine Vives discusses the Roman proverb "the State cannot be governed without injustice" presenting, however, a surprisingly neutral and historical analysis of the saying. Vives: VCA, ii.xxi.

the character of the audience, arguing that if we are advising many, we must be aware that inexperienced people are prone to dissociate the useful from the honourable, whereas the wise – the senate – do not make the same mistake. Furthermore, in the case where advice is given to just one person, then his character limits our possibilities of having a say. If the men we are advising are bad, one should not persuade them by appealing to honour, “but to praise, public opinion, and (if these vanities are ineffectual) the future advantages, or, even more, by pointing out some frightening consequences of taking the opposite course.”³⁹³ Moreover, Quintilian explicitly claimed that rhetorical persuasion was needed when the character of those addressed did not live up to the expectations, “It is very easy to commend an honourable course to honourable men; but if we try to ensure the right action from persons of bad character, we must take care not to seem to be criticising their very different way of life.”³⁹⁴ Despite the fact that Vives reminds the reader of the exact congruence of the two, the whole treatise is built on the premise that in the mind of the one advised a break between the honest and the useful is often indeed the point of departure. However, inside this world of discord *De consultatione* shows ways of finding one’s way in politics in the best possible way.

***De Consultatione* as Rhetoric of Counselling**

Although Vives’s claim to originality at the beginning of the work should not be taken at face value, he takes as his starting point the basic rhetorical and contextual rule that different situations and times demand different kinds of precepts.³⁹⁵ Just like his later *De ratione dicendi* that significantly alters the traditional division of rhetoric into three genres by introducing multiple new ways of writing more suitable for early sixteenth-century context, Vives’s *De consultatione* starts with the claim that the places of argumentation should be “exposed according to a new method.” Here he is hinting, among other things, at a temporal and contextual gap that separates traditional books on rhetorical invention regarding the deliberative

³⁹³ Quintilian: IO, iii.viii.39: “...permovendus, sed laude, vulgi opinione, et, si parum proficiet haec vanitas, secutura ex his utilitate, aliquanto vero magis obiciendo aliquos, si diversa fecerint, metus.” The same distinction between the many and the wise was widely known in classical antiquity. Plutarch, for example, referred to it in his *Moralia*. Plutarch (Pseudo-Plutarch): “De liberis educandis”, 2-71 in Plutarch: *Moralia*, vol. 1, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1966, 9: “For to please the multitude is to displease the wise.”

³⁹⁴ Quintilian: IO, iii.viii.38-39: “Et honesta quidem honestis suadere facillimum est; si vero apud turpes recta optinere conabimur, ne videamur exprobare diversam vitae sectam cavendum.”

³⁹⁵ A claim to originality could be a topos in itself. See Vickers 1988, 269.

genre.³⁹⁶ Thus, rhetorical theory itself is not ahistorical but partially subjected to modifications in accordance with the changes in surrounding context, something that becomes explicit on numerous occasions in the work, and is well in accordance with the more general Erasmian understanding of the art of eloquence – most clearly manifested in the Dutch humanists’s famous dialogue entitled *Ciceronianus*.³⁹⁷ The fact that the work was always printed together with *De ratione dicendi* from the 1530s onwards seems to emphasize the submission of the deliberative genre to a more general theory of rhetorical persuasion. However, many aspects of the work show that Vives never made the effort to merge it with an overarching general theory of argumentation where its relationship to dialectic and other rhetorical genres would be harmonized when he published it in 1533.³⁹⁸

Yet, there are two points one should emphasise regarding *De consultatione*’s relation to the later *De ratione dicendi*. First, it represents the only genre that draws explicitly from the tradition of deliberative rhetoric in the totality of Vives’s treatment on the art of eloquence. Secondly, its structure built on an analysis of the persons involved in a rhetorical situation is loosely based on applying the general precepts – set out in Vives’s exposition of *decorum* (appropriateness) in *De ratione* – to the specific case of deliberations.³⁹⁹ Thus, although there is no general treatment of rhetoric or dialectic by Vives from the 1520s, the work can be seen as aspiring to cover only a limited part of rhetorical theory, namely counselling, not the totality of rhetorical precepts. Vives himself was very clear about this in *De consultatione*, claiming that he “writes on the deliberative genre” on the petition of the Lord of Praet, adding a little later that the part on invention only deals with *suasoria*.⁴⁰⁰

I agree with van der Poel that Vives's work adopts a rather flexible notion of the concept of deliberations as to the contexts in which they are needed.⁴⁰¹ Unlike classical treatises written primarily for the institutional and oral context of the Roman republic, Vives is writing

³⁹⁶ Vives: DCO, 233: “...inventio tota ex locis argumentorum sumitur, qui mihi aut repetendi erunt hoc loco, aut certa quadam & nova ratione proponendi...”

³⁹⁷ Vives *De consultatione* emphasizes this, see Vives: DCO, 247-250. One of the central points of Erasmus’s *Ciceronianus* is to defend the historicity of language and rhetoric, see Mañas Núñez 2009, 37-48; Fumaroli 1980, 92-110.

³⁹⁸ In his *De ratione dicendi*, and also in his *De disciplinis* from 1531 Vives delimits the scope of rhetoric mainly to elocution. Yet, his *De consultatione* is largely dedicated to invention (*inventio*). Vives: DD, 143: “Elocutio magis artis huius est propria...”

³⁹⁹ Vives: DR, 134-170.

⁴⁰⁰ Vives: DCO, 233, 234: “...de genere deliberativo separatim a reliquo artis Rhetoricae corpore scribam.”; “Ita nos primo loco de inventione suasoriarum disseremus.” *Suasoria* was really a fictional exercise in deliberative rhetoric but Vives most certainly refers to it here in a more general sense as deliberative rhetoric.

⁴⁰¹ This is one of van der Poel’s main points, see Van der Poel 1991, 803-810.

here to a counsellor of the prince. In Vives's case, it is clear that the precepts of the work could be applied both to oral counselling and to written pieces. In fact, the complete absence of two traditional parts of rhetoric – delivery and memory – point to an understanding of counselling that could be primarily written.⁴⁰² Moreover, Vives's idea that was amplified in his later *De disciplinis* that destructive rhetoric in Rome and Athens was partly due to the momentous and swift nature of speaking in those political cultures, hints at the fact that one could be more optimistic about the possibilities of a purely literary rhetoric.⁴⁰³ Furthermore, the general headings meant for the analysis of the persons involved would imply a rather flexible idea of the status of the counsellor, since they present different strategies depending on the distance and relationship one might hold with respect to the prince. This strongly implies that the one advising might not in fact be very close to the ruler. Thus, even if *De consultatione* is a book for actual counsellors operating close to the prince, as was the case of the ambassador the Lord of Praet, the precepts could be applied equally well by a humanist looking for a possibility to express his opinion in writing. This makes it more understandable why Vives indeed decided to publish it as part of his rhetorical corpus in the 1530s.⁴⁰⁴

Finally, a broad understanding of the application of deliberative rhetoric might also be the reason why Vives never explicitly defines the subject matter of deliberations. Rather vaguer than what was common in the classical tradition, he states, “we deliberate on everything that is in our control, on questions demanding physical vigour as well as on the actions of the soul.” This implies an understanding of deliberation that could be extended far beyond traditional political questions to religion, education, private matters, and a range of other issues where decisions were needed and that in a princely context were deemed socially, politically, and religiously significant.⁴⁰⁵ In Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, the themes related to the deliberative genre are explicitly mentioned. *Ad Herennium* and *De invention* also treat deliberative cases in a way that makes clear that possible questions are restricted to political issues debated in an

⁴⁰² The fact that he is thinking about both possibilities is perceivable in a part where he recommends carefully composed written speeches that give the impression of a more serious thought. Vives: DCO, 247. More generally, one of the characteristics of Erasmus's rhetorical oeuvre was its pronounced emphasis on written rhetoric, see Mack 2011, 76-77; Monfasani 1988, 198-200.

⁴⁰³ Vives: DCO, 261: “Athenienses, quod ea celeritate uterentur, non diu imperium tenuisse: & Caesarem ruisse in mille facinora, diutius & maius cunctatores Lacedaemonios habuisse imperium...”; Vives: DD, 235-236.

⁴⁰⁴ The possibility of counselling someone you hardly know and problems related to it are presented in the piece. See for instance Vives: DCO, 247-248.

⁴⁰⁵ Vives: DCO, 239: “Ergo de omnibus quaecunque sunt in nostra potestate consultamus, de operibus manuum, & actionibus animi.” Van der Poel 1991, 803-810. Van der Poel emphasizes this last point.

actual moment of decision-making.⁴⁰⁶ What one finds, thus, is at least a partial redefinition or opening up of the subject matter, places, and media of traditional deliberative rhetoric with respect to the bulk of the classical tradition in a clear attempt to mould existing theory into a princely context. One thing, however, is quite absent in Vives's exhibition of deliberations. Even though Vives understood the importance of a more general audience in the practice of writing, the deliberator or the judge of the issue discussed here is almost exclusively the prince. There is practically no analysis of how the activation of a third party – a general audience for instance – would affect the dynamics of counselling and the decision making of the prince. In other words, *De consultatione* does not offer a reflection on how the publishing of a deliberation to a wider audience could potentially change the way in which the genre should be approached, but focuses exclusively on persuading the prince in more immediate contexts.

Rhetorical Invention in *De consultatione*

Vives's basic rule before moving into topics is that one should ask general questions, both about the persons involved in the consultation, and about the contextual phenomena of the matter such as things discussed, the place, time, and the circumstances of discussion. General questions are a sort of an introduction to rhetorical places (*loci, topoi*); the places are nothing more than a tool to carry out this kind of analysis through more specific inquiries. In all rhetorical tradition, places were a set of headings that could be used for gathering material for one's cases. Thus, they suggest questions that can be asked about anything relevant for deliberation, as well as point towards possible answers by connecting the questions asked to existing materials. The next few pages provide material in abundance for analysing these issues by asking questions drawn from a few general headings.⁴⁰⁷ The first part – the most comprehensive treatment of *loci* – is structured around the questions of what comes temporally and socially before, with and after the persons involved in the deliberation, that is: the deliberator, other counsellors, as well as the speaker. By far the largest treatment is given to the things that come with the

⁴⁰⁶ Aristotle famously declared that the most important topics of deliberations were ways and means, war and peace, defence of the country, imports and exports and legislation, Aristotle: *Rhetoric*, i.iv.7. In *Ad Herennium* and *De inventione* it is taken for granted that the range of deliberative rhetoric is the treatment of these issues in the Senate. See for instance *Ad Herennium* iii.ii.

⁴⁰⁷ These headings are largely the same as the ones found in the discussion on *decorum* in *De ratione dicendi*. Vives: DR, 134: "Quum ergo dicimus, haec sunt cogitanda omnia, dicens, audiens, locus, tempus & materia, seu res, de quibus dicitur. In his sunt illa omnia, quae exposita sunt in tractatu probabilitatis...."

counsellor or the deliberator, and here the general headings are his mind and his body.⁴⁰⁸

This means that by asking internal questions about persons, an orator or a writer can reconstruct the constitution of their mind, for example, the natural talent, prudence, manner, education, passions etc. of a given person. Vives offers, furthermore, ways to analyse what specific objects certain passions might imply for the person in question – a feature that could be found in Aristotle’s rhetoric that comprised the most ambitious exposition of passions.⁴⁰⁹ By asking external questions on the other hand, one can get an idea of his life, family, wealth, social status and a number of other issues. Vives also shows how the analysis can be extended through the general categories from questions around persons to what can be considered one of the central concepts of political deliberation – the commonwealth.⁴¹⁰ With analogous questions, one can gather information about its history, laws, customs, military power, and various other aspects. The idea is clear: to gather as much material as possible, the relevance of which will then be analysed in relation to the problem at hand.⁴¹¹ Yet, and despite the fact that Vives shows the possible analogy to the analysis of commonwealths, one thing seems to be striking in this initial exposition of the *loci*; the material gathered in this way is not primarily meant for the treatment of certain thematic questions on specific problems of politics.⁴¹² This was the case in the classical tradition where topics were primarily employed for the analysis of a question debated.⁴¹³ In *De consultatione* topics point to persons and their attributes, such as their instruments, opinions, social status, and relations. The focus on persons is understandable in the context of counselling; the adversity to overcome is not necessarily another deliberation presented by an adversary but the state of mind of the prince. *De consultatione* does not primarily portray an open debate in an institutional setting focused on a question, but ways of

⁴⁰⁸ Vives: DCO, 234: “...quae ante ipsam, quae cum ipsa, quae post ipsam.” George has categorized all the specific headings. See George 1992, 140.

⁴⁰⁹ Vives’s analysis is not very comprehensive. He mainly writes that some passions have determined objects, Vives: DCO, 235.

⁴¹⁰ Vives explicitly uses the analogy between the individual and social body here. Thus, the same questions that can gather information on individuals also serve for the *republica* or *civitas*, the two terms employed by Vives here. Vives: DCO, 237: “Inveniuntur proportione quadam haec in republica, aut civitate, sicut in unoquoque hominum.”

⁴¹¹ Vives: DCO, 234-238. Vives states later explicitly what any reader of a rhetorical handbook would have known, namely that “the alphabets of invention” exposed here are situated to the place where they have their greatest force by “prudence and art” and that all places should not be used in all discourses.

⁴¹² Towards the end of the part on invention, he does include a short section on how to think about and classify problems, see Vives: DCO, 261-263.

⁴¹³ For the importance of character, see Quintilian: IO, iii.viii.14-15. The part on deliberative rhetoric on *Ad Herennium* for instance, is heavily focused on the analysis of a question through the general headings of *honestum* and *utile*. An example of a question would be “Does it seem better to destroy Carthage, or to leave her standing?” *Ad Herennium*, iii.ii.2.

guiding the prince in contexts that are more private and possibly through written deliberations such as letters. In fact, its closest link is to the letter-writing manuals of the Erasmian tradition that emphasize the analysis of the addressee as one of the keys to invention.⁴¹⁴

In a traditional manner, Vives moves on to argue that deliberation is always about possible futures, in other words, about a possible course of action to be taken in an issue in which we can actually have a say.⁴¹⁵ The next move Vives makes is crucial for his rhetorical politics, as it presents an analysis of how, from the point of view of the faculties of the soul, the persuasion of the prince is possible. The basic categories here are faculties and the will, since “he who can and has the will does it, but if one of the two is not there he will not do it.”⁴¹⁶ Faculties refer not only to external, but also internal possibilities, such as natural talent (*ingenium*), and to the possible impediments of the soul such as passions. The link to the list of headings is evident; in order to get a comprehensive understanding of the possibilities – both external and internal – of a given actor one has to run through the headings already mentioned. But equally as important is a good analysis of what the deliberator wants since “everything refers to the will of the one deliberating.” The will, of course, is naturally inclined to seek what is good, but this, as Vives is quick to point out, refers not so much to the criteria of reality as to people’s personal judgement, which can be erroneous.⁴¹⁷

Directing the Will

The introduction of the notion of the will (*voluntas*) opens up explicitly two fronts of analysis in *De consultatione*: what everyone wants and what they should want. In some ways, the orators’ main task is to start with the analysis of the deliberator and especially his judgements of the good and the bad. This analysis should then be used to bring him as close as possible to what is considered to be the true standard of virtue as judged by Vives’s understanding of

⁴¹⁴ Erasmus, Desiderius: *Opus de conscribendis epistolis, quod quidam & mendosum, & mutilum aediderant, recognitum ab autore & locupletatum*, Johann Froben, Basel 1522, 10-11, 17, 19; Mack 2011, 246.

⁴¹⁵ Vives: DCO, 238: “Deliberatio omnis ac electio de futuris est, non necessariis, neque impossibilibus...”; Aristotle: *Rhetoric*, i.ii.12-13, i.iv. In *Ad Herennium* the fact that deliberative rhetoric is about choosing a right course of action is mentioned, *Ad Herennium*, iii.ii.2; Quintilian: IO, iii.viii.22.

⁴¹⁶ Vives: DCO, 239: “Tractantur haec perpensa voluntate & facultate, nam qui & potest, & vult, faciet, utique non facturus si alterum desit.” In classical tradition, the use of *voluntas* is different and does not play a role in rhetorical theory.

⁴¹⁷ Vives: DCO, 240: “...quoniam omnia ad voluntatem deliberantis referuntur.”; “...quae ad iudicia nostra referuntur magis, quam ad veritatem rerum.” The fact that our natural inclination to search good and avoid bad refers to our own judgement is one of the premises on which Vives’s third book of *De anima* on passions and emotions is built. See Vives: DA, 145-146.

Christian humanism, or at least use the deliberator's assessment of the good and the bad to promote an honest course of action. The question in Vives's mind is never only between two neutral opinions, but about bringing the other to reason, persuading him to follow the good, directing his will to a righteous path. Vives equates counselling with medicine of the soul that he calls the "art of curing" in a discussion on whether counselling should be based on experience or on universal rules opting for the latter, since they are "more stable and less exposed to deceit."⁴¹⁸ The idea of advising as curing underlines, of course, the Erasmian emphasis on teaching (*docere*) that lies in the very heart of its conception of rhetoric.⁴¹⁹ It is exactly erroneous judgement of the true good in the actual world, understood to be the norm by the humanists, that has to be overcome or at least controlled.

What is more, this idea of teaching (*docere*) implied a very specific relationship between reason and power. In describing rhetorical deliberation as an attempt of the reason to persuade the blind will, Vives wonderfully demonstrates the inverted intellectual hierarchy between the counsellor and the prince. The prince's world of ideas is not taken as the expression of a sovereign will that should be blindly listened to, but it is analysed only as a point of departure for rhetorical composition with the question of how he can be persuaded, brought to reason, and prevented from sinking into tyranny forever looming in the background. What was inherent in the writing of *De consultatione* – the interplay between an inner and outer deliberation creating a playful analogy between the counsellor and the prince, as well as the reason and the will – was explicitly stated in his later *De pacificatione* and *De anima* where Vives likened the prince to will (*voluntas*) and the counsellor to reason (*ratio*).⁴²⁰

In other works too Vives was very clear that in a healthy monarchy or a princely regime, in questions of decision making the judgement of good counsellors is placed above that of the prince. Indeed, in his 1522 letter to the newly elected Pope Adrian he complained that some learned men were persuading princes – who were ruled by their passions – that every war was just, which implied the corrupted nature of those supposed to perform the duties of

⁴¹⁸ Vives: DCO, 264: "Et quemadmodum in medendo sunt, qui solis consisi experimentis, suscipiunt aegrorum curam, quos greco verbo IMPERIKOS nominant; alii habent canones universales, quos ad singula rerum, quum locus poscit, deducunt." This refers to the capacity to generalize the particular question to universal precepts. The link to Vives's ideas on dialectic is evident as well as to Cicero's treatment of general and particular questions in *De oratore*, Cicero: *De oratore*, ii.xxxiii-xxxiv.

⁴¹⁹ Chomarat 1980, 20-25.

⁴²⁰ Vives: DA, 99-100; Vives: DP, C2-C3: "...ut Rex voluntas sit regni, Consilarii vero mens eius, & ratio, & id quod nomen ipsum loquitur, consilium, cuius rei aptissimam concepit ac expressit imaginem, qui dixit, praestare malum esse principem cum boniis consilariis, quam bonum cum malis."

reason.⁴²¹ Good counselling that fulfilled a duty to teach reason was of utmost importance for princely regimes and it consists of uniting princely will with a true assessment of the nature of things through virtuous counselling. This was a point emphasized repeatedly by humanists.⁴²² Some of the examples mentioned by Vives in *De consultatione* testify clearly of this inverted intellectual hierarchy. A great example is Vives's praise of the persuasive power of *Demosthenes'* story on wolves and sheep.⁴²³ The story is about how a wolf, Alexander the Great, offers his friendship to and persuades a shepherd to give up his dogs – orators – the result being that the wolf, after getting rid of the watchful eyes of the dogs, eats the sheep. This, in the guise of a non-adversary tale, is as clear a metaphor of tyranny that breaks with the paternal duties of a Christian prince. Simultaneously it promotes the role of the watchdogs as guardians of the prince.

The Question of Passions

That Vives takes as a presupposition for rhetorical situations the incompleteness of the world around him is clearly manifested in his treatment of emotions and passions as a way of redirecting the will. In his treatment of emotions in *De consultatione* Vives reveals ways of persuading and controlling someone with different emotional judgements of good and bad. Vives's ambivalent notion of emotions is present here: on the one hand one has to use emotions, because the only way to redirect opinions rhetorically is through emotions, but on the other hand, the use of very strong and blind passions, potentially uncontrollable, should definitely be avoided. Hesitantly Vives states “passions of the soul should not be excited and thrown into disorder” admitting only that they can be “pinched” by “things themselves.”⁴²⁴ What is more, he is adamant in proclaiming: “You are a saintly counsellor if you do not light up those passions

⁴²¹ Vives: *De tumultibus*, vi: “Sunt beatissime pater nonnulli docti homines, qui proximi & probati principibus magna apud illos autoritate, quum de bello consuluntur, ita de iusto & iniusto bello differunt, ut facile ex eorum oratione ansam Principes alioqui in suos affectus proni & praecipites arripiant existimandi quodlibet bellum modo placeat, iustum esse.”

⁴²² The importance of counselling for Erasmian humanists has, of course, been recognized before. See for example Skinner 1978, vol. 1, 213-221 Very often humanists remind the prince about the importance of choosing good counsellors in their political treatises. See Erasmus: *Institutio*, 46: “Alioqui tolerabilior est reipublicae status, ubi Princeps ipse malus est, quam ubi Principis amici mali.”

⁴²³ Vives: DCO, 259: “Sunt inter exempla fabulae poetarum, & apologi, qui saepenumero magnam vim ad persuadendum afferunt: ut ille de cassita, qui est apud Gellium: & quod Demosthenes dixit de lupis & pastoribus ad populum Atheniensem, et similes.”

⁴²⁴ Vives: DCO, 259: “Affectus non sunt in hoc genere, ut in aliis nonnullis, concitandi & perturbandi: propterea quod alienum id videtur a gravitate & probitate, quae in consultationibus exigitur. Vellicantur [...] ex rebus ipsis.”

but calm and appease them. Persuasion is not worth so much, that in order to achieve it, you would want to be a bad person.”⁴²⁵ Even though Vives’s main reflections on emotions and passions happened only later in the context of his *De anima*, he most certainly subscribed to the typical dichotomy, well known in Roman rhetorical theory, between good ethical emotions that in the more Christian interpretations pointed towards a union in God, and disturbing passions on the other hand. His hesitance about strong passions, however, is in stark contrast with much of the Roman theory that described elaborate ways of using them, despite Quintilian’s insistence on the destructive side of passions.⁴²⁶

The most fundamental technique of emotional persuasion concerns the redescription of the ends the one deliberating has set himself. As an example of a twisted understanding of the ends of political action, Vives portrays a man who has set himself the goal of gaining power, and who will do everything in order to reach that objective – even destroy humankind. If one wants to redescribe the ends, one has to show that the goal set has to be understood through negative evaluative terms. According to the Spanish humanist, one should argue in these and other cases that what the prince has set as his final aim “is not magnanimity but cruelty, not glory but vanity, not honour, but an empty shadow, not magnificence but madness, not justice but injustice, not liberality but profusion, not fortitude but foolhardiness, not a dispute but a brawl, not erudition but fraud.”⁴²⁷ Here Vives is activating the resources of the rhetorical theory of neighbouring concepts according to which one can always find an opposite concept that can be employed to describe the same action but with a different normative value. Thus, neighbouring positive and negative evaluative terms compete for the description of exactly the same set of actions, something that highlights the flexibility of rhetorical production in coming up with normative statements.⁴²⁸

The redescription of the ends one has set is not, however, the only technique proposed. The other strategy deals more directly with the use of the passionate disorders of the ones we are advising by using a neighbouring passion to show in another light the action proposed. In the background to all this, there was a theory of passions that emphasized their

⁴²⁵ Vives: DCO, 259: “Verum sancti consultoris erit, non accendere hos affectus, sed sedare ac placare, nec est tanti persuasio, ut vir malus esse ob eam velit.” In another passage, Vives: DCO, 251 (erroneously numbered as 252): “Nemo est qui non malit sibi caetera omnia, quam iudicium aut prudentiam detrahi....”

⁴²⁶ Quintilian: IO, vi.ii.

⁴²⁷ Vives: DCO, 260: “...non esse eam magnanimitatem, sed crudelitatem: non gloriam, sed vanitatem: non honorem, sed inanem umbram: non magnificentiam, sed vecordiam: non iustitiam, sed iniuriam: non liberalitatem, sed profusionem: temeritatem, non fortitudinem: rixas, non disputationem: captiones, non eruditionem....”

⁴²⁸ This aspect of rhetoric is described well in Skinner 1996, 138-152.

interrelations and the possibility to counter one passion with another. Thus, Vives states, “strong passions should be countered with another passion considered of no less importance by the one deliberating,” and proceeds to give some examples.⁴²⁹ Thus, one can use the psychological disposition of the one advised in order to show that what he is seeking contains threats that appeal to some other passion of his. Naturally, conceptual flexibility of rhetoric is an integral part of how this can actually be done.

What is clear here is that the one being persuaded is not the prince envisioned by Erasmian educational schemes. It is taken for granted that motivating passions can be those that would be despised and nullified in northern humanist thinking, and even though strong passions should not be lit up, some ways of using the emotional dispositions of the princes are needed. What is more, the exact same passions that make man unfree in Vives’s mind serve as a point of departure for rhetorical composition. All this, in addition to being a presupposition in a conceptual sense, was also so in practice. Erasmus and Vives’s letters amply testify to the fact that they were very well aware of the limitations of European princes, and that they understood their published eulogies to be ways of entering rhetorical persuasion.⁴³⁰ Rhetoric is essentially dealing with an incomplete world. It is a practice that gets its relevance exactly from the fact that the world is not living in a Morean utopia; there are wills that either have to be conquered or motivated by appealing to a distorted understanding of the true ends of human life since they are guided by reason that attributes incorrect evaluative terms to erroneous actions. One good example is the category of glory.

On the one hand, Vives’s thinking, in line with the Erasmian currents of the time, rejected glory as a motivating principle because of its closeness to destructive passions and to improper evaluative criteria. Vives’s *Vigilia*, an amplification of Cicero’s *Somnium Scipionis* from *the Republic* published together with Cicero’s piece in a volume that enjoyed considerable success in the print market, is essentially about glory and problems related to it.⁴³¹ In the *Somnium* compendium, Vives very consciously argues against a whole tradition of civic glory related to the exhibition of virtue, praised not only by Roman republican writers but also by a number of Italian *quattrocento* humanists, as well as the chivalric practices of his own time.⁴³²

⁴²⁹ Vives: DCO, 260: “Opponendum percussae affectioni, aliam affectionem apud ipsum non minorem....”

⁴³⁰ Erasmus to Dorp, Allen 337, 88-91.

⁴³¹ For its success, see González González 2007, 65.

⁴³² Vergerio: “De ingenuis”, 67-69. Despite underlining the importance of military virtues, the argument about the bestiality of war was a commonplace in Roman thought. Cicero, for instance, did argue for the primacy of peace regarding war as a demonstration of force suited for beasts. Cicero: *De officiis*, i.xi.34. Vives also dismisses this understanding of glory in his printed letter to the pope Adrian, Vives: *De tumultibus*, iiiii: “Optabant veteres illi

In one of the most emphatic moments, Scipio Africanus gives his opinion on glory to Pompeius. The paragraph that plays a key role already in Cicero's text where eternal and mundane glories are juxtaposed is amplified into a long and eloquent treatment in Vives's *Vigilia*. The treatment that brings some essential insight and depth to the concept shows how Vives intends to upgrade Cicero into a truly Erasmian humanist.⁴³³ In Vives's *Vigilia*, Africanus starts by noting that Pompeius still has his eyes on earthly issues but that he is positive that Pompeius can raise his spirit and soul to higher matters. However, he is still worried about Pompeius's possibilities to "easily shake off and to repudiate ambition and desire for glory," the most seductive of vices that is yearned for and sought after even by men of good *ingenium*.⁴³⁴ This is because the nature of glory is interpreted erroneously. Africanus argues, "glory is indeed not borne out of vices, and it is not what ignorant and stupid multitude and capricious people judge it to be," uniting glory with the social appreciation of the masses who are blind.⁴³⁵ True glory, on the other hand, is united with virtue, and especially the judgement of the wise.⁴³⁶

On the other hand, the political literature of the humanists uses the concept constantly in political treatises.⁴³⁷ Vives's own *De consultatione* reproduces the idea in the form of a precept. Vives writes that "another *ingenium*" can be either "drawn or forced." At times force has to be partly based on deceiving and seducing, so that "an ambitious man can be seduced through honor."⁴³⁸ Furthermore, already in Vives's list of things lingering somewhere

bellum, ut virtutem in eo, vigoremque animi & corporis ostentarent. Optari poterit tibi, sed longe diversa ratione. Illi enim vastando, sternendo, occidendo, cladem stragemque longe faciendo ac late magnam laudem, clarum nomen, immortalem parari gloriam arbitrabantur, ut eorum memoria sacrosancta esset mortalibus, quam magnam mortalium partem delevisent, & ii essent humano generi chari, qui adeo homines oderant, ut plurimos de possessionibus, de fortunis, plurimos de vita deiecissent, & grati bonis hominibus essent, quibus solis bellum faciebant latronibus & consceleratis comitati ac adiuti." The court culture was very present in many royal practices of the Burgundy of the time. See for instance Martínez Millán 2005, 231-232.

⁴³³ Cicero's treatment of the theme in *Somnium*: "Sentio, inquit, te sedem etiam nunc hominum, ac Domum contemplari. Quae si tibi parva (ut est) ita videtur; Haec coelestia semper spectato, illa humana contemnito. Tu enim quam celebritatem sermonis hominum, aut quam expetendam consequi gloriam potes." Vives: "Somnium", 59-61.

⁴³⁴ Vives: "Somnium", 126: "...non facile possis excutere & repudiare, ambitionem illam & gloriae cupiditatem."

⁴³⁵ Vives: "Somnium", 126-127: "Neque enim gloria de vitiis unquam nascitur, neque gloria est quod imperita multitudo stulta & levis plebes iudicat, vel non iudicat potius."

⁴³⁶ Vives: "Somnium", 127: "Vera namque gloria virtutem semper tanquam umbra corpus consequitur, sermonibusque et voce constat, eorum qui optime de summis virtutibus iudicant."

⁴³⁷ See Chapter four.

⁴³⁸ Vives: DCO, 264: "Alienum ingenium corpusque; vel allicitur, vel cogitur. Allicimus aut recta ratione ostensa, ut honesto, pio, legibus: aut affectu eius capto. Id sit partim rationis viribus, partim dolo, qui illectamento aliquo tegitur: ut avarus pecunia capitur velut esca, voluptate delitiosus, honore ambitiosus...." In a letter to Cranevelt he writes that he would rather live with lions than with drunkards since lions can be drawn to wherever one wants to take them by using lion's instincts. Thus, bestiality, if not cured, should be controlled, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 30, 10-13: "cum leonibus vixero libentius, quam cum ebriosis; inest enim aliquis in leone sensus, ita ut eo illam feram aliqua ratione quo velis adducas; ebrius nescit mansuescere, & bene morigerari."

between the honest and the good in *De consultatione*, one could find such social concepts that are effectively turned into faculties of persuasion.⁴³⁹ Thus, there is an acute awareness that, in a world where the moral constitution of men and especially rulers is far from perfect, one has to use traditional and false motivating principles in rhetorical persuasion. By redescribing glory and fame in attaching them to different actions – namely the perfecting of citizens in the prince’s case – one could try to use the vain and ambitious side of the ruler in order to advance Christian politics. Thus, theories based on glory are not to be understood as merely preceding the rhetorical situation: quite the contrary, they are evoked exactly because politics is conceptualized in rhetorical terms.

***Ethos* as a Source of Persuasion**

What is clear in the analysis of rhetorical redescrptions and in the moving of the will is that it has to bring about a real (even though possibly a momentary) change in the way the deliberator understands the ends and the means of social life. This cannot be brought about if the changes do not touch upon emotions and passions. A new way of seeing things brings with it a new emotional attitude towards the objects of deliberation that affects the will. However, there was something else to persuasion: the speaker should also use his own *ethos* in bringing about a change in the prince.

Ethos, as was earlier argued, could refer to the true character of the one speaker – a notion that was connected to the ethical integrity of life as a member of the *paucis* one social interpretation of which was the Republic of Letters. Yet, in rhetorical tradition, the question was always of the possibilities of evoking or creating an *ethos* in the production of speech or text, and if no art of *ethos* building was used, one’s rhetorical capacities would diminish significantly. Character is presupposed as a prerequisite for a good orator, but in oratory itself *ethos* means primarily the getting across of a message Vives and other northern humanists would consider important, and hence, the focus is on the possibilities of rhetorical *ethos* building. Since *De consultatione* is not conversation, but oratory, some moulding of character is needed to meet the standards of the situation where what counts is appearance, and where the point of departure is framed by the kind of judgement that other people involved have of our character.

⁴³⁹ Vives: DCO, 241-242: “...acumen ingenii, iudicium, eruditio, dignitas, honor, laus, gloria, gratia, autoritas, potentia [...] quae si ultro contigerint, & moderate utaris, in emolumentum aliorum, pulchrae res sunt & magnificae....”

Vives's treatment makes the basic assumption of the rhetorical importance of *ethos* clear: “the same thing said by various people does not have the identical effectiveness.”⁴⁴⁰ What follows is an introduction to character building in which the notion of appearing is key. In the very first sentence, Vives writes that “in advising two things are enormously powerful for persuasion, the reputation [here *opinio*] of honesty and prudence,” adding later in his analysis love.⁴⁴¹ It is quite clear that Vives's language easily slides towards the impression one makes on the deliberator who is mostly, but not exclusively, analysed as the prince. Thus in this part virtues are virtues only as far as they are perceived as such by the deliberator. The whole section built under the general headings of honesty (*probitas*), love, and prudence, takes as its point of departure the corrupted nature of political reality and the people involved in the situation. This manifests itself in manifold and interesting ways. Vives opens up with an exposition of the category of honesty. The Spaniard claims that wisdom without honesty is worth nothing since we do not trust people we do not consider honest. According to him there are mainly two things that guarantee the honesty of our character, namely that we live “honestly and saintly,” and that our words and deeds are in no way in conflict with one another.⁴⁴² Both suggestions underline the extra rhetorical dimension of *ethos*, since they are mainly concerned with advice for the totality of our life as constructing the right kind of authority to be persuasive – a point Vives might have taken from Augustine.⁴⁴³ But as was already seen in *De consultatione* these operate in a rhetorical framework: Vives argues explicitly that the famous Roman maxim according to which only a good man can be an orator is partly true, but only because a man who is not considered good would not be persuasive.⁴⁴⁴ Thus, life is viewed through its persuasive possibilities related to how it is perceived and portrayed.

In his treatment of love and prudence, this tension is even more apparent. The first thing Vives hurries to remind us about love is that it is of utmost important that it is believed that you love the person you are counselling.⁴⁴⁵ The very particular use of love in this context,

⁴⁴⁰ Vives: DCO, 244: “...eadem enim ad variis dicta, non idem efficiunt.” The same point is made in *De disciplinis* under authority, see Vives: DD, 596: “Non omnis persona eiusdem est autoritatis.”

⁴⁴¹ Vives: DCO, 244: “Duo sunt in consiliis potentissima ad persuadendum, opinio probitatis, & opinio prudentiae.”

⁴⁴² Vives: DCO, 244: “Existimatio probitatis duabus potissimum rebus vel paratur, vel confirmatur. Parabitur primum si honeste & sancte vivas, ac consulas, unde vetus illud, Vitam maxime persuadere. Nec est quod perinde avertat homines a persuasione, quam si vitam dictis videant dissentire.”

⁴⁴³ Vives: DCO, 244-245; Augustine: *De doctrina Christiana libri IIII*, Eucharius Cervicornus, Köln 1529, iv.xxvii.

⁴⁴⁴ Vives: DCO, 244-245: “Caput est apud Quintilianum, in extremo libro, non posse oratorem nisi virum bonum esse, quum aliis de causis, tum vero quod non persuadebit, nisi credatur talis....”

⁴⁴⁵ Vives: DCO, 245: “...ut amare illum credaris, cui consulis.”

as something gluing the counsellor to the person deliberating and enabling persuasion, is clearly exposed when Vives emphasizes: “the one deliberating most gladly hears to be loved, because that is truly pleasing and he really thinks that this is the case,” and that everyone believes themselves to be “most worthy of love.”⁴⁴⁶ A more explicit expression of how vanity and self-love of the prince can be evoked is hard to find. In another passage he argues that one should always respond to love and “more so with a powerful person, a prince, whose friendship can do so much good, and whose wrath can cause so much destruction,” and that it is safer to call the prince “very stupid” than to say that one does not love him.⁴⁴⁷

Vives, moreover, compares love and general good reputation as sources of persuasion, and cannot decide between the two, still arguing that love guarantees we are well considered since “our friends seem us better than our enemies.”⁴⁴⁸ Rather than general Christian love, what is meant here is the kind of exclusive love reserved for friends or members of one’s party that also look after one’s personal interest. What is more, this is primarily a love that is recognized and understood by the one deliberating. For this reason, it is of utmost importance that “it appears that you are only thinking about the well-being and interest of the one you are advising and not that of yourself or someone else.”⁴⁴⁹ Just as in Erasmus’s *Institutio*, where the prince is told to try to make friends with “the best,” friendship, although approached from a technical standpoint, is understood here as a key concept gluing the prince together with good counsellors with all the connotations of trust and fidelity that loom in the background.⁴⁵⁰

Prudence, for its part, is treated in its double function as the virtue guiding the whole construction of a speech, and as an appearance of this virtue that enhances the believability of what we say. Clearly referring to its second function Vives states that we should avoid “demonstrations of arrogance.”⁴⁵¹ On the same note, he gives very specific technical

⁴⁴⁶ Vives: DCO, 246: “& is qui consulit, laetissimo animo audit amari se: quoniam id est iucundissimum, & credit ita esse, propterea quod nullus tam parum sibi fauet, aut tam exacte se novit, quin censeat se multa habere, propter quae amore sit dignissimus.”

⁴⁴⁷ Vives: DCO, 252 (erroneously numbered as 252): “...nihil autem est tam ingratum, tamque inhumanum, quam non respondere in amore illi, a quo sis provocatus: multo magis si sit potens, si princeps, cuius amicitia tantopere prodesse potest, & obesse odium: ita ut maiorem dent tolerantiae significationem, si quis eos stultissimos dixerit, quam si non satis principem diligere, ipso maxime audiente, aut aliquo per quem possit ad illius aures permanere.”

⁴⁴⁸ Vives: DCO, 245: “...amici nostri semper meliores nobis esse videantur, quam inimici.”

⁴⁴⁹ Vives: DCO, 245: “Ita totum consilium sic temperandum est, ut commoda & rem illius, qui consulit, videaris spectare: non tuam, vel alterius cuiusquam.”

⁴⁵⁰ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 31: “Cum natura genuerit omnes homines liberos, & praeter naturam inducta sit servitus, quod ethnicorum etiam leges fatentur, cogita quam non conveniat, Christianos usurpare dominium, quos nec leges servos esse voluerunt, & Christus ab omni servitute redemit.”; “Constulit igitur tuae maiestati, qui civium libertatem ac dignitatem tuetur.”

⁴⁵¹ Vives: DCO, 245: “Omnino vitanda est suspicio arrogantiae....”

advice by arguing that we should always ascribe the opinion we are arguing for, not to our own genius but to the one deliberating. This can be achieved, for instance, by arguing that we learned it all through the person who is consulting us, or because of a mission or task we were ascribed by him. Someone close to the king might say, for instance, that he learned it in the exercise of his duty – a strategy Cicero used to build his authority in the eyes of the Roman people according to Vives. Whereas love can be more openly exposed, the exhibition of prudence has to be more hidden and subtle, and all hints of anything resembling arrogance must be avoided.⁴⁵²

The impression that *ethos* building is really an art with its own rhetorical rules – not just something spontaneous emanating from our character – is strengthened when Vives unites these questions to possible complications of the process. Thus, for example, loyalty built on virtues is always exposed to envy, a threat Vives counters with a detailed list of ways of strengthening the ties uniting us to the deliberator. There is very little analysis of how to build systematically a rhetorical disposition but as a way of a general rule guiding all specific strategies of proceeding Vives suggests that “all along the oration we should try to avoid saying anything that diminishes the general opinion of honesty, friendship, and prudence, and aspire to augmenting it.” He moves on to advise that with people we do not know, “we should proceed with circumspection so that we do not exhibit any appearance of temerity, arrogance, imprudence or that we do not seem as if we are looking for personal advantage.”⁴⁵³ In what follows a set of specific rules is given for choosing the right tone in relation to the social position, moral character, and intellectual capacities we hold in relation to the person to whom we are talking. Once again, the contextual nature of Vives's treatment is exposed: the general categories of prudence, honesty, and love, are to be tailored to a variety of situations where the way we manage our *ethos* and relations with others in different ways is the key. The most interesting section deals with the managing of our relationship with the hierarchically superior. Vives is well aware that the rules of the game are significantly different from the republics of classical antiquity, where due to the equality of the persons involved, more liberality and directness in expression are possible. With princes and with nobles one has to be aware of the asymmetry of the situations, and of the dreadful consequences of inciting anger.⁴⁵⁴ Here, the

⁴⁵² Vives: DCO, 245-246; *Ad Herennium* i.v.

⁴⁵³ Vives: DCO, 247-248: “Ergo tota oratione danda opera est, ne quid dicas, quod opinionem vel probitatis, vel amicitiae, vel prudentiae imminuat: augeat potius quantum licebit.”; “...agendum circumspectius, ne qua species emineat seu temeritatis, seu arrogantiae, seu stultitiae, seu impudentiae, seu tuarum utilitatum...”

⁴⁵⁴ Vives: DCO, 248-250.

managing of the relationship, taking a prince's prudence and wisdom in appearance for granted, directing him gently and with artfulness, as well as hiding and concealing possible disagreements, is of utmost importance for successful counselling. Somewhere in the background, one could hear echoes of the words of Peace in Erasmus's *Querela Pacis*: "kings are more powerful than the learned, and more under the influence of caprice than of right judgement."⁴⁵⁵

⁴⁵⁵ Erasmus: *Querela*, 6: "At principes magni sunt potius quam eruditi, magisque ducuntur cupiditatibus, quam recto animi iudicio."

4. Christian Peace under Good Princes

Chapter four looks at Vives's political texts of the 1520s on princely action and counselling. Rather than analysing all texts separately, the chapter sees them as partaking in an identifiable discourse on politics centred on the dichotomy between a good prince and a tyrant. This discourse can be found both in political deliberations meant for princes, in political texts printed for a wider audience, as well as in school exercises. This underlines the variety in contexts and audiences Vives is operating with. On a conceptual level, Vives, following closely Erasmus, argues that the primary duty of princes is to guarantee peace at all costs since it is only in peace that all other aspects of humanist Christian life become possible. The limits of a successful performance of the office of prince are not set merely by legal constraints but by the moral and virtuous nature of the prince. His self-governance can, however, only be guaranteed by the active and continuous performance of counselling that does not happen merely in the confines of existing institutions, but also in humanist literature more broadly conceived. Thus, Vives is both educating people in the performance of counselling, and realising a life of *negotium* in the service of the common good of Christendom, rather than of any one particular state.

Vives's Political Literature and its Context

Vives put his literary skills and his intellectual *ethos* to work in moral and civic philosophy in the 1520s; his published literature in the years 1519 – 1529 was overwhelmingly of a political and social nature. Already his 1519 *Opuscula varia* had touched upon political and social themes, and two of the published texts, *Praefatio in leges Ciceronis* and *Aedes legum*, openly discussed questions related to law. In 1520, the *Argumentum Somnium Scipionis Ciceroniani* appeared first on its own (Thierry Martens, Louvain) and later that very same year together with Vives's own *Somnium et Vigilia* (J. Thibault Gorneens, Antwerp). In 1520 Vives's *Declamationes Quinque Syllanae* was printed by Michael Hillen. In addition to these, the critical edition of Augustine's *De civitate Dei* with commentary, commissioned by Erasmus, appeared in 1522 from Froben's famous printing house in Basel. Despite its theological and encyclopaedic importance, the edition presented a number of views on a wide range of social and political themes. The aforementioned *De consultatione* was composed in 1523, and all of

the works published in the thoroughly political compendium entitled *De Europae dissidiis & Republica*, printed by de Croock in Bruges in 1526 were composed in these years. The works included in the compendium were his letter to the Dutch pope, Adrian of Utrecht, from 1522, *Ad Adrianum VI Pontificem de tumultibus Europae*, Vives's Latin editions of Isocrates's orations *Areopagitica* and *Ad Nicoclem* dedicated to Cardinal Wolsey in 1523. In addition to these, two letters to Henry VIII from 1525 entitled *De Rege Galliae capto* and *De regni administratione, bello, & pace* were included, as well as a letter to the Bishop John Longland from 1524. Finally, the edition was completed with a fictional dialogue *De Europae dissidiis et bello turcico* composed in 1526. The famous *De subventionem pauperum* on poor relief was written in 1525 and in early 1526, and it was published in autumn 1526 by De Croock.⁴⁵⁶ Finally, Vives's grandiose *De concordia* printed together with two shorter texts, *De pacificatione* and *De conditione vitae sub turca*, appeared in 1529 (Hillen). In short, these years witness a remarkable production of social and political literature varying in its scope and themes. The texts covered a wide range of issues in formats that varied from school texts to political deliberations pointing at the different places of political and social activity Vives was working in.

The composition of these texts happened, however, in somewhat differing contexts with regards both to Vives's personal life and the larger developments of European politics. Two interrelated themes have to be understood as forming the background of Vives and Dutch humanist thought more generally. The relationship between Habsburg princes and Dutch towns and provinces, as represented by the General Estates on the one hand, and on the other, the international relationship between the three big princely powerhouses of the European scene: England, France and the Habsburg dominions. Both of these discussions could be linked, furthermore, to the threat posed by the Turks who were advancing at an ever-increasing pace into the South East corner of the continent.

In 1519, when Vives discussed political and legal issues in his *Opuscula varia* he did so in a distinctively positive and optimistic moment. On the international level, the last years of the 1510s represented the culmination of pacifist humanist projects that had been developed and propagated in London, Mechelen, Brussels, and Paris, after a series of wars that had taken place mainly in the Italian peninsula between France and League of Cambrai led by

⁴⁵⁶ The work was mainly written between June and December of 1525, Adams 1962, 246-247.

the Holy Roman Empire and England.⁴⁵⁷ In 1518, the Treaty of London designed by Cardinal Wolsey, the Lord Chancellor of England and the most powerful figure of the Tudor court until the late 1520s, was signed by the ambassadors of all European powers. According to the solemn treaty, all major European nations agreed, among other issues, to a non-aggression pact, which also required all to fight a party that would break the agreement.⁴⁵⁸ In 1520 a series of talks between European princes took place in the continent, culminating in the flamboyant meeting between Henry VIII and Francis I on the Field of the Cloth of Gold, where the intention was to end warfare for all time, no less. The dawning of a new age was tangible, not least because the realization of the dreams of a number of European humanists seemed to have been made true by three young princes, all of whom had been borne after 1490, and whose policies were to a certain extent affected by the currents of humanist political thought.⁴⁵⁹ This all should be accounted for when assessing the naïveté and utopianism of Erasmian policies: in their exhortations to peace in the tumultuous years of the 1520s many humanists working in the Imperial and English courts actually refer to an existing document signed by all European princes.

The optimism of the late 1510s, however, was short-lived. During the 1520s, the political situation of the Burgundian Netherlands and of Europe as a whole deteriorated dramatically from the vantage point of Vives, Erasmus, and the humanist project of peace more generally. In 1521, a war between Charles and Francis had broken out, and starting that year there were discussions between the imperial and English chancellors, Mercurio Gattinara and Thomas Wolsey, on a possible attack on the French soil. These negotiations, which resulted in the Treaty of Windsor in summer 1522, effectively signified an Anglo-Habsburg war against France. The early 1520s political outlook based on a Habsburg-English alliance against the French soon turned upside down after the battle of Pavia and the ensuing Treaty of Madrid between Charles and Francis, who was prisoner of the Emperor at the time.⁴⁶⁰ In May 1526, Francis, after having been released from his imprisonment in Spain, formed the league of Cognac together with the Pope, Milan, Venice, and Florence – openly challenging the Emperor

⁴⁵⁷ Tracy 1978; 49-51. The peace treaty of 1514 was between France and England. In 1516, Charles, as count of Flanders, signed the Peace of Noyon with Francis I. In 1517, the Emperor Maximilian and Francis signed the Treaty of Brussels. In 1517, Vives was involved in the peace negotiations; see González González 2008, 43.

⁴⁵⁸ The project was greatly influenced by the currents of Erasmian thinking in the English court, see Gwyn 1990, 98-102; Adams 1962, 160-161, 178.

⁴⁵⁹ Koenigsberger 2001, 1-15; Tracy 1978, 49-69, 109-112; Tracy 1990, 1-89.

⁴⁶⁰ Knecht 2001, 93-94, 117-128; Gwyn 1990, 378.

and nullifying the basic contents of the Treaty of Madrid he had signed under pressure.⁴⁶¹ England finally joined the league in the summer of 1527 after flirting with pro-French policies since at least 1525, and suddenly Charles was left very much alone.⁴⁶²

There was also a local dimension to the distinctively Dutch humanist thought of the time closely related to wider European developments. Since 1477, the Dutch provinces had been in the possession of the Habsburg family who had acquired the region through the marriage of Maximilian (who became the Holy Roman Emperor in 1493) to Mary of Burgundy. After Mary's death in 1482, Maximilian's relationship with the Dutch provinces had been extremely complicated partly as, according to their wedding contract, none of the two could inherit each other's territories, but partly also because of the Great Privilege of 1477 that had reconfirmed many of their ancient privileges and liberties of the Dutch provinces. After 1477 Habsburg rulers failed to get a hold over the provinces, and the central government remained weak by European standards and quite incapable of enforcing princely authority despite the success in nullifying the Great Privilege. In fact, already by the early sixteenth century, most towns and provinces of the Low Countries had developed a distinctively constitutionalist tradition and civic consciousness.⁴⁶³ Consequently, not only taxes but also questions related to warfare that legally pertained to the prince were constantly negotiated with the towns represented by the General Estates.⁴⁶⁴ Throughout the early years of the sixteenth century, before the reign of Charles V, the Estates had declined to finance Habsburg wars, pointing to the close connection between the European aspirations of the Habsburgs and the will of Dutch towns to finance them.⁴⁶⁵

A clear example of how the international and the local were entangled was the problem of the Duchy of Guelders that did not recognize Habsburg rule, and that was supported by France in its defiant and militaristic activities. When two factions emerged in the 1510s in the discussions between the Habsburg rulers and the towns on a possible war against the Duchy of Guelders people knew well that a choice of policy towards Guelders was linked to France, international relations, and ultimately, to the taxation of towns and the authority of the central

⁴⁶¹ Knecht 2001, 125, 127; Mallet – Shaw 2012, 155.

⁴⁶² Treaty of the More on 30 of August 1525 signaled the beginning of close relations between England and France. Henry renounced his plan to invade France with the intention of regaining the French crown. England ceased warfare with France officially with the Treaty of the More, signed on August 25 in 1525. England officially joined arms with France with the Treaty of Westminster on 30 April 1527.

⁴⁶³ Van Gelderen 1992, 19-30.

⁴⁶⁴ Tracy 1990; Tracy 2002, 70-72.

⁴⁶⁵ Tracy 1990, 33-63; Tracy 1978, 11-13; Koenigsberger 2001, 42-72.

government. Erasmus, who was supporting a pro-French alliance led by his protectors Jean Sauvage and the lord of Chièvres, was among others keenly aware of these connections.⁴⁶⁶ In short, the question of war nationally and internationally was always tied to financial issues related to the relationship between the Habsburgs and the General Estates, and ultimately the powerful towns. An additional ingredient to the Dutch situation was the ascension of the young Charles, prince of the Dutch provinces, to the throne of Spain in 1516, and then to the imperial throne in 1519. The Low Countries were tied to international politics, something that the General Estates and the towns were to notice throughout the 1520s and 1530s.

Vives's Allegiance

Vives's own development as one of the prominent humanists occurred during these years with the help of the Erasmian Republic of Letters in the Low Countries. However, the contexts in which Vives performed his humanist work as a member of that Republic varied greatly due to the wider developments of European politics. His first acquaintance with Erasmian humanism happened in the optimistic moment of the late 1510s when some sections of Dutch humanism were trying to secure the goodwill and favour of the young Charles.⁴⁶⁷ As an indication of this, the years spanning from 1515 to the early 1520s, witness some production of political texts, the most important of which were Thomas More's *Utopia* – a common project of a number of Louvain humanists – and Erasmus's two main political texts: *Querela Pacis* and the *Institutio Principis Christiani*. Both of these works were written on the commission of Jean Sauvage and the Lord of Chièvres – powerful members of the court.⁴⁶⁸ These were by no means the only political texts printed in the Low Countries during the 1510s⁴⁶⁹ Different treatments

⁴⁶⁶ Tracy 1978, 71-88; Tracy 1990, 60, 64-89; Koenigsberger has emphasized that the so-called parties comprised among other things a distinctively geographical element. The towns of Flanders, who saw England as a commercial competitor, supported pro-French policies, whereas the great towns of Brabant, to whose textile industry English cloths were important, were prone to being pro-English and anti-French. Koenigsberger 2001, 93-95. For a good overall account of the development of the relationship between the General Estates and princely power, see Koenigsberger 2001. Sauvage and the Lord of Chièvres had an enormous impact on the policy making of young Charles in the 1510s, and could be regarded as the most powerful political actors of the time. For more detailed information, see BR I, 366-367; BR II, 325-327. How Erasmus linked taxation and warfare in his belief that a group of mercenaries was a plot of the central government to get funding for war, see Erasmus to More, Allen 543, 15-21.

⁴⁶⁷ The battle for the control of the young prince had been harsh already before his nomination to prince. Margaret had tried to protect the young prince from the influence of the Estates. See McConica 1976, 84.

⁴⁶⁸ Tracy 1978, 52.

⁴⁶⁹ Other texts touching upon political thematic included Dorlander van Diest's *De enormi proprietatis Monachorum vicio dialogus*, printed twice by Thierry Martens in the 1510s, and Adrianus Barlandus's *Libelli tres uno, principum Hollandiae, altero, episcoporum insignis ecclesiae Trajectensis, tertio, res gestae continentur*

were partly incompatible with each other due to their literary form, and differed greatly as to their respective geographic aspirations. Some were written as histories, some as political treatises (*Utopia*), and they all employed moral and legal arguments to a different degree. However, irrespective of whether epideictic rhetoric of praise and blame, historiography, or the language of law were employed, all partake in the fundamental idea of reminding the ruler of his duties and teaching him virtuous conduct. In this way, the praise and blame of these treatises is not primarily about the assessment of past conduct, but about framing expectations for the future as well as about reminding the prince of the limits of his power.

Despite the importance of local and other political tracts, it was Erasmus's *Institutio Principis Christiani*, printed by Thierry Martens three times in 1516, that undoubtedly represented the most far reaching and influential attempt to frame expectations for the young Charles. *Institutio* was, among other things, a piece of epideictic rhetoric, a sort of a mirror-of-princes reminding the ruler of his virtues and vices as well as an instruction book on education and policymaking. Furthermore, like More's *Utopia*, *Institutio* from 1516 onwards was very often printed together with a number of other works turning it into a truly comprehensive political compendium. In the first page of the 1516 Froben edition, the reader could discover that in addition to the *Institutio*, the book comprised Erasmus's translation of Isocrates's *Nicoles*, his own *Panegyricus* to the late Habsburgian Prince Philip, and Plutarch's *De discrimine adulatoris & amici* (*How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend*). Thus, taken in its totality, the reader is offered a treatise that touches upon the important themes of politics, law, good education, and the selection of suitable counsellors. In addition, Erasmus's *Institutio* was most openly connected to Vives's own production, and explicitly woven together with his *Declamationes Syllanae*. In the dedication letter to *Declamationes*, the Valencian informed the reader that Prince Ferdinand's predisposition to learning, manifested by his reading of Erasmus's *Institutio* under the supervision of the doctor Juan de la Parra, led him to dedicate the work to Charles's brother.⁴⁷⁰

invictissimi principis Caroli, Burgundiae ducis dedicated the history of the region but simultaneously reminding the ruler of his duties. Dorlander van Diest's text had been composed earlier but it was published twice by Martens, the main Erasmian printer of the Low Countries. In the 1513-dedication letter to Martens version, one reads how the work taught how princes should properly live, see Amstelredamus, Andreas: "Venerando patri & domino Adriano", dedicatory letter to Dorlandus, Petrus: *De enormi proprietatis monachorum vicio dialogus cultissimus*, Thierry Martens, Louvain 1513. There were also other more local defenders of the Dutch system of consensus, such the Hollander Aurelius. For a good analysis of Aurelius's urge to defend the language of consensus, see Tilmans 1992, 254-262, 279-280.

⁴⁷⁰ Vives to Ferdinand 1520, printed in Vives, Juan Luis: *Declamationes Syllanae quinque*, Michael Hillen, Antwerpen 1520: "documento est cum sanctissimi Christiani principis institutionem Erasmi nostri tibi a gravissimo

In 1523, Vives sailed to England. It is, however, unlikely that the decision reflects a complete turn in his allegiances vis-à-vis his Habsburgian years. The exact nature of Vives's relations and reasons during his English sojourn are hard to pin down. It has been quite convincingly suggested that Vives was closely connected to a powerful group of Tudor humanists in Henry's court, spearheaded by the likes of Richard Pace, Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop Fisher, and Thomas More, most of whom were friends of Erasmus.⁴⁷¹ As is well known, this group had been influential in the late 1510s peace politics, and still vied in the 1520s for a Europe-wide peace under the protection of the Emperor Charles V. Thus, whereas Cardinal Wolsey, their chief opponent in the court and the most powerful man of England after Henry, has been seen as epitomizing a *Realpolitik* approach to an alliance with Charles, the humanist circle Vives was mostly acquainted with, hoped for a long-term *Pax Christiana*. This would be based on an alliance with the Emperor that was destined to be the starting point for a European wide peace.⁴⁷²

Yet, activities in English humanist circles by no means hindered other allegiances. Vives was well connected to the Habsburg representatives of the English court, spearheaded by Lord of Praet and the Queen Catherine of Aragon, Charles's aunt.⁴⁷³ Furthermore, his constant trips to the mainland and his lively exchange of letters with Charles's advisors – such as Cranevelt – show that Vives most certainly did not understand his cause in England to be in contradiction with his old Habsburg contacts. It seems very clear that Vives's possibilities in England – at least from 1525 onwards – were closely tied up with the faith of the Aragonese queen. The change in general English climate vis-à-vis alliance with the Habsburgs coincided with a cooling of the relationship between the Spanish Queen Catherine. Henry himself was thinking about ways of nullifying his marriage with the Spanish queen, starting in from 1525 at least. After the Spanish-Imperial cause in the Tudor court had suffered a blow with the 1525 – 1526 political turmoil, Vives's activities on English soil are centred on the defence of the queen. Indeed, the Spaniard did defend her until an eventual break up between the Spanish scholar and Catherine occurred in 1528 primarily because the Valencian humanist advised the Queen not to defend herself in a trial that according to Vives was mere theatre the result of which being

viro medico tuo enarrari cotidie iubes neque is liber qui ad Christianam virtutem principem format e manibus umquam tuis deponitur. Quae res me aliam in sententiam iam adduxit tibi que hoc quidquid est opusculi dicare constitui.”

⁴⁷¹ Adams 1962, 188-203; Curtis 2008, 127-132.

⁴⁷² Curtis 2008, 127-132.

⁴⁷³ Catherine of Aragon was of course not merely a representative of Habsburg policies. She was also one of the leading patrons of English humanists, see McConica 1965, 53-58.

prearranged.⁴⁷⁴

It is symptomatic how Vives's loss of position in the Tudor court immediately led him to reactivate his Habsburg connections in order to carve out a place in the Habsburg context. The way in which Vives actively sought Charles's attention was one of the recurrent themes of his letters towards the late 1520s.⁴⁷⁵ Among others, Juan de Vergara's letter to Vives written in December 1527 reveals that the Valencian was seeking the attention of the Emperor. In a soothing tone, Vergara assured Vives, "he has a great conception of you due to the praise I dedicate to you in his presence."⁴⁷⁶ What is more, it is known that Vives did indeed establish a relationship with the Emperor, which allowed him to give counsel on educational and political issues throughout the 1530s, although the closeness of Vives to the Emperor is not easy to pin down. However, it does testify to a continuing interest to serve as an advisor of Charles, and somewhat breaks with the traditional interpretation that emphasized Vives's isolation in the 1530s.⁴⁷⁷

The way Vives moves around in the 1520s can also be interpreted through more local allegiances. His stay in England could have well been partially linked to his local contacts, since his family life happened in the Spanish merchant circles of Bruges, where Vives went on to marry the daughter of merchant family (Valldaura) in the spring of 1524. Flanders and Bruges in particular had close economic links with England that could be greatly disturbed by a war between Henry and Charles, and Vives himself was well aware of the logic of commercial relations as a member of a merchant family. In 1525, Vives himself was granted in England the license to import Gascogne wine and Toulouse wood, and to export corn, a license that must have been connected to the commercial activities of his family.⁴⁷⁸ However, it is not necessary to choose between different levels of allegiance in order to explain Vives's activities in the Habsburg and Tudor courts. Rather, one can interpret Vives, a prominent member of the Republic of Letters, as serving the wider cause of European peace that was the precondition for all other commercial and intellectual activities that Vives's humanist circles and own merchant family would judge as important. In this view, he utilises his positions and humanist authority

⁴⁷⁴ Curtis 2008, 130-131; Adams 1962, 270-272.

⁴⁷⁵ See Vives to the Lord of Praet, MA VII, 137; Vives to Honorato Juan, MA VII, 140.

⁴⁷⁶ Vergara to Vives, CHE 10, 253: "Is [Charles] de te praedicatione mea magnifice sentit."

⁴⁷⁷ For isolation, see Noreña 1970, 105-120. For new evidence, see González González 2008, 60-61. He was also payed a pension by the Emperor from 1531 until his death, see González, González 2008, 62; Moreno Gallego 2006, 150-151.

⁴⁷⁸ Noreña 1970, 77; De Vocht 1934, 19. Flanders's ties with England did not mean that they were anti-French - quite the contrary, see Koenigsberger, 2001, 93-95.

in different courts for the enhancement of a project of peace in rather flexible ways, and he is well aware that this project is of collective nature and has different spokespersons in different places.⁴⁷⁹ Moreover, his activity in the wider humanist circles did not seem to contradict his more local allegiances as a member of a Bruges merchant family, since the best way to promote the cause of Flanders' merchants was to work for peace in the international environment.

Despite an ambivalent attitude Vives manifested to worldly possessions – declaring “nothing but virtue is beautiful and great” in an Erasmian spirit – his writings portray commerce as a precondition of spiritual and humanist renewal. This is wonderfully represented by *De bello, & pace*, where Vives argued that the cessation of commercial relations leads to a decline of generosity that “sustains men of study.”⁴⁸⁰ The idea of peace as a precondition for commerce must have resonated especially well in the merchant circles of Bruges. In the context of the 1488 rebellions, Bruges had made very clear that the duty of the prince was to guarantee peace and prosperity.⁴⁸¹ Thomas More, who had famously close connection to commerce, wrote in 1524 to Vives's friend Cranevelt, “as long as the fury of war grows everywhere, no-one can freely take care of one's particular interests.”⁴⁸²

It is in these changing contexts that Vives's political writings can be understood as varying contributions to the project of peace. First, one has the circa 1520 texts, spearheaded by *Declamationes* and *Somnium*, that are first and foremost about propagating a certain language of civic action and moral philosophy in the school context of Louvain. Secondly, the letters to the Pope Adrian and to Henry can be read as political deliberations, exhorting the recipient to action on very concrete matters such as the organization of a Church council or a peace among European nations. Hardly unsurprising, all texts written in the form of deliberations are composed in the more pessimistic years following the breakdown of peace. Thirdly, the same texts printed in 1526 with the dialogue *De Europae dissidiis* offer somewhat different readings since the future orientated deliberations presented in these letters referred to things in past. Pope Adrian has already passed away and Vives's relations with the English king

⁴⁷⁹ Noreña 1970, 104.

⁴⁸⁰ Vives: “Introductio ad sapientiam”, 230: “...nihil praeter virtutem pulchrum, aut magnum esse...”; Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xvii: “Et intermissis commertiis multisque necessario indictionibus, omnium benignitas coarctatur, unde sustentari solet ordo studiorum hominum.” Adams also portrays peace as a precondition for social renewal, see Adams 1962, 3.

⁴⁸¹ Dumolyn 2010, 378-379.

⁴⁸² More to Cranevelt, CRA 115, 25-30: “Porro iam omnium animi sic publica cura tenentur occupati, dum belli furor ad hunc modum ubique adrescit, ut nemini vacet ad privatas sollicitudines respicere! Quocirca si quem domestica negocia unquam gravarunt, ea communi malo obscurata sunt.” Thomas More had close connection both to the merchant circles of England and Bruges, see Keane 2008, 117-130.

had deteriorated to the point where his possibilities of convincing Henry of peaceful politics must have been marginal.⁴⁸³ Moreover, one of two letters composed directly after the news of the Battle of Pavia had reached England, argued that England should not take advantage of the situation, something that had become irrelevant in autumn 1526 when Francis I was not only free but had already formed the League of Cognac. However, the content of *De Europae dissidiis* printed in Bruges was by no means random. It creates a *speculum* where the central message of past deliberations, European religious and political peace, combined with a joint war against the Turk, was still well in line with the main goals of a generation of humanists in the latter part of the 1520s, when the battle of Mohács had created a renewed sense of urgency.⁴⁸⁴ Moreover, the language in which the Vivesian 1520 corpus was embedded drew heavily on the common humanist discourse of the time.

Justice and *Aequitas* between Law and Ethics

Because of the varying contexts and audiences of Vives's 1520s literary production, the texts show different selections of style, length, and openness. However, despite Vives's capacity to give truth different forms according to the *ingenia* of the audience, it is clear that what is moulded according to the requirements of a context stems from a relatively stable conceptual basis: all the texts partake in a distinctive discourse of politics, shared to different degrees by a number of northern humanists. Naturally, the basic language adopted by most northern humanists did not operate with concepts that would have been alien to the everyday discussion on politics throughout Europe. In the Low Countries, every well-informed citizen would have been very familiar with the central concepts of concord, justice, and peace and he would have known that the duty of the prince was to serve as a prudent minister of justice for the common good. Moreover, he would have known that in a *dominium politicum et regale* such as the Low Countries, the political community had the right to participate in the administration of issues concerning everyone.⁴⁸⁵ These same concepts, however, did refer back to the longer tradition of political thought and to the classical authors humanists were deliberately resuscitating in

⁴⁸³ Curtis 2008, 130-131. Vives was very well aware that printing a letter to the Pope Adrian would turn it into a public political document. In December 1524 he consulted Cranevelt on the matter, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 128, 4-14

⁴⁸⁴ In the Battle of Mohács (29.8.1526) a Christian army was defeated by the Ottomans leading to a partition of Hungary and to a growing fear that the Turks might enter the core of Europe.

⁴⁸⁵ Koenigsberger 2001, 1-15.

educational contexts. In Vives's case, his somewhat eclectic debt to the classical tradition spearheaded by Aristotle and Cicero was dominant. However, this tradition was filtered through the Christian humanist heritage of Erasmus and Guillaume Budé. Thus, although no system building is to be found in Vives, some basic conceptual presuppositions present throughout his literary production can be discerned in these years.

What all northern humanist thinkers agreed on was that social life, as well as political communities, had to be based on justice – following the most important authorities of classical tradition such as Cicero, Plato and Isocrates. In his *De officiis*, Cicero had argued that in maintaining a commonwealth justice (*iustitia*) and charity (*beneficentia*) were needed. In a later paragraph, where Cicero linked cardinal virtues to specific themes, the Roman statesman treated justice in the context of human associations.⁴⁸⁶ Vives closely echoed Cicero and other classical thinkers in his *Vigilia* in arguing in the voice of Scipio Africanus for the centrality of justice as the glue of human associations – adding in the margins the maxim: “Justice is the bond of human associations” (*Iusticia nodus humanae societatis*), which indicated the central message of the passage.⁴⁸⁷ Justice, however, was not only the main glue of humans on the level of all associations (*societas*) according to Vives, but the primary task of the magistrates of a *civitas* was also to guarantee justice.⁴⁸⁸ These were not the only instances Vives underlined the centrality of justice as a basic bond between humans living in a commonwealth.⁴⁸⁹

The concept of justice evoked by humanists was of complicated semantic nature, and when it was employed in political deliberations, it was rarely defined, leaving it open to a variety of interpretations. However, whenever Vives reflected on the nature of law some basic assumptions always came up linking justice to natural and divine law, as well as to the Aristotelian concept of equity (*epikeia, aequitas*). His 1519 *Opuscula varia* comprised two texts on law, *Praelectio in leges Ciceronis* and *Aedes legum*, both of which united law and jurisprudence strongly with moral philosophy. As Matheussen has shown, the thematic and composition of these texts was closely linked to the academic disputes of Louvain between humanists and scholastics. In this debate, the evocation of the philosophical nature of law was one of the strategies employed for bringing law under humanist textual criticism and philology

⁴⁸⁶ Cicero: *De officiis*, i.vii, i.xxviii.100.

⁴⁸⁷ Vives, Juan Luis: “Vigilia”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *Somnium. Est praefatio ad somnium Scipionis Ciceronis. Eiusdem vigilia. Quae est enarratio somnii Scipionis Ciceronis*, Johann Froben, Basel 1521, 99.

⁴⁸⁸ Vives: DD, 372.

⁴⁸⁹ See for instance Vives: *Aedes*, 115. See also Vives: DD, 134: “Humanae omnes societates duabus potissimum rebus vincuntur, ac continentur: iustitia, & sermone....” Justice also plays a key role in *De concordia*.

from the confines of the traditional specialists of Roman Law working in the *mos italicus*.⁴⁹⁰ However, these polemics presented simultaneously a view on law that was repeated with minor differences in all Vives's reflections on the theme, implying a number of issues for jurisprudence not only as an academic discipline but also as a language of civil science.

In his *Praefatio in leges Ciceronis*, Vives presented the lawgiver and the judge as a mitigator between natural and positive law. He had to be a philosopher since the study of natural law understood in a predominantly Stoic sense meant that positive law should be promulgated in accordance with the natural ends for which man was created. Since the question of man's *telos* and the correct way to get there, belonged to the subject matter of philosophy, the legislator needed an understanding of these issues together with a contextual knowledge of whether particular laws were suitable for "the circumstances, places, times [...] and the citizens."⁴⁹¹ It was, however, not enough that positive law was devised in accordance with the requirements of natural law but the active interpretation of the law also had to take place in right spirit, guaranteeing that no divergence from natural law could ever take place. Thus, Vives, following Aristotle, argued in his *Aedes legum* that the correction and interpretation of law was an essential part of *epikeia*, underlining greatly the importance of the judge as the spirit of the laws.⁴⁹²

At the heart of this interpretative task lay the concept of *epikeia*, the central concept of both *Aedes legum* and the parts on law found in *De disciplinis* – arguably Vives's most substantial contribution to jurisprudence in his later years. Vives's interest in *epikeia* did not happen in a contextual vacuum: Vives's main reference point on law, Guillaume Budé, had linked Ulpian's definition of jurisprudence as the art of the good and the equitable (*ars boni et aequi*) to the Aristotelian notion of *epikeia* with all the philosophical and political implications the concept could imply. Budé had given the old Aristotelian concept new centrality in his *Annotationes in quatuor et viginti Pandectarum libros* where he presented equity as a correction (*emendatio*) of written law, evoking the importance of the flexibility of interpretation in the spirit of *epikeia*.⁴⁹³ In his commentaries on Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, Vives praised Budé

⁴⁹⁰ Matheussen 1982, 97.

⁴⁹¹ Vives: PC 1519, 111: "Perquirat siquidem naturalium cognitor rerum, sit ne lex secundum naturam, an loco, temporique, an etiam universis, quibus fertur satis congruat?"

⁴⁹² Vives, Juan Luis: "Aedes legum", in Vives, Juan Luis: *Opuscula varia*, Thierry Martens, Louvain 1519, 120: "epikeia hoc aequum & bonum unico Aristoteles appellat vocabulo, quam dicit non id ius esse, aut eam legem, quae sit scripta & expressa, sed legis emendationem atque interpretationem."

⁴⁹³ Budé: *Annotationes*, 1-2; Kelley 1991, 77.

exactly on explaining how jurists failed to grasp the meaning of Ulpian's definition.⁴⁹⁴ In the humanist circles close to Erasmus, *epikeia* was also gaining importance: one of the leading authorities of legal studies in Louvain and Basel, Cantiuncula, based his understanding on law essentially on a notion of *epikeia*, which was endorsed by Erasmus himself.⁴⁹⁵ More generally, most humanist jurists of the first rank were familiar with the concept and reflected on it in various ways.⁴⁹⁶

In classical treatments of *epikeia*, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*, *epikeia* complemented a merely legal notion of justice. As Aristotle argued, universal laws could not cover the infinite number of particular cases satisfyingly. Moreover, this was not accidental: it lay in the very nature of practical issues that all individual cases could never be covered by universal statements.⁴⁹⁷ In Vives's *Aedes legum epikeia* performs the same function: it is the virtue of interpretation that guarantees the relationship of natural law to particular situations that can never be bridged by a mere interpretation of the letter of law. Vives writes about *epikeia* in a number of ways, making his debt to Aristotle explicit: it is the virtuous interpretation of the law according to the norm of law, the interpretation of the intention of the lawgiver in promulgating the law or, as he eloquently puts it, the "way, norm, reason, law, mind, sense, spirit, soul and life" of laws.⁴⁹⁸ However, whereas in Aristotle *epikeia* performs a more specific function inside a general theory of justice and law, in Vives's *Aedes legum epikeia* is described in terms that make the letter of the law seem marginal, and always subject to the performance of this virtue in the act of interpretation. In this spirit, Vives evoked the Ciceronian commonplace that the "greatest justice" can be "the biggest injustice."⁴⁹⁹ Thus, at the heart of Vives's philosophical reflection on law is the lawgiver and interpreter of *epikeia*, and he never ventures to a systematization of specific problems of law in the manner of professional jurists.⁵⁰⁰

A few themes tie Vives's discussions on *epikeia*, natural law, and positive law

⁴⁹⁴ Vives: VCA, ii.xvii: "plura & exactissima Gulielmus Budaeus in annot. Pandectarum explicans illud a iuris consultis antea non satis intellectum: Ius est ars aequi & boni." Vives considered Budé the best jurist of his time and made the point in his private letters as well, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2 20, 114-115.

⁴⁹⁵ See also Schoeck 1988, 313; Kisch 1960, 154-176. Vives knew Cantiuncula, Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2 20, 96-97.

⁴⁹⁶ Giarrizzo 1977, 10-21. For different conceptions of *aequitas* in the early modern period, see Maclean 1992, 175-178.

⁴⁹⁷ Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, v.x.

⁴⁹⁸ Vives: *Aedes*, 120: "...legum viam, normam, rationem, legem, mentem, sensum, spiritum, animum, vitam."

⁴⁹⁹ Vives: *Aedes*, 120: "Neque velit semper ius summum sequi, quae saepissime summa iniuria est."; Cicero: *De officiis*, I.x.33.

⁵⁰⁰ This has been noted by existing scholarship, see Monzón i Arazo 1992, 315-316.

intrinsically to questions of good government. Firstly, what it meant to practice the virtue of *epikeia* could get a more specific interpretation in the ongoing discussions on the room of action of the princes conducted in the language of law. It opened up the possibility of criticising the actions of the powerful by referring to equity and the good that stated that positive law had to be in accordance with the common good, and interpreted in the right spirit. In this way, a law could be bad or interpreted incorrectly, if it served primarily the private interests of the powerful.⁵⁰¹ Very much in this vein, Vives equated bad laws in his *Aedes legum* with laws that punished the vulnerable but did not reach those in power.⁵⁰² There was a more particular way in which this language could be evoked in the critique of the possibilities of the prince to enlarge his room of action through deliberately malicious interpretations of law that only superficially covered a logic of bestial violence – the classical counterpart of lawfulness.⁵⁰³ The wonderful dialogue of *De Europae dissidiis* in which Vives embarked on a satirical analysis of the recent war in Italy between Charles V and Francis I, portrayed violence that was only superficially covered by law as the norm in power politics. At one point, in discussing what constitutes the right to geographical areas Tiresias – representing the humanist cause in its purest form in the dialogue – asks, “What else are these old rights than living roots from which a sequence of wars arises”? Such rights, according to Tiresias, are linked to the will to conquest, not to govern what one already has.⁵⁰⁴ Scipio, a warrior that represents a realist line of thought in *De Europae*, argued that the weapons of the princes really represented the sole right to “dominions and kingdoms.”⁵⁰⁵

These critical ideas of law as an excuse to expand one’s room of action or possessions, and law as masking the rule of force by the strong could also be found in Budé’s letter to Lupset, printed for the first time in a 1517 edition of *Utopia*. This same point had also played a major role in Erasmus’s *Institutio*, where in a section entitled *Enacting or amending*

⁵⁰¹ Vives’s early 1520s letters testify how he unites the decadence of law to aggressive politics of warfare made possible by the corrupted legal interpretations of the jurists. See for example Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 6, 11-38; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2, 91. This is one of Vives’s main points about law in his *De disciplinis* as well, see Vives: DD, 205: “leges [...] quae quoniam aequae in commune non sunt, nec iustae, haud aliter leges debent nominari, quam avena hordeum, aut mulus equus...” All major jurists of the early sixteenth century, such as Budé, Zasius and Alciatus, were well aware that the philological project of investigating Roman Law had political implications. See Kelley 1991, 77-78.

⁵⁰² Vives: *Aedes*, 118-119.

⁵⁰³ This idea was very much present already in More’s *Utopia*, see More: *Utopia* 1518, 50-61.

⁵⁰⁴ Vives: *De Europae*, xxxvii, “Nam ista vetera iura, quod aliud sunt, quam viviradices, unde alia ex aliis succrescunt bella, nisi simul radix ipsa oblivione obruta extinguitur.” This dichotomy between conquest and governing was developed also by Erasmus in his *Institutio*.

⁵⁰⁵ Vives: *De Europae*, xxxvii: “quasi aliud sit hoc tempore ditionum omnium ac regnorum ius?” Scipio is here referring to weapons. The same argument was put forward in an earlier paragraph by Polipragmon.

laws, the Dutchman had essentially tried to argue that laws should never serve private purposes, but rather the common good.⁵⁰⁶ All this was in line with the thoroughly Erasmian idea of law as something that protected citizens, as Erasmus made clear in his *Institutio* where he argued that law is something that makes men free.⁵⁰⁷ The basic idea of law as protecting the weak from bestiality is captured in Vives's remark in his *De concordia* where he asks

“What hope is left for poor citizens when they have lost in a storm the only port of justice and public tranquillity, if exactly those who publicly declare and promise to fight against injustice have their souls ready to cause wrongs?”⁵⁰⁸

There were possibilities in existing legal languages that could also be employed for restricting the room for action of the prince. In some of his work, Vives expressed his dissatisfaction with the conceptualization found in Roman Law that the ruler is free from law (*legibus solutus*) in a plea for a good prince not to posit himself above the law but to be bound by it. Erasmus had made the argument in *Institutio*, and Vives wrote in his 1519 *De initiis* a passage on good lawgivers that “did not want to be free from law.”⁵⁰⁹ Furthermore, he was capable of evoking the typical constitutionalist argument in his take on law in *De disciplinis* according to which princes were constituted by the consent of the people to enhance the common good. Differently from some tenets of the constitutionalist tradition, Vives did admit that originally these princes were not bound by law but that this was exclusively predicated on their moral and prudential character. Thus, if the legal definition of the prince as free from law (*legibus solutus*) is understood in the right spirit and in its original context, it most certainly does not mean that current princes can do whatever they wish, as Vives is quick to point out.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁶ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 51. He states for example that “In condendis autem legibus illud in primis cavendum crit, ne quid oleant sisci lucrum, ne privatam procerum commoditatem, sed ad exemplar honesti, & ad publicam utilitatem referantur omnia....”

⁵⁰⁷ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 29: “At homo divinum est animal, ac bis liberum, primum natura, deinde legibus.”

⁵⁰⁸ Vives: DC, book 3, R: “quid reliquum erit miseris civibus spei, quum amissus sit unicus ex tempestatibus portus iustitiae, & tam publicae quietis, quam privatae, si ipsi qui iniuriarum depulsionem profitentur ac promittunt, paratos ad faciendam gerunt animos?” In the absence of page numbers in *De concordia & discordia*, the next signature mark following the quote have been given for the identification of the quote.

⁵⁰⁹ Vives: “De initiis”, 83: “Neque enim soluti iis legibus esse voluerunt”; Erasmus: *Institutio*, 41, 47: “Cum negant principem teneri legibus, cum semet illi submittunt, cum ius in omnia tribuunt, caveat ne statim putet sibi licere quicquid animo collibuit.”; “Nec servitus est, ad legum honestarum praescriptum vivere. Neque tranquilla respublica, cum ad omnem principis nutum obsecundat populus, sed cum bonis paretur legibus, & principi bene consulenti, iuxta legume dictamen.” Vives makes fun of a French lawyer who wanted to defend Emperor's sovereignty over the whole world, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2 7, 56-59.

⁵¹⁰ In *De disciplinis* Vives does admit that initially princes were not bound by law because of the greatness of their character. However, with the corruption of their character they most certainly should be and Vives judges very

As often in the constitutionalist tradition and in Vives himself, the necessity to have princes in the first place is predicated on discord since in a simple and natural world of justice no political authority would be needed. In the new corrupted state, *magna potestas*, with the consent of the community, was given to very wise men of great judgement – specialists of *epikeia* who were free from passion, and who could enhance and sustain common good.⁵¹¹ *De disciplinis* was not Vives's only reference to the constitutionalist tradition. In an outspoken section of *De pacificatione*, Vives deliberately discussed princes alongside magistrates, claiming that they were “elected by the people,” pointing out that they had sworn fidelity to laws.⁵¹² In a work that was part of a compendium dedicated to the Emperor, this was essentially a way of reminding him of the consensual nature of the politics of the Low Countries.

Secondly, *epikeia* was not only meant as a possibility to criticise specific interpretations of law, but a certain culture of discussion centred on law more generally. Evoking *epikeia* opened up a space for redefining the academic discipline of law by claiming the philosophical status of jurisprudence. Whereas it was not uncommon in the early modern period for lawyers to use the philosophical basis of law as a justification of their own practice, in Vives it is systematically employed as a critique of the system of Roman Law within the confines of specific legal questions.⁵¹³ Despite activating certain argumentative possibilities derived from the language of law, Vives was keen to argue more generally that talking politics in the technical language of law could never fill the gap between universal laws and particular cases. More specifically, in *De disciplinis*, Vives's critique of legal tradition was fierce and linked to political history. The corruption of law goes hand in hand with the will of the prince – already ruled by his passions – to enact laws suitable for him with the aid of jurists. The following process of expanding written legal corpus with comments and interpretations is judged in profoundly negative terms as a process that alienated law from the common good and

negatively on the idea of *legibus solutus* and even more negatively on the idea that the prince can do whatever pleases him (*principi licere quicquid libeat*). See Vives: DD, 203.

⁵¹¹ Vives: DD, 201: “Ergo quod ex usu erat omnium ad quiete & iucunde vivendum, permissum communi consensu iis, quos censebant sapientissimos esse homines magni iudicii, & quietis affectibus, ut ipsi quam aequitatem mentis suae lumine essent intuiti ad publicas utilitates aederent, eam si videretur acciperet hominum coetus....” The need for princes is connected to the management of discord in the second part of *De disciplinis* as well. Here more emphasis is put on the problems of the people to choose the truly prudent man as a prince, see Vives: DD, 221-222. For a classical treatment of the constitutionalist tradition, see Skinner 1978, vol. 2, 113-134.

⁵¹² Vives: DP, C: “Regem, principem, magistratum elegit populus, ut adsit iustitiae, ut patronus sit ac propugnator legum, ut vinculum concordiae civilis.”; “Nec solum in leges magistratus & princeps, quum dignitatem inuit, iurat, sed nomina illi induntur, quis meminerit conciliatorem se esse communis dilectionis, authorem & nodum concordiae, vindicate pacis, quietis, ocii.” In the third part of *De disciplinis*, in defining *ius*, Vives explicitly states that authority (*potestas*) was transferred to the ruler by the people, Vives: DD, 522.

⁵¹³ The commonplace was used in humanist literature, see for instance Vergerio: “De ingenuis”, 54.

epikeia, and makes the understanding of law by non-experts overly difficult.⁵¹⁴ Ultimately, to cover all possible and hypothetical cases through the expansion of written law and casuistry is an impossible task – as Aristotle had shown in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. What is called for is a return to simple and reduced number of laws that are useful for people, and leave room for the practice of *epikeia*.⁵¹⁵ Thus, Vives’s depiction of the development and expansion of written Roman Law is predominantly negative and linked to the rule of the powerful, social discord, and complication of original simplicity. In this spirit, Vives argued repeatedly in *De disciplinis* that true philological humanist jurisprudence should transcend the confines of Roman law, and focus on the universal aspect of *epikeia*.

An indication of how Vives approaches the tradition of Roman law as a totality is that all classical jurists are grouped together, irrespective of their position on central questions of law. Thus, both Bartolus, one of the most famous legal writers on tyranny, is presented as part of the same tradition of law as Accursius – hardly an advocate of popular sovereignty. Like in many other humanist writers the whole tradition is woven together with an over-arching dichotomy of humanism and the darkness of scholasticism that transcends the particular points a given jurist is making.⁵¹⁶ Vives’s assessment is, univocally more negative than that of Guillaume Budé, for instance, who acknowledged the greatness of Accursius and Bartolus – arguing that their failures were due to the times they had to live in.⁵¹⁷ In assessing all of this, one should not rule out that Vives’s knowledge of the tradition of Roman Law might have been superficial. In the absence of specific discussions with the tradition, his specific knowledge of it is hard to decide.

Still, there are strong implications for civic discussion in conceptualizing the whole tradition of Roman Law in negative terms as one of discord. The preference for paternal simplicity found ideally in Christian princes, and the hesitance to employ legal language in the conceptualization of the relationship between the prince and the people, equates to the hesitance to define the rights of people vis-à-vis tyranny. Thus, Vives’s philosophy of concord never delineates any kind of right to revolt or disobedience for the people but rather aspires to sustain concord inside the existing institutional framework.⁵¹⁸ On a conceptual level, law predicated on

⁵¹⁴ Vives: DD, 201-219.

⁵¹⁵ Vives: DD, 218-219: “Scilicet utiliores sunt leges populo quo simpliciores...”; “Propterea quod ubi omnia explicare volumus, nec aequitatis syncerae interpretationi locum relinquimus, iniquitatem introducimus...”

⁵¹⁶ Vives: *Aedes*, 116; Vives: “Somnium”, 30; Vives: DD, 210-212.

⁵¹⁷ Kelley 1970, 73n, Monzón i Arazo 1992, 309.

⁵¹⁸ See Chapter five.

discord could be contrasted to the simple philosophy of Christian *caritas*, which could be condensed into Christ's fundamental message of reciprocal love that should rule on all levels of human associations.⁵¹⁹

Thirdly, the most central point of all was that the use of *epikeia* simultaneously implied that all legal questions concerned, conceptually, moral philosophy. Since questions of law always comprised the possibility of the practice of virtue of *epikeia*, the failure of the lawgiver or a judge to promulgate or interpret law according to what was just according to natural law, was never merely a technical error, but intrinsically tied to his moral condition. In Vives's later *De disciplinis*, the very first corruption of law is the corruption of legislators ruled by their passion and ignorance.⁵²⁰ As a conceptual consequence of this, breaking positive law is described as an ethical failure, meaning that unlawful princely action was not tyrannical solely because it could be judged as such in light of existing laws but because it was a break from natural law – an incapacity to live according to one's nature. More concretely, despite the presence of certain legal arguments, monarchical and tyrannical action was predominantly discussed in the language of virtues and self-governance inherited from the mirror-of-princes tradition dating back to Seneca's *De clementia (On mercy)*, which had played a key role already in Erasmus's *Institutio*.⁵²¹ This shifts the focus from the language of law to the language of ethics, and from the professional lawyer to the humanist expert of moral philosophy more generally. The possibilities of the language of virtues were systematically employed by Vives throughout the spectrum of his political oeuvre: Vives's most elaborate mirror-for-princes, *De bello, & pace*, drew predominantly from the language of self-governance and virtues reminding the ruler that he is the soul of the commonwealth and laws.⁵²²

More specifically, the idea that natural law served as a yardstick for the assessment of political action had another link to discussions of duties and virtues since a life in accordance with natural law consisted essentially in virtue.⁵²³ In the case of the prince, the outward sign of virtue was a peaceful rule that enhanced common good, which meant the

⁵¹⁹ Vives: DC, book 4, Cc3: "Si amor accedat, tanquam ignis noxia & viciosa omnia excoquens ac perpurgans, is unus vice erit legum, quae, cunquam excogitari possunt, omnium." Law as discord and feud was widely contrasted to the simplicity of Ulpian's *epikeia*, see Pace, Richard: *De fructu qui ex doctrina percipitur*, Johann Froben, Basel, 1517, 48.

⁵²⁰ Vives: DD, 202: "Prima ergo legum perturbatio in ipsis derivatoribus fuit [...] quod qui leges sanxerunt, sive imperitia atque ignorantia tenerentur, sive pravus animi cupiditatibus ac concitationibus vexarentur, & obedirent."

⁵²¹ Stacey 2007, 196-204.

⁵²² Vives: "De bello, & pace", xiii, xix: "Est enim princeps in Republica, quod animus in corpore...."; "Haec omnia in pace Principi debent tanquam legum animae, sponsori publicae fidei, sequestri concordiae...."

⁵²³ Vives: PC 1519, 110-111.

perfecting of citizens in a life of virtue that was natural for men.⁵²⁴ A prince should be a doctor that cures the social body to its natural state. When referring to natural life, law or state, the concept for Vives had often some obvious prelapsarian connotations, since natural life is essentially about living according to one's Christian nature embodied in the unbroken relationship to God that preceded original sin.⁵²⁵ In his *Vigilia*, Vives solemnly proclaimed:

“the love of one’s country is in accordance with human nature, it is something that restitutes man to his natural place, and that city of yours and those human laws, made according to the ones that govern heavenly kingdom, or brought to the earth by wise, divine men [will raise people] to the fountain of their origin.”⁵²⁶

The idea of politics that emphasized the role of the prince as a doctor of the political body did have precedent in classical thought, although without the temporal and Christian framework of original sin. In Seneca’s *De ira (On Anger)*, the teacher of Nero argued, “it becomes a guardian of the law, the ruler of the state, to heal human nature by the use of words, and these of the milder sort.”⁵²⁷ Erasmus, in his *Institutio*, drew heavily from the idea of the Christian ruler as a doctor of a political body and argued that laws should be above all persuasive, and aspire to perfecting citizens.⁵²⁸ In the same spirit, Vives’s *De bello, & pace* reminded the ruler that “princes should busy themselves in order to labour for and strive at

⁵²⁴ The idea of the common good as a key category for interpreting good political action is omnipresent in Vives and the humanist tradition, see for instance Vives to Thomas Wolsey, “Vives Thomae cardinali” (printed as an introductory letter to Isocrates’s speeches in *De Europae*), xlv: “...salutarem esse omnem gubernationem, in qua publica commoda privatis anteponuntur, perniciosam quum contra, & si adsit prudentia et omne genus virtutis, respectusque communis boni, praestare imperium atque administrationem unius...”

⁵²⁵ See for instance Vives: DC book 1, C: “Quid enim est aliud Christianus quam homo naturae suae redditus ac velut natalibus restitutus, a quibus deiecerat eum diabolus captum victoria sceleris?”

⁵²⁶ Vives: “Vigilia”, 150: “Illae enim de patria curae tam secundum naturam humanam sunt, ut ad naturalem hominum locum reducant, illaque civitas atque illae vestrae humanae leges ad harum coelestium exemplum compositae, seu hinc potius per sapientes & divinos viros in terram derivatae veros suos cultores & servatores ad fontem suum locumque unde ipsae defluerunt, revehant.”

⁵²⁷ Seneca: “De ira” (trans. by Basore), 106-355 in Seneca: *Moral Essays*, vol. 1, The Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1968, i.6.3: “Ita legum praesidem civitatisque rectorem decet, quam diu potest, verbis et his mollioribus ingenia curare...” The idea of laws as aiming at perfecting citizens is an old one, see Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, ii.i; x.ix; Plato: *Laws* (trans. Bury), vols. I-II, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts/London 1961, vi: “These are our original principles; and do you now, fixing your eyes upon the standard of what a man and a citizen ought or ought not to be, praise and blame the laws—blame those which have not this power of making the citizen better, but embrace those which have; and with gladness receive and live in them; bidding a long farewell to other institutions which aim at goods, as they are termed, of a different kind.”

⁵²⁸ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 50-51.

making themselves and their people good.”⁵²⁹ This was not only to practice virtue but also to perform one’s duty as a prince.⁵³⁰ Once again, Vives’s *De bello, & pace* put forward a perfect example of how good government was about performing one’s duty:

“But even more important than all these things is that the king fulfils his duty in governing his kingdom. Most certainly, in the case of a painter, a shepherd, a shoemaker, or a labourer, everyone mocks and dislikes him who they suspect cannot fulfil his duty. In the case of those who are important as well as those who are less important, it is considered ugly and despicable if they cannot excel in whatever they profess.”⁵³¹

Thus, a good prince reigned according to natural law: the successful performance of virtues and duties in the service of the common good meant that he was just and able to interpret and promulgate law in the spirit of *epikeia*. Ultimately, his main duty consisted in the perfecting of his citizens.

Vives’s views on the merits and importance of law should not be taken lightly. The old contractual system of the Low Countries was based on *consensus* manifested by the *joyeuses entrées*, which served as a symbolic demonstration of the respect for the ancient rights and privileges of towns. This situation was largely visible in the debates between towns, represented by the General Estates, and the Burgundian and Habsburg princes. Simultaneously, and increasingly in the early sixteenth century, the importance of professionally trained jurists was increasing both in the Habsburg administration, and in the administration of the towns that created good career opportunities for trained men of letters.⁵³² Thus, Vives’s point about the primacy of natural law, virtue, and *aequitas* together with a historical and philological understanding of jurisprudence and a great distaste for professional jurists occurs at a moment in which juridical education was the best way to guarantee a position in the administration of the prince. Furthermore, it was the best possible education for participation in the kind of

⁵²⁹ Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xv: “Quocirca omni studio Princibus laborandum, atque annitendum est, ut ipsi boni suos quoque bonos faciant.”

⁵³⁰ Virtues and duties were closely connected in classical discussions. See for instance Cicero *De officiis*, book I. At the start of book II, Cicero argues that he has already shown “how duties are derived from moral rectitude, or rather from each of virtue’s four divisions.” Cicero: *De officiis*, ii.i.1

⁵³¹ Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xx: “Sed haec, atque alia, quaecunque dici possent, superat quod Rex sic administrando regno officio suo satisfacit. Quippe sive pictorem, sive pastorem, sive caligarium, sive fabrum, aut alium quemcunque nemo non tum ridet, tum est odit, qui explere munus susceptum non queat, adeo & in magnis & in parvis non praestare quod quisque profiteatur, turpe atque invisum habetur.”

⁵³² Koenigsberger 2001, 75.

political discussions that would potentially be of interest to the prince by defining the lawful sphere of his actions. Thus, Vives's explicit rejection of the language of technical jurisprudence is meant to be a critique of the authority of professional lawyers, as well as a way of expanding legal questions to the realm of larger humanist concerns, opening up the possibility of ethical discourses of tyranny and good government.⁵³³ Vives's critical attitude clearly had a local element tied to the culture of *consuetudo* of the Low Countries. The centrality given to *epikeia* and to the right interpretation of very few laws resonated well in the framework of Flanders where the relationship to the count, Charles V, was essentially moderated through a simple culture of *consensus* not based on written documents.⁵³⁴ In accordance with a medieval political language found in the Low Countries, the prince should be the father of his state, the shepherd of his subjects, and he should prudently be reminded of that.⁵³⁵

Christian Peace and the Turkish Threat

What remains somewhat stable throughout the 1520s was not only the basic language and presuppositions in which politics was assessed, but also the more tangible demand Vives put forward: the duty of all princes to secure peace at all costs. This was not only Vives's point: it was effectively the main concern of both Erasmus and the Tudor humanists active in Henry VIII's court. Erasmus himself had provided the perfect and most persuasive *laudatio* of the importance of peace and concord in his *Querela Pacis* where he claimed that peace was the source of all that is good, and that it was the primary duty princes to guarantee this.⁵³⁶ The same theme in different forms was to develop into one the recurrent demands of humanist discourse of the 1510s and 1520s. The most grandiose and international manifestation of this was the Universal Peace of 1518 between the most prominent European princes.⁵³⁷

In practically all Vives's individual texts of the period, peace is of central

⁵³³ Koenigsberger 2001, 5-15, 44, 75-86, 103; Tracy 1990, Chapter two. The influence of professional jurists was growing in other places too. For France, see de la Garanderie 1995, 18; Ridder-Symoens 1981, 277-301.

⁵³⁴ In his *De disciplinis* Vives takes the example of Pannonia (Hungary) that was better ruled with its customary laws than with Roman Law interpreted by specialists. Vives: DD, 218.

⁵³⁵ Blockmans 1988, 145-148.

⁵³⁶ Erasmus: *Querela*, 5: "Etenim si ego Pax illa divorum simul & hominum voce laudata, fons, parens, alitrix, ampliatrix, tutatrix, rerum bonarum omnium, quas vel caelum habet, vel terra." The idea of peace is the precondition for the greatness of political communities is, of course, an old one, see Skinner 2002, vol. 2, 22.

⁵³⁷ The orations of Richard Pace and Cuthbert Tunstall in the context of the Universal Peace of 1518 are perfect examples of a humanist discourse of peace and they have been connected to the development of Vives's ideas, Curtis 2008, 118-123.

importance. Vives's 1526 and 1529 political compendia are essentially focused on the possibilities of peace.⁵³⁸ The most far-reaching and all-encompassing understanding of peace found in Erasmus's *Querela pacis*, and in numerous printed texts and letters of Vives, presented an interpretation of peace that went far beyond the confines of politics underlining the importance of a true peace in Christ as a precondition for the peacefulness of individual souls as well as for communal life.⁵³⁹ As Erasmus pointed out in his *Querela*, it was only through Christ that a reconciliation of man with himself and with others was ultimately possible – a reconciliation that signified a complete transformation, a restitution of man to his true nature.⁵⁴⁰ Vives largely agreed with Erasmus on this point. Very generally, Vives had declared peace as the source of all that is good in a commentary on a passage in Augustine. In this passage, the bishop of Hippo distinguished between different layers of peace leading from the body and soul to a perfect harmony of the City of God, and ending with an all-encompassing notion of peace between all creatures as tranquillity of order.⁵⁴¹ The idea of peace as tranquillity of order, harmony, and concord is also amplified at great length in Vives's 1529 texts *De concordia* and *De pacificatione*.

However, in some of his 1520s texts destined to the temporal rulers of Europe, Vives described peace in a way that could be interpreted primarily as the termination of warfare, referring naturally to the specific and urgent way a prince could contribute to a more profound Christian peace. In two of his published letters to Henry VIII Vives reminds the ruler – who is to his commonwealth “what a soul to a body” – of his pastoral and paternal duties towards the people, duties that demand the cessation of all violence.⁵⁴² Both letters, *De bello, & pace* and *De Francisco Galliae rege a Caesare capto*, refer to a very specific worry Vives had in the post Pavian context in which the English reaction to the imprisonment of the French king was hanging in the air. The letters linked the securing of political peace to a more general idea of social concord by arguing that it is only in peace that other realms of life could flourish – from commerce and the private life of households to the arts, and religion. In this way, the maintaining and securing of peace must be the basic and most fundamental duty of the prince,

⁵³⁸ Calero has argued that peace is the central theme only in Vives's 1529 compendium with the 1526 compendium being largely focused on politics. The fact that peace appears as a central theme in all the texts printed in the 1526 compendium does not support a clear separation between the two, see Calero 1999, 15.

⁵³⁹ See for instance Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 144, 14-22.

⁵⁴⁰ See for instance Erasmus: *Querela*, 10: “Quid autem tam idem potest, quam eiusdem corporis membra?”

⁵⁴¹ Vives: VCA, xix.xiii: “In hoc capite ostendit Augustinus omnia bona pace constare, quod si ita est, mala omnia in discordia & dissensione sita erunt.”

⁵⁴² Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xiii: “Est enim Princeps in Republica, quod animus in corpore....”

since it is only in a peaceful state that any of the other dimensions of humanist social programme become possible, ranging from the performance of virtues and justice, to education and commerce. As Vives put it “Only in peace can the goodness of the people remain untouched, since the activities that make men better are strengthened by peace, and suffer during wartime: the cultivation of arts and sciences, religion, laws, justice, negotiations, tranquillity, work.”⁵⁴³ Very much in the same vein, he continued, “In peacetime all these things are guaranteed by the prince as he is the soul of the laws, the guarantor of public confidence and mediator of concord.”⁵⁴⁴

In other words, political peace is the precondition under which all other human and humanist activities directed towards the reformation of Christianity become possible, paving the way for the truly perfect peace in Christ that cuts through and transforms all levels of human existence.⁵⁴⁵ What is more, all this systematically united to the promise of glory that would follow a prince who dedicates himself to the arts of peace. In his *De bello, & pace*, Vives linked the securing of peace to *Pax Romana*:

“Therefore a righteous and peaceful prince is followed rightly by these things; the praise of men of letters who owe the prince their *otium*. Augustus was most illustrious and praised by writers of all kind to whom he had provided the possibility of leisure with his prosperous peace extended to the whole globe thus obtaining a glory that is very rare among men.”⁵⁴⁶

What is taken up is social glory that relates not only to the relationship between prince’s action and conscience, but to the judgement of good and virtuous men – something Vives strongly emphasized in his commentaries on Augustine as well.⁵⁴⁷

⁵⁴³ Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xvii: “Unicus tempus conservandae bonitatis populi est pax. Nam ea quibus homines meliores fiunt pace vigent, languescunt bello, litterae, religio, leges, iusticia, negotiatio, quies, opiscia, honesta per civitatem contractio, atque occupatio otium, & utilis.”

⁵⁴⁴ Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xix: “Haec omnia in pace Principi debentur tanquam legum animae, sponsori publicae fidei, sequestri concordiae, unde qui hanc violant, contra pacem domini Regis dicunt fecisse.”

⁵⁴⁵ This idea can be found in other humanist writers as well, see Fonseca to Erasmus, Allen 2003, 75-79. Vives grows increasingly sceptic of a truly Christian peace. See Vives to Erasmus, Allen 2061, 33-42; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 261, 16-18; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 266, 8-11.

⁵⁴⁶ Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xix: “Idcirco probum et quietum Principem iure haec omnia consequuntur, laus a litteratis, quam suum illi ocium debent, quo nomine clarissimus fuit Augustus Caesar concelebratusque ab omni scriptorum genere, quibus ille festa pace toto orbe diffusa altissima fecerat ocia, nactusque est eam gloriam, quam es per gentes rarissima....”

⁵⁴⁷ Vives: VCA, v.xii: “Haec est in universum gloria, sed de vera gloria Cic. III Tusculanae Quaestiones sic inquit: Est gloria solida quaedam res & expressa non adumbrata: ea est consentiens laus bonorum incorrupta vox bene iudicantium de eccellente virtute, ea virtuti resonat tanquam imago.” Making the other point about God as the only judge of our heart, Vives: VCA, i.ix: “Paulus primae Corinth. III: Mihi autem pro minimo est, ut a vobis iudicer,

Vives did of course argue that a prince should contribute to the more profound peace through all possible means. He should give an example of virtuous conduct that has persuasive force for all other people.⁵⁴⁸ He should also serve as a patron of arts and participate in the restructuring of learning with his financial possibilities. But the role of the prince in bringing about true Christian concord should not be overestimated outside the confines of peace and warfare: much of Christian renewal rested on other domains of life. In Erasmus's *Institutio*, the Dutch humanist suggested to the prince ways of occupying himself in the time of peace, which included active engagement and enhancement of his dominions, ranging from the improvement of the infrastructure of towns to the cultivation of land.⁵⁴⁹ Yet, the main point of Erasmus is to warn the prince about what he should not do. The prince should remember that he is not above law, that he should not change status quo for petty reasons, he should not tax heavily, he should guarantee the right interpretation of a relatively short legal corpus, and of course, ensure that no war should break out.⁵⁵⁰ By providing a positive content as to how law should be interpreted, and by advising about what the prince should do, Erasmus is clearly implying that he should not break the age-old consent (*consuetudo*) with the Estates and the towns.⁵⁵¹ Even though a similar kind of explicit reference to the Dutch system is not found in Vives, partly because of the English dimension of some of his key political texts, his main points do not diverge so greatly from Erasmus. What is more, Vives's own appreciation of Dutch towns, their privileges and government, shines clearly through in the more locally embedded *De subventionem* on the social welfare of Bruges. In a description of man's postlapsarian history, centred on the rise of different kinds of human associations from the natural social possibilities of man, the concord of political communities (*civitas*) is finally broken by the emergence of princes, who profit from the work of others without truly providing anything except for tyrannical rule.⁵⁵² Furthermore, in his 1531 *De disciplinis*, Vives wrote in a tone that left very

aut ab humano die. Est humanum iudicium, quo quis ab hominibus bene vel male audit; cui contrarius est dies domini, qui intima cordis scrutatur, & iudicat.”

⁵⁴⁸ Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xvii “Vides summam administrandi imperii in bonitate vertii tanquam in cardine, ut is demum habiturus sit principatum iucundum ac stabilem, quisquis effecerit cives probos, facillime facturus tales exemplo sui. Nemo fert enim exigere quenquam ab aliis, quod ipse non praestet, nec frustra dicitur, vitam maxime persuadere.”

⁵⁴⁹ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 61-63. The section is entitled *De principum occupationibus in pace*. Tracy has argued that Erasmus had a deep mistrust towards the Habsburg government, see Tracy 1978, 128.

⁵⁵⁰ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 61-63.

⁵⁵¹ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 50-57, 61-63. The section is entitled *De legibus condendis aut emendandis*. Tracy 1978, 35-38.

⁵⁵² Vives, Juan Luis: *De subventionem pauperum. De humanis necessitatibus libri II. Ad senatum Brugensem. Prior de subventionem privata. Alter de subventionem publica, quid civitatem deceat*, Hubertus de Croock, Brügge 1526,

little doubt as to where his preferences rested concerning princes, when he claimed, “they consider very greatly those who take from the poor what adds to the dignity of the princes” and, “everyone who reminds him [the prince] of public prosperity and the liberty and tranquillity of the people is considered seditious.”⁵⁵³ Furthermore, Vives does indeed present similar views on the necessity to tax lightly, to guarantee the existing legal system, or to secure peace under all circumstances already in his 1520s political literature, and while these are not specifically destined to the Dutch context, all these texts were indeed printed in the Low Countries.⁵⁵⁴

Despite his constant plea for peace and concord throughout the 1520s, the Turkish threat complicated this. Even though concord and peace should be advanced in Christendom, Vives – like many other humanists – was one of the spokespersons of at least a defensive war against the Turks in the middle of the 1520s. There are very specific issues that arise here. As a servant to the Queen in the English court attached to Habsburg politics, a court he had served in the past, the election of Turks as the primary opponent at the very moment in which they emerge as a possible ally of France, was far from being only a general intellectual stance.⁵⁵⁵ Yet, Vives’s participation in an ongoing policy campaign against the Ottomans had a strong conceptual basis: they represented a threat to Christian life and concord, a threat that had become a recurrent commonplace in humanist discourse at least since the 1510s.⁵⁵⁶

Vives has also repeatedly referred to the Turkish threat before his 1526 compendium.⁵⁵⁷ One of the central points of his 1526 compendium is that the discord and warfare between European princes ultimately would allow the Turk to conquer Christendom and make impossible any kind of practice of Christian life. In a more political sense, Vives comes to associate Turkish rule with exactly the kind of political phenomena that go with tyranny: arbitrariness of rule, lack of legalist tradition, and no possibility to have an effect

Av: “Hactenus quidem pulchre illi & concorditer inter se agitabant, sed avitum malum non paucos vexavit aliis praeeminendi, imo vero premeendi, ut ociosi & honorati alienis laboribus fruerentur, ceteri imperata facerent, ipsi regno & potentia conspicui, stipati manu eorum quos vel arte vel metu in consensum tyrannidis suae pertraxissent, hoc ex ambitione illa proauthorum est natum, qua sibi spem divinitatis praesumpserant.” In the absence of page numbers, I have used signature marks to identify quotes. It indicates the next signature mark following the quote.

⁵⁵³ Vives: DD, 205: “...ut eum putet esse sidissimum sibi; quisquis de misero populo detrahit, quod addat principis dignitati, quae iam quo crescat non habet: & in seditiosis habeatur, quisquis de commodis publicis, de libertate populi, de quiete eius audeat vel meminisse.”

⁵⁵⁴ See especially Vives: “De bello, & pace”. See also Vives: DC, book 3.

⁵⁵⁵ Starting from late 1525 the French were trying to establish an alliance with the Turks. See Knecht 2001, 124.

⁵⁵⁶ In Erasmus’s *Querela*, the general attitude towards the Turks seems still to be rather peaceful. See Erasmus: *Querela*, 16.

⁵⁵⁷ Vives to Erasmus, Allen 1362, 74-75; Vives to John Longland, “Ioannes Lodovicus Vives D. Ioanni Episcopo Lincolniensi” (printed in *De Europae*); Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 47, 13-14; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 185, 16-21; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 217, 33-34.

through the performance of the active life.⁵⁵⁸ Thus, if the duty of a Christian prince is to guarantee the possibilities of not only political peace, but of Christian life more generally, than the duty to take arms for Christian Europe should not be disregarded since the possibilities of a Christian peace and concord are dependent on a successful defence against the Turk. Peace and concord are not of universal extension, but are rather closely tied to the life of concord between Christian states, to a concord that transcends the purely political dimension.

In addition to these conceptual reasons for fighting the Ottomans, the crusade against the Turks offered a possibility to redirect the existing hunger for glory associated with warfare. In the dialogue *De Europae dissidiis et bello turco*, by far the longest speech – a true exercise in deliberative oratory – is delivered by Scipio Africanus (one of the few traditional military heroes of the Erasmian circles) who calls for a collective European crusade against the Turks. In Scipio's speech, the existing interpretation of military glory is not redescribed, but used for the advancement of the cause.⁵⁵⁹ In many ways, Scipio, in doing this is speaking in accordance with the conceptual framework of Italian *quattrocento* humanism, where the defence of one's homeland and one's fellow citizens was indeed a major exhibition of virtue and an important source of civic glory.⁵⁶⁰ The fact that this is done in a dialogue gives Vives freedom to manoeuvre; rather than openly promoting the cause, he portrays it as a possible course of action, albeit quite a tempting one. Even though the dialogue is stuffed with Erasmian *ethos*, and that Scipio's opinion is somehow framed by it, no explicit condemnation of his words is ever made. The openness of the dialogue is not coincidental; if one thinks of the dialogues were one of the interlocutors is introduced to make a case for an ultimately erroneous cause, the norm is to condemn the absurdity of their words with ridicule.⁵⁶¹ Thus, Scipio's opinion that follows the rules of deliberative rhetoric in proving the righteous and advantageous nature of the solution presented emerges from the dialogue as a very plausible course of action indeed. Alternatively, to be precise, if one does not want to follow the voice of pacifist reason found in Tiresias, one should at least follow Scipio's advice that appeals to an erroneous notion of glory.

Scipio's speech starts by aligning itself with the critique of the princes blinded by

⁵⁵⁸ See especially Vives, Juan Luis "De conditione vitae Christianorum sub Turca", in Vives, Juan Luis: *De concordia & discordia in humano genere libri quattuor. De pacificatione, liber unus: quam misera esset vita christianorum sub Turca liber unus*, Michael Hillen, Antwerpen 1529.

⁵⁵⁹ Vives: *De Europae*, xxxviii-xlii, as an introduction to the theme one could read in the margins "Scipionis de bello Turcico sententia."

⁵⁶⁰ See for instance Vergerio: "De ingenuis", 67-69, 73.

⁵⁶¹ Good examples of the kind of closed dialogues are Erasmus's *Ciceronianus* and the Erasmian critique of papacy *Iulius exclusus*.

their anger and discord, moving on to argue that it would be both more advantageous and more honourable to take the war to the Turk. He argues that if one wants money, riches, or land, then Asia is the best option because of its immeasurable wealth and its large territory. Much of the argument is also about making a detailed analysis of the weaknesses of the Turkish army and military structure, and about the use of historical examples for proving this could be achieved since Europeans had always been and still were by their very nature stronger than Asians were. In the end, if “the wind changed direction and you directed your hatred and anger against the Turk, you will learn to know the spirit of the Asians.”⁵⁶² After the long speech by Scipio, Tiresias, effectively speaking in the name of Christian humanism in the dialogue, does not condemn but somehow incorporates Scipio’s ideas into his own position. In an Erasmian vein, Tiresias states that Europe’s strongest defence lies in Christ who guarantees mutual love and concord. Yet he continues by claiming that if the princes still “wish to augment their land, it would be better if they fought against a stranger and an enemy of the religion and not someone they are united to through blood and initiation to shared mysteries (Christ).” In a later paragraph, he goes explicitly to plea for a common defence of Germany.⁵⁶³

Thus, in a moment when the old Turkish threat was present in the aftermath of the loss of the Christian army in Mohács and when the Ottoman successes were closely related to the alliances and future of European affairs, Vives shows the flexibility of his rhetorical politics by incorporating an aggressive action aimed to appeal to the destructive side of princes. For the Valencian humanist, this was a way of redirecting the violent and ambitious impulses of princes to war, which could save the possibilities of a Christian reform programme in Europe.

Sulla and the Case against Tyranny

In addition to political deliberations, political concepts could be transported to texts that were primarily meant for an educational context. In this way, many of the commonplaces and arguments about tyranny and monarchy could be found in texts that were not primarily meant for princes or office holders, but to those in the highest echelon of literary training. A perfect example of this is Vives’s set of five fictional declamations: *Declamationes Syllanae*, printed

⁵⁶² Vives: *De Europae*, xlii: “Paulum si reflarent venti, & odia atque iras vestras in illum transferretis, agnosceretis illico Asianos animos.”

⁵⁶³ Vives: *De Europae*, xliii: “...aut si regnum liberet augere, alienissimum potius & pietatis hostem, bello impeterent, quam vicinum, sanguine et mysteriorum initiatione coniunctum.”

in 1520. Where *Veritas fucata* and *Somnium Scipionis* yearned to dress Greek philosophy in Roman garb meant for the variety of *ingenia*, *Declamationes* showed how to put existing political commonplaces into motion in a persuasive way. With this respect, it might be symptomatic that Vives did not only underline the dependency of law and justice on philosophy and natural law, but also in a more general sense on *scientia civilis* and humanist dialectic.⁵⁶⁴ As in *De consultatione*, the point of departure of *Declamationes* is that all normative concepts of political thought such as virtue, duties, common good, and justice could be understood in dynamic terms as claims that could cover different sets of actions. Just as Cicero could talk about the honest and the useful both in his rhetorical works and in his moral philosophical *De officiis*, *Declamationes* shows ways of situating one's argument under the headings of *honestum* and *utile*.⁵⁶⁵

The political nature of the declamations has aroused some curiosity.⁵⁶⁶ It has been pointed out that there is a possible conflict in Vives's explicitly pronounced reasons for writing the work, since on the one hand Vives emphasizes greatly the fictional side of declamations as a genre together with the adaptation of arguments to characters and particular questions. On the other, Vives states that one can draw specific political lessons from the work.⁵⁶⁷ Indeed this tension runs through *Declamationes* where so much effort is put into reconstructing the specifically Roman situation around the time of Sulla and Marius with its linguistic and institutional specificities. Thus, one could not apply *Declamationes* to current political situations in any simplistic way because some of the commonplaces reflect specifically Roman institutional and moral settings. Moreover, in *Declamationes*, the way the commonplaces reflect the character of the speaker and his intentions is crucial, and the arguments offered by Sulla's speech, for instance, would not be regarded exemplary as such. Yet, it is clear that even though the *Declamationes* are not comparable with simple *progymnasmata* leading from grammatical commonplaces to rhetorical production in a simple sense, they did indeed serve didactic purposes in ways that are more refined as E. George has suggested.⁵⁶⁸

The way the importance of declamation is highlighted as the most refined

⁵⁶⁴ Vives: PC, 109-112.

⁵⁶⁵ As George has noticed, Vives mentions three reasons for writing the *Declamationes*: 1. Against the inarticulate flatterers (scholastics), 2. An example of art of declamation, not merely *Progymnasmata* linking grammar and rhetoric 3. Specific political lessons to Ferdinand. George 1989, 2-3.

⁵⁶⁶ Some scholars have seen them as literary rather than political exercises. Lorenzo Riber for instance in his Spanish translation of the *Opera Omnia* situates *Declamationes* and the whole *Somnium* compendium under the general heading of *Obras Filológicas* (philological works) emphasizing their literary character. Riber 1947-1948.

⁵⁶⁷ George 1989, 2-3. For an in-depth analysis, see George 1989b.

⁵⁶⁸ George 1989b, 124-127.

rhetorical exercise in Vives's *De disciplinis* had deep roots in the classical tradition: already Quintilian, the rhetorical teacher of classical antiquity *par excellence* accentuated their pedagogical significance and practical usefulness.⁵⁶⁹ They could be useful in various ways. First, one finds in these declamations a set of political arguments and commonplaces that can be arranged in a number of ways. Because of the heavily rhetorical nature of these literary pieces, it is hard to distinguish a certain overarching architecture of argumentation where all the themes would come together into a one single chain of hierarchically related thought. Rather, the texts are a collection of arguments drawn from places (*loci*) through the methods of *inventio*. The material gathered is then arranged into a speech according to the rules of disposition (*dispositio*), always keeping the ultimate goal of the argumentation, the role of the speaker, the audience, the time and the theme in mind in accordance with the rules of *decorum*. Thus, at the same time as they taught political arguments or political commonplaces drawn from the places, they also transmitted a certain practice or modality of politics that are ultimately rhetorical and dependent on a range of contextual phenomena surrounding the case. In *Declamationes*, understood as an educational text, these two are inseparable.

However, the most important point of all is that the practice of rhetoric *Declamationes* portrays is clearly a rhetoric of counselling, where questions of good government and tyranny are treated in a context in which open speech is not always possible, and in which a mastery of *decorum* is needed. It, thus, mirrors many of the issues found in *De consultatione* in a theoretical form. One finds in *Declamationes* five different speeches, the first and second of which argued for the abdication of Sulla on both sides of the matter. The third one is Sulla's own resignation speech, and the fourth and the fifth orations flow through the mouth of Lepidus dealing with Sulla's condemnation and his possible public funerals respectively. The corpus of five speeches presents deliberations about future, assessments of the lawfulness of past actions, and moral evaluations of characters incorporating elements flexibly from different genres of classical rhetoric. This, naturally, points toward exactly the kind of rhetorical tasks Vives took to be potentially relevant in the princely context, where counselling and moral assessment of actions was of primary importance. All these features are even more pronounced in the 1538 edition printed in Basel, where *Declamationes* appear together with Quintilian's *Paries palmatus*, and Vives's response to Quintilian. Furthermore,

⁵⁶⁹ Quintilian: IO, ii.vi; ii.x. Quintilian highlights the importance of impersonation in deliberative exercises, Quintilian: IO, iii.viii.52-54.

Vives had included in the edition his translations of Isocrates's orations *Areopagitica* and *Nicocles*, both dealing with questions of good government and the respective merits of monarchical and republican constitutions. Still, Vives had added four texts of his own from his 1526 political compendium, all of which were clearly composed to advise the princes of the time on the most pressing issues of the moment.⁵⁷⁰ Finally, the dedication letter of the *Declamationes* to Ferdinand had been modified, although the 1538 edition still claimed that it was written in 1520. The new letter accentuated even more the contemporary relevance of the oratorical exercises reminding the reader that what was put in precepts in other works is presented in *Declamationes* in examples.⁵⁷¹ Furthermore, like the 1520 edition, the 1538 dedication emphasized the importance of guaranteeing the goodwill of subjects in presenting lessons that could be drawn by a prince from the *Declamationes*. The 1538 corpus is nothing less than a compendium of exemplary texts for advising that weaves the educational and fictional *Declamationes* together with texts treating contemporary issues, building a connection between Sulla and current princes that would be noticed by the reader. What is implied in the 1520 edition – namely that the rhetorical situations of *Declamationes* can be helpful to present day counselling – is made even more explicit in the 1538 edition.

Thus, it is not surprising that the general conceptual outlook of humanist political thought is regularly evoked in *Declamationes*. As George has argued, the *Declamationes* could be read as the dynamic and more eloquent counterpart of Erasmus's *Institutio*, composed very much as a collection of commonplaces.⁵⁷² The inherent flexibility of the concepts is brilliantly exemplified by Sulla whose speech is based on covering his actions with favourable normative vocabulary, although every humanist reader would have spotted the twisted nature of Sulla's arguments that try to embellish an ultimately tyrannical action. It is important to notice that the rhetorical flexibility of normative vocabularies is not taken to its ultimate conclusion by Vives:

⁵⁷⁰ These texts were his letter to the Pope Adrian (*De tumultibus Europae*), two letters to Henry VIII (*De Francisco Galliae Rege a Caesare capto* and *De pace*) and *De bello turcico*.

⁵⁷¹ Vives's dedication letter to Ferdinand in the 1538 edition of *Declamationes* in Vives, Juan Luis: "Ioannes Lodovicus Vives Principi Illustrissimo Fernando, Archiduci Austriae", in Vives, Juan Luis: *Areopagiticus de praesenti statu Europae, et bello Turcico diversa opuscula Joannis Lodovici vivis valentini declamationes sex. Syllanae quinque. Sexta, qua respondet parieti palmato Quintiliani. Eiusdem de praesenti statu Europae, & bello Turcico diversa opuscula. Item. Isocratis orationes duae, areopagitica & nicocles, eodem Joan. Loco. vive interprete*, Robert Winter, Basel 1538, "...et quae alibi praeceptis traduntur, hic exemplis."

⁵⁷² Edward George has studied the work in depth. He concludes that Vives's historical dramatization, closely connected to the precepts of Quintilian and examples of Sallust, portray a different and a more dramatized way of presenting Erasmus ideas compared to the Dutch master. According to George, "Erasmus is the Isocratean reciter of discursive aphorisms, Vives is the dramatic creator of situations which speak for themselves," George 1989b, 144.

his intention is not to present Sulla's story as an equal claim to normativity with all the other speeches. Already in the preface Lepidus, who "ferociously" attacked Sulla, appears as the potential hero of the story.⁵⁷³ Moreover, Vives is keen to point out that since the rules of declamation state that one should not simply put forward one's opinion, but to present a persuasive case for every cause, one "should not be surprised" if some of the arguments appear as being "easy to refute."⁵⁷⁴

Thus, even though Sulla's defence is effectively based on proving that he had acted honestly and expediently for the common good, despite of the harsh measures he had resorted to, the reader would understand the ultimately flawed and twisted nature of his rhetoric that tried to embellish tyrannical action and unreliable character with normative claims. In the end, Sulla states that it was only through his actions – carried out with conscience and the good of the community as the only guiding principles – that it became evident that in Rome (*civitas*) nothing was more highly esteemed than "liberty, laws, equity, and the good."⁵⁷⁵

Similarly, the first speech advising Sulla not to give up his power delivered with the mouth of Quintus Fundanus, would be recognizable to a humanist reader as a defence of tyranny. Even though Sulla's rule is presented as necessary for the future of Rome in the current corrupted state of virtue and habit that make a republican rule impossible, much of the speech betrays an attitude that would be recognized as ultimately flawed by a reader trained in humanist thought. A clear demonstration of this is that one of the key arguments in the speech for Sulla not to abdicate is based on his own private interest, since to step down after a regime based on fear and cruelty would result in his and his family's doom. Fundanus asks Sulla if he really thinks, "he could become a private citizen in this country where at your [Sulla's] command over a hundred twenty thousand citizens were slaughtered?"⁵⁷⁶ This is a cynical appeal to private advantage always deemed as the natural opposition to common good.

Yet it is mostly in the declamations two, four and five that one sees a constructive,

⁵⁷³ Vives: *Declamationes* 1520, *Praefatio*, B: "Lepidus [...] ferociter non solum in Syllae iam mortui acta, sed in ipsum etiam vivum esse contionatum..." In referring to the 1520 edition of *Declamationes Syllanae* signature marks have been used since the digital copy on Ghent University lacks page numbering. The signature mark given here refers to the one following the quote.

⁵⁷⁴ Vives: *Declamationes* 1520, *Praefatio*, B: "Quo circa nemo mirabitur, si levibus interdum argumentis, parum fortibus coniecturis usus fuero, & iis quae alicui dissolvi facile posse videantur." In the margins one could read, "In declamatione non quod sentis, sed quod persuadet dicendum."

⁵⁷⁵ Vives: *Declamationes* 1520, Declamation 3, K1: "...ut nihil appareat plus quam libertatem, leges, aequum, bonumquae in hac civitate valere."

⁵⁷⁶ Vives: *Declamationes* 1520, Declamation 1, D1: "Quid in hac te civitate in columem fore privatum putas? in qua plura quam centum milia civium iussu tuo occisa sunt." Translation from George 1989, 53.

although not a straightforward, way of putting humanist principles into work. In the second declamation that argued for the abdication of Sulla through Marcus Fonteius, one could effectively find an example of an asymmetrical situation of counselling dealing with less than a perfect recipient that is Sulla.⁵⁷⁷ Answering Fundanus, Fonteius tries to convince Sulla by claiming that the only way to secure glory in the history of Rome is to abdicate, and to show that power is not an end in itself but a troublesome burden one has to bear for the good of the community.⁵⁷⁸ Fonteius also emphasizes the ultimately impossible task of ruling Roman people in their current state. He argues, among other things, that their “virtue” and “liberty” require that “all others be subject to them, and that they are not be subjected to any of their own citizens.”⁵⁷⁹ With Fonteius, whose argument is heavily based on Sulla’s own faith and not only on the general question of the good of the Republic, one could indeed learn how to activate the vain side of the prince for one’s cause. Two of the political lessons Vives presented to Ferdinand, both in his 1520 and 1538 dedications, were that “nothing renders the burden of power lighter than the good will of one’s subordinates,” and that “men’s mouths can be shut and their speech constrained by fear, but if it relents even slightly free, speech and unfeigned opinions break out into the open.” These were given a veiled and dramatic Roman form in Fonteius’s speech.⁵⁸⁰

In Lepidus’s speeches, one finds a flamboyant condemnation of tyranny; albeit in a pronouncedly Roman language of freedom from dependency not found in Vives’s other political writings. Harnessing a variety of rhetorical strategies, ranging from character descriptions to the narration of history, shows in a new light the respective qualities and actions of both Sulla and Marius. At the end of the fourth oration, Lepidus claims that Sulla’s tyrannical actions were against, “all justice, laws, equitable and good, against religion, faith and all gods.”⁵⁸¹ All the traits of tyranny, from the breaking of laws to acting against reason and

⁵⁷⁷ Already in the introduction Vives pointed out that the first two speeches dealt with deliberations. See Vives: *Declamationes* 1520, *Praefatio*, B.

⁵⁷⁸ Throughout Erasmus’s *Institutio* the office of the prince is portrayed as a burden, see for instance Erasmus: *Institutio*, 22: “Cum principatum suspicis, ne cogita, quantum accipias honoris, sed quantum oneris ac sollicitudinis...”

⁵⁷⁹ Vives: *Declamationes* 1520, Declamation 2, E1: “...cui in primis caeteras, ipsam vero nulli suorum civium subiici pro virtute huius populi decet, pro libertate oportet...”

⁵⁸⁰ Vives: *Declamationes* 1520, Dedication to Ferdinand: “...ut nulla res levius regni pondus reddat quam bona subditorum gratia, eaque firmum ac perpetuum imperium stabiliat, tum, ut metu hominum ora comprimantur, & coercentur sermones: si abscesserit tamen parumper metus, erumpere liberas voces et iudicia non simulata.” Vives’s dedication letter to the 1538 edition of *Declamationes Syllanae* reproduces this passage.

⁵⁸¹ Vives *Declamationes* 1520, Declamation 4, M1: “...contra ius omne, contra leges, contra aequum & bonum, contra religionem, contra fidem, & deos omnes.”

common good, with passion and private interest as guiding principles are amplified eloquently.

Citizenship, Rhetoric, Princely Action

How, then, was the relationship between the prince or the monarch and the people conceptualized? What gives the people or Erasmus and Vives for that matter the right to make a number of strong claims? One of the classical concepts for interpreting the relationship was that of a citizen not absent from Erasmus and Vives's reflections on politics. Erasmus and Vives knew well that a Roman interpretation of the term portrayed the relationship as one of active participation in politics guaranteed by law.⁵⁸² In Erasmus's *Institutio*, some isolated moments could be interpreted as implying the Roman language of citizenship where the concept was presented in a dichotomous relationship to slavery, understood as dependency on the will of others. Erasmus argued that man is free twice over, once by nature and another by law, moving on to argue that true majesty consists essentially in the protection of the liberties and dignity of citizens.⁵⁸³ However, the central thread running through Erasmus's *Institutio* is not built on Roman language of freedom, but on explaining the analogy between Jesus Christ and a truly Christian prince. Thus, the main point is to explain that the basic political and judicial concepts of *dominium*, *imperium*, *regnum*, *maiestas*, *potentia*, are unsuitable for a Christian prince who is described through a range metaphors underlining his paternal nature, not his legal status. It is in this general framework that the dichotomy of citizens and slaves appears as freedom from the bestial terror of the prince, and as possessing a right to his paternal love.⁵⁸⁴ As Erasmus reminds Charles and the reader, God also wants to rule over free men and not slaves.⁵⁸⁵ Thus, all possible hints to the Roman language of liberty are always mixed with and framed by a more dominant Christian language.

Vives himself also knew perfectly well fact that citizenship did indeed imply constitutional and legal viewpoints in Roman political thought. Thus, it is hardly a surprise that one can discern a certain pattern in Vives's election to use the words citizen (*civis*) and subject (*subditus*). In his letters to princes and in his treatments of princely regimes, the word citizen, although not absent, appears more infrequently whereas the word subject (*subditus*) is

⁵⁸² Van Gelderen – Skinner 2002, 2-3.

⁵⁸³ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 29, 31: "At homo divinum est animal, ac bis liberum, primum natura, deinde legibus."; "Constulit igitur tuae maiestati, qui civium libertatem ac dignitatem tuetur."

⁵⁸⁴ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 29-31.

⁵⁸⁵ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 31. In the marginal, one could read "Deus liberis imperare voluit."

omnipresent.⁵⁸⁶ A clear shift occurs, however, when he addresses the town of Bruges, lauded for its republican constitution in *his Subventionem Pauperum* in 1526, where the word *civis* and *civitas* are employed frequently. The fact that the words are indeed connected to certain forms of government in Vives's mind is seen in the translation of Isocrates's speeches where the *Oratio Areopagica* – a plea for republican constitution – uses the word *civis* throughout whereas in the monarchical *Nicocles subditus* is by far the more common term.⁵⁸⁷

It is, however, in his *Declamationes* that Vives exhibits a knowledge of Neo-Roman political discourse. In *Declamationes Syllanae*, and especially in the speeches of Marcus Emilius Lepidus, we can find a presentation of a republican notion of political citizenship. In the first of his speeches, Lepidus is trying to accuse Sulla of a number of crimes committed before and during his reign while in the second one he makes a case against the public burial of the recently deceased Sulla. Both speeches make a systematic use of a republican language where Sulla's tyranny is related above everything else to his violation of the Roman freedom of citizens. By doing this and in using his arbitrary power he has effectively turned citizens into slaves depriving them of any possibilities to participate in the law-making process. Vives is using a language here that has a link with institutional arrangements instead of just hinting more loosely to the rights of citizens vis-à-vis the arbitrary power of the tyrant. This is made quite clear in his treatment of Sulla's attack against the people's tribune.

This is not just something additional in the text; it is one of the central points of Lepidus's oration. He asks, "By what right is the entitled power of the tribunes of the plebs restricted. Why is the sole rampart of this people's liberty hurled down from its citadel: why is this sole protection smashed and ripped away?" Later he adds,

"Seeing that all this was impossible so long as any free tribune's voice remained, he began by assailing the very head and stronghold of liberty. He mounted a siege on the tribuneship, so that he could proceed in safety and at leisure to stamp out our liberty."⁵⁸⁸

⁵⁸⁶ *De bello, & pace* employs *civis* and *civitas* but *subditus* is more frequent.

⁵⁸⁷ A tentative analysis of the first edition of *De subventionem pauperum* confirms that the terms, *civis*, *civitas* and *civilis* are employed over 15 times in *De subventionem*. In the dedication letter to the work Vives famously calls himself a citizen of Bruges, Vives: *De subventionem*, dedication letter entitled *Consulibus & senatui Brugensi salutem*.

⁵⁸⁸ Vives: *Declamationes* 1520, Declamation 5, P1: "Quirites, audire, quo iure tribunorum plebis ius potestasque minuitur, cur unicum libertatis huius populi praesidium de arce sua deiicitur, unica custodia frangitur, escinditur...."; "...neque id fieri posset quamdiu libera aliqua tribuni vox superesset, ipsum libertatis caput, ipsam

These and other pleas for the freedom of the plebeian citizens form the very core of Lepidus's attack. Thus, in a text that portrays a fictional setting for supposedly pedagogical purposes, Vives is able to demonstrate and bring to life the more specifically Roman notion of citizenship that was contrasted to the dependency of a slave.⁵⁸⁹ Moreover, the attack on the tribune as the protector of people surfaced the bestial tyranny of Sulla primarily as an assault on the liberty of his people. Nevertheless, despite *Declamationes*, it is clear that Vives and Erasmus never explicitly theorized about how the freedom of active citizens could be guaranteed by institutional arrangements against the mere possibility of arbitrary power of a prince or a monarch.⁵⁹⁰

However, the lack of theory on the legal conditions of citizenship does not mean that a prince should not be guarded. Both Erasmus and Vives are adamant in demanding that people expect and even have the right to demand good government from the prince. Vives in his *De bello, & pace* was very clear that the people did indeed expect virtuous policies from the prince, claiming that "all the people expect and demand from you as their right [...] that you complete it [peace]."⁵⁹¹ This strong claim is accompanied by a pronounced stress on the importance of counselling, and by transplanting the virtues of active life demanded of a citizen to the duties of a counsellor. Erasmus's *Institutio* undelined the importance of counsellors, claiming, "those citizens who are distinguished for their moral character, judgement, and prestige are held in suspicion and distrust by the tyrant, whereas the king holds fast to them as his helpers and friends."⁵⁹² This is primarily a plea for the prince to choose good counsellors and that he listens to them. In *De bello, & pace*, the Valencian put forward a strong demand for the prince to listen to his counsellors since the best road to wisdom consisted in "being reminded, instructed, corrected."⁵⁹³ This entire subject links closely to the moral dichotomy

arcem primum impetiit atque oppugnare adorsus est, ut nudatam praesidiis tutamentisque nostram libertatem ipse extinguere...."

⁵⁸⁹ Vives: *Declamationes* 1520, Declamation 4, N1: "O Quirites, quam pudet me Syllam mansuetudine & lenitate nostra tam esse abusum, patientiam tentasse, expertum esse quantum servitutis ferre & perpeti possemus, quid enim ad extremam & ignominiosam servitutem relictum est?"

⁵⁹⁰ Tilmans 2002, 113.

⁵⁹¹ Vives: "De bello, & pace", xxii: "Gentes omneis, quantum fama, & hominum sermonibus intelligimus, a te expectare, ac prope suo iure exigere, ut qui pacis initia & spem mundo ostendisti, eam tu idem absolvas...."

⁵⁹² Erasmus: *Institutio*, 23-24: "Rex se sua erga cives beneficentia et civium erga se benevolentia satis tutum putant. Tyranno suspecti sunt et invisi, quicumque civium, virtute prudentia, aut autoritate pollent. At hos rex ut adiutores et amicos potissimum amplectitur." (English translation from Erasmus: *Literary and Educational Writings*, vol. 5, Collected Works of Erasmus 27 [ed. Levi], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1986, 224).

⁵⁹³ Vives: "De bello, & pace", xiii: "...admoneri, edoceri, reprehendi, quae non minus necessaria sunt principi,

between flatterers and counsellors often evoked by humanist writers, and to the duty of counsellors to direct the prince gently to virtue.⁵⁹⁴

The evocation of counselling and counsellors found in Vives is, however, somewhat ambivalent as to the precise extension of the concept. It might well have referenced the Dutch system of consensus where the General Estates offered the prince counselling on fundamental issues of the state, and it could definitely imply the people officially dominating key offices of counselling.⁵⁹⁵ However, it could equally well refer to anyone who was able to give counsel and converse with a prince, or to anyone who was his friend. Erasmus's *Institutio* discussed the importance of friends as potential counsellors, and Vives's *De consultatione* had made very clear that to be a friend of the prince was crucial in the practice of counselling.⁵⁹⁶ Finally, however, the question of counselling understood in very broad terms could be united to a demand for the freedom to express one's opinions as a precondition to a successful monarchy, or a princely regime – a point Vives underlined in *De bello, & pace*.⁵⁹⁷ Indeed, one manifestation of this liberality happens outside the court in writing. Vives himself was very clear that he performed the duties of a counsellor in his *De rege capto* referring to himself as a counsellor (*monitor*). Erasmus, for his part, argued that books were of great importance in counselling and instructing princes; it is in this context that part of Vives's own activities of the 1520s must be understood as the performance of the active life as a counsellor of princes.⁵⁹⁸

However, to be a counsellor was not merely a social or institutional position, but it was ultimately always discussed as an ethical condition in dichotomy with the flatterer. As has been seen, the traditional dichotomy of tyrant and prince goes back not only to the medieval and Renaissance mirror-of-princes genre, but also eventually to the Senecan tradition of Roman political thought that emphasized moral self-governance of the prince as a precondition for

quam reliquis hominibus....”

⁵⁹⁴ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 38-43; Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xiii-xiiii.

⁵⁹⁵ Vives to Erasmus, Allen 2208, 13-17: “Sed revalvit, et in adinstratione rerum Hispaniae est Augustae et Caesarae discendente. Queis duobus additi sunt Dux Albae, et Magister Equitum, nuper mortui filius; ita ut hi tres sint velut admonitores et consultores, illa Imperatrix et rectrix omnium.”; Vives *De Galliae*, xii: “Non addam plura, ne praecipere videar prudentiae vel tuae, vel tuorum consultorum, & in primis D. Cardinalis viri in gerendis publicis negotiis exercitatissimi.”

⁵⁹⁶ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 43.

⁵⁹⁷ Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xiiii: “Magnum regni columnen sunt amici prudentes, ac liberi, quibus moderata potentia sustentatur.” The paragraph was marked in the margins by the heading *libertas consultorum*. Curtis has also underlined the importance of counselling in Vives, see Curtis 2011. 1. Thomas More famously called for liberality of speech in a speech in the House of Commons in 1523, see Roper, William: *The Life of Sir Thomas More, c. 1556* (eds. Wegemer, Gerard – Stephen Smith), Center for Thomas More Studies, 2003, 7-10.

⁵⁹⁸ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 43.

healthy and legitimate rule.⁵⁹⁹ The outward sign of self-governance and freedom from passion was, thus, a rule in accordance with the by definition natural virtues and duties of a prince that posited common good as the ultimate goal of political action. As is well known, humanists would often underline the importance of right education of the prince as a right path to good rule.⁶⁰⁰ However, in highlighting the importance of the counsellor, the ethical demand is transposed to those undertaking counselling; he should be free from passions, and he should guarantee that government occurs in accordance with reason and natural law. Vives's *De pacificatione* made this demand clear when referring to the counsellor as the reason of the social body that has to refrain the will, to teach what is best, and excite to everything that is laudable and honest.⁶⁰¹

The evocation of the moral nature of counselling was linked to the omnipresent discussion on the true source of nobility, which according to humanists lays in virtue and not in lineage. Thus, it links to the broader process where the educated elite, men of letters, and members of the Republic of Letters, slowly populate the more important offices of the state.⁶⁰² However, the ethical demand had far-reaching conceptual consequences since to be a virtuous person is essentially to participate in natural law. The moral claim implies that the one undertaking a life of *negotium* cannot be partial but has to be a true citizen of the world. This is a point Vives makes frequently about the concept citizenship: it is not a legal privilege but a moral condition predicated on one's capacity to partake in the world of reason and natural law. Of classical writers, Seneca most famously discussed the two commonwealths men were a part:

“One, a vast and truly common state, which embraces alike gods and men, in which we look neither to this corner of earth nor to that, but measure the bounds of our citizenship by the path of the sun; the other, the one to which we have been assigned by the accident of birth. This will be the commonwealth of the Athenians or of the Carthaginians, or of any other city that belongs, not to all, but to some particular race of men.”

⁵⁹⁹ Stacey 2011.

⁶⁰⁰ Erasmus's *Institutio* focuses greatly on this.

⁶⁰¹ Vives: DP, C2-C3: “Consilarii vero mens eius, & ratio....”

⁶⁰² On the *vera nobilitas* discussion, see Vives: DP, B4-B5. According to Erasmus the best, not nobles, should be magistrates, see Erasmus: *Institutio*, 58. This dichotomy was more widely known in humanist circles, see for instance Tunstall to Erasmus, Allen 572, 31-38.

He went on to show that the first world was not a mere realm of *otium* and contemplation but one that could be served by “enquiring what virtue is, and whether it is one or many, whether it is nature or art that makes men good.”⁶⁰³ Openly referring to the Stoic universal commonwealth, Vives argued in his *Praefatio in leges Ciceronis* that the context for thinking about the *thelos* of man and law was the “universal commonwealth,” composed of human race where the lawgiver should act as the “perfect citizen.”⁶⁰⁴

All of this implies a systematic denial of the Ciceronian model in which the performance of citizenship for the common good is equated with the Roman state.⁶⁰⁵ Vives explicitly denounced this in his *De consultatione* where he complained that Romans thought about the honest within the confines of *patria* claiming that religion – the true measure of honesty – should win over particular commonwealths.⁶⁰⁶ In Vives, the citizenship of the world can at times be equated with Christendom, but in other instances he describes this in even more open terms.⁶⁰⁷ However, the point is clear: the political goals and common good of separate states in no-way conflict with *Pax Christiana* which enables good government and the unharmed flourishing of the arts and commerce. Moreover, this is where the true glory of princes lies, and they should constantly be reminded of this by wise, educated, and virtuous counsellors. In the 1520s Vives was definitely one of these men who translated wisdom to civic prudence, and he educated others in the performance of these duties.

⁶⁰³ Seneca: “De otio” (trans. by Basore), 180-201 in Seneca: *Moral Essays*, vol. 2, The Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1965, IV.1-2: “Duae res publicas animo complectamur, alteram magnam et vere publicam, qua dii atque homines continentur, in qua non ad hunc angulum respicimus aut ad illum, sed terminos civitatis nostrae cum sole metimur; alteram, cui nos adscripsit condicio nascendi. Haec aut Atheniensium erit aut Carthaginiensium, aut alterius alicuius urbis, quae non ad omnis pertineat homines sed ad certos.”; “...ut quaeramus quid sit virtus, una pluresne sint; natura an ars bonos viros faciat....”; see Stacey 2007, 29-30.

⁶⁰⁴ Vives: PC, 111: “...is etiam tanquam optimus civis huius universae civitatis, quae totum genus humanum capit inventa sua publicos in usus in medium reponit.”

⁶⁰⁵ Tuck 1990, 44-45.

⁶⁰⁶ Vives: DCO, 254: “...Romani fortasse summam honestatem putabant, patriae prodesse [...] Nos vero dicamus. Honestas vincat, sed potius, Vincat religio.” See also Erasmus to Budé, Allen 906, 501-503: “Quid autem necesse est sic me huic aut alteri principi addicere, ut a reliquis me eximam? Malo servire nulli, et prodesse, si quem, omnibus.”

⁶⁰⁷ Vives: DD, 390.

5. Between Concord and Discord

Chapter five focuses on Vives's 1529 political compendium built around the grandiose *De concordia & discordia in humano genere*. Rather than analysing the totality of *De concordia*, the chapter tries to argue three things. First, Vives's use of the social body in *De concordia* suggests that the perfecting of man is essentially a social undertaking; it can be discussed on the level of social bodies. This social perfecting is not predicated merely on the perfecting of its individual members, but on the capacity of the head of the body to enhance and guarantee the common good. Secondly, the chapter argues that the general focus of the work on all human association directs the attention away from politics to a whole range of issues sustaining discord and error on all levels of human association. In this way, it implies the entire humanist educational project that aimed to produce prudential men through education. Lastly, it shows how the metaphor of social body is extended to a constructive proposal in *De subventionem*, and to a critical reaction in the case of radical Anabaptism.

Vives, Charles V, and Universal Monarchy

In 1529, a monumental political and social compendium comprising three works entitled *De concordia & discorida in humano genere*, *De pacificatione* and *Quam misera esset vita Christianorum sub Turca* appeared from the printing house of Michael Hillen in Antwerp. It presented arguably Vives's most ambitious attempt to analyse the social and political problems that were pestering Europe. The 1529 compendium that touched upon a variety of themes familiar already from his 1526 *De Europae dissidiis* was the last political treatise Vives ever wrote, with the exception of the very short *De communione* (1535), and it marks a clear shift in Vives's literature towards larger, more philosophical treatises. The monumental compendium proposes several readings pointing to different levels of meaning found in the work.

At the very first level lies its evident relation to its immediate context. Two of its most important works – *De concordia* and *De pacificatione* – are aligned with the goals Charles V, advised by numerous humanists at the court, set himself in Augsburg in 1530: political and religious concord among European states guaranteed by a Church council, and a joint crusade against the Turks. This was exactly the project envisioned by the chancellor Mercurio Gattinara

after the disaster of the Sack of Rome in 1527, a plan that could portray the Emperor effectively as a peaceful defender of Christendom while simultaneously ending the burdensome war against the League of Cognac.⁶⁰⁸ Suggesting this reading, Vives gives at one point specific content to the semantically ambivalent, flexible, and general terms of peace and concord by uniting peace to continuing warfare, and concord to the question of opinions that implied the idea of a Church council:

“A peace between princes, firm and enduring, as far as it is possible, and a concord of opinions which I consider more useful and important for human race. I think the latter is harder to achieve than a peace between princes.”⁶⁰⁹

Church council and cessation of warfare that formed the background for *De concordia* pointed to two key issues in the compendium: religious division and Vives’s relation to the emerging imperial project of Charles V. By 1529, religion had evolved into one of the main concerns of Charles V’s dominions. Issues related to the Reformation were discussed in royal courts around Europe, as well as in the papal *curia*. Thus, in the decade of the 1520s – when warfare among Christian princes was continuous – questions of religion added yet another dimension to European problems. The document of the Diet of Worms, signed in 1521, did not halt the advancement of reformed churches in large areas of Europe. Moreover, as the 1520s passed, the extent to which the document of the Diet of Worms could and should be imposed was heatedly debated in imperial Diets. These religious concerns were also closely linked to larger political problems of dynastic warfare and the Turkish threat.⁶¹⁰

Despite the fact that Vives did not reside in the epicentre of religious problems, much of the reformed literature beginning from Luther was widely available throughout the Dutch provinces, and issues around the Reformation pestered Vives’s mind increasingly

⁶⁰⁸ Martínez Millán 2005, 238-239. Vives had pleaded for a church council already in his letter to the Pope Adrian in 1523, Vives: *De tumultibus*, vii: “Omni memoria tumultibus Ecclesiae occursum est indictis conventibus patrum, quod generale consilium vocatur, haec una est medicina morbis etiam, qui deplorati putabantur.” Thus, this is not a posture he adopts after losing his position in England.

⁶⁰⁹ Vives: DC, letter to Charles V: “Pacem scilicet principum, quoad eius fieri possit firmam mansuramque: Tum concordiam opinionum, quam ego ut utiliore magisque humanae genti necessariam, ita factu difficiliorem puto, quam alteram illam inter principes....” In a later paragraph, Vives refers to these same points, see Vives: DC, book 3, S: “Nec occurri potest tanto malo, aut medicina ulla adhiberi, quum in commune consultari non queat, quippe principum discordiae regiones claudunt, ne congregari & in unum convenire possunt corpora, & doctorum odia animos disiungunt, ne inter se ad communem deliberationem mentes coeant, ut nec loqui utrinque de alteris sit iam tutum....”

⁶¹⁰ Hillebrand 2007, 155-161.

towards the end of the 1520s. The visible social side of religious dissent had manifested itself in various forms despite of the fact that the central government had reacted more vehemently to the heretic threat. Possibly around 20 or 30 executions had occurred over the course of the 1520s in the Low Countries, with Bruges being one of the centres of Lutheran practices.⁶¹¹ The problem of heresy, closely tied in contemporary minds to social upheaval, was also tackled throughout the 1520s with a number of royal ordonnances forbidding different activities related to the Reformed faith.⁶¹² However, Vives's 1520s concerns were not tied to the purely local manifestations of the rebellious and social side of the Reformation. As an aspiring courtier and member of the European Republic of Letters, he was keenly aware of the recent political and religious development of Europe as is wonderfully demonstrated by his 1526 compendia on European politics, and by his private letters to some of his best friends. Hardly surprising, Vives was very well informed about all European issues ranging from *comuneros* revolt in Spain, and the Franco-Spanish Italian wars to the developments of the Reformation in German lands, interpreting these very much as manifestations of general discord.⁶¹³

What is more, Vives reacted strongly to the implications of German Peasant Revolt. For him, the Peasant Revolt represented a more pressing form of warfare compared to dynastic wars among princes. As Vives wrote to Erasmus in summer 1525, the Peasant Revolt was a way “to assure the Gospel with three hundred thousand soldiers, destroy everything, and sow calamity and death everywhere they enter.”⁶¹⁴ Vives's interpretation, that implied the use of theology for social ends, made a strong link between the reading of the Bible and social and political concerns – an association that was becoming more and more widely acknowledged with the Peasant Revolt, which, in its famous *Twelve Articles*, mixed religious and evangelical issues with social concerns somewhat randomly. It is exactly in 1525 that Luther himself was forced to criticise the increasingly radical and social side of the Reformation in his *Wieder die*

⁶¹¹ Alistair Duke has showed how much the Low Countries were influenced by different currents of the Reformation thought already in the 1520s. Duke 1990, 1-59; Van Houtte 1967, 97; Tracy 1996, 163-164. Vives was concerned about Lutheran developments quite early, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2 26, 28-31.

⁶¹² Tracy 1990, 52-60; Tracy 2005.

⁶¹³ *De Europae Dissidis* is a good example, it is essentially an assessment of the recent political history of Europe. Vives on warfare in Italy, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 128, 27-28; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 217, 9-22; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 227, 9-15; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 248, 37-52. Vives on Reformation and the peasant wars, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 157, 12-22; Vives to Virués, MA VII, 200-201. Vives discusses warfare continuously in his 1520s letters, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA, 8-12; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 167. Vives and *comuneros*, see Vives: *De Europae*, xxix: “Dum in Germaniam ad invendum principatum ex Hispania Carolus redit, consecuti sunt motus Hispaniae plebis adversus nobilitatem, urbium adversus urbes.”

⁶¹⁴ Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 137, 14-17: “Hoc demum est asserere Evangelium, tercentis milibus armatorum militum late omnia popularii, & quacumque ingredientur, clades ac strages dare.”

Räuberischen und mörderischen Rotten der Bauern. Luther specifically disapproved of the Bible being used in twisted ways, and for an outright social agenda.⁶¹⁵ Thus, the central concepts of concord and discord comprised an irreducible religious element that was evident for any reader of Vives's *De concordia*. Referring to these two concepts Erasmus claimed in a letter to Jean de Carondelet, "the substance of our religion is peace and unanimity."⁶¹⁶ As it is well known, throughout the 1520s the Dutch humanist himself was famously vying for religious concord that would not be based on violent suppression of heresy, but on tolerating error – a point Vives reflected on in his 1529 compendium and that served as a point of departure for Vives's call for Church council.⁶¹⁷

Another issue to take into account in the analysis of the compendium organized around *De concordia* was Vives's general *rapprochement* with imperial politics. Simultaneous with Vives's attempt to seek a place close to the imperial court, something also changes in Vives's outlook of the wider European situation. Between the summers of 1525 and 1526, a change is visible in his private letters in the way he refers to the person of the Emperor and to imperial politics more generally. Until July 1525, Vives's pessimistic description of European warfare treated its main protagonists, Charles V and Francis I, symmetrically. Thus, the problem of warfare is attributed to the competition between young princes as well as to their lack of understanding of the destructive forces of warfare.⁶¹⁸ This attitude is largely echoed in Vives's *De Europae dissidiis et bello turcico* finished somewhere after the disastrous battle of Mohács in the late summer or early autumn of 1526.⁶¹⁹ Yet, already starting from the letter to Cranevelt, dated 10.6.1526, Vives's tone is quite different, and Charles is described in private letters in a more positive light than his adversaries who had formed the League of Cognac on May 22.⁶²⁰ Furthermore, in early September Vives wrote to Cranevelt that the official defence of French policies, *Apologia Madriciae Conventionis inter Francorum regem et Carolum electum*

⁶¹⁵ Hillerbrand 2007, 145-146.

⁶¹⁶ Erasmus to Jean Carondelet, Allen 1334, 217: "Summa nostra religionis pax est et unanimitas."

⁶¹⁷ Tracy 1996, 163-171; Remer 1994, 309-321. Vives's most forceful defence of toleration of heresy happens in a letter to the archbishop of Seville and might well refer primarily to an autobiographical experience of Spanish developments, see Vives: DP, A3.

⁶¹⁸ Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 128, 28-29; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 159, 11-17.

⁶¹⁹ Vives: *De Europae*: xxviii, xxxii: "De imperatore deligendo ambitu & profusissimis largitionibus apud electores a Carolo & Francisco certatum, quasi mercimonium licerentur, non regnum."; "...Carolus hic velut haereditatem suam armis reptetit, quando hoc solum est ius interponentes."

⁶²⁰ Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 193, 19-34; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 217, 9-39. Cranevelt was a member of the Great Council of Mechelen. His relationship with Charles was good. Erasmus himself approached Cranevelt when he tried to recover his imperial pension, see BR 1985, 354-355. He had held speeches in the court of Charles V, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA2, 12.

imperatorem dissuasoria, was “the most shameful and foolish thing that can be said.”⁶²¹

The difference in the choice of words between Vives’s letters to Cranevelt and the portrayal of Charles in *De Europae dissidiis* might partly be due to their different purposes and degrees of publicity. Whereas in his private letters, Vives from 1526 onwards builds a closer and more privileged relationship with imperial politics, the whole point of *De Europae dissidiis* is to appeal to audiences on both sides of the war, and encourage them to a joint crusade against a Turkish threat. By taking a symmetrical approach to the primary actors of European politics, Vives is making sure that he can talk in the name of Christendom for the project of peace – a goal that could not be achieved through one dimensional propagandist texts that would nurture division and discord. In this way, Vives’s *De Europae dissidiis* contrasts strikingly both with the official propaganda on either side – namely the French *Apologia* and the Imperial *Pro divo Carolo*, both of which tie the explanation of the happenings of the 1520s to an explicitly partisan framework where the future of Christendom is equated with the French and Imperial political programmes respectively.⁶²²

Thus, despite the limited presence of the Imperial language of the programme in the 1529 compendium, Vives never breaks with Erasmus’s strict line of not aligning himself with any of the European powerhouses in the 1520s. As it is well known, the Dutch master was highly critical of Gattinara’s project of universal monarchy, and Vives’s distaste for Gattinara’s project is also beyond any doubt.⁶²³ It is true that whereas the 1526 compendia does not partake in the imperial propaganda campaign spearheaded by Mercurio Gattinara and Alfonso de Valdés, the 1529 literature makes explicit reference to Charles as an instrument of God, whose “success was not borne out of human, but divine forces” according to the dedication letter of the work to the Emperor himself.⁶²⁴ This dedicatory letter to the compendium is also more generally an example of how to unite Charles’s success and virtues to a Godly plan – something proposed by Alfonso de Valdés, one of the main architects of Charles’s imperial propaganda who had argued in the aftermath of the battle of Pavia that “it looked as if God, miraculously, had given this victory to the Emperor.”⁶²⁵ However, this eloquent praise is manifest only in the

⁶²¹ Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 202, 21-23: “Puto cidisse te Apologiam Madriciae Conventionis pro Rege Galliae; quo nihil potest aut impudentius dici, aut stultius.”

⁶²² For French and Spanish propaganda campaigns, see Headley 1983.

⁶²³ In a letter to Cranevelt Vives exhibited a rather critical attitude towards Gattinara, see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 159, 18-26. For Erasmus and imperial politics, see Van Gelderen 2005; Bataillon 1991, 243-253; Tracy 1996, 194-196.

⁶²⁴ Vives to Charles in DC: “hos tantos, tamque admirandos successus non humanarum esse virium, sed divinarum....”

⁶²⁵ Bataillon 1991, 244.

letter to the Emperor himself. In none of the actual books forming the corpus does the argument about Charles's special nature as the instrument of God play any significant role. Moreover, Vives explicitly denied the attribution of military glory to divine motives in a thoroughly satirical section in Book four of *De concordia*. Here Vives, with the voice of a fictional prince states that "I pray you most gentle and mild Father, that you give me force for achieving that [to cause havoc], that you show me the way, assist me in my plans, and direct favourably my undertakings." He adds that if someone were really to ask this, he would be considered "more degenerated than any devil."⁶²⁶ The section dedicated to kings and princes in *De pacificatione* is most explicit in its claim that reason truly resides with counsellors rather than princes, opening up a trend that is present throughout the 1530s.⁶²⁷ If anything, the 1529 compendium is even more suspicious of princes than Vives's earlier writings, and it is not kind on Charles V either.⁶²⁸

Thus, by appealing to an existing and vigorous language of universal monarchy Vives's idea is to address the Emperor as the most powerful man in Europe who bears the duty to work for peace and the union of the Church. Yet the actual plan he is offering is not based on a notion of divine rule understood in any other sense than as pastoral care – an image familiar from numerous Erasmian texts epitomized by Erasmus's *Institutio*.⁶²⁹ In Alfonso de Valdés's *Las cosas acaecidas en Roma* (also known as *Diálogo de Lactancio y un Arcediano*) recent political events are interpreted through the dichotomy of good and evil, represented by the Emperor and his opponents respectively. Conversely, *De concordia* and *De pacificatione* do not rely in any way on an interpretation that underlines the godly nature of Imperial action.⁶³⁰ In

⁶²⁶ Vives: DC, book 4, V: "Rogo te pater clementissime, ac mitissime, ut ad eam rem suppedites vires, aperias viam, consilias adiuves, secundes coepta."; "Haec si quis diceret, nonne omnes eum [...] quovis diabolo desperatiorem clamarent...."

⁶²⁷ Vives: DP, C.

⁶²⁸ E. George has shown how *De concordia* functions also as a veiled critique of Charles through the precepts of non-adversity as spelled out in *De consultatione*, see George 1997.

⁶²⁹ In the actual texts, the symmetrical treatment is present: Vives: DC, book 3, L5: "Et his bellis proximis, quam serviliter Gallus Helvetio se submisit, Carolus desperatissimae ac perditissimae Germaniae atque Hispaniae foeci! Et qui Principes nobilissimi, ac praeclarissimi, noluerunt paulum alter alteri velut levi lateris declinatione cedere, coacti sunt impurissimos dominos toto corpore perferre, & eis propter bellum adulari, quos in pace crucifixissent...."

⁶³⁰ Alfonso de Valdés's main target is the Pope, his *Las cosas acaecidas en Roma* presents the common accusations against the Emperor through the mouth of Arcediano. These accusations are, however, refuted by Lactancio, the hero of the dialogue, who unites the destruction of Rome to godly vengeance, Valdés, Alfonso de: "Diálogo de Lactancio y un Arcediano", 331-481 in Valdés, Alfonso de: *Dos diálogos*, 1850, 338: "Lo primero que hare, será mostraros, cómo el Emperador ninguna culpa tiene en lo que en Roma se ha hecho. I lo segundo, cómo todo lo que ha acaezido, ha sido por manifiesto juizio de Dios, para castigar aquella ciudad." Valdés and Gattinara are not the only ones participating in the process. See for instance Miguel de Ulzuxia: *Catholicum opus imperial regiminis mundi* and the much later Pedro Mexía's: *Historia imperial y cesárea*. One of the first to address the universal

fact, they are not based on the primacy of the Emperor and the empire, understood as a legal right or as a supreme Godly mission in any sense. Vives's *De concordia* starts from the premise that there is symmetry in the relations between the European princes.⁶³¹ Vives himself considered the work of such impartiality that in 1529 he sent it to the French humanist Guillaume Budé arguing in a letter to Budé that it was "written for the compassion that these times we are living through arouse in me [Vives]."⁶³²

Yet, although the kind of overtly propagandist partiality is not to be found in any of Vives's political texts, his knowledge of the discussions and currents of the imperial court should not be underestimated. He is clearly suggesting a course of action that was present in the imperial court of the time where Gattinara's and Valdés's strict line never represented all humanist thought; many humanists showed little interest in defending the idea of universal monarchy interpreted in a Gattinarian sense, which incorporated Erasmian moral critique into an aggressive and missionary plan of defending Christendom.⁶³³ More importantly, the flexible nature of the imperial language assimilating different elements for the enhancement of at-times directly opposing actions has been recently emphasized, something that surfaces the strict line of imperial propaganda as only one attempt of using Erasmian language for the propagation of certain political goals.⁶³⁴

However, in many ways Vives's *De concordia* seeks deliberately to transcend its immediate context. Despite the contextual element of the compendium, it is clear that Vives's aspiration in *De concordia* is not to give advice but to write primarily as a philosopher, to show much more fundamental patterns that have lead Christendom to *discordia* and that continue to sustain it.⁶³⁵ It is true that it was the norm in all humanist discourse to cover very particular and

nature of Charles' monarchy was Ruiz de la Mota in a speech at the Cortés of La Coruña in 1520. For the differences between Gattinara and de la Mota, see Menéndez Pidal, 1946, 12-25. Menéndez Pidal wants to demonstrate how de la Mota's idea of universal monarchy is essentially a moral one whereas Gattinara emphasizes the legal rights and possibilities of the monarch. Menéndez Pidal was criticising Karl Brandi's attribution of the imperial programme to Gattinara, see Brandi 1959, 74-79. Modern literature emphasizes also the limits of this programme and the scarcity of voices defending Charles's actions in the late 1520s and, especially, the Sack of Rome. See García Cárcel 2003, 31-33.

⁶³¹ The difference between Alfonso de Valdés and Vives, two supposedly Erasmian thinkers, is well-known. See for example Fernández-Santamaría 1977, 38-57.

⁶³² Vives to Budé, MA VII, 219: "Accipies a Valdaura meo librum De concordia scriptum a me proxima aestate, dem mu horum temporum miseret...."

⁶³³ Vives's main link to the Spanish court was Vergara who did not partake in the aggressive dimension of the language of universal monarchy, see Bataillon 1991, 166-168, 256-257. He also knew the main protector of the Erasmian movement in Spain, the inquisitor-general Alfonso Manrique. For biographies of Manrique and Gattinara, see Martínez Millán 2000, 256-263; BR II, 76-80, 373-375.

⁶³⁴ Martínez Millán 2005, 236-240.

⁶³⁵ Despite being a philosophical work, *De concordia* lies stylistically firmly within the humanist tradition. As with all Vives's work, it deliberately avoids the systematic style of scholastic treatises built around questions and

local problems with the most general language of virtues and vices. Consequently, simple political deliberations about taxation would connect their arguments built on the utility and honesty of a cause to the most general possible language of virtues. However, leaving the dedication letter to Charles V aside, *De concordia* is not primarily a political deliberation. In fact, Vives's selection of style shows that he did aspire to a treatment that would transcend particular questions of decision-making. Even though peace and Church council effectively refer to existing political projects that were highly important when the text was published, the pure length and depth of analysis would hardly make it the best possible medium to give actual counselling. We should consider that Vives had employed other, much more rhetorically attuned ways of proceeding in his 1526 *De Europae dissidiis*.

Moreover, it is in these years that Vives most likely undertook his more ambitious, general, and profound analysis of the state of Christendom. This was to materialize in the years around 1530 in the form of *De disciplinis*, *De ratione dicendi* and *De anima*. These works cross-reference one another, which points to the larger educational and social programme Vives was devising for the future of Europe around 1530. The compendium built around the *De concordia* – composed of four separate books – takes the earlier themes of concord, peace and self-government, analysing them in the most general and all-encompassing form. In this process, it makes their connections to larger cultural and historical dynamics, as well as passion disorders explicit. This was essentially a way to show patterns that sustained discord and hindered concord, which took the analysis far-beyond policy making to the cultural arrangements that nurtured misjudgement and actual political decisions. Generalizing the problems of religious discord and warfare among princes was Vives's answer in the 1529 compendium, which brings us to the second level of analysis.

***De concordia* and the Social Repercussions of Passions**

De concordia and *De pacificatione* were built around the central concepts of concord (*concordia*) and peace (*pax*) that had been central in all Vives's political reflections and all political discussion more generally in preceding years. The problematisation of these in the 1529 corpus most surely related to the fact that the ideals of peace and concord were in a stark

arguments for and against a case. Disregarding the only systematic method of clarifying questions gives the continuous prose of the work composed of eclectic quotes a disorganized touch. Hence, the architectural structure of the argument is quite difficult to trace, since different parts of the work are never structurally brought together.

opposition with the actual state of affairs surrounding the Valencian humanist. In Vives's private correspondence peace and concord surface repeatedly and often in a pronouncedly pessimistic tone. Even where Vives was openly promoting a discursive solution leading to concord – as is the case of the convocation of a Church council for solving the problem of the religious separation of Christendom – he often expressed reservations about the actual possibilities of reaching a concord through dialogue in his private correspondence. This was because a successful dialogue could only be based on good judgement that presupposed the inner concord of the ones judging on the matter, something that in Vives's opinion evidently was not the case.⁶³⁶ In increasingly desperate tones Vives argued towards the end of the 1520s that a true concord depended ultimately on the help of Christ to bring about a lasting peace, “in a century so plagued by factions and the souls irritated by differences of opinion” – a view shared by Erasmus.⁶³⁷ However, in *De concordia* and *De pacificatione* Vives takes the challenge of describing and analysing the possibilities of concord as a potentially realizable horizon, although not necessarily as an instant political project. Concord, peace, and their potential threats such as factions are not merely political concepts in the work: *De concordia* is not primarily an analysis of the specific political steps to be undertaken but of the deeper dynamics that nurture the judgement of discord

De concordia, more than any other work of Vives, portrays a Stoic and Christian theorization of the dualistic worldview found in numerous youthful texts, which are centred on a continuous and omnipresent fight between the social counterparts of truth and error, wonderfully presented in his *Veritas fucata*.⁶³⁸ Already the initial focus on *societas* underlines, however, that *De concordia* is strictly speaking unpolitical: it opens up with a general explanation of human association and community (*societas, communitas*), the temporal incarnation of which are the family and different forms of political associations.⁶³⁹ *Societas* performs an important function in all of Vives's reflection on different human associations, be they private, public, or sacred. It can be used as a general term under which all other associations

⁶³⁶ See especially Vives to Cranevelt, MA VII, 199-200; Vives to Virués, MA VII, 200-201.

⁶³⁷ Vives to Virués, MA VII, 201: “In concilio nihil video difficilium, quam statuere qui erunt iudices tantae rei, praesertim in seculo adeo infecto, partibus, et animi affectibus concitatissimo.” The plea for a true peace in Christ is recurrent in his letters, see for instance Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 261, 16-18; Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 266, 8-11. Vives's plea for peace was widely shared by his friends, see for instance Fevyn to Cranevelt, CRA 131, 4; Erasmus to Charles V, Allen 1873, 23-26.

⁶³⁸ Noreña has also emphasized the tension between Vives's insistence on man's corrupted features, on the one hand, and his reliance on the Stoic possibilities of self-improvement, on the other. Noreña 1989, 48-49.

⁶³⁹ The end result of political formation is mostly equated with *civitas*, not with *regnum*, see Del Nero 1991, 72-73.

are placed, but it can also be temporally employed to describe the basic sociability of man that is then realized in different ladders of actual social organization.⁶⁴⁰ Vives does evoke society in referring to the mystical union in the body of Christ.⁶⁴¹ However, more generally, *societas* is used to describe the social bonds and needs that are natural for man and that set the ultimate preconditions for more particular associations. In *De disciplinis*, political communities arise from more primordial social associations based on benevolence that were manifestations of the social nature of man.⁶⁴² Similarly, in *De concordia* society (*societas*) is essentially pre-political: it refers to the sociability of man, out of which associations that are more particular are borne.⁶⁴³ This gives *De concordia* an accentuated level of generality and guarantees that all human associations, including political ones, can be discussed primarily as parts of human society – the concord of which they have to enhance, not as separate entities with specific goals. It also constantly invites the reader to think about the different instances of concord, from education and intellectual discussions to politics and religion together. A clear separation between these fields and an analysis of their precise relations is not to be found in *De concordia*.

De concordia brings the duality of truth and error to the realm of society (*societas*) in the analysis of *concordia* and *discordia* that comprise clusters of opposing pairs of concepts. Thus, *concordia* – already the central concept of Stoic political philosophy as well as Erasmus’s most overtly political writings *Querela pacis* and *Dulce bellum inexpertis* – would go together with at least peace (*pax*), wisdom (*sapientia*), charity (*caritas*), benevolence (*benevolentia*), conscience (*conscientia*), reason (*ratio*), judgement (*judicio*), prudence (*prudencia*), tranquillity (*tranquillitas*), friendship (*amicitia*), patience (*pacientia*) and virtue (*virtu*). Whereas *discordia*, for its part, would combine well with war (*bellum*), ignorance (*ignorantia*), envy (*invidia*), arrogance (*superbia*), fury (*furor*), glory (*gloria*), slyness (*astutia*), multitude (*multitudo*) and passion (*affectio*). Vives’s point is that these issues come in packages; they create a harmonious totality that penetrates into every part of human society ranging from the family to the international community, and this dynamic is not easy to separate.⁶⁴⁴ Even though Vives’s

⁶⁴⁰ For the first use, see Vives: DD, 134: “Humanae omnes societates duabus potissimum rebus vinciuntur, ac continentur: iustitia & sermone.” For the second one, see Vives: DD, 201-202.

⁶⁴¹ According to medieval thought, the ultimate society was a union in Christ, Black 1988, 592.

⁶⁴² Vives: DD, 201-203. It is true that in the second part of *De disciplinis*, *De tradendis*, Vives offers a story where all human associations are born out of the necessities of individuals. It is necessity that makes humans realize their social possibilities. Vives: DD, 220-221.

⁶⁴³ Vives: DC 1529, B2-B4.

⁶⁴⁴ The use of these concepts very often happens in clusters emphasizing their mutual interdependence. See for instance Vives: DC, book 1, B4: “Addidit rationem ducem & consultricem operum, quae nunquam ad discordiam aut odium, semper ad amorem, concordiam, quietem, iustitiam, aequitatem, omne denique virtutis & bonitatis

analysis of different individual *ingenia*, in his *De consultatione* and in the later *De anima*, show that he considered some people more prone to some specific vices, on the level of social bodies virtues and vices come by-and-large together since they entail and support one another in the social level.⁶⁴⁵ Ideally, all virtues would come together in a union in Christ that would guarantee a move from the omnipresent *discordia* to a worldview and life of *concordia*, a general natural harmony in and between souls.⁶⁴⁶

These clusters of concepts are predicated on a body: in the heart of *De concordia* lies the corporeal metaphor widely used in the Middle Ages that creates an analogy from individual to social self-control. There can be no doubt that on a number of occasions in a number of works Vives addresses directly the individual reader showing the right path to true wisdom through different ways of controlling passions.⁶⁴⁷ In his *De pacificatione* and *De concordia* the word *concordia*, harmony, in addition to sociability, refers to inner peace or concord where judgement and action are in harmony with the laws of nature understood as the basic precepts and ends of good life.⁶⁴⁸ The kind of play of parallels between the inner constitution of a person and the structure of society is continuous in Vives's work – certainly more than a coincidence – and it makes possible the discussion of the duties and functions of groups of people by likening them to different body parts and faculties of the soul.⁶⁴⁹ Moreover,

genus voluntatem adhortatur, & instigat.”

⁶⁴⁵ Vives: DA, 77-83. *De consultatione* starts from the premise that different people can be persuaded through different vices because of differences of *ingenia*.

⁶⁴⁶ In the best tradition of *Philosophia Christi* he argues in Vives: DC, book 4, T4: “Christi vero pax aspera inquietis affectibus rationem magnis opibus instructam in solium totius animi evehit, ut iam nec obliuatis tabulis, nec testibus, nec iureiurando sit opus, nec paratis armis & ostensione terroris, quando quidem dissensionis materia, occasio, autores, arma sunt penitus erepta.”

⁶⁴⁷ This side of Vives's thought has been heavily emphasized. See Noreña 1970, 200-213. A recent article on Vives's political thought also emphasizes political concord as a direct result of individual harmony, See Strosetzki 2014.

⁶⁴⁸ As seen, Vives's notion of natural law implies living according to one's natural capacities that are inseparable from man's ends, not a set of rules making different realizations of the self possible. The semantics of concord are hard to pin down yet it clearly did have numerous connotations. The kind of social harmony Vives was talking about was definitely not just a harmony based on balance of power between states but also a natural harmony more akin to the harmony in music or harmony in accordance with nature related to the affinities of sympathy. The point is that it is not a harmony arising from the management of conflict but a harmony where conflict is absent. See Vives: DC, book 4, T4: “...Haec est pax illa, quam se Christus ait suis impartiri, sed qualem dare non valet mundus, homines enim pactionibus suis affectus leniunt, non comprimunt, blandiuntur, non cohibent, ad summum vi & metu manus arcent ab iniuria, id est maiore discordia, ligant minorem.”; Vives: DC, book 4, T2-T3: “Piratae & latrones, quorum ars atque exercitium est infestare hominum genus, perturbare quietem, leges ac iura conculcare, contaminare sacra & profana omnia, tamen inter se pacem quandam & concordiam conservant definitam certis quibusdam legibus & velut iustitiae aequitate nec aliter possent coitiones illas suas & latrocinii societatem retinere.”

⁶⁴⁹ See especially the book four of *De tradendis*, Vives: DD, 315-352; Vives: DC, book 3, M: “Quum & aer, & aquae pestilenti sunt aliquo vicio contaminatae, corpus quod in illis semper necesse est versari ac vivere, difficile servatur incorruptum & sanum. At quum in ipsis ossibus medullisque affixa haeret lues, & saeva morbi vis totum corpus pervasit, potest fortassis remedium extrinsecus aliquod adhiberi. Tutus vero nemo est, qui prospiciat

by discussing the social body one could describe a concord that went beyond individual acts of coming to reason in Christ, or in Stoic self-control.⁶⁵⁰ The idea of social concord could be used in *De concordia* in a rather flexible manner. First, it could relate to the mystical union of all Christians in the body of Christ – a powerful image that emphasized the deep associations of charity and benevolence between all Christians independent of the political units they were living in and the different churches to which they were attached. In fact, this metaphor is evoked precisely to argue for a peace between nations and a concord of opinions as the curing of the body of Christ, and its significance transcends the institutional confines of the Catholic Church.⁶⁵¹ Vives also employed the metaphor of the body to discuss political unions both on the level of the city and larger kingdoms or empires. In talking to the city council of Bruges, for example, he reminds that the administrators have to look after and listen to “the whole body of the city.”⁶⁵² In *De concordia* Vives could also write that “in vast kingdoms there is always a part that harms and worries the whole body with its particular sickness,” referring here to larger political entities.⁶⁵³ These two general meanings are not used in any antagonistic way by Vives.

oppressa mente, & omnibus corporis sensibus, tanta & tam tumultuosa morbi concitatione. Talis est imago externae discordiae & intestinae.”

⁶⁵⁰ This has been suggested in different forms by most writers on Vives’s political thought, see Noreña 1970, 212-222, Fernández-Santamaría 1998, Chapter three, Curtis 2008, 155. In his early *The State, War and Peace* Fernández-Santamaría saw Vives’s and Valdés’s differences in the fact that Vives “enlists into his cause of total reform every member of the Christian commonwealth,” Fernández-Santamaría 1977, 56.

⁶⁵¹ Vives: DC, book 4, Cc2: “Haec omnia haeserunt in humano genere ex noxia vetusti Adam. Novus vero Adam exors peccati omnis, & coelestis a deo missus omnes illas sepes, omnes terminos ac limites diruit, & in primam illam ac veram naturam hominem reposuit, ut quum ipse esset pater & princeps omnium, effecissetque suo sanguine, ut universi homines ad eandem civitatem, ad eandem sacra, ad eandem felicitatem pertinerent, iam cessarent humanae distinctiones, nova essemus omnes & una creatura, in qua iam nec discrimen esset nationis, nec gentis, nec conditionis, nec status, sed membra unius corporis, una benevolentia, uno sensu coniuncta...”; Vives: DC, book 4, DD: “Eorum commodis & bonis tam gaudebit, quam oculus, si per se sensum haberet, utilitate manus aut pectoris, non aliter dolebit illorum malis, quam oculus damnis & cruciatu pedis. Quoniamquidem non minore harmonia & concentu coliatum coaugmentatumque est corpus Christi, quae est ecclesia, quam corpus uniuscuiusque nostrum, fecit enim Christus congregationem hanc & conventum suorum omnium, corpus unum, cuius se caput constituit, totumque vivida illa & ardentissima sua charitate animavit.”

⁶⁵² Vives: *De subventione*, Gv: “Denique rectoris Reipublicae officium est, sollicitum non esse quid unus aut alter aut certe paucis de legibus & administratione sentiant, modo totius civitatis corpori in comune sit consultum. Leges enim etiam malis utiles sunt, vel ut corrigantur, vel ne diu malefaciant.”

⁶⁵³ Vives: DC, book 4, Y: “...in ingenti regno semper existit pars aliqua, quae corpus totum suo aliquo morbo infestet, ac inquietet...” Vives makes the analogy clear in discussing society in the book number 4, see Vives: DC, book 4, DD; see also Vives: DC book 3, M: “Quum & aer, & aquae pestilenti sunt aliquo vicio contaminatae, corpus quod in illis semper necesse est versari ac vivere, difficile servatur incorruptum & sanum. At quum in ipsis ossibus medullisque affixa haeret lues, & saeva morbi vis totum corpus pervasit, potest fortassis remedium extrinsecus aliquod adhiberi. Tutus ver nemo est, qui prospiciat oppressa mente, & omnibus corporis sensibus, tanta & tam tumultuosa morbi concitatione. Talis est imago externae discordiae & intestinae.” For a union in the body of Christ, see Vives: DC, book 3, M: “...unicum agnoscimus patrem Christum illum, qui in similitudinem quidem carnis peccati, sed tamen coelestis homo secundum deum formatus est, ut iam non modo unius civitatis ecclesiae sumus cives, sed etiam maiori vinculo colligati, nempe unius omnium patris filii, imo vero eiusdem capitibus & corporis membra, ut nec manus nocere possit pedi suo cum sua utilitate, aut oculus auri.” Cathy Curtis has also noted the presence of two bodies that refer to Christological imagery and the Aristotelian ideal of kingship

On the contrary, the ultimate point is that the harmony of political bodies can only be realized as part of the larger body of all Christians, and, referring to the universal dimension of Christ, of all mankind.⁶⁵⁴ This was indeed what a true citizen of the world would have understood.⁶⁵⁵

However, Vives's point is not merely to describe the world of concord and discord through a bodily metaphor, but to discuss their dynamics: the conceptual clusters of *discordia* and *concordia* do not remain timeless or immovable. Already in the first part of the work entitled *Liber primus, qui est de originibus concordiae et discordiae* Vives presents an explanation that is historical but also simultaneously conceptual. He starts by claiming that humans, by nature, are inclined to and created for concord, and all their corporeal and mental capacities amply testify to this. Thus, discord is nothing more than a separation of man from his God-like nature:

“One has to admit plainly and openly; man was not satisfied with his human nature and strove for divinity, and therefore lost the humanity he had given up without reaching the divine condition he was looking for. Man could have perhaps reached partly that divine condition if he had known himself, distrusted of his own forces, and expected to obtain it with the grace and beneficence of God whose beneficence he had already experienced. But he did not know himself and with the deceit of the cunning Devil he was raised to heights from which he could not descend without a serious fall.”⁶⁵⁶

Here and throughout the work Vives is very clear that it is this initial fall – somehow reminiscent of the loss of paradise – that gives rise to destructive passions and most importantly, following Augustine, to pride (*superbia*).⁶⁵⁷

It does not play a major role in Vives whether pride is the reason or the

as paternal government in northern humanist discourse, Curtis 2006, 103.

⁶⁵⁴ Vives: DC, book 4, Cc2: “...iam cessarent humanae distinctiones, nova essemus omnes & una creatura, in qua iam nec discrimen esset nationis, nec gentis, nec conditionis, nec status, sed membra unius corporis, una benevolentia, uno sensu coniuncta.”

⁶⁵⁵ See Chapter five.

⁶⁵⁶ Vives DC, book 1, 1529, C2: “plane ac aperte confitendum est, non fuit homo humanitate contentus, divinitatem expetiuit, idcirco & humanitatem, quam relinquebat amisit, nec quam affectarat divinitatem, est consecutus, ad quam fortassis divinitatem quadam tenus pertigisset, si se agnoscens & suis diffusus viribus dei se gratia ac beneficio adepturum sperasset, cuius in se tam prolixam erat iam benignitatem expertus. Sed se non agnovit & diaboli versuta sublatus fraude eo ascendit, unde no posset sine gravissimo casu descendere....”

⁶⁵⁷ In Augustine, pride is also the reason. Augustine: *De civitate Dei*, xii.xi: “Cum vero causa miseriae malorum angelorum quaeritur, ea merito occurrit, quod ab illo, qui summe est, aversi ad se ipsos conversi sunt, qui non summe sunt; et hoc vitium quid aliud quam superbia nuncupetur? Initium quippe omnis peccati superbia.” Vives does not add any significant remarks to these passages in his commentaries.

consequence of the fall,⁶⁵⁸ but after the fall, its primacy among concepts never seems to be in doubt, since it is from pride that Vives deduces its strongest armor bearers in the world of passions:

“Pride attacks using two pointed weapons: envy and wrath. For if someone excels in things considered beautiful and eminent, pride immediately sends envy to discredit what is beautiful, to sprinkle stains on what is pure; in short, through poor judgement and bad interpretation, it leaves nothing sincere and right, and leaves an unjust mark on everything or, when it cannot do anything else, a mark of suspicion. If, however, pride tries to take something away from us, it mentions offences, and wrath is given the license to revenge. Both envy and wrath are equipped with the will to do harm, and when this will turns into a permanent state it is hatred.”⁶⁵⁹

What is significant here is not only that Vives argues discord back to the dysfunction of the soul and the rise of passions, but that all this implies a certain notion of social living very strongly, since the rule of passions has burst out invading all aspects of collective life.⁶⁶⁰ The activities and interpretative patterns stemming from the initial *discordia* create models of interpretation that sustain the error, a good example of which is the close relationship between the concepts of *decorum*, adulation, glory and multitude. Since a man pestered by pride is naturally dependent on the assessment of others to nourish his sense of superiority, he is mainly looking for glory that is based on the opinion of the multitude that makes him vulnerable for adulation. This is because the multitude is equated with passion and, consequently, its judgement never grasps the right measure of all things.

As Vives eloquently points out, a world where people seek the judgement of the multitude turns into a social competition, a kind of theatre of self-fashioning where each word

⁶⁵⁸ Augustine discusses this at length coming to the conclusion that the efficient cause of evil will is impossible to find. See Augustine: *De civitate Dei*, xii.vi-xii.vii.

⁶⁵⁹ Vives DC, book 1, 1529 (C 5 next): “Impetit superbia duobus iaculis invidia & ira. Nam si quis aliqua rerum huiusmodi, quae pulchrae ac praestantes censentur antecedit, continuo a superbia mittitur invidia, quae formosa deturpet, et puris labem aspergat, denique male sentiendo & peius omnia interpretando nihil syncerum aut rectum praetermittat, omnibus vel apertissimam notam iniurens vel certe suscipionem, quando aliud non potest, sin detrahare a nobis tentet, iniuria nominatur, & irae permittitur ultio, utraque & invidentia & ira voluntate malefaciendi est armata, quae voluntas, quum inveteravit, sit odium...” Pride is also the reason for man’s fall in *De subventionem*, Vives: *De subventionem*, Aiii.

⁶⁶⁰ Noreña sees the problems of society primarily as a social extension of problems caused by passions on an individual level, see Noreña 1970, 212-222.

and gesture is seen as a possibility to demonstrate one's superiority and worth in the eyes of those who are not able to judge correctly. The kind of understanding of the social world points to a *decorum* that is pronouncedly aesthetic, it is about appearing to be something, not actually being something under the vigilant eye of one's pure conscience, men of character and, ultimately, God. This model is used for both the critique of luxury and ostentation, and the importance of military glory, both of which are sustained by a misinterpretation of glory and honour.⁶⁶¹ The dichotomy between being something and appearing as something that had been functional in questions of true nobility and truthful use of word is in the very heart of both *De concordia* and *De pacificatione* and seriously hinders the possibilities of the language to build a society of concord.⁶⁶²

The interplay between appearances and inner self resonated well in Vives's overall oeuvre. Much of his literary production dealt with a specific tension: whereas our entire external appearance should mirror character and virtue, what lay behind the exterior could not be captured in any simple way. The very starting point of his entire political oeuvre ranging from *Veritas fucata* and *De consultatione* to *De pacificatione* and *De concordia* was that a brake had occurred between the transparent world of concord and the actual state of discord and corruption. On the one hand, all the external signs of humans testify of his benevolent and caring nature extensively described in the first book of *De concordia*, but on the other, the contemporary reality shows how far man has degenerated from his true nature.⁶⁶³ This was reflected in Vives's basic epistemological views: in the very heart of his theory of knowledge

⁶⁶¹ Vives: DC, book 1, C3: "Mira dictu res captavit humana superbia & haec praestantiae cupido laudem atque admirationem ex re omni, non ea solum, quae speciem videbatur habere aliquam virtutis aut boni, sed ex neutris, & quae indifferentes nominantur, ex frivolis, ac ineptis, ex noxiis, ex pudendis, ex viciis. Sedere, stare, iacere, ingredi, omnem gestum & motum corporis volumus ita fieri cum dignitate, ut non contenti offensionem spectantium defugisse, etiam decus ex iis paremus, nihil sinimus esse natural, omnibus adhibenda est ars honoris colligendi." Vives uses similar logic to explain the rise of military glory: Vives: DC, book 1, E: "Plane ubi affectus totam possessionem animorum occupant, violentissimus quisque tyrannidem invasit. Ita non optimus erat in precio ob amorem virtutis, sed promptissimus ad nocendum, quum metuerent omnes iis rebus, quas haberent, quam virtutem chariora. Ergo partim, quod interna non viderent, externa tantum suspicerent, partim quod se putarent iuvari, partim adulatione, in quam prona est adversum potentes multitudo, omne honorum, decoris, laudum, gloriae genus in facinora est militaria congestum...." This same model is functional also in *De disciplinis* for explaining false wisdom based on the opinion of the spectators and not on truth, see for instance Vives: DD, 12: "Caeca est arrogantia, & quocumque intendit per confidentiam, atque impudentiam temere grassatur, ergo nihil dubitat quiduis subito intrepide asseverare, etiam de arcanis rebus, & maxime reconditis. In superbia hac alii magna illa & admirabilia tenere ipsi sibi persuadent, vel pravae naturae vitio, vel quod quum id vident esse spectatoribus persuasum, ipsi iudicio illorum de se acquiescunt."

⁶⁶² Vives: DP, B5: "Quid illa omnis educatio ac disciplina in verbis & gestu, externa quadam specie consumetur? nihil ne penetrabit ad animum, qui solus, quum sit hominis praecipua pars ac prope sola, ineducatissimus ac barbarissimus remanebit spurco & bruto corpore, ad humanum quendam & civilem habitum apto & conformato?"

⁶⁶³ Vives: DC, book 1, especially the early part.

as it was spelled out in the 1531 *De disciplinis* was the idea that in man's current state essences were not knowable in themselves but ultimately only through their accidents. What is more, in his theory of knowledge Vives explicitly made the link to the essence of individuals such as Marcus Cato, who are also known only through their accidental attributes and never in themselves.⁶⁶⁴ In a perfect epistemological state man would have no problem in reaching knowledge through attributes, but in the theatrical world of discord the corrupted mind has lost its capacity to capture those truths – it misjudges the exterior attributing wrong essential qualities to wrong accidents. Just like in *Veritas fucata* where the soldiers of error sustain their collective error, the world of appearance is sustained by a social dynamic.

This error is truly everywhere: the ties of concord have broken down, and discord has penetrated into different layers of human existence – ranging from arts and material culture to the kind of *exempla* that create modes of interpreting actions and words. A dominant strand of the treatise approaches the larger social culture and tradition and shows how *discordia* is in fact inherent in and inscribed into the very culture surrounding people. This is closely linked to Vives's analysis of the social dimension of passions and, more specifically, to how a passionate interpretation of an individual happening is socialized. According to Vives, humans guided by passions tend to take the offenses suffered by other members of the groups they belong to (family, city etc.) as their own, and have a tedious tendency of remembering them from generation to generation.⁶⁶⁵ This memory, then, has been one of the driving forces of cultural production, the result of which is that people live in the midst of signs inherited from a tradition imbued with passion and misguided judgement that nourish faction on all levels of human association. Thus, statues, eulogies of military glory, jousts, and pictorial depictions of warfare all testify of the socialization and normalization of an ultimately disastrous culture of discord

⁶⁶⁴ Vives: DD, 519, 520: "...sed quatenus rerum essentiae per se sunt nobis ignotae, quesita sunt per quae illae nobis innotescerent, nempe adiuncta: quippe ut intelligentiae nostrae ex sensationibus nascuntur, ita essentiarum cognitio, quae est mentis, ex adhaerentium cognitione, quae est sensus...."; "Sed neque singulare habet propriam sibi distinctionem essentiae, accidentibus figuratur: ut qui sit M. Cato, qui Bucephalus, quae Portia, aut Lucretia."

⁶⁶⁵ Vives: DC, book 2, G3-G4: "Omnia oportet discordiae servirae, non interna modo, sed externa quoque. Sermonem, & lachrymas, & amicitias, quas ad mutuam auxilium ex dei munificentia acceperamus, in mutuam perniciem convertimus, amicus amicum, frater fratrem, vicinus vicinum, civis civem non ad opem ferendam implorat, ut in commune prosint, sed ut alii noceant, sit manus hominum consentientium in ultionem eius, quam illi iniuriam interpretantur, vel quod caussae favent, vel quod homini, aut quod alii alias spes sequuntur." See also Vives: DC, book 2, G2: "...apud quasdam nationes, quae quum ipsae sibi abunde ad humanitatem videantur informatae, ihumanissime vivunt, ad reponendam iniuriam non modo authorem requirunt, sed parentes, fratres, filios, avos, proavos, nepotes, pronepotes, patruales, patruos, consobrinos, omnes propinquos, affines, gentiles, quacunque sint valetudine, conditione, sexu, aetate, ut etiam pulchre videant sibi functus ultionis munere, qui lactantem puerum in ulnis nutricis caeciderit propinquum eius...."

and warfare.⁶⁶⁶ The idea of inscribing erroneous signs and messages to culture was deeply Erasmian. In the part on adulation in his *Institutio* the famous Dutchman had written, “There is a certain implicit flattery in portraits, statues, and inscriptions” enlarging the scope of flattery to encompass different signs of collective memory.⁶⁶⁷

This quasi-sociological dimension of *De concordia* has two important consequences. First, it amounts to a far-fetching critique of certain very concrete cultural practices the clearest example of which was the strong chivalric *ethos* of Burgundy that had attracted young Charles.⁶⁶⁸ The kind of discussions of a culture of warfare that is embedded in practices such as jousting is a clear reference to the culture of nobility surrounding Charles and prominent members of nobility. Persuading Charles or any other prince to seek military glory communicated through these signs, and interiorized by people, stands in stark contrast to the peaceful and virtuous Christian prince rejoicing in his self-control.⁶⁶⁹ Thus, the dismantling of the culture of chivalric nobility and ostentation, together with the promotion of a culture of learning is a central implication of *De concordia*, although it also fiercely criticises the learned circles – especially Italian humanism – for an oratorical culture nurturing discord. However, fellow humanists are criticised not for their aspirations to be learned, but for their failure to perform the duties as wise doctors of souls. Thus, *De concordia* takes a stance for the peaceful culture of learning found among the educated elite against the theatrical culture of false nobility dreaming of military glory – as well as against the growingly aesthetic culture of luxury and ostentation more generally.⁶⁷⁰ In describing how the culture of classical antiquity nurtured warfare, Vives himself wrote in a thoroughly satirical manner:

“It is not uncommon that both consider themselves victors, act accordingly, and erect trophies against the other in their respective lands like Athenians and Spartans in the Peloponnesian wars. It is hard to put into words how much these permanent signs of victory incite the souls

⁶⁶⁶ Referring to warfare Vives writes in Vives: DC, book 1, E: “...poemata & historiae conscriptae, erecti arcus, positae statucae in celeberrimis urbium locis cum praeclaris inscriptionibus, clarum nomen, nobilitas ad filios & nepotes.”

⁶⁶⁷ Erasmus: *Institutio*, 70: “Est tacita quaedam adulatio & in picturis, statuis, ac titulis.” (English translation from Erasmus: *Literary and Educational Writings*, vol. 5, Collected Works of Erasmus 27 [ed. Levi], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1986, 248).

⁶⁶⁸ Blockmans 2002, 14-16.

⁶⁶⁹ Even though princely action is fiercely criticised in *De concordia*, Vives reminds the reader that what nurtures and makes their “crazy acts” possible is the hatred reigning among people. Vives: DC, book 1, F: “Sed & nos odiis nostris mutuis illorum [principum] furoribus servimus, illi nostris affectibus ad explendam animi sui libidinem abutuntur....”

⁶⁷⁰ Vives: DC I-12.

of both parties revoking and aggravating old and almost forgotten enmities: we know that solely for this reason many wars have been renewed in older days and recently.”⁶⁷¹

The second and conceptual implication is the magnitude of concord that binds all humanist projects together. One thing is to urge for peace by appealing to people in powerful positions, but it is even more important to create the kind of cultural conditions where self-understanding is possible and where passions can be controlled. Political peace might be a precondition for this, but all cultural codes such maxims, proverbs, books, material culture and range of other issues should be reformed if one wants peace and concord to truly last.⁶⁷² In this way, *De concordia* implies the social and political importance of a range of humanist educational, political, and theological projects underlining their fundamental union with social goals. Simply put, a corruption in *mores*, learning, and culture, nurtures a corruption in moral and political judgement and not just the other way around.⁶⁷³

In addition to showing how discord is inscribed into the culture one is living in, Vives argues that discord also produced the kind of repercussions the destructive nature of which is obvious to everyone. In this way, a life of discord is not only an offence against the precepts of honesty but also against the precepts of expediency. To point this out was, of course, well in line with rhetorical precepts, and Vives himself in his *De disciplinis* wrote that the most effective way to argue against vice that has the appearance of utility was to show that a seemingly advantageous course of action has in fact consequences that cannot be considered expedient.⁶⁷⁴ More concretely in this case, and in order to argue for the utility (*utilitas*) of a life of concord, he traces the most tangible tragedies of the time, namely the seditions of the Reformation and wars among princes, back to the dynamics of discord. These, of course, would be counted as tragedies even by those who interpret the world through the lenses of discord

⁶⁷¹ Vives: DC, book 3, O: “utrique se non raro pro victoribus habent, et gerunt, & tropae in sua quisque regione de altero statuit, ut bellis Peloponnesiacis Athenienses et Lacedaemonii, quae signa victoriae ad diuturnitatem impressa dici non potest, quantum incitant utrorumque animos, & veteres iam ac prope oblitteratas inimicitias revocant & exacerbant, unde multa & olim & nuper ea sola de causa reparata esse bella novimus....”

⁶⁷² See for instance Vives: DC, book 1, F5 (erroneously E5): “...& quam minus auditores preferant, laudandi, & quidem sui, iam simulachra pugnarum praecipuae cuiusdam sunt in spectaculis voluptatis, olim gladiatores in harena, venationes, naumachia, athletae, nunc militaria exercitamenta, certamina poetarum vel oratorum, disputationes in scholis, quibus homines intersunt litterarum prorsum ignari, iurantque singularem se ex illis voluptatem capere, nempe ex pugnae imagine, nam verborum nihil intelligunt....”

⁶⁷³ This has been argued in the case of More and Erasmus as well, see Baker-Smith 2009, 168-169.

⁶⁷⁴ Vives: DD, 371: “Sic fuerit operaepretium monstrare iuveni tristeis exitus, quos voluptates plurimis attulere. Eundem in modum sit mihi dictum de iis vitiis, quae cum populari utilitate sunt coniuncta: quod genus habentur avaritia, astutia, fraus, ultio, quae prava illa imitatione utilitatis non paucis allubescunt.”

since, as Vives amply points out, all mundane goods of nobility, wealth, and possessions have suffered considerably.⁶⁷⁵

Path to Concord

Because of the multifaceted nature of the concepts of concord and discord, and their omnipresence in all aspects of life, one has to ask about the possibilities of building a path from a world of discord to a world of concord. Indeed, Vives discusses in his *De concordia* a move to concord with the fourth part of the work being explicitly dedicated to the description of the right path to a state of concord. Thus, the language of virtues around concord and peace is not only a criterion of rhetorical assessment of political and social action, but it effectively fixes an end or a *telos* to which humans individually and collectively should strive.

Nevertheless, to break the interpretative circle of discord is not easy, and Vives never offers a temporal story that would describe the steps of that move. One of the boldest arguments on the temporal element of Vives's social thinking has strongly emphasized the temporal possibilities of man for building an earthly society of *bonitas* as a gateway to divine *felicitas*. According to this view, Vives rates very highly human chances of creating a society of concord.⁶⁷⁶ In a similar vein, Noreña's classical study argued that "the unfinished character of earthly perfection and its essential propensity toward the eternal fulfilment is truly a fundamental feature of Vives's moral philosophy."⁶⁷⁷ Noreña has strongly argued there lies an unresolved tension between the Stoic ideals and Augustinian tenets that emphasize man's sinfulness in a world pestered by original sin claiming, however, that "*De concordia* [...] lacks the truly Augustinian insistence on the powerlessness of man, on the total reliance of man on God's grace and assistance."⁶⁷⁸ More generally, a number of interpretations of Vives have highlighted the importance of the youthful *Fabula de homine* as a truly Renaissance text

⁶⁷⁵ The third book of *De concordia* is dedicated to this, see Vives: DC, book 3, K: "Incipiam a postremis bonorum, quae tamen multi iudiciorum pravitate prima ponunt. Opes hominum aut constant fixis possessionibus, ut agris, atque aedificiis, aut iis quae moveri loco possunt, ut metallis, gemmis, vestitu, suppellectili, servis, pecore. Bellum tanquam vehementissima quaedam procella quaecunque fiunt obvia, proruit, nihilque integrum aut erectum praetermittit...."

⁶⁷⁶ This is one of the main arguments of Fernández-Santamaría. See especially Fernández-Santamaría 1998, viii-ix. Fernández-Santamaría's interpretation has been criticised for turning Vives into a Pelagian and forgetting the importance of grace, see Pabel 1999. See also George 1999, 1158. Despite of this, Fernández-Santamaría captures the explicitly optimistic and utopian implications of Vivesian framework for social thinking more clearly than his predecessors.

⁶⁷⁷ Noreña 1970, 201.

⁶⁷⁸ Noreña 1989, 48-49.

belonging to the tradition of Pico della Mirandola's *Oratio* that emphasized the ambivalent metaphysical status of man, who by the use of his own free will was capable of good and bad.⁶⁷⁹

Vives, of course, knew well one of the most grandiose treatments dedicated to time, Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, which famously deprived political and social history of its eschatological element. In Augustine's view, our earthly actions as members of human society had little to do with the redemption and salvation of one's soul, which was ultimately dependent on divine grace since the consequences of original sin had made men hopelessly incapable of achieving salvation using their own free will. History might have been the stage on which the theatre of eschatology is played out, yet the possibilities of the actors to understand the rules of the greater logic of the play are limited indeed. Earthly society, thus, could aspire to the more modest ends of mundane virtues spearheaded by justice but in numerous occasions; because of man's corrupted nature, earthly kingdom had to focus on putative measures. More recently, Luther had denied the existence of free will and the importance of human intentional actions for divine grace by arguing that man, utterly incapable of living according to God's commandments, was justified only through faith.⁶⁸⁰

Vives is undoubtedly reacting against these ideas of human powerlessness in all of his political, theological, and social writings. As an answer to these problems, however, Vives does not offer a systematic philosophy of history that would weave eschatological aspects together with the organization of society in any clear manner. As in the case of More's *Utopia* and Erasmus's *Institutio*, the discussion is not overtly temporal in any of Vives's works. Yet it seems clear that the Spaniard is in fact talking about a relative embetterment of man's earthly life – one could even argue that this is the very premise on which *De concordia* is built. However, there were other discussions where human possibilities were heatedly discussed, the most important of which was the problem of the free will. Already in his commentaries on Augustine, Vives had strongly defended human capacities for choosing their own destiny through the free use of one's own will. In a somewhat Augustinian fashion he emphasized that God's foreknowledge was compatible with free will since God knows or sees human history in his timeless existence (*nunc stans*) yet the history perceived by God is realized through the

⁶⁷⁹ Colish 1962, 3-20. Fernández-Santamaría emphasizes that *Fabula* differs from Pico's *Oratio* since he is more sceptical about the possibility to have knowledge about God's plan for man, thus opening up the question of earthly society as a possibility to *bonitas* that is still tied somehow to man's metaphysical status as *Imago Dei*. Fernández-Santamaría 1998, Chapter one. Fantazzi has argued that the works are fundamentally different since Vives does not share Pico's idea of man's existential freedom, see Fantazzi 2003, 79-87.

⁶⁸⁰ See especially the books xviii-xxii of Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*; Luther, Martin: *De servo Arbitrio ad D. Erasmus Roterodamum*, Hans Lufft, Wittenberg 1526. For the political thought of Augustine, see Dyson 2005.

voluntary actions of humans. Emphatically, Vives's commentaries on Augustine's fifth book state that there are "many things that could occur but never occur," and that "we can freely choose between two options."⁶⁸¹ In another passage, shortly later, Vives very unequivocally stated, "man does not sin because God foreknows that he is going to sin," moving on to quote Chrysostom who emphasized strongly that it is man who willingly sins.⁶⁸²

The defence of free will, however, did not necessarily relate to social and political reality as in much of early Renaissance and late medieval thought the discussion was primarily about the possibilities of individual salvation, irrespective of the social and political context one had to live in. Erasmus's defence of free will, *De libero arbitrio*, defined the issue mainly in terms of human possibilities of reaching salvation, leaving somewhat aside what exactly those possibilities would imply in the earthly world from a social and political point of view.⁶⁸³ Despite this, one of Erasmus's central concerns throughout his *De libero arbitrio* is to point out exactly the kind of social consequences the denial of free will would potentially have, making explicit the implications the theological question had for collective life in Erasmus's mind. Thus, according to the Dutch scholar it is important to attribute actions to free will, "to allow the ungodly, who have deliberately fallen short of the grace of God, to be deservedly condemned; to clear God of the false accusation of cruelty and injustice; to free us from despair, protect us from complacency, and spur us on to moral endeavour."⁶⁸⁴ Following Erasmus, Vives rates human potential rather highly even in the postlapsarian world with respect of the possibilities of organizing collective life through the free use of human will. More generally, an emphasis throughout Vives's work on liberty as a sign of the God-like nature of man that transcends the limitations of nature and body is a pronounced one.⁶⁸⁵

The stress on human liberty rules out discussions of unalterable predestination,

⁶⁸¹ Vives: VCA, v.ix: "Creavit deus voluntates nostras liberas, quae ideo liberae sunt, quia ille voluit, & utrumlibet possunt facere ex contrariis, aliud tamen facturae non sunt quam quod deus praesciuit, quia aliud haud dubie nunquam facient, tam & si possunt. Certum est enim fieri pleraque posse, quae nunquam fient: ita non res future ex scientia dei manant, sed scientia potius dei ex illis, quae tamen future non sunt deo, in quo est error multorum sed praesentes. Quo circa non recte dicitur praescire, nisi relatu ad actiones nostras dicendus est scire, videre, cernere."

⁶⁸² Vives: VCA, v.x: "Quid erat tricus illis & verborum laqueis opus, nisi simpliciter loqui, ut hic Augustinus non ideo peccare hominem, quod deus praesciuit eum peccaturum, qui si nolit potest omnino non peccare, idque si faciat, hoc praesciuit deus...."

⁶⁸³ Erasmus: *De libero*, b2: "Porro liberum arbitrium hoc loco sentimus, vim humanae voluntatis qua se possit homo applicare ad ea quae perducunt ad aeternam salutem, aut ab iisdem avertere."

⁶⁸⁴ Erasmus: *De libero*, third to last page: "Ut sit quod merito imputetur impiis, qui gratiae dei volentes defuerint, ut excludatur a deo crudelitatis, & iniusticiae calumnia, ut excludatur a nobis desperatio, ut excludatur securitas, ut extimulemur ad conandum." (English translation from Erasmus – Luther: *The Battle over Free Will* (ed. Miller), Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis 2012, 29).

⁶⁸⁵ See the discussion on the liberty of actions, Vives: DD, 479.

and Vives never connects history with providence, eschatology, nor with any prophecies that would make an explicit reference to human history and future. But some of the concepts of the tradition of classical antiquity used for describing the forces active in human history were treated very interestingly by Vives. This was the case of *fortuna* – used regularly in Stoic parlance synonymously with Providence to describe the blind forces of nature and history not controlled by human agency.⁶⁸⁶ In Vives, *fortuna* could, for instance, be rhetorically employed to describe the cause of everything positive achieved through acts of discord – such as warfare. The point was that even though acts of dubious moral nature have produced useful outcomes, they have done so not because of the *utilitas* of specific human actions, but merely because of the blind forces of *fortuna*. More generally, and uniting it with our social duties, Vives often ascribes all our achievements in the social world to *fortuna*, ranging from our social position, to wealth, which underlines the somewhat random nature of our social fortunes. But even more importantly, it is clear that Vives did not understand human life as being merely under the blind forces of *fortuna*, since the concept is throughout put to use to describe precisely the unpredictable nature and blindness of the world of discord, whereas the world of concord signifies, among other things, a conquering of the world of *fortuna*.⁶⁸⁷

The most in-depth discussion of these classical concepts could, however, be found in Vives's commentaries on Augustine, where the Valencian had discussed *fortuna*, *fatum* and *necessitas* quite extensively – albeit in a somewhat disorganized manner. In the spirit of the commentary tradition Vives presented different views inherited from the classical and Christian traditions in various parts of the work. In his comments to the very first chapter of the Book V Vives, however, offered a more substantial discussion on *fatum*, *fortuna* and *necessitas*, quoting the most important authorities on the matter. Following Plato, he argues that necessity is such that “no force, no reason, and no art could achieve that what is established is not completed.” Destiny, on the other hand, “follows determinate causes and remains fixed,” yet, “it does not take away the necessity of choice,” while fortune is reserved to phenomena that is under the influence of stars and can at times be “avoided through wisdom, diligence, and work.” These last concepts form the very basis of Vives's educational programme as it is presented in his later *De disciplinis*. Using an Aristotelian language, Vives states that fortune refers to the outcomes that do not fall into the teleological design of the agent, giving the example of someone

⁶⁸⁶ For the two ways of using *fortuna* in Seneca, see Stacey 2007, 65-72.

⁶⁸⁷ Vives: DC, book 3, N: “...nihil est infirmius quam quantacumque potentia in discordia, nusquam magis ludit fortuna.” See also the introduction letter to *Pompeius fugiens*.

accidentally finding a treasure while working his land for other purposes. In the very last part of the section, Vives, in his own voice states that *fortuna* very often refers to our own *fatum* and that “when fortune evolves in accordance with the desires of the soul, it is called happiness, when in the opposite direction, it is called unhappiness.” Happiness, one of the terms most frequently used by the Spaniard, referred to a virtuous life according to one’s nature and *thelos* – not to a purely subjective understanding of our own state.⁶⁸⁸

Even more visible is Vives’s distaste for *fatum* as an unavoidable force when he rails against those defending the inalterable nature of *fatum*:

“For if it was necessary for one to be bad and the other good, why would the bad one deserve punishment and the good one praise – since there is no praising and blaming of necessities. Thus, it would be of no use to encourage to virtue and to attack vice for nothing could happen in a different way. Whose destiny it is to be bad, would be bad.”⁶⁸⁹

This paragraph can be understood in the context of his commentaries on Augustine and his strong defence of free will. However, simultaneously it points to Vives’s larger rhetorical programme; it highlights Vives’s urge to underline the possibilities of language and social action for shaping human reality by employing the rhetorical language of praise and blame. The point of departure of the fourth book of *De concordia*, dealing with the path to concord, starts effectively from the premise that some kind of concord is indeed attainable. As he states in the last part of *De concordia*, “There is nothing more conform with and akin to heavenly happiness than our concord, and nothing that resembles more the disaster of Hell as

⁶⁸⁸ Vives: VCA, v.i: “Quoniam de fato multa disserit hoc loco Augustinus, repetam paulo altius opiniones aliquot veterum ea de re, quo melius omnia faciliusque intelligantur [...] Nulla vi, nulla ratione, aut arte effici posse quo minus illa, ut constituta sunt, perficiantur, unde est illu ab ipso [Plato] usurpatum: Necessitati ne deos quidem resistere, quae vero ab astris geruntur, talia interdum esse, ut evitari sapientia, industria, labore queant, in quo sita est fortuna: quae vero certis causis progredierentur, ac permanerent fixa, id dici fatum, quod tamen necessitate non afferat electionis. Est enim multum in nostra manu situm, quid optemus, quid inceptemus: sed ubi incepimus, reliqua sunt fati...”; “Aristoteles explicatius secundo libro de naturali auditione, & caeteri peripatetici, inter quos Alexander Aphrodisiensis: Fortuita sunt, inquit, quorum finis non est ab agente actioni praestitutus: ut si quid fodiens, quo pinguescat humus, reperit thesaurum, fortuna est...”; “Fortuna plerumque pro fato ipso sorteque rerum utuntur: quae quum ex animi sententia procedit, nominatur felicitas, quum secus, infelicitas.” It is worth mentioning that some of the same vocabulary is evoked in Vives’s understanding of deliberative rhetoric that deals with future oriented choices. As he argues in his *De consultatione*, deliberation is never about necessities since there is no point of debating about something that is already settled, Vives: DCO, 238. See also Vives: DD, 191-193; 422-423.

⁶⁸⁹ Vives: VCA, v.x: “Hoc obiiciebatur iis, qui necessario fato dicebant omnia fieri. Quod cum necesse esset hunc esse malum, illum bonum cur malus supplicum bonus praemium merebantur, cum necessaria nec vitio dentur, nec laudi, tum etiam nec exhortari ad virtutem carpereque vitia prodesset, cum fieri aliter non posset, quin malus esset, quem fatum esset esse malum.”

disagreements and hate” – drawing here on an explicit parallel between eternal and temporal concord.⁶⁹⁰ Thus, if man achieves peace with God in this world, then “peace will be in the interior, in the exterior, in public, in private, in each everyone as they relate with others and themselves.”⁶⁹¹ Vives is not, however, Pelagian. His argument rather emphasizes human action as a way of our asking for God’s grace – an asking based on virtuous life, both individual and collective. Thus, rather than being very radical, his basic ideas on the possibilities of the social body to reach earthly *bonitas* were in line with traditional Catholic medieval theology that always emphasized the mixture of grace and human will as a gateway to heaven.⁶⁹²

As Vives argues, God will help those who know how to ask humbly, but the problem has been that the way of asking has started from wrong and selfish premises, because men are blinded by diabolic passion.⁶⁹³ The premise of the fourth part of his *De concordia* as well as his *Introductio ad sapientiam*, is that peace is not just a blind gift of God, but that man’s actions and effort for earthly goodness and concord are a way of asking for divine help that ultimately completes human peace and concord. Thus, humans should strive to build the kind of body that knows itself and is guided by reason, a metaphor that refers both to each and every person separately and to social bodies as a whole as pictured in *De concordia*. As Vives forcefully states in *De concordia*: “What else indeed is a Christian than a man restituted to his own nature and to the origins from which he was evicted by Devil, as a prisoner of the victory of evil.”⁶⁹⁴

The individual Road to Peace and Concord

In discussing the possibilities for concord Vives, in his *De concordia*, *De pacificatione* and in *Introductio ad sapientiam*, continuously addresses the reader in individual separation. Thus, the

⁶⁹⁰ Vives: DC 1529, book 4, Dd5: “...nihil coelesti beatudini conformius ac confinius, quam nostra concordia, nihil infernae calamitati, quam dissidium, quam odium.”

⁶⁹¹ Vives DC 1529, book 4, second to last page: “...pax erit intus, foris, publice, privatim, unicuique cum aliis, unicuique secum...”

⁶⁹² Tracy 2012, xi-xvi. This idea of asking for God’s grace as a way of life is very present in Vives’s introduction to his posthumous *De veritate fidei Christianae*, see Vives, Juan Luis: *De veritate fidei Christianae libri quinque*, Johann Oporinus, Basel 1543: *Praefatio*; Vives: “Introductio ad sapientiam”, 202-203.

⁶⁹³ Vives: DC, book 4, V: “Petat homo a deo, petat Christianus a Christo, si saltem hominem deus agnosceret in petente & non diabolum, indubie largiretur rem homini inter caeteras maxime conducibilem ac necessariam, nunc sub humanis formis diabolicos spiritus & arrogantiam intuetur, mirandum non est, si iustissimus ac sapientissimus dispensator non dat daemonibus, quod est hominum.”

⁶⁹⁴ Vives: DC book 1, C: “Quid enim est aliud Christianus quam homo naturae suae redditus ac velut natalibus restitutus, a quibus deiecerat eum diabolus captum victoria sceleris?”

point is to emphasize repeatedly that the right path to concord and peace passes through self-knowledge and the control of passions presented as a universal demand for everyone – a point made emphatically by Erasmus already in his *Enchiridion*.⁶⁹⁵ The start of *De concordia*'s fourth book, which according to Vives presents the correct route to concord, discusses the fight between passions and reason inside man. It develops into a presentation of a route to reach inner peace based on self-knowledge, which sheds some light on the limits of human understanding and on the control of the destructive passions in all facets of life. Understanding the precepts and demands of a harmonious life according to one's nature would then lead to constructive social action.⁶⁹⁶ It was, however, in his earlier *Introductio ad sapientiam* that Vives had most clearly spoken to every individual reader in a highly normative tone putting forward much of the precepts amplified in the 1529 compendium.

Introductio ad sapientiam was one of Vives's most successful and widely published works in the sixteenth century and it usually appeared together with his *Satellitium animi*, a collection of proverbs meant to serve as "the attendant of the soul," not altogether different from Erasmus's *Adagia*, and two letters on elementary education entitled *De ratione studii puerilis*.⁶⁹⁷ Looking at how the work was framed through dedication letters one could get the idea that it was destined to form part of the virtuous education of princes and noble men since the two letters were targeted to Mary, princess of England, and to the son of Lord Mountjoy. Yet, from the start, its printing history suggests other interpretations of its potential readers, and González González has indeed characterized the booklet as being one of Vives's works directed to a larger audience.⁶⁹⁸ More specifically, judging from the works it was printed with and from the contents of the book, a context Vives had in mind was elementary education, understood very generally as encompassing all young pupils. This added a pronounced institutional dimension to questions regarding healthy knowledge and the teaching of wisdom. Thus, it is hardly a surprise that in Vives's main educational opus *De disciplinis, Introductio ad sapientiam* is mentioned exactly as the most basic gateway to virtues for young learners.⁶⁹⁹

⁶⁹⁵ Erasmus: *Enchiridion*, 21-33.

⁶⁹⁶ This is a central theme in the book, see especially Vives: DC book 4.

⁶⁹⁷ Vives: Introductory letter to "Satellitium sive Symbola", in Vives, Juan Luis: *Introductio ad sapientiam, Satellitium sive Symbola, Epistolae duae de ratione studii puerilis*, Simon de Colines, Paris 1527, 30: "...satellitium [...] animo tuo..."

⁶⁹⁸ González González 2007, 70-71.

⁶⁹⁹ Vives: DD, 266: "Omnibus initio statim fundamenta sunt tradenda pietatis nostrae, ut noscat se, quam est infirmus, & pronitate naturae malus: ut nihil nec sit, nec potest, nec valet nisi ope Dei: illum implorandum crebro & bona fide: nec speret se quicquam omnino affecuturum absque eius auxilio. Quanta sit caecitas & fraus in animis vulgis iudicantis de bonis ac rerum aestimatione. Integrae opiniones in vacuum pectus instillandae. Nos inimicos

Introductio was, furthermore, an example of how Vives thought the young could be taught the most basic conceptual framework of Erasmian humanism in short sentences that would stick in the mind of the pupil. In some ways the two letters forming *De ratione* functioned as a curriculum and index of materials one should learn in elementary education, and, in a typically Erasmian way, turned the use of maxims represented by *Introductio* and *Satellitium* to one of the cornerstones of character building in elementary schooling.⁷⁰⁰ The booklet itself makes that connection very explicit right from the start: in the very first maxim, what is emphasized is the right judgement of the nature of things and the *laudatio* and *vituperatio* of everything according to real merits.⁷⁰¹ A little later in the maxim number 15, Vives names just two things that lie under the heading of the soul, which a few lines before is described as of Godly origin.⁷⁰² These two are virtue (*virtu*) and learning (*eruditio*), which are contrasted to ignorance (*ruditas*) and vice (*vitium*). This makes a typically Erasmian union of education, knowledge, and virtue integral.⁷⁰³ More generally, *Introductio* presents all major points of Erasmian philosophy, from true nobility and glory to the control of passions and contempt towards the opinions of *vulgus* in a condensed and easily approachable form.

Introductio ad sapientiam is a combination of Christian and Stoic viewpoints, two traditions that in Vives's mind possessed no obvious contradiction in his 1520s works such as *De concordia* and *De pacificatione*. In fact, the Stoic element, and especially Seneca who plays a major role as a source of quotations in *De pacificatione*, was even more pronouncedly present

Dei reconciliatos illi esse per crucem filii eius. Deum tu potentem metuat, ut conscium vereatur, ut datorem ac beneficium amet. Nos ad haec exponenda libellum conscripsimus, cui titulum fecimus de introductione sapientiam....”

⁷⁰⁰ Vives makes the connection to Erasmus's maxims as an antidote to the world of fortune but Vives's own collection of maxims and proverbs, *Satellitium animi*, is clearly meant to serve similar ends in elementary education. Vives, Juan Luis: “Epistolae duae de ratione studii puerilis”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *Introductio ad sapientiam satellitium sive symbola, epistolae duae de ratione studii puerilis*, Simon de Colines, Paris 1527, 54: “...quae omnia eodem libello Erasmus coniunxit, & explicavit. Ediscet ex illis sententiolis aliquot vitae maxime utiles, quas habeat in posterum velut antidota adversus venenum, & prosperae fortunae, & iniquae....” Vives: “De ratione studii puerilis”, 50: “...versus qui ad imitationem proponuntur, contineant gravem aliquam sententiam, quam iuvet edidicisse, nam toties rescribendo, necesse est retineatur, dabitur opera, ut initio saltem imitando castigate scribat.” Other humanist works of the genre include for instance Johannes Murnelius's *De officiis discipulorum, sive Enchiridion scholasticorum*, printed for the first time in 1505 in Zwolle.

⁷⁰¹ This has an evident link to the performance of demonstrative rhetoric based on *laudatio* and *vituperatio*. Vives “Introductio ad sapientiam”, 1: “Vera sapientia est de rebus incorrupte iudicare, ut talem unamquamque existimemus, qualis ipsa est, ne vilia sectemur, tanquam preciosa, aut preciosa tanquam vilia reiiciamus, ne vituperemus laudanda, neve laudemus vituperanda.”

⁷⁰² Vives: “Introductio ad sapientiam”, 13: “Animum divinitus datum, angelis & deo simile....”

⁷⁰³ Under the heading of body, the list is much more ample. Vives makes the same connections in *De ratione studii puerilis*, Vives: “De ratione studii puerilis”, 54: “...discatque iam nunc in hac tenera aetate veras & incorruptas opiniones, ut ea sola bona putet, quae vere sunt talia, velut virtutes, & eruditionem, ea mala quae re vera mala, ut vitia, & ignorantiam & stultitiam, ne mala pro bonis accipiat, aut encontrario....”

in the latter part of the 1520s when Vives was collecting material for an edition of the famous Stoic philosopher.⁷⁰⁴ Despite the importance of Seneca, the basic examples evoked in *Introductio* and in *De pacificatione*, are Jesus Christ and Socrates. The path from self-knowledge to the knowledge of God and the social imperative following from these are explicitly spelled out in the section on moral corruption in his *De disciplinis*. In this Socrates, just as in *De initiis*, is presented as the founder of moral philosophy who understood that all natural philosophy would be useless if one did not know oneself. His knowledge of himself and of morals was not based on the opinion of the multitude but on a judgement founded on the Godly inner light (*synderesis*). Furthermore, from this knowledge Socrates deduced a social imperative, “not only to teach but to stimulate and affect through apt and efficacious eloquence for persuasion, that those listening would know what to do and want it.”⁷⁰⁵ This, in fact, is also the core message of *Introductio ad sapientiam*: self-knowledge is only a step towards a realization of the active life in the service of others.⁷⁰⁶ Stoic philosophy and Seneca in particular would have largely agreed on this assessment of the wise man. Thus, in *Introductio*, one finds an emphatic description of a path from self-knowledge to a social imperative of putting one’s knowledge to the service of others meant for a school context.

In addition to *Introductio*, Vives composed pieces belonging to the traditions of meditation and affective prayer that described a different path to inner peace and union in Christ.⁷⁰⁷ *Introductio* made the connection from its language to the kind of inner spirituality cultivated in the practices of prayer and meditation:

“Because all religion resides in the intimacy of the heart, try to understand your prayers and take care that you do not do it only with words but when you pray, focus on it with your soul, your mind, your thoughts, and your face.”⁷⁰⁸

⁷⁰⁴ Vives to Erasmus, Allen 2061, 1-12.

⁷⁰⁵ Vives: DD, 188: “...non ut doceret solum, sed ut impelleret atque afficeret. Ut qui audirent, & quid faciendum esset scirent, & vellent facere oratione apta ad persuadendum & efficaci....”

⁷⁰⁶ Vives makes the point about self-knowledge right in the start but the whole treatise focuses heavily on human interaction, see Vives: “Introductio ad sapientiam”, 11.

⁷⁰⁷ He composed several works belonging to these traditions. Of these, the most important ones were his 1529 compendia of orations and meditations (Vives, Juan Luis: *Sacrum diurnum de sudore Jesu Christi; concio de nostro & Christi sudore; meditatio de passione Christi in psalmum XXXVII*, Hubertus de Croock, Brügge 1529) especially meant for the inhabitants of Bruges who had to endure yet another sweating-sickness epidemic, and his simple prayer book *Excitationes* from 1535 was one of the more widely printed works of Vives in the sixteenth century. It was translated into Spanish in 1537.

⁷⁰⁸ Vives: “Introductio ad sapientiam”, 314: “Quandoquidem religio omnis sita est in intimis pectoris, preces da operam ut intelligas, & cave ne ore tantum permurmures, sed quum oras, totus & animo & mente, & cogitatione, & vultu in hoc sis....”

Moreover, Vives himself, like many other humanists influenced by late medieval piety, had been pursuing for years a very private and intimate practice of praying as he explains in the dedication letter and preface to a prayer book *Excitationes* (also printed as *Ad animi excitationem in Deum commentatiunculae*).⁷⁰⁹ Thus, the claim of self-knowledge obviously entailed concrete practices widely known to contemporaries.

Coming to Reason as a Social Body, Perfecting People

Despite the insistence on individual renewal that was strongly incorporated into *De concordia* and *De pacificatione*, the *raison d'être* of both works was pronouncedly social.⁷¹⁰ Thus, just as *discordia* is sustained by social dynamics, the creation of concord comprises a strong social element: social *concordia* is not just a sequence of individual acts of coming to reason, it is the reform of social life itself that can also make inner peace possible. The social dimension is indeed the very presupposition of *Introductio ad sapientiam*: it refers to individuals in separation but presupposes that there is a social setting where this is achieved. Both *De concordia* and *De pacificatione* are abundant in reminding of the fundamentally sociable, benevolent, and caring nature of humans. In the first part of *De concordia*, Vives extensively explains how man was created for harmonious communal life by enumerating all the gifts man was endowed with for successful social life, ranging from reason, free will, and speech to a wonderful description of bodily signs of benevolence such as smiling and tears.⁷¹¹ All the natural gifts given to social life should be put into use in the perfecting and teaching of citizens. As Vives emphatically stated in the early part of his second book of *De concordia*,

“I would rather want laws, judges and the customs of cities and people to focus on correcting the restless souls of men, and to focus on teaching them how unworthy of humans it is to do

⁷⁰⁹ Vives, Juan Luis: *Ad animi excitationem in deum commentatiunculae. Praeparatio animi ad orandum. Commentarius in orationem dominicam. Preces et meditationes quotidianae*, Johann I Gymnich, Köln 1539, A3, B2: “...hoc opus [*Excitationes*], quum uni mihi pridem scripsissem...”; “A primo uni mihi haec [*Excitationes*] composueram...” Meditation and prayer were common practices among not only humanists but also larger circles. See Bataillon 1991, 598-613.

⁷¹⁰ Stacey has emphasized how the metaphor of the social body in Seneca shifts the attention from the autonomy of the individual to the autonomy of the body politic ultimately dependent on the prince alone. Thus, the point of departure of Seneca in his *De clementia* is that individuals in practice are not capable of moral autonomy, see Stacey 2007, 48-53.

⁷¹¹ Vives: DC, book 1, early part.

an injustice to others or to be eager to return one.”⁷¹²

It is, however, in the shorter *De pacificatione* that Vives most strongly discusses the duty of everyone to contribute to the common good. No doubt, there is a pronouncedly universal duty found in Christian charity (*caritas*) that binds everyone, and that is underlined by the fact that Vives addresses even those who do not have other instruments than their example and speech to contribute to the common good as members of the body of Christ.⁷¹³ However, the main point of the work is to remind everyone to perform the social duties demanded of their instruments, authority, and social positions. Thus, one should fulfil the social duty of a truly wise man in the confines of the social role one has.⁷¹⁴ In a perfect state the right use of our possibilities would be nothing else than living according to our nature and natural law, “because if each instrument adapts to the specific labour nature gave it, everything will be perfect and accomplished.”⁷¹⁵ However, despite the plea for the natural function of instruments, *De pacificatione* is very clear that the world in which the project takes place is one of discord and erroneous judgement. Thus, even those instruments that hold no sway over the wise are harnessed for the cause of peace and concord, such as misattributed honour, possessions, money, nobility of lineage and other things “to which the people attribute great value.”⁷¹⁶ Like in *De consultatione*, the very same things that are despised in Christian humanist discourse are employed because of their inherent power in the world of discord. The explanation of the specific duties of each social position according to their instruments is the main goal of *De pacificatione*, which uses a pronouncedly Christian language in its description of the fight between the children of God and the sons of Devil.⁷¹⁷

⁷¹² Vives: DC, book 2, G: “Vellem potius ad hoc leges, iudices, mores civitatum populorumque incumberent, ut inquietos hominum animos castigarent, docerentque, quam indigna homine faceret, & qui iniuriam alteri inferret, & qui studeret referre....”

⁷¹³ Vives: DP, B: “Sunt, qui rem nullam habent, isti voluntatem conferant in commune, & votis faustisque precessionibus, interdum quoque exhortationibus atque incitationibus adiuvent laborantes.”

⁷¹⁴ Both natural talent and the mundane gifts of fortune are mentioned here, Vives: DP, B: “non prodis ipse in aciem, quia, vel natura vires tibi ademit, ut opes fortuna, at certe prodeunt voce, votis, bonis, omnibus victoriam adiuvant, contribue voluntatem, qui facultatem non potes.”; Vives: DP, B: “Sunt qui aliquid ad pacificationem possint adferre opere ac re ipsa. Sunt, qui rem nullam habent, isti voluntatem conferant in commune, et votis faustisque precessionibus, interdum quoque exhortationibus atque incitationibus adiuvent laborantes.” In *Introductio ad sapientiam*, the first premise of which is to know one self as a yardstick for the evaluation of all other things reminds the reader that “Reliqua vel externa, vel corporis si habes, proderunt tibi ad virtutem relata, oberunt ad vitia, si non habes, cave ne quaeras vel cum minimo dispendio virtutis.”

⁷¹⁵ Vives: DP, B4: “Quod si quodque instrumentum ei operi accomodatur, cui a natura sua est tributum, omnia opera exacta & consummata existent....”

⁷¹⁶ Vives: DP, B2: “multum hisce tribuit vulgus, quod non perinde ad iudicium rationemque res omnes revocat atque expendit, ut sensu quodam externo adducitur.”

⁷¹⁷ Vives: DP, B-B2.

The focus on duties according to social role had two conceptual possibilities that were activated in a variety of Vives's works. First, there is a conservative point against all radical movements of the 1520s and 1530s that underlines existing institutional and social framework as a suitable context for any reform of society. Thus, Vives wants to remind everyone of their subjected role vis-à-vis the mundane, spiritual, and intellectual powers of the time, to insist repeatedly on the existing institutional and social framework for solving the problems pestering Europe.⁷¹⁸ Secondly, the same discourse opens up a number of possibilities for criticising those in power, and especially princes for not living up to the standards demanded of their social role. Vives himself, of course, had used this critical potential in the 1520s on numerous occasions – implying quite clearly that the policies of European princes could be seen as tyrannical actions.⁷¹⁹ In short, Vives is adamant in arguing that the problems destabilizing the Europe of his time are not solved by the Reformation, by revolt of any kind, or by questioning authorities, but only through successful performance of one's duties, be they related to the family, the political community or any form of social interaction.

De pacificatione is structured around an analysis of symmetrical and asymmetrical relations and their possible contribution to social concord. Under symmetrical relations that should be ruled by concord, Vives situates for example friendship, neighbourhoods, and citizenship. Under the heading of superiors, the reader would find kings and princes used interchangeably in *De pacificatione*, magistrates, counsellors, teachers, husbands, fathers, and masters. Under the heading of inferiors, one finds citizens or subjects, disciplines, wives, sons, and slaves. He also discusses nobles, soldiers, priests and the rich demanding that they put their instruments and possessions into social use instead of leading a life of theatrical ostentation. Once again, the selection of categories further accentuates that Vives is including all social associations from families and the Church to commonwealths and kingdoms. The message running through the whole work is simply that the fulfilling of the duties of one's social role contributes to the general concord.

However, woven into every page of *De pacificatione* is the idea of the Stoic or

⁷¹⁸ At one point Vives claims that true liberty is living free of passions under existing institutions, see Vives, Juan Luis: "Quam misera esset vita christianorum sub Turca liber unus", in Vives, Juan Luis: *De concordia & discordia in humano genere libri quattuor: De pacificatione, liber unus: quam misera esset vita christianorum sub Turca liber unus*, Michael Hillen, Antwerpen 1529, A4-A5.

⁷¹⁹ Cathy Curtis has pointed out Vives's uncommonly forceful critique of the tyrannical actions of Henry VIII, Curtis 2011, 42-43. Many of Vives's later works contain barely veiled critiques of Henry VIII. In *De pacificatione* he clearly refers to Henry's divorce, see Vives: DP, D: "non adducaebantur Graeci, ut crederent suas querelas, rixas, discordias ab iis hominibus sapienter posse componi, qui ipsi privatas domi vel autoritate, vel prudentia non sedassent."

Christian wise, the man of true self-understanding. As Vives wrote in an early part of *De pacificatione*: “This is the true disposition of mind of a great and wise man; to consider himself and his own health of secondary importance to the well-being of others and not to hesitate to lose something if it protects others.”⁷²⁰ It is in this context that Vives introduces some categories that have a complex relation to existing social roles, such as the erudite, the powerful man (*vir fortis*), the good man (*vir bonus*), and the man of doctrine and prudence (*viros doctrini ac prudentia excellentes*). Some of these categories denote specific groups of people. The erudite naturally has a link to schooling.⁷²¹ *Vir fortis* for its part points to those vying for military glory found in princely courts and in nobility. Under this heading, Vives makes a forceful description of how the true virtue of the powerful is not to be shown in external deeds of discord but in the true fight that is fought inside one’s soul.⁷²² This is yet another instance where civic glory is given Christian form that turns the external fight into an internal one against sin, a point that is directed especially to princes and soldiers. Men of doctrine and prudence, for their part, are those working in religious offices.

However, the good man holds the most ambivalent link to all fixed categories; he can potentially embody any social role, but whatever he does, he should “lead others to where he has arrived.” Little later Vives declares, following Aristotle, that a good man is the yardstick of everything.⁷²³ One can interpret that Vives means that to be *vir bonus* is the goal of every person, and allows them to fulfil their role successfully – a point that could be employed as a critique of those in the highest echelons of human associations, who fail to fulfil this condition, with especially harsh words directed to princes and nobility.⁷²⁴ However, *vir bonus* can work equally well next to those in powerful social roles – to become the yardstick of their social actions. In fact the description of the relationship between counsellors and princes as one between reason and will, glaringly underlines that those with powerful means and instruments are not necessarily good. On the contrary, they should listen to the good; instruments and powers should be united in wise counsel. Vives made the point emphatically in his dedication letter to *De disciplinis* destined to the King of Portugal João III in drawing the attention to the concord and friendship between princes and men of letters pointing out the importance of

⁷²⁰ Vives: DP, B: “Hic est vere affectus magni & sapientis viri, se & suam salutem aliorum saluti posthabere, seque ipsum nihil dubitare perdere ut alii serventur.”

⁷²¹ Vives: DP, E.

⁷²² Vives: DP, D3-D4.

⁷²³ Vives: DP, E: “alios cupiet eodem adducere, quo ipse pervenit.”; “Vir bonus mensura est omnium...”

⁷²⁴ Vives: DP, B5-C.

counsel offered by the learned.⁷²⁵

The kind of social dynamics found in *De pacificatione* highlights that one could advance the cause of *concordia* through measures that are essentially social. Indeed, one has two distinct ways of entering the conceptual circle of concord: on the one hand through acts of individual self-control, and, on the other, through social means taken and advanced by the more prominent members of the social body in possession of suitable instruments. In a way, these represent two ways of talking about the same phenomenon in different contexts and to different audiences. Inner peace and concord is something everyone should strive for, but the social factor involved means that all, as members of the same body of Christ, should contribute to the social aspect of concord according to their differing possibilities and roles. Because of differing instruments, the self-control of those in power radiating to constructive social action is of great importance. In this way, the duty of the prince to guarantee peace is a precondition for the individual peace of other members of the social body, and the right administration of law by magistrates makes individual peace and social concord possible on the level of neighbourhoods and cities.

However, all this presupposes there are some who have reached a level of inner peace and concord to be able to enhance social harmony. This is not, however, merely a conceptual presupposition backed up by Vives's optimistic idea of man as capable of relative earthly perfection, but it also has a reference in the world in which Vives is operating. The duties of counselling and teaching are exactly what Vives and other educated humanists are doing; they are already performing the life of social utility demanded of *vir bonus*. They are the ones who should guarantee the communication of true wisdom in a world of discord; they are the ones whose critique should become the yardstick for the successful performance of social and political duties. Vives's 1520s literature is nothing less than the systematic guidance to the social roles of *De pacificatione*. He writes to families, to schools and to princes in an effort to transmit them wisdom.⁷²⁶ Thus, what Vives is proposing in *De pacificatione* and *De concordia* can only be understood in the larger framework of the humanist project that was changing

⁷²⁵ Vives: DD, *Epistola*: "Tum intelligis quanta sit inter principes & eruditos homines munerum consensio: ut non sint duo hominum genera, quae amica inter se magis & coniuncta esse conveniat [...] Eruditio quiete indiget, quam praestat regia potestas: haec vero consilio ad molem tantarum rerum tractandam, quod praestant docti prudentia ex disciplinis collecta..." His dedication letter to Charles V based its demand on a similar union of power and the right kind of will, see Vives: Dedication to Charles.

⁷²⁶ For politics, see Chapter four. For educational contexts, he wrote the aforementioned works of *Introductio ad sapientiam*, *De ratione studii puerilis* and *Satellitium animi*. His major contributions to families were his *De institutione faeminae christianae* and his *De officio mariti*.

educational patterns, resuscitating classical knowledge, and aspiring to secure a role in administration.⁷²⁷ In short, it aspired to renewal in almost all domains of social existence, which ultimately could reform those ruled by their passion and discord.

Curing Poverty

Despite its social dimension it is clear that the model of *De concordia* and *De pacificatione* is ethical in the sense that it depends on the ethical qualities of either those in powerful positions or of those reminding them of their duties, with no reflection on the structural nature of institutional checks. It rather takes existing institutions and ways of exercising power as a given. But the language of perfecting of the body did not mean that more institutional means of demanding the social utility of the instruments of the rich and powerful could not be evoked. The flexibility of the language of the perfecting of the social body was stretched to cover institutional issues in *De subventionem pauperum* – Vives’s famous plea for communal welfare system destined to the burgomaesters and the city council of his hometown Bruges that was printed in 1526.⁷²⁸

The work is divided into two parts, the first of which deals with individual pleas of *caritas*, whereas the second part is dedicated to administrative means that are largely based on moving the existing framework of poor relief grounded on private and religious hospitals under the supervision of civil authorities. In this question, the framework for policies is not the central government but the town: Vives is here writing to the city fathers as a citizen of Bruges, and hails the republican institutions of the Great town of Flanders without referring to central government. This is not incidental: throughout his work, Bruges appears as a *civitas* – as a political community or a body of its citizens – not merely as a town (*oppidum, urbs*).⁷²⁹ In addition to being a practical answer to a local question, this testifies to how much real political measures excluding warfare were in Vives’s mind related to local context.⁷³⁰

Vives dedicates the first chapter to everyone individually where all both in the role of subjects and objects of beneficence are reminded of their duties as members of the social

⁷²⁷ One can think of Thomas More, Juan de Vergara, Guillaume Budé or even Cranevelt as Vives’s humanist friends operating very close to power.

⁷²⁸ For analysis of the work, see especially Matheussen 1986; Matheussen 1993; Matheussen 1998; Fantazzi 2008.

⁷²⁹ See especially the dedication letter to *De subventionem*.

⁷³⁰ Matheussen 1998, 111-113.

body. Vives is of course not approaching all parties as potential readers of the book, since the objects of the policies would hardly have the possibility to familiarize themselves with the work. He is merely implying the universal extension of duty that reaches all members of the social body. In the first part, entitled *De subventione privata quid unumquemque facere oporteat* Vives's main move is to turn the specific requirement of alms giving into a general philosophy of social *caritas* by arguing that the Greek word *eleemosune* refers not to alms but to mercy (*miser cordia*) that is supposed to cover the totality of good deeds.⁷³¹ Thus, Vives is able to claim that all actions enhancing virtue and instruction have to be understood as acts of beneficence demanded of a true Christian.

But the crucial moment comes in the beginning of the second part, when Vives states: "Until now I have explained what each and every one should do individually; from now on, I will explain what the city as well as the one governing it, who is like the soul of the body, should do." Here he is pointing out two different ways of approaching questions of poor relief, only one of which is pronouncedly private.⁷³² The programme of the second part is predicated on the breakdown of original *concordia* and *De subventione pauperum*. It explicitly delimits the burden of actions of those in power to a world, which is already detached from early Christian fervour. In the beginning of the sixth part of the second chapter entitled *De pecunia quae his sumtibus sufficit*, Vives describes a short history of poor relief underlying the gradual loss of apostolic spirit which, consequently, led to a situation in which those institutionally in charge of alms giving did not live up to expectations. As Vives states:

"The fervour of Christ's blood grew colder and colder, and the Spirit of the Lord was communicated to a very few. The Church began to emulate world and to compete with it in display, arrogance, and extravagance. Already Jerome complains that the provincial prefects eat more sumptuously in monasteries than in palaces – and for those expenses, much money was needed. What was meant for the poor was thus transformed into the possession and resource of the Bishops and Priests by Bishops and Priests themselves."

⁷³¹ Vives: *De subventione*, B: "Quisquis ergo aliena ope indiget, pauper est, & ei misericordia est opus, quae graece eleemosyna dicitur, non in sola pecuniae erogatione sita, ut vulgus putat, sed in omni opere, quo humana indigentia sublevatur." Fantazzi has also emphasized this, see Fantazzi 2008, 96-97. Fantazzi, like Bataillon, also stresses that Vives is careful not to mention mendicant orders at all, see Fantazzi 2008, 104; Bataillon 1952, 143-144. The names of the two parts are very revealing indeed. The first part is *De subventione privata quid unumquemque facere oporteat* and the second part *De subventione publica, quod civitatem deceat*

⁷³² Vives: *De subventione*, Eiiii: "Hactenus quid unumquemque deceat, posthac quid civitatem publice, & eius rectorem, qui est in ea, quod in corpore animus...."

The point is thus to justify the political action taken by civil authorities, since this strongly implies the failure of the Church to do what is asked of it. At the same time, however, it makes generally clear that it is a corrupted state of affairs one is dealing with – something that makes political action necessary more generally.⁷³³

Moreover, it is for achieving this that the political body needs its head, soul or, according to yet another metaphor, doctors – people who understand the dynamic of poor relief. It is in the head that both powers and faculties for making decisions for the whole lie and the activities of the head, soul, or the doctor of the body should be understood as ways of perfecting people rather than in a merely punitive sense.⁷³⁴ Already in one of the last paragraphs of the first book, Vives had called for beneficence that would be preventive, not merely a reaction to an existing need. If one reads these paragraphs in the context of Vives’s original definition of alms as being primarily about the enhancement of virtue the argument seems clear: the preventing actions of the political authorities serving as teachers or doctors is the ultimate act of mercy (*miser cordia*).⁷³⁵

Naturally, this programme of the second book occurs in a very specific situation. This was the inadequacy of the old poor relief system based on privately funded hospitals to meet the demands of the growing legions of urban poor of Bruges in economic decline, and also more generally in the Low Countries and other regions of Germany and France in the early sixteenth century.⁷³⁶ The point of departure for all such reforms was in one way or another to

⁷³³ Vives: *De subventione*, Fv: “Postmodum vero refrixit magis ac magis fervor ille cruoris Christi, & spiritus domini communicatus est paucioribus, coepit Ecclesia mundum aemulari: & cum eo pompa, fastu, luxu, certare. Iam Hieronymus conqueritur praesides provinciarum lautius in monasterio coenare, quam in palatio, ad eos sumptus opus erat grandi pecunia. Ita quod pauperum fuerat, in rem & facultates suas Episcopi & Presbyteri verterunt.” In the first part of the second book he also states strongly that the city has rebuilt what has been lost. Vives: *De subventione*, Ev-F: “Quid quod quemadmodum renovantur in civitate omnia, quae temporibus aut casibus vel mutantur, vel intereunt, muri, fossae: aggeres, rivi, instituta: mores, leges ipsae, sic par esset succurrere primae illi distributione pecuniae, quae variis modis damna accepit.” In the first book on the necessities of man he also depicts a familiar story about the corruption of man through vice, namely pride. See the part very first part entitled *Origo humanae necessitatis ac miseriae*. Already in his commentaries on Augustine Vives praises the role of censor’s as teachers of good habits, Vives: VCA, ii.ix.

⁷³⁴ Vives, *De subventione*, Ev: “Unde nascuntur ea vitia, quae dudum recensui, non tam illis imputanda, quam etiam interdum magistratibus, qui non aliter civitati prospiciunt, haud recte de gubernatione populi statuentes, ut qui solum se existiment praefectos litibus pecuniae, aut criminibus censendis. Quum contra magis conveniat eos in hoc incumbere, quo pacto cives bonos reddant, quam quemadmodum vel puniant malos:”

⁷³⁵ Vives: *De subventione*, B: “Precipuum & summum beneficium est, si quis virtutem cuiusquam adiuvet.”

⁷³⁶ As is well known, the years between 1520 and 1545 witness a remarkable wave of reforms of social systems. Before the composition of *De subventione* in the 1520s, at the least, Strasbourg, Nuremberg, Leisning, Mons and Ypres had reorganized their poor relief. See Fantazzi 2008, 95-96; Bataillon 1952, 141. Moreover, Charles V gave an edict in 1531 that forbade mendacity handing the responsibility of social welfare to the central government. In Vives, on the other hand, the unit responsible for organizing social welfare was the town. Matheussen 1993, 39-

shift the focus from the medieval notion of alms giving centred around the self-sanctification of the one giving alms, to a view focusing on the enhancement of public good through political and civic measures. Public good, in all of these reforms, could and should be enforced through collective methods that ultimately aimed at incorporating the poor into the life of the body politic and, simultaneously, at mobilizing them as potential work force.⁷³⁷ Thus, in making this point, most of those proposing reforms had to argue against a centuries-old tradition of alms giving – one of the core messages of Jesus, and the cornerstones of mendicant orders.

In many ways Vives's more general understanding of *caritas* as not dealing only with acts of almsgiving but with more general measures is, thus, a particular and polemical understanding of charity, although Vives most likely deliberately toned down some parts of the text in order not to provoke the Catholic Church and especially the mendicant orders.⁷³⁸ It should be remembered, however, that Vives's text does not propose a criminalization of mendacity, as Charles V's famous edict of 1531 would do, and the tone of the text is not pronouncedly juridical. Rather, the dominant way of writing in *De subventionem* is ethico-social as Matheussen has argued.⁷³⁹ Vives's discussion of the poor was to be heatedly debated in the Spanish context, starting from the Castilian poor laws of 1540. In the context of this discussion Domingo de Soto, a Dominican priest writing on the questions of the poor, strongly defended a more traditional view of spiritual and direct charity based on *miser cordia* that was demanded of all Christians in a variety of situations.⁷⁴⁰

However, the persuasive force of this argument was amply backed by Vives's *laudatio* of the pragmatic effects of these kinds of policies. Throughout the work, one of Vives's main points is once again to prove that in addition to being honest and virtuous, these policies would effectively be beneficial (*utilitas*) to the body politic. In doing this, he underlines that individual criminal acts should not only be traced back to the corrupted nature of the individual soul in charge of the act, but to social reasons that effectively produce necessities for doing this.

41; Matheussen 1998, 111. For the decadence of Bruges and the rise of Antwerp, see Hunt & Murray 1999, 232-236.

⁷³⁷ The question of whether the sixteenth-century developments were about enforcing and disciplining through secular top-down political measures, or about institutionalizing and collectivizing medieval notions of religious charity, have been hotly debated. See Safley 2003, 1-14; Wandel 2003, 15-25.

⁷³⁸ However, he was criticised by a Franciscan Friar. See Fantazzi 2008, 94-96, 106-107; Bataillon 1952, 143. See also Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 246, 27-35.

⁷³⁹ Matheussen 1998, 110-111. Even though Vives's point is to root out mendacity, he never forbids it outright to my understanding. Moreover, as Matheussen has noted, both vagabondage and mendacity were already before considered criminal acts in many existing documents and texts, even though the extent to which the prohibition was enforced in different places is not known.

⁷⁴⁰ Fernández Santamaría 1998, 167-170; Fantazzi 2008, 107-108.

In his 1525 *De bello, & pace*, Vives had argued that war created poverty and mendacity, an argument that had played a role in English humanism Vives was so familiar with, and that most likely had influenced his understanding of poverty around 1525.⁷⁴¹ Already in the first book of *Utopia*, Thomas More had claimed by the mouth of Raphael Hythloday that individual character, the spring of actions, was greatly shaped by politics.⁷⁴² As Hythloday claimed, “if you allow young folk to be abominably brought up and their characters corrupted, little by little, from childhood; and if then you punish them as grown-ups for committing the crimes to which the training has consistently inclined them, what else is this, I ask, but first making them thieves and then punishing them for it?”⁷⁴³ Hythloday’s lengthy treatment of theft, vagabondage, and poverty, approved by Cardinal John Morton acting as an interlocutor in the dialogue, highlights the fundamental role of preventive means of educational and economic activity, and is strongly suspicious of politics based on strong legal sanctions on something people never really chose to do as subjects of their own actions. Likewise, Vives’s *De bello, & pace* already argued that it is the general perfecting of citizens, and the securing of peace and concord that constituted the only way to fight poverty.⁷⁴⁴

Echoing this, Vives is clear about the fact that the enhancement of public good demands that a significant number of the people are not abandoned. If this is done, these people – the poor – will not only be useless, but also harmful for themselves and for others. They would rob, women would be forced to prostitution, their children would be badly educated, and nobody would know under what precepts and customs they would be brought up. It would also

⁷⁴¹ Adams suggests that *De subventionem* is “...a direct outgrowth of the English humanist criticism of man and society”, Adams 1962, 250. Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xix: “Postremo multitudo gravata indictionibus & tributis, exclusis per bellum terra & mari commerciis, in summa egestate ac miseria vitam trahit, tam exhausta, & perdita, ut quiete ac pace deinceps reddita, vires tamen longo etiam tempore recipere non valeat, permulti cessante artis quaestu, aut invalidi mendicant, aut latrocinantur validi, praesertim ingenti licentiam atque impunitate scelerum, quam belli tempore necesse est contingere, quum quisque ita sanctissimus ac honestissimus habetur, ut animus est ei promptissimus flagitiis ac facinoribus patrandis, tanquam in eiusmodi dexteris posita sit regni salus, quae maximam malam perniciem regno adferunt.” Vives made the same point about poverty in his *De concordia*. Vives: DC, book 3, L: “Quid tenuibus relinquitur, quise manuum labore sustentabant, nisi ut boni aut invalidi mendicent, aut vitam durissime ac difficillime exigant, fame eos cibos ingerere in ventrem cogente, quos alias nequivissent sine nausea attingere aut etiam intueri, mali vero & valentes ad latrocinium egestate impellantur, aut manus sanguine et maleficiis, quum suoapte ingenio abhorrent tum etiam educatione ac moribus.”

⁷⁴² Already Noreña noticed the similarities between Vives’s *De subventionem* and More’s *Utopia*. See Noreña 1970, 96.

⁷⁴³ More: *Utopia*, 42: “Certe nisi his malis medemini, frustra iactetis exercitam in vindicanda furta iustitiam, nempe speciosam magis, quam aut iustam aut utilem. Siquidem quum pessime sinitis educari, & mores paulatim ab teneris annis corrumpi, puniendos videlicet, tum demum quum ea flagitia viri designent, quorum spem de se perpetuam a pueritia usque praebuerant, quid aliud quaeso quam facitis fures, & iidem plectitis?” (English translation from More, Thomas: *Utopia* [eds. Logan – Adams], Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2002, 20).

⁷⁴⁴ Vives: “De bello, & pace”, xix.

be hard to know what these people think about religion and manners. The last point makes a clear link to education as exactly the kind of way to bring the poor back to a communal life of concord. All these suggestions, most of which were reiterated in *De concordia*, must have resonated well with the audience of the time.⁷⁴⁵ The link from religion to crime had a direct and explicit reference to the Reformation, to the peasant war and to the problem of mercenaries, who were often seen as armed robbers. Human associations and body politic appear as the horizon where peace and concord should be enhanced and secured by countering poverty.

The Breakdown of Reason

It is by now clear that Vives's metaphor of human association as a body led him to consider the possibilities of its salvation not solely as acts of inner concord of individual members, but as the coming to reason of the whole body. This coming to reason happens primarily in the head of the body, since it is there that the responsibilities for the body and the faculties of the rational soul lie. The head can be the supreme authority of any social constellation, meaning that the metaphor is applicable to all human associations; but if the supreme authority does not perform its duties in a satisfactory manner the head should be reminded of its duties by those taking the role of reason.

However, the possibility that politics can actually be about something else than the perfecting of citizens through different means was to get more attention from Vives as the years advanced. The general reaction to the social dimension of the Reformation was more generally negative among the humanist circles Vives was familiar. Erasmus had already in his *Lingua* strongly urged for respect for existing authorities.⁷⁴⁶ More clearly, the Dutch humanist argued in his widely published *Epistola contra quosdam qui se falso iactant Evangelicos*, from 1529, that heretics, if a threat to civic order, should be punished.⁷⁴⁷ If the central theme of the Vivesian corpus until the late 1520s had been the control of princes as potential and

⁷⁴⁵ Vives: DC, R. In the margins one could read *iustitia* and *humanitas*.

⁷⁴⁶ Erasmus, Desiderius: *Lingua*, Johann I Knobloch, Strasbourg 1525, 135-136: "Tam potentem ac felicem linguam precemur episcopis nostris precemur principibus, magistratibus, & populo cordocile, cor tractabile, cor carneum, cor auritum, & alatum, nec elingue, auritum, ut pastoribus ad meliora vocantibus libenter auscultent, alatum, ut cos strannue praecedentes per viam evangelicam, alacriter sequantur, nec desit lingua qua plebs imperita ad episcoporum benedictionem clare respondeat, Amen." Erasmus's shifting understanding of the people in the early 1520s seems to be clear. To his 1525 edition of the *Adagia*, he added a line to *Scarabeus* dealing with tyranny that stated, "the cruelty of the Kings is better than the universal confusion of anarchy." The example is from Adams 1962, 248.

⁷⁴⁷ Hillerbrand 2007, 145-146.

unpredictable threats to European peace and Christendom more generally, Vives too was to become much more aware of the fact that the body itself, the multitude, can rebel against the reason that should guide it. Already in 1531 in his *De disciplinis* Vives had argued that in the absence of love as a glue of political community (*civitas*), justice, strengthened with power and force, has to take its place.⁷⁴⁸

Vives's interpretation of poor relief and educational ideas were of course closely related to the long-term solution of these problems, and to the social ambiance of Reformation Low Countries and Europe in the context of which Vives's 1529 compendium appealed for a tolerant solution. In his *De communione rerum* (1535), an attack against radical Anabaptism, the putative aspect of politics becomes a central theme and leads to a strong condemnation of a social usage of theology. Radical Anabaptism had diverged from its early non-institutional and non-resistance modality by turning the city of Münster into "New Jerusalem," introducing a community of goods and polygamy. This sect had dangerously close connections to some sects of northern Low Countries, and some signs of the radicalization of the Melchiorite Anabaptists in the Low Countries had manifested in early 1535 when the Oldekloster in Frisia and the city hall of Amsterdam were assaulted by Anabaptist groups. The reaction to Radical Anabaptism was univocal both in the Protestant and Catholic camps in demanding harsh measures against the Anabaptists of Münster who were eventually brutally crushed in 1535.⁷⁴⁹ Thus, Vives's call for putative measures was firmly in line with the general reaction.

The difference of *De communione* with respect to *De subventionem* has been noted by many: the first focuses on criticism of arguments for the community of goods, and the other uses superficially similar arguments for the enhancement of its plea for social welfare.⁷⁵⁰ The discrepancy in the focus of the works and in their respective argumentative structures is clear, yet much of it can be attributed to the problem and audience at hand. In *De subventionem*, the question is about the restructuring of poor relief, and the imagined audience consists of civic officers. Whereas in *De communione*, Vives argues against a rebellious group basing its arguments on the community of goods, the more popular element of which explains why *De communione* was published in German already in 1536 under the name of *Von der gemeynschaft*

⁷⁴⁸ Vives: DD, 372: "Verum ubi Charitas abest, iustitiae officium in eius locum succedit, non illius blandae ac inermis, sed armatae potestate ac viribus, quae frenos concitationi animorum iniiciat."

⁷⁴⁹ Its leaders Jan Matthijs and Jan van Leyden were from the Low Countries, as well as many of the people who poured into Münster in spring 1534. Many of the preachers inspiring the events of Münster came also from the Low Countries and the Anabaptist sects were very much influenced by the happenings in Münster. See Hillebrand 2007, 119-123; Duke 1990; 58-59; 85-88; Tracy 1990, 160-167; Stayer 1991, 123-138.

⁷⁵⁰ Noreña notes the difference but does not see them to be in contradiction, Noreña 1970, 221-222.

aller dingen (Strasbourg 1536). According to the principles of rhetoric Vives knew well, it is in the confines of particular questions that the construction of argument should be done, always bearing in mind the expectations of the audience. In this way, *De communione* is a realization of another possibility lying in the language of social body that does not criticise the head for not living up to its standards, but blames the body for a supposed rebellion of the passion.⁷⁵¹ Thus, in no way does *De communione* break with the overall *ethos* of his work.

Right from the start, Vives makes clear he is discussing current issues, making very explicit the idea that social violence has emerged from the divergence of opinions and from the questioning of age-old truths.⁷⁵² He continues by claiming that the kind of Biblical arguments some Anabaptists put forward were just a way to mask criminal practices (associated with Catiline) with only superficially theological arguments.⁷⁵³ Yet, it is of utmost importance to make categorical distinctions in the groups of those participating in social tumults so that the correct problems could be discerned, and the right remedies applied. Vives proposes three categories, all of which relate to his earlier works. First, one finds real criminals – those who apply their malicious rhetoric to others, and who cannot be cured any more than other delinquents through rational means. To them, Vives proposes the sword of civic authorities, because it is the one of their duties to defend the people.⁷⁵⁴ There was something tangible and concrete about this claim: this was essentially what some of the city fathers of certain Dutch towns had not done.⁷⁵⁵

The two other groups, however, would be familiar to any reader of Vives. The second group consists of those idle ones who saw in this a possibility to live off the work of

⁷⁵¹ This was very much present in *De pacificatione*, see DP, D.

⁷⁵² Vives, Juan Luis: “De communione rerum”, in Vives, Juan Luis: *De communione rerum ad Germanos inferiores. Eiusdem in psalmum tricesimum septimum meditatio de passione Christi. In psalmum tricesimum septimum meditatio de passione Christi*, Johann I Gymnich, Köln, 1535, A2-A3: “Olim in Germania res pietatis erant ita constitutae, ut firmæ ac stabiles gratissima quiete persuerarent, nec quisquam fas esse ducebat de ulla earum rerum, quæ receptæ iam essent ambigere. Inventus est qui primum auderet quædam in dubium revocare, initio modice ac verecunde, mox aperte non solum ut disputaret sed ut negaret, abrogaret, tolleret permulta tanta confidentia, quam si de coelo & arcanis divinitatis esset delapsus....”; “Ex dissentione opinionum est ad dissidium vitæ.”

⁷⁵³ Vives: “De communione rerum”, A3 (in the absence of page numbers the next signature mark is given).

⁷⁵⁴ Vives: “De communione rerum”, A4-A5: “Nam in ho negotio tria hominum genera versari arbitror. Praecipui sunt, & aliorum ductores ac magistri vasri quidam, facinorosi, impudentes latrones [...] Alterum genus est quorundam, qui vel desidia atque ignavia vel fortuitis casibus vel immoderatis sumptibus, profusis patrimoniis, aut laborem defugientes, quo facile parari posset victus, communionem bonorum optant [...] Tertii sunt quos ego non tam prava voluntate peccare autumo, quam ignorantia et tarditate mentis...”; “Ex his tribus generibus, primi sunt magis sanabiles, quam latrones. Secundorum prava cupiditas cohiberi potest facile. Tertii non multum absunt ab innocentia, in quos competit illud Petri [...] Primi relinquuntur potestati civili....”

⁷⁵⁵ Only in 1535, harsh measures against the strong Anabaptist community began in some Dutch towns, most notably in Amsterdam. Tracy 1990, 160-167; Duke 1990, 85-88.

others for different reasons. A group that still participates in criminal activities willingly was very much present in Vives's *De subventionone* as potential objects of poor relief and, as we have seen, as a potentially subversive mob.⁷⁵⁶ The third group is composed of those who have joined the ranks of the Anabaptist movement out of ignorance, and who more than subjects of social tumults, had been objects of irresponsible rhetoric. It is to these groups, and especially to the third, Vives is talking to, and about. They can potentially be convinced back to virtuous path by Vives, whereas the leaders of the movement cannot. Vives does not of course see this third group to be within the confines of reason or rationality. Rather, he sees them to be the kind of passive multitude that can be the object of successful rhetoric and possibly education, not participants in conversation. You could, and should, teach them reason, but not make them participants in its production. However, the last group relates closely to Vives's endless call for education and virtue: their lack of virtue is nothing else then lack of learning, and outside the confines of this very particular question of Anabaptism, the long term remedy to the problem would lie in education – in bringing them back to the Christian flock.

Vives sets out to argue both that the Anabaptist case is based on a misreading of the Bible, and that was consequently against divine and natural law. In addition to this, he argues vehemently that the promise of community of goods in the actual world would be impossible to achieve. His main point is to argue that the philosophy of charity the Anabaptists promoted turns *caritas* from a subjective imperative of giving to the violence of asking. Thus, what is supposed to be an imperative for every Christian – to share his possessions with those in real need – is twisted into a form of political and social argument where everything can be taken violently, since it is the duty of the other, not of oneself, that is constantly watched and demanded.⁷⁵⁷ This kind of understanding of charity is close to *De concordia* and *De pacificatione*, although the emphasis is elsewhere. Yet, already in the 1520s, charity (*caritas*) is used as a critique of existing practices of those in power, or in possession of riches, but it is never used as a socially subversive argument against existing institutions and possessions. As to the impossibility of community of goods, Vives was forced to argue against radical Anabaptist interpretations of the Acts of the Apostles two and four, which described the

⁷⁵⁶ Vives also reminds the poor in *De subventionone* that they should never cause tumult. See for instance the passage under the subchapter *De pecunia quae his sumptibus sufficiat*. Vives: *De subventionone*, G: “Nec pauperes id debent optare, ut tumultus in civitate ullus existat....”

⁷⁵⁷ Vives: “De communione rerum”, B: “dicitur vero de duabus tunicis, ut det alteram, non iubetur quis communia facere sua omnia, sed dare superflua, retinere necessaria, tu non explorato ac ne consyderato quidem, quae sint cuique necessaria, quae superflua, petis, rapis omnia, non animadvertis senex sit an iuvenis, sanus an aeger, maritus an celebs....” This was also Erasmus's and Luther's point.

practices of sharing goods and possessions among early Christians after Christ's death. Against the Anabaptist position, Vives tries to show that the apostolic message was not about possession, but about an imperative to use existing possession in the presence of necessities. Furthermore, if the kind of communal way of living ever existed it was only possible in a small community when the blood of Christ still reigned in the hearts of true Christians.⁷⁵⁸ The message, thus, is clear: in the corrupted world of passions, a life based simply on spontaneous charity and the imitation of the apostles is quite impossible, since the Anabaptist attempt to emulate early Christianity does not capture and bring to life true apostolic virtue deemed indispensable for the community of goods.⁷⁵⁹

Vives goes to considerable lengths in elaborating how impossible a total commodity of all possessions would be. He also predicates possession on use, going on to argue that use cannot be separated from necessities. In addition, because these human necessities are manifold, no community of use or possession would be possible or desirable. In a phrase that sums this all up, Vives wrote, "God created everything for the use of man; necessity created their use and *ingenium* together with wisdom are in charge – just as the captain steers a boat."⁷⁶⁰ Unlike in many other texts, here Vives focuses much more on how people actually are different according to their social roles, compared with how they are similar as children of Christ. The ultimate point is to defend existing differences in human associations, not to criticise the excesses of those differences that make the focus and the development of the argument understandable. According to Vives, the Anabaptist case for the community of goods was effectively "a rule of the most potent, not of the best" and represented, thus, the rule of violence in place of prudence, judgement, and law.⁷⁶¹

All this was firmly in line with Vives's general urge to defend concord. It is a philosophy of concord that should be strived for in the confines of existing institutions, and

⁷⁵⁸ Vives: "De communione rerum", A5-B: "adducitur statim exemplum Apostolorum, quod in ecclesia illa nascente & purissima, fervente etiam tum in Christianorum cordibus Christi sanguine, nemo existimabat quicquam esse suum, sed omnia illis erant communia & distribuebantur, ut cuique erat opus. Rectissime id quidem factum, quis neget, & conveniens Charitati, si probe expendas singula? Sed vis ne tu in nomine Christiano, quod Christo gratia, per univesum terrarum orbem pater, fieri, quod tum fiebat inter paucos, in eadem civitate congregatos nempe Hierosolymis."

⁷⁵⁹ Vives: "De communione rerum", B: "Sed revertamur ad exemplum Apostolorum, quo vos uno maxime confiditis quasi per omnia similes illorum, quum nihil de prisca illa sanctitate placeat praeter nomina, quibus vos ad desidiam & luxum et insolentiam vestram abutimini. Nam si vetera illa tantopere vobis probantur, cur non illorum fidem imitamini? patientiam, mansuetudinem, clementiam, alacritatem spiritus..."

⁷⁶⁰ Vives: "De communione rerum", C: "Quippe res humanas omnes condidit Deus propter usus hominum, usum necessitas peperit, regit autem ingenium, & scientia utendi, tanquam gubernator navem."

⁷⁶¹ Vives: "De communione rerum", C2: "...omnia vestra bona, fortunae, possessiones, uxores, liberi, libertas, sacra & profana concederent in ius & libidinem non meliorum, sed potentiorum, etiam regnum..."

where the wise and the good should guard the actions of the powerful with speech, but where the social disobedience of the multitude can never be the answer. As his *Introductio ad sapientiam* reminded the reader “display honour to magistrates, and listen to them even if they command difficult and burdensome things – for that is God’s will for the maintenance of public tranquillity.”⁷⁶²

⁷⁶² Vives: “Introductio ad sapientiam”, 443: “Magistratibus exteriorem honorem exhibe, illisque audiens esto, etiam si gravia & molesta imperent, hoc enim vult deus propter publicam quietem.”

6. *De Disciplinis*, Problematizing the *trivium*

Chapter six looks at Vives's redefinition of the *trivium* in his 1531 *De disciplinis*. The chapter argues that Vives's move to bigger treatises on education, rhetoric, and the soul in the 1530s is partly a reaction to and a reflection on the failure of his attempts in the 1520s to turn the tide of European affairs as a political actor. Consequently, since *De disciplinis*, *De ratione dicendi* and *De anima* problematize the very concepts and instruments Vives was employing in his 1520s activities from rhetoric to the judgement of the intellect, they do engage in a rather critical dialogue with both classical and humanist traditions. Inside this critique, the chapter focuses on Vives's attempt to redefine the relationship between rhetoric and dialectic in very Agricolaan terms. In a history of the art of eloquence in *De disciplinis*, Vives insists strongly on the social and civic importance of rhetoric while simultaneously underlining greatly the destabilizing powers of rhetoric in cultures that nurture open confrontation. Vives's historical depiction of rhetoric opens up a section where the Valencian humanist wants to restrict rhetoric to only one of the traditional duties of classical rhetoric: elocution. This accentuates an instrumental view of rhetoric as power of words that speaks to the passions of those who cannot be reached merely through reasoning, and it simultaneously transposes the intellectual task of inventing arguments to dialectic. Thus, dialectic appears as the art that should provide the orator or writer with substantial and general knowledge of arts and sciences, which can then be moulded to meet the requirements of the audience through rhetorical elocution.

***De disciplinis*: Reassessing the Humanist Tradition**

In 1531, Vives's most important contribution to questions of education and pedagogy *De disciplinis* appeared from the printing press of Michael Hillen in Antwerp. *De disciplinis* is undeniably part of the canon of Renaissance intellectual history, as is witnessed by its presence in many general works on Renaissance thought – yet the work has received surprisingly little detailed scholarly attention.⁷⁶³ Indicative of this omission, the last and only monograph of the

⁷⁶³ Kristeller has argued, “Vives made the attempt to replace the scholastic tradition in all fields of learning with ancient and humanist scholarship, and this attempt had considerable influence on later educational theory and practice.” Kristeller 1990, 133. The importance of the work as an overall assessment of Western culture is often repeated. See Noreña 1970, 116-117; González González 2007, 57; Roest 2003, 143; Guy 1972, 151; Vigliano

twentieth century dedicated solely to Vives's grandiose *De disciplinis* is Valerio del Nero's 1991 *Linguaggio e filosofia in Vives. L'organizzazione del sapere nel 'De Disciplinis' (1531)*. It was also del Nero who tackled the work in the recent *Brill's Companion to Juan Luis Vives* from 2008 with an article entitled "The *De disciplinis* as a Model of a Humanistic Text." Taken together, del Nero's works represent the most far-reaching attempt to analyse *De disciplinis* in its totality.

Del Nero's expertise in the Italian tradition of Renaissance semantics, pedagogy, and encyclopaedism, as epitomized by the likes of Eugenio Garin and Cesare Vasoli, has guaranteed that the question of language holds a central place in his work. In del Nero, it is language, approached from different directions, that appears as the central theme and problem of *De disciplinis*, as well as a nexus that brings together a number of different elements in a philosophy of *sermo*. Del Nero has linked the modifications in the *trivium* and the semantics of *usus* with a more historically and practically orientated language, as well as grounded Vives's pedagogical thinking in a strong philosophical basis, challenging a long tradition of reading *De disciplinis* in the closed tradition of educational viewpoints.⁷⁶⁴ Ultimately, according to del Nero, in *De disciplinis* Vives puts forward a constructive proposal that allows man to become truly himself within a collective life grounded in language and communication.⁷⁶⁵ The big story of arts and disciplines that arise from the collective judgement and experience of men is also present in Fernández-Santamaría's reading of *De disciplinis* in his *Theater of Man: J.L. Vives on Society*, which describes man's journey to earthly and social *bonitas*. In Fernández-Santamaría's interpretation, *De disciplinis* bridges the gap from man's capacity for *ars vivendi* based on *synderesis*, to a social world of happiness realized through the precepts of expedient arts.⁷⁶⁶ In this way, the educational path of *De disciplinis* would fulfil the project of concord called for in Vives's *De concordia*, amongst other works.

In accordance with the bulk of existing scholarship, both del Nero and Fernández-

2013, xi.

⁷⁶⁴ The construction of this myth in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is thoroughly analysed in González González 2007, 291-309. The tendency not to read *De disciplinis* in the internal tradition of pedagogy is becoming more common. However, indicative of how the pedagogical label as an ultimate framework for understanding the work has stuck is the fact that the Spanish name of *De disciplinis* in the 1992 anthology of Vives's texts still is *Tratado de la Enseñanza* (Perez i Durá [ed.]: *Antología de texto de Juan Luis Vives*, Universitat de València, 1993, 428-487).

⁷⁶⁵ The idea of language as the central question of Vives's 1530 treatises is becoming increasingly accepted, see for instance González González 1999, 53.

⁷⁶⁶ Fernández-Santamaría 1998, 83-144. Noreña writes about a Pelagian faith in the perfectibility of the individual, see Noreña 1970, 178.

Santamaría have emphasized that *De disciplinis* was primarily a constructive and more practical alternative to what can be lumped under the heading of scholasticism.⁷⁶⁷ No doubt one of the central objects of critique throughout the work is the tradition of late-medieval learning, which is criticised for its method, contemplative aspirations, excessive focus on disputations, and a number of other issues. However, Vives is clear throughout *De disciplinis* that classical and humanist traditions themselves have to be subjected to the same kind of critical judgement, since arts and sciences in a postlapsarian world had never reached perfection. This is more than a general claim; Vives does indeed engage in a critical dialogue with the classical and humanist traditions on a number of points concerning *studia humanitatis* and the internal composition of the *trivium*.

Much of Vives's critical attitude can be attributed to the traditional attempt to harmonize classical culture with Christian standards of piety – a theme that concerned a number of major humanist thinkers of the time starting with Erasmus.⁷⁶⁸ However, Vives's restructuring of the arts of the *trivium*, and especially his highly ambivalent treatment of rhetoric is only partly related to an attempt to unite piety and classical culture. Unlike Erasmus – who in his *Ecclesiastes* (1535) readjusted rhetorical tradition to the art of preaching – Vives's *De disciplinis* and his other rhetorical works never try to adapt rhetorical theory to ecclesiastical or religious contexts.⁷⁶⁹ What is more, in *De disciplinis* the selection of authors and the description of the places in which rhetorical knowledge could and should be put into use underlines, among other things, a deep link of rhetoric to civic issues as already exemplified by *De consultatione*. The link from rhetoric to civic issues was not made only in *De disciplinis*. It was widely acknowledged by all popular works on rhetoric, including Melanchthon's *De rhetorica*.⁷⁷⁰ This is of course not to argue that the link to piety has been broken; Erasmus in his *Ecclesiastes* linked profane and sacred rhetoric to one another claiming that they were mutually supportive, and Vives most certainly predicates the usefulness of language on the moral condition of *vir prudens* that is never detached from piety.⁷⁷¹ In this view, it is the inner peace and concord of the virtuous man that makes possible the prudential use of word in a world of profound discord.

⁷⁶⁷ Del Nero 1991, 40-48; Del Nero 2008, 178-185; Fernández-Santamaría 1998, viii-ix.

⁷⁶⁸ See for instance Budé's: *De transitu Hellenismi ad Christianismum libri tres*, Robert Estienne, Paris 1535. For the importance of *pietas*, see Del Nero 1991, 32-34. Vives's critique of Aristotle's earthly happiness (*eudaimonia*) is an example of a Christian critique, see Vives: DD, 187-193.

⁷⁶⁹ Other scholarship has also noticed the absence of preaching, see Mack 2005, 90.

⁷⁷⁰ Melanchthon, Philipp: *De rhetorica libri tres*, Basel, Johann Froben, 1519, 9.

⁷⁷¹ Erasmus, Desiderius: *Ecclesiastae sive de ratione concionandi libri quatuor*, Merten de Keyser, Antwerpen 1535, 1-2. Erasmus called for a union between Ciceronian eloquence and Christian piety in other instances as well, see Erasmus to Vergara, Allen 1885.

However, even if Vives's *vir prudens* is a Christian orator who transmits wisdom in a world of corruption in an Augustinian manner, he is not a religious orator. The world he engages with is one in need of a life of *negotium* and prudent use of language in non-religious contexts. Furthermore, the models for his imitation are predominantly classical writers.⁷⁷²

However, the moment in which *De disciplinis* appears is one in which these constructive possibilities of language are increasingly questioned in humanist circles. What is put into doubt in the latter part of the 1520s is the possibility of language to perform its social function as a source of concord. This critique was directed at two very different directions. First, Erasmus could criticise fellow humanists for employing a language utterly devoid of rhetorical powers. His *Ciceronianus* was famously critical of a tenet of humanism, mostly Italian, that interpreted linguistic imitation very rigorously as concerning the words and phrases of Cicero rather than the overall spirit of Tully, in which the power of his language was grounded.⁷⁷³ Referring to Erasmus's *Ciceronianus*, Vives himself had defended Cicero's eloquence as general learning and character, criticising the aestheticizing rhetoric of the already-deceased Christoph de Longueuil, who according to the Valencian wrote classical Latin without saying anything.⁷⁷⁴

But more importantly, it is not merely the frigid and spiritless language of scholastics or Ciceronians that is criticised for its incapacity to move people, but also the powerful rhetoric of humanists detached from character, spirit, and knowledge of things. Nowhere is this more visible than in Erasmus's widely printed *Lingua* that appeared for the first time in 1525. This focused on the disastrous consequence of loose tongue on all spheres of social life, and linked the problem explicitly to contemporary issues.⁷⁷⁵ In *Lingua*, Erasmus argued that loquacity and other faults of the tongue stemmed from stupidity and – what was worse – from outright wickedness that “brings about the private and public ruin of the human race.”⁷⁷⁶ Throughout the work, Erasmus – who makes frequent references not only to religious sedition but also to the use of language in the presence of princes – emphasizes that it is indeed possible to be an eloquent master of words with a capacity to persuade yet use them to further

⁷⁷² For Augustine on rhetoric, see Augustine: *De doctrina*, Chapter IV.

⁷⁷³ Fumaroli 1980, 101-106; Margolin 1999, 226-235.

⁷⁷⁴ Vives to Galcerano Cepello, DAE 139.

⁷⁷⁵ According to the Universal Short Title Catalogue (USTC) the number of editions in the years 1525 and 1526 was 14. The whole title of the book is in many editions *Opus novum, & hisce temporibus aptissimum*, see for instance the Froben edition of 1525, *Opus novum, & hisce temporibus aptissimum*, Johann Froben, Basel 1525.

⁷⁷⁶ Erasmus: *Lingua*, 52: “...in privatum ac publicum humani generis exitium.” (English translation from Erasmus: *Literary and Educational Writings*, vol. 7, Collected Works of Erasmus 29 [ed. Fantham – Rummel – Ijsewijn], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1978, 314).

evil. Moreover, Erasmus links these developments to a range of contemporary phenomena where discord had come to prevail, ranging from warfare among princes dependent on bad counselling, to feuds that are more private. In a striking fashion, the Dutch humanist goes on to link all this to the decadence of the seven liberal arts: “the loquacity of the declamatory school has ruined eloquence.”⁷⁷⁷ In another section dedicated to rhetoricians, dialecticians, and declaimers, Erasmus further accentuated his criticism, arguing, they “arm tongue with words” than “their breasts with moral reasoning.”⁷⁷⁸ Erasmus’s criticism, although never forgetting the barbarisms of scholasticism, is already pointing towards humanist training as an empty shell of words, if it is detached from character, spirit, and useful knowledge.

Erasmus’s remarks about the destructive side of language reveal a deeper crisis in the optimistic educational programme of Erasmian humanism; Erasmus’s union of *Philosophia Christi* with the transformative power of language had been surpassed by the Reformation – many representatives of which had roots in humanist training. Basic trust in the responsible use of eloquent language by learned humanists to enhance social, spiritual, and political renewal was becoming an empty dream in a Europe, where the quantity of printed materials and potential audiences actively engaging with books was growing, and where the dynamics of discussion had already been affected by an emerging vernacular pamphlet culture.⁷⁷⁹ The vigorous project of peace during the 1510s had been crushed by the warfare of the 1520s. Despite the Peace Treaty of Cambrai in 1529, there are no traces of optimism in Vives in the 1530s concerning the rulers of the time. As Vives made perfectly clear in his *De disciplinis*, they were always vulnerable to flattery and adulation. Lastly, the context in which the peace projects of the 1510s were devised was shattered – not only had the relationship between Erasmus and Vives cooled, but the relative decay of the Republic of Letters itself as a public project in an increasingly conflictual climate was becoming evident.⁷⁸⁰ In this way, the world of men of letters – as a seat of concord in the midst of discord – was greatly threatened.

⁷⁷⁷ Erasmus: *Lingua*, 37: “Declamatoria garrulitas corrumpit eloquentiam.” (English translation from Erasmus: *Literary and Educational Writings*, vol. 7, Collected Works of Erasmus 29 [ed. Fantham – Rummel – Ijsewijn], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1978, 286)

⁷⁷⁸ Erasmus: *Lingua*, 19: “Et in hoc vitium sere incidunt, qui dialecticorum ac rhetoricum praeceptis, declamatoriisque palaestris, linguam potius armant verbis, quam pectus honestis rationibus.” (English translation from Erasmus: *Literary and Educational Writings*, vol. 7, Collected Works of Erasmus 29 [ed. Fantham – Rummel – Ijsewijn], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1978, 276)

⁷⁷⁹ By 1530 the number of different pamphlets produced by the Reformation had to be around 10000 meaning that different copies had to be counted in the millions, see Blockmans 2002, 42

⁷⁸⁰ See Chapter three. Some of Vives’s closer friends in different European courts representing the Erasmian tradition such as Juan de Vergara, Thomas More and John Fisher who lost their lives in the performance of a life of *negotium*.

The treatment of *artes sermocinales* and especially rhetoric in *De disciplinis* mirrors these developments. Vives's depiction of rhetoric in *De disciplinis* weaves the art of eloquence tightly together with a substantial knowledge of other disciplines and character development. On the one hand, *De disciplinis* aspires to rhetoric that would not be merely of a literary nature deprived of social and political importance but, on the other hand, it should not become a source of flattery, deceit, or discord. Moreover, the problematic nature of humanist rhetoric in *De disciplinis* is more than an evocation of a Platonic commonplace, since it leads to actual transformations; its relationship with the other arts of the *trivium* and *studia humanitatis* has to be rethought, its internal theory modified, and its place and importance in the *curriculum* altered. In doing this Vives is rethinking a pronouncedly optimistic understanding of rhetoric as the true corner stone of *studia humanitatis* and elementary education found in Cicero and Quintilian, in some of the most widely read Italian *quattrocento* pedagogical manuals, and in Agricola's *De formando studio* and Erasmus's *De ratione studii*. Although familiar with the originally Platonic accusation of the deceitful nature of rhetoric, this educational tradition did not question the classical ideal of rhetoric as adversity and debate that presupposed the possibility to argue each issue on both sides. Vives, on the other hand, takes a much more reserved approach to the ambivalent nature of rhetoric, an art he himself had praised in his prelection to *Ad Herennium* in 1514, and used widely throughout the 1520s.

Vives's position vis-à-vis language arts in *De disciplinis* was, of course, not a sudden change in its specific details, but a culmination of a longer assessment of humanist educational tradition; his *In pseudodialecticos* had underlined the central importance of dialectic, and his *De ratione studii* had largely omitted the teaching of truly rhetorical knowledge to young pupils. Moreover, some of his actual propositions reflect the wider humanist reception of Agricola and humanist dialectic in the 1520s and 1530s. Despite this, Vives's ambivalent feelings and reservations about the art of eloquence – truly expressed and elaborated only in *De disciplinis* – have to be understood in the context of the profound experience of political and religious discord in the 1520s. This gradually directs Vives to larger educational, rhetorical, cultural and social themes, and ultimately to the treatment of the soul in the late 1520s and 1530s. As Vives had pointed out in his *De concordia*, this discord reigned everywhere, producing difference of opinion and a distortion of the whole interpretative culture in which men lived, and it is that culture that has to be modified for concord to stand a chance. Vives's move from more practically oriented counselling to the composition of larger treatises is partly an answer to a situation where the possibilities of immediate impact are non-existent.

It is in this context that *De disciplinis* appears indeed as a promised path to concord through education, which, however, is not equated simply with an uncritical admiration of humanism.

Even though *De disciplinis* appeared in 1531, it is evident that it was the product of a longer project, which had most likely started at least in the mid-1520s.⁷⁸¹ From what is known, Vives viewed *De disciplinis* very much as a personal, and as a monumentally ambitious task undertaken in relative isolation.⁷⁸² As he wrote to Juan de Vergara, he had to rely on his own judgement since he could not expect help from Erasmus.⁷⁸³ The way *De disciplinis* is framed also differs from his earlier projects such as *In pseudodialecticis* and Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, where Vives's own production is deliberately portrayed as part of a general humanist agenda through introductory and prefatory materials. When one opens *De disciplinis* one does not get the same idea of a common project. Even though the work clearly aspires to general levels of analysis – presupposing all traditional battle lines between scholastic and humanist thinking – and touches upon a wide range of intellectual themes debated in the 1520s, from Ciceronianism and translation to questions around pedagogy and dialectical knowledge, one gets the idea that it represents the effort of a relatively isolated intellectual figure.⁷⁸⁴ Thus, it testifies of the larger demise of humanism as a common public project.

The monumental work is divided into three parts, each of which comprises between six and eight books. The first part, *De causis corruptarum artium*, presents both an account of the possibilities of learning as well as a historical critique and assessment of all major arts and sciences. *De tradendis disciplinis*, the second and most well-known part is dedicated to a comprehensive and encyclopaedic treatment of education that covers everything from curricula and pedagogical questions to the physical placement of schools. The third section composed of eight books with different titles presents Vives's most comprehensive treatment of first philosophy and dialectic. The three sections were printed together in all sixteenth-century editions, which show that they were understood to form a unity in which the critical

⁷⁸¹ Del Nero 1991, 12; Vigliano 2013, lvi-lx; Sinz 1963, 83-86. In his letters to Cranevelt there are some hints at the work in the summer and autumn of 1525 (see Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 167) and in a letter to Cranevelt dated 17.2.1526 he quite clearly refers to *De disciplinis*, Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 175. In an early 1527 letter to Vives Juan de Vergara wants to know more about the project, Vergara to Vives, CHE 10, 254.

⁷⁸² His introduction (*praefatio*) to the work makes claims to originality and presents *De disciplinis* in most general terms as a critical assessment of all learning. In his letter to Cranevelt, he states that he speaks of a daringly ambitious project he does not want to explain since he would be considered a lunatic, Vives to Cranevelt, CRA 137. According to Sinz, this refers to *De disciplinis*, Sinz 1968, 83.

⁷⁸³ Sinz 1963, 87; Vives to Vergara, CHE xii, 264.

⁷⁸⁴ There are no introductory remarks from any other humanists and the only introductory letter is a dedication to João III, King of Portugal.

first part paved the way for the constructive proposal of the second part.⁷⁸⁵ The third part would then function as an introduction to metaphysics and dialectic – the method of reasoning – the core of all arts and sciences.

The peculiar and somewhat isolated nature of *De disciplinis* is further accentuated by the fact that it is not connected to an ongoing collective programme to reform an old institution or to establish a new one. Thus, unlike the work of other famous pedagogues of the time, such as Melanchthon and Johannes Sturm, Vives's *De disciplinis* does not present a realizable and specific programme of study that should be put into practice in any univocal way, but aspires to a more philosophical, general and encyclopaedic level. In doing this, *De disciplinis* blurs all simple readings of the work in one specific genre of literature, and it is unique in combining an educational and pedagogical treatise with a thorough critique and redefinition of arts and disciplines.⁷⁸⁶ This is indeed a central point for Vives; in the current state of learning, any programme of practical utility should engage critically with all the tradition in which collective error still reigned.

History of Arts and Disciplines

The first of the three parts of *De disciplinis* entitled *De causis corruptarum artium* is dedicated to both a historical and a critical assessment of the arts. The history writing of *De causis* differs greatly from the typical rhetorical histories found in humanist civil science, which aspired to cultivate prudence through right kind of selective *exempla* on the influence of character and a range of other issues for historical outcomes.⁷⁸⁷ *De causis* rather takes up the challenge posed in *De concordia* about the entrenchment of corruption, misjudgement, and twisted traditions in the whole culture surrounding people, by engaging in a purifying and critical dialogue with the past understood as a collective memory inside of which contemporary culture still has to operate.⁷⁸⁸ Moreover, as Bejczy has argued, the historical narrative Vives is trying to convey to the reader is not of one-dimensional corruption of a perfect classical antiquity, he rather

⁷⁸⁵ Del Nero 1991, 16-19.

⁷⁸⁶ See Vigliano 2013, lxviii, xc.

⁷⁸⁷ It could fall under the general categories of history as described in Vives's *De ratione* as dealing with narration meant for explaining something useful. However, it does not partake in the most common genres of history that in Vives's mind also deal with the influence of individual character in history, since here the focus is on arts not persons. See Vives: DR, 181-199.

⁷⁸⁸ This is one of the main points of his own introduction to the work, See Vives: DD, *Praefatio*.

emphasizes that the seeds of corruption have been there in all postlapsarian human history.⁷⁸⁹ One of Vives's points in *De causis* is undeniably targeted against scholastic learning in defence of numerous elements drawn from classical wisdom. Yet at the same time, he is very clear about the fact that the knowledge of the Greek and the Romans itself contained elements of corrupted nature, arguing in the introduction to the work, "I will show that the error in the old writers was [...] due to their defects."⁷⁹⁰ This effectively opens up another front of critical assessment – namely that of the learning of classical antiquity, and ultimately, of humanism itself that has to be saved and moulded to the use of a Christian world as an educational paradigm. As Vives points out: "Since I want the authority of the ancient writers to be confirmed in matters of the teaching of arts [...] I had to reveal the points on which I thought they had erred."⁷⁹¹

There are a number of reasons for Vives to do this, but conceptually the most important of these is undeniably the discussions taking place around *ingenium*. As has been argued, Vives's history of the corruption of the arts could be described as a philosophy of *ingenium* – a word of complicated semantic nature regularly employed to denote individual talent, but used here to describe more generally the overall force of the mind.⁷⁹² The first part of *De disciplinis*, historical in its aspirations, is essentially based on the use of the possibilities of *ingenium* understood as the inventive force of human mind to overcome its own state.⁷⁹³ It is in the concept of *ingenium* that one finds a strong commitment in *De disciplinis* to human capacities for shaping their own history – even in postlapsarian reality – something presupposing Erasmus's understanding of free will, as described in his *De libero arbitrio*, and Vives's own views on the issue exposed in his commentaries on Augustine's *De civitate Dei*. In his commentaries, Vives had argued in very Augustinian terms that predestination referred to God's foreknowledge of events, brought about by human will.⁷⁹⁴ As Vives in the very first page of *De disciplinis* emphatically argued, "even though man of his own fault drew to himself a great variety of necessities, God gave him instruments, such as a sharp *ingenium* that acts to cover them in one way or another. From this, all human inventions were born – both expedient

⁷⁸⁹ Bejczy 2003, 69-83. Tracy makes the same observations, Tracy 1996, 65-66.

⁷⁹⁰ Vives: DD, *Praefatio*: "Conatus sum etiam artes ab impiis scrupulis repurgare, at que a gentiliis tenebris ad lucem traducere pietatis nostrae: ut quod olim veteres illos scriptores fefellit, non id factum humani ingenii vitio, sicut nonnulli arbitrantur, sed illorum ostendam."

⁷⁹¹ Vives: DD, *Praefatio*: "Verum quam antiquorum hominum in tradendis artibus confirmata esset autoritas [...] declarandum mihi fuit, quibus in rebus lapsos esse illos censerem."

⁷⁹² Quintilian: IO, i.iii.

⁷⁹³ The importance of *ingenium* in *De disciplinis* has also been noted by Hidalgo-Serna, Hodges and Del Nero. See Hodges 1996; Del Nero 1991, 28-34; Hidalgo-Serna 1983.

⁷⁹⁴ Vives: VCA, v.ix.

and harmful, good and bad.”⁷⁹⁵ However, *ingenium* does not have Pelagian possibilities; the Spanish philosopher emphasizes throughout *De causis* that the possibilities of *ingenium* are very much related to what is fundamentally an imperfect and corrupted world that effectively frames the creative possibilities of *ingenium*. Thus, even the ancients are subjected to an analysis that emphasizes their limits, and Vives explicitly points out some of the corrupted elements that actually motivated their reasoning and use of *ingenium*.⁷⁹⁶ Moreover, the point of critique is not only targeted towards the past; Vives is equally clear that the same limitations apply in man’s current state and frame the possibilities of arts and sciences and, ultimately, of concord. In some ways, the use of *ingenium* found in *De disciplinis* defends the possibilities of the human mind to progress against those tenets of the Reformation that put all faith in grace while simultaneously showing how this is possible only inside the limits of a postlapsarian reality.

This postlapsarian reality is flamboyantly present in Vives’s discussion on the motivating forces of *ingenium* and the natural capacities of men. He makes a distinction between *ingenium* as a natural capacity and diligence (*diligentia*) as attention that can be motivated and that heavily directs the use of *ingenium*. In doing so, Vives is employing terms central to the narrower question of education and learning in a more ambitious and general analysis of the history of arts; *ingenium* and *diligentia* traditionally employed for analysing individual learning form the basis of the collective formation of arts and sciences in the first part of *De disciplinis*.⁷⁹⁷ The possible sources of diligence that draw *ingenium* are essentially the following: necessity, enjoyment (*delectatio*), contemplation, together with the admiration of the greatness of something such as God or truth, and social motifs based on money and honour.⁷⁹⁸ These candidates relate closely to Vives’s earlier social and political thought, and to

⁷⁹⁵ Vives: DD, 1: “Illa tamen in re, indulgenter homo est a principe, et autore suo habitus, quam cum ipse necessitates sibi sua culpa tam varias accersierit, Deus tamen instrumentum ei reliquit ad eas quoquo modo propulsandas, ingenii acumen vivax & sua sponte actuosum. Hinc sunt nata inventa hominum omnia utilia, noxia, proba, improba.”

⁷⁹⁶ Vives: DD, 8: “Non quod ars ulla vel ad absolutionem aliquam sit perducta, vel ita extensa ac expolita, ut nihil haberet admistum inutile ac reiiciendum. Non ea sunt humani ingenii vires, clausi mole hac corporis & tenebris, ut aliquid excudat perfectum atque absolutum, cui non desint plurima ad cumulum perfectionis, & quasi ad fastigium illud naturae cuiusque rei.”

⁷⁹⁷ *Diligentia* and *ingenium* are employed frequently in humanist literature, see for instance Agricola *De formando*, 14; Vergerio: “De ingenuis”, 56. They are employed in this sense in the second part of *De disciplinis*.

⁷⁹⁸ Vives: DD, 7: “Acre ingenium et usui aptum naturae sunt munera: diligentia vel necessitate urgetur, vel delectatione allicitur, vel admiratione magnitudinis et pulchritudinis rei capitur: quamvis in hoc quoque tacita inest delectatio, postquam assecutus es causam tantae rei. Deinde cupiditate aliqua excitatur decoris aut pecuniae. Postremo perficiendi spe alitur & detinetur.” Even though Vives is talking here about the notorious Epicurean candidate pleasure, it seems that he is not considering it in the Epicurean sense. Throughout the part he is focusing on the pleasure that arises from contemplation.

the capacity of men to judge and use words prudently. Out of the four candidates, money and glory are, of course, highly susceptible; they are notoriously close to bodily urges and to blinding passions, and they are effectively described as belonging to the world of discord in *De concordia*.⁷⁹⁹ Necessity, inside its own reach, is positively assessed as wonderfully witnessed by Vives's favourable assessment of practical arts and skills in *De disciplinis*, yet incapable on its own to motivate higher arts since wisdom is ultimately detached from the range of bodily necessities.⁸⁰⁰ Truth and the urge to find truth – interpreted as knowledge of the God-like nature of one's self – should, and in an ideal world would motivate our steps in the intellectual path. As Vives argued in *De disciplinis*, Greek philosophy, in its purest form, was motivated by the simple yearning for truth.⁸⁰¹ However, as *De disciplinis* makes quite clear this is rather an exception than the norm.

These motivational principles are also woven into a temporal framework, and in discussing different ways of drawing collective *ingenium*, Vives offers the reader simultaneously a historical story. Chronologically the first candidate that gave birth to arts in the very beginning was necessity that pushed *ingenium* to turn isolated, yet somehow similar experiences into collective precepts. It is not easy to pin down what necessity exactly is in Vives since it can vary from things related to immediate survival to issues far detached from direct bodily experience.⁸⁰² Yet necessity is conceptually tied to the world of body, it deals with the short- and long-term possibilities of living. The further away thinking arises from the immediate experience, the closer it comes to the world of wisdom – somehow related to necessities yet

⁷⁹⁹ Vives: DD, 10: “Eruditio, & artes quae compressae & velut coactae talibus fuerint ingeniiis, necesse est eadem facie & natura prodeant, qua sunt ipsa ingenia, scilicet prava, detorta, vitiosa. Neque enim aliter eruditio ab ingenio unde manat vel formam accipit, quam caseus a fiscella: vel naturam respicit ac vinum e dolio, vel utre: quare necesse est ut male tradant, quae male acceperunt. Iam affectus omnes animi si non retundunt mentis aciem, certe impediunt, ac retardant, & quasi rubigine obducunt: quocumque illi invaserunt, lucem offuscant animi, & dispicientiam veri perturbant, non secus ac densae nebulae ante oculos offusae. Supremam & celsissimam illam mentis lucem, superbia perstringit, & a recto itinere abducit transversam: haec est eminendi atque excellendi cupiditas, ut videatur habere quae nullus alius, aut quae pauci, nempe altissima ac praestantissima, rara, nova, plurima, aut omnia.”

⁸⁰⁰ Vives: DD, 2. This is not always clear. At some point Vives states that “...quemadmodum videmus in vita contingere, ut homines perfuncti domesticis & necessariis negotiis applicent animum ad aliquid altius ac liberalius cognoscendum, ita artibus, quae praesenti atque urgenti necessitati opem ferrent rite inventis ac constitutis, visum est humano ingenio sensim ad pulchriora sese attollere.”

⁸⁰¹ Vives: DD, 6: “Adduxit ad tractandas atque excolendas artes magnitudo rei, & opus unum excellentia mentis nostrae longe dignissimum cupiditas veri inveniendi, qua nihil est praeclarior, nec quod magis deceat hominem: sicut ignorari, falli, decipi, turpe ac miserum iudicamus: quae ut evitentur, philosophatos esse priscos illos, nec alia causa, aut in alium usum, Aristoteles perhibet gravis imprimis autor.”

⁸⁰² Vives: DD, 1-7. In describing the birth of rhetoric, Vives paints a story that moves from necessities to cover other objectives. Vives: DD, 135: “Sed ornatus dicendi, & acutius inveniendi ex necessitate fluxit [...] Ex necessitate hac recuperandi sua; ad alia quoque expetenda translatum est instrumentum.”

separate from them and motivated by things already linked to the soul.⁸⁰³

However, throughout Vives's depiction of the unfolding of the history of thought, the Spaniard makes quite clear the importance of glory as one of the primary forces drawing diligence both generally and in the case of individual arts and sciences. Sometimes glory links closely to necessity, since things considered necessary in a given society bring glory to the members excelling in their performance.⁸⁰⁴ This connection is not, however, always present since glory can equally well link to all arts and disciplines, even to those far detached from immediate or even socially elaborated conceptions of necessity such as theology.⁸⁰⁵ Actually, Vives raises the search for glory, irrespective of its relation to necessity and wisdom, to the main driving force of the history of thought, and insists that it is an irreducible element of arts and sciences in the current world.⁸⁰⁶ By arguing that the search for glory frames human thinking, Vives makes very clear that it is difficult to put faith and the destiny of thinking into the hands of a simple yearning for truth. Furthermore, the directing of diligence and the social aspirations of men is of primary importance for the development of arts in the current ontological condition of man.

The treatment of *ingenium* and diligence is full of tension. As Vives elaborated at length on numerous occasions, the desire for glory was closely linked to the dynamics of discord since it fomented the passions that were socially destructive. Thus, if arts are indeed based on the search of honour and glory, because "everyone wants to excel and be honoured," one is again playing with exactly the kind of socially threatening passions that are potentially uncontrollable and harmful, and that effectively sustain discord.⁸⁰⁷ The fact that this discord is inscribed into the arts inherited from a tradition that was never free from a desire for glory is a

⁸⁰³ Vives: DD, 2: "Tum Mathematicae & Philosophiae naturalis quaesita, & civitates constitutae, & leges datae, quae tametsi vitae magnopere prosunt, tamen non illis necessitatibus consulunt, quibus terrae fossio, aratio, repastinatio & alia quae operibus rusticis exercentur..."; "videlicet hominum consensu, id declarante, excellentiora esse quaecunquae ad animum pertinerent, quam quae ad corpus...."

⁸⁰⁴ Vives: DD, 6: "Invitati sunt complures quos multitudo plurimum valere ingenio arbitrabatur, & allekti maximis praemiis, ut artibus in commune necessariis darent operam: laboris praemia fuerunt pecunia, honor, decus, gratia & privata & publica. Ea de causa Aegyptii sacerdotes multam in mathematicis posuerunt operam, quod vehementer Geometria Aegyptus tota indigeret, confusis per annos agrorum limitibus ab inundante Nilo."; Vives: DD, 7-8: "In Aegypto permagnus mathematicarum usus, quas praemiis & honore afficiebat necessitas...."

⁸⁰⁵ Vives: DD, 8: "In Academiis publicis plerique alliciuntur illis honorum nominibus, tum iis quae magno aestimantur. Unde Lutetiae tanta Theologorum copia, Aureliae iurisconsultorum: apud Nitiobriges, quem nunc montem Pessulanum vocant, medicorum."

⁸⁰⁶ Vives: DD, 8: "Acutissime illud in hominum moribus ac natura deprehendit, qui dixit honore ali artes. Excellere enim quisque cupit, & honore affici: quare, ut id consequatur, ei se tradit studio, quod in pretio esse videt. Ita sit, quam recte, non disputo: nec solum in magnis civitatibus ac populis, sed in quocunquae coetu, in quacunquae consuetudine & familiaritate hominum, virorum, foeminarum, senum, iuvenum."

⁸⁰⁷ Vives: DD, 8: "Excellere enim quisque cupit, & honore affici."

major trend in *De disciplinis*. As a matter of fact, in discussing the reasons why arts never in their history reached perfection, implying that even in classical antiquity the arts comprised elements of corrupted nature, Vives argues that this is mainly due to “the blindness and weakness of the arrogant soul,” – something conceptually linked to a desire for glory.⁸⁰⁸ Ultimately, *De causis* starts from the premise that the actual cultivation of the arts has almost never been based on an unselfish interest in truth.⁸⁰⁹

If this dynamic in the case of the history of the arts can be turned into a critical analysis, the fact that the same logic still applies presents other kinds of problems. The limits of *ingenium* can never be totally overcome but there are some possible ways of managing the situation. It is possible to use existing cultural assessments on the importance of studies as a source for human glory. As Vives pointed out in *De tradendis*, echoing classical educational paradigms, even though “glory can greatly incite the young to honest actions, it is later the cause and origin of many bad things.” He likens this to the entrance of youth into studies.⁸¹⁰ Thus, one would use glory as an incentive to letters, but in the end, the yardstick of truth should take its place, implying that the studies covering necessities and leading to truth should enjoy popular appreciation that creates an initial push to their study. However, ultimately Vives is explicit that complete perfection in the arts and sciences is out of the reach of man’s *ingenium* in his current state.⁸¹¹ Rather what he promises is a continuous struggle under the guidance of reason against corrupted impulses for a slow enhancement in arts, a process he describes as “swimming against the current.”⁸¹²

⁸⁰⁸ Vives: DD, 8: “Nunquam ergo vel perfectae fuerunt artes vel purae, ne in sua quidem origine: ea est superbissimi animi caecitas atque imbecillitas.”

⁸⁰⁹ Vives: DD, 380-398.

⁸¹⁰ Vives: DD, 385: “...verum quae ut in adolescentia & iuventute maximos subdit stimulos ad honestas actiones, ita multorum deinceps est malorum causa & origo.” Vives had made the same point in his letter to Gil Wallop where he argued that the social incentives served as entry to learning. Later, however, learning is fomented by a yearning for excellence in sciences and in virtue, Vives to Wallop, MA VII, 210. This idea can also be found in Quintilian: IO, i.iii.22 and in Vergerio: “De ingenuis”, 8-10.

⁸¹¹ This is the predominant spirit of the work although there are moments when he expresses a strikingly optimistic interpretation of the possibilities of *ingenium*. See for instance Vives: DD, *Praefatio*: “ut quod olim veteres illos scriptores fefellit, non id factum humani ingenii vitio, sicut nonnulli arbitrantur, sed illorum ostendam.”

⁸¹² In Vives: DD, 9 he writes, referring to the state of arts in classical antiquity: “Haec omnia quasi brachiorum vi aliquo usque progressa tanquam adverso flumine...” He also strongly suggests that this continuous fight is the ontological position of man in other contexts. See for instance Vives: DD, 367: “haec est eterna in homine militia, seu pugna verius: inque eo est perpetuo laborandum, & connitendum, ne dominam superet ancilla, in quam tyrannidem exerceret acerbissimam, & ab homine degenerare cogeret in belluam.”

Rhetoric as Part of the *Trivium*

The dynamics of *ingenium* that are at play in the general part of *De causis* are also functional in the analysis of the corruption of individual arts, albeit in somewhat differing ways. In a typically Vivesian and more generally humanist vein *De disciplinis* blurs distinctions between language disciplines, and focuses on showing their interdependencies on a number of fronts. In the section dedicated to grammar that opened the critical analysis of different arts, Vives underlined their union in the very start by stating, “grammar showed what and on what account, rhetoric brought embellishment and refinement, dialectic arguments and probability,” showing here how different linguistic arts approach questions related to language from different angles.⁸¹³

In the case of grammar, Vives’s analysis is not focused on the history of the art and the way of arguing is mostly thematic. The Spaniard makes a comprehensive analysis of scholastic interpretations of the role of grammar and the grammarian on one hand and of humanist excesses of Ciceronianism depriving language of its historical and creative element on the other. What emerges is a typically humanist idea of a grammarian who presents the culture of classical antiquity in its wholeness through a historical reading of *auctores*, which are a gateway not only to linguistic questions but also to the basic wisdom of the ancients.⁸¹⁴ In the case of dialectic, a historical story is much more carefully delineated. One part of the section is dedicated to a critical assessment of The Philosopher – Aristotle – the supreme authority on the tradition of dialectic. In the spirit of *In pseudodialecticos*, Vives aims to demonstrate in this section how Aristotle, who in the scholastic culture was usually read only through commentary tradition, analysed argumentative patterns as they appear in language. In turning Aristotle into a somewhat humanist philosopher, Vives is simultaneously accusing scholastics for turning dialectic into an analysis of formal semantics. In this way, Vives is opening a gate to the third part of *De disciplinis*, structurally loosely based on Aristotle’s *Organon*, where he presents his own views on humanist dialectic meant to be an analysis and inventive tool for arguments in speaking and writing.⁸¹⁵

⁸¹³ Del Nero has drawn attention to this aspect, Del Nero 1991, 95; Mack 1993, 2. Vives: DD, 65: “Veterum scriptorum consensio tres artes de sermone posuit, Grammaticam, quae quid, & qua ratione diceretur, indicaret: Rhetoricam, quae ornatum & cultum: Dialecticam, quae argumenta & probabilitatem.”

⁸¹⁴ Vives: DD, 65-94. The importance given to the grammarian in Vives’s writing is widely acknowledged, see Del Nero 1991, 106-117.

⁸¹⁵ Vives: DD, 95-133.

It is, however, in the section on rhetoric where the history of the art and its relation to questions of motivating principles is presented in a most interesting fashion, and in a much more ambivalent light than in Johannes Sturm's history of rhetoric (*De amissa dicendi ratione*), which offered a pronouncedly positive assessment of the eloquence of the Ancients.⁸¹⁶ In the beginning of the section dedicated to the corruption of rhetoric, Vives starts by reaffirming the fundamentally social role of the art of eloquence by stating, "two are the things that above all bind and keep human associations together, justice and language" moving on to a short presentation of the history of rhetoric in classical antiquity.⁸¹⁷ Here Vives claims, following a commonplace, that rhetoric was born out of the necessity to regain property in Sicily and Greece.⁸¹⁸ Soon, however, its scope broadened to cover other purposes, the most important of which was a political one:

"From the necessity to regain one's property, this instrument moved also to strive after other objectives, so that just like it had moved judges, it would move the souls in popular assemblies, the senate in the curia, and finally all those who had influence in the Republic in whose hands and control the faith of the whole city was placed."⁸¹⁹

What follows is a presentation of the rhetorical culture of Rome, Athens, Rhodes, and Sicily where the orator, in favourable republican circumstances for the cultivation of rhetoric, imposed his rule.⁸²⁰ This is contrasted to Crete and Sparta where, due to the general character of the audience – presented as the decisive factor – an orator's space for manoeuvre was much more reduced.⁸²¹ This point, as well as the main outline of this section, could be

⁸¹⁶ Sturm, Johannes: *De amissa dicendi ratione, ad Franciscum frossium jurisconsultum libri duo*, Wendelin Rihel, Strasbourg 1538, first six pages.

⁸¹⁷ Vives: DD, 134: "Humanæ omnes societates duabus potissimum rebus vincuntur ac continentur: iustitia, & sermone." This same assertion is repeated in *De ratione dicendi*. See Vives: DR, 3: "Qui humanæ consociationis vinculum dixerunt esse iustitiam et sermonem, hi nimirum acute inspexerunt vim ingenii humani...."

⁸¹⁸ Property in Vives is definitely more related to the body than to the soul. Thus, the link to necessity is not necessarily a curious one. The story about the birth of rhetoric in Sicily for judicial purposes was a common one in classical antiquity, see for instance Cicero: "Brutus", xii.46.

⁸¹⁹ Vives: DD, 135: "Ex necessitate hac recuperandi sua; ad alia quoque expetenda translatum est instrumentum: ut quemadmodum moverant iudices, moverent etiam animos in concione populi, senatus in curia, denique eorum omnium, qui plurimum possent in republica, & in quorum manu atque arbitrio fortuna esset omnis posita civitatis...."

⁸²⁰ Vives: DD, 136: "...dominatus est orator, ubi eloquentia invenit turbas acumine ingenii præditas, inquietas, ambitiosas, & libertatis quadam aura tumefactas." Already in his *De subventione* Vives reminded the reader of the corruptive tendencies of republics where private interest was given precedence over public good. Vives: *De subventione*, Bii: "Quod duæ potentissimæ gentes declararunt, Romana & Atheniensis, & declarabunt quotcunque tales habent cives, qui se, quam suam patriam, magno & potentes esse malint."

⁸²¹ Vives: DD, 135-136. The idea that free republics where the natural habitat of a striving rhetorical culture was

found in Tacitus's *Dialogus de Oratoribus*, where Crete and Sparta are portrayed as commonwealths, where, "very strict discipline and very strict laws prevailed," and where, consequently, oratory did not flourish.⁸²² The well-known fact that Crete and Sparta were famous for their mixed constitutions – a point implicit in Tacitus who connects the flourishing of oratory to the republican constitution and context – is not mentioned by Vives in this paragraph at all.⁸²³ Just like Tacitus, he writes about the possibilities of rhetoric, "in well-governed commonwealths" (*in bene constitutis civitatibus*), but instead of mentioning laws and discipline as Tacitus does, he shifts the focus to the qualities and character of the people.⁸²⁴ Whatever idea of a mixed constitution Vives might have endorsed in the style of the Burgundian Netherlands, it is not openly emphasized in *De causis*.

Already before the historical description Vives had made very clear that rhetoric thrives naturally in free republics and is of little use in monarchies where the hands of the orator are tied by fear. This is due to the fact that since oratory is of utmost importance and power in republics, men, who are drawn by "honours, riches, fortunes, dignity and power," dedicate their time to political oratory.⁸²⁵ There is something very ambivalent about the first paragraph. The picture of monarchy where word has ceased to perform its social function, comes very close to notions of tyranny which are always characterised by the rule of fear in the humanist discourse.⁸²⁶ However, at the same time the description of the republican setting is reminiscent of Tacitus's *Dialogus de oratoribus* where republican rhetoric – although praised for its perfection – is simultaneously tied to anarchistic and potentially destructive tendencies.⁸²⁷ This

widely defended in the classical tradition, see Cicero: *De oratore*, i.viii.

⁸²² Tacitus: *Dialogus de oratoribus*, The Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1913, xl: "quarum civitatum severissima disciplina et severissimae leges traduntur."

⁸²³ Polybius complains about the fact that their constitutions are said to be similar, see Polybius: *Histories* (trans. Paton), vol. 3, The Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts/London 1960, 6.45.

⁸²⁴ Tacitus: *Dialogus*, xl: "Non de otiosa et quieta re loquimur et quae probitate et modestia gaudeat, sed est magna illa et notabilis eloquentia alumna licentiae, quam stulti libertatem vocitant, comes seditionum, effrenati populi incitamentum, sine obsequio, sine severitate, contumax, temeraria, adrogans, quae in bene constitutis civitatibus non oritur. Quem enim oratorem Lacedaemonium, quem Cretensem accepimus? Quarum civitatum severissima disciplina et severissimae leges traduntur."; Vives: DD, 135: "Nam in bene constitutis civitatibus quieto & moderato, atque etiam paulo hebetiore populo etiam si libero, non tamen magnus relictus est locus facundiae ad se iactandum, quemadmodum Cretae, vel Lacedaemone."

⁸²⁵ Vives: DD, 135: "In istis [*imperium populare*] ergo quando homines proclivitate naturae ad honores feruntur, ad opes, ad fortunas, dignitatem, potentiam, permulti studuerunt, ut optime ad conciones civium dicerent: quod qui faciebant, oratores nominati sunt, & eorum ars oratoria."

⁸²⁶ Vives: DC, book 1, E: "an etiam occidere, dirvere, incendere est gubernare? & metu opprimere est consulere? vide ne appareat te non tam cupere regere, quam dominari. Non est regnum quod expetis, sed tyrannis, velle multos tibi esse dicto audientes, non ut commode vivant, sed ut te metuant, & imperata obedienter faciant."

⁸²⁷ Tacitus: *Dialogus*, xl.

understanding is further enhanced towards the end of the section dedicated to the history of eloquence, where Vives describes the corruption of rhetoric as an internal problem of republican rhetoric based on glory as a motivating principle. Vives states, echoing his earlier words, “consequently, since its exercise was a step to great power, men who desired honour, riches and who were dedicated to their business (*negotium*) strove after this art,” going on to describe how this led orators to believe they could talk about anything hastily.⁸²⁸ In Erasmus’s *Lingua*, for instance, the kind of oratory based on envy, ambition and pride is effectively described as a disease of tongue, with its harmful repercussions causing *discordia*. Although the contemporary oratory of discord is never mentioned by Vives, the parallels to then-current situations were likely noticed by the readers of *De disciplinis*. Thus, both republics and monarchies are problematic from the viewpoint of rhetorical culture. In republics, where the culture is nurturing victory in open confrontation together with glory as the ultimate social prize, one can and will say too much, whereas in monarchies the use of word has ceased completely.

Accentuating his point about monarchies and princely regimes, Vives offers another historical depiction of rhetoric later on in *De causis*. This loosely picks up the history of the art of eloquence where the previous story had left it, namely the end of the republican period. The point here is clearly to unite the decadence of rhetoric to a change in the political outlook of Rome, and not to the internal tensions of rhetoric in the flourishing republican context. Thus, Vives argues that in the new political environment of the empirical era, rhetoric degenerated in the forum, in the courtroom, and in the senate respectively. In the senate, according to Vives, “opinions were not expressed freely as before, but in order to flatter established power, they were more eulogies of princes than deliberations on public good.”⁸²⁹ In the same vein, rhetoric in other contexts evolved into mere amusement. In short, a new political situation brought with it a separation of rhetoric from its social and political role. Simultaneously rhetoric as a means to glory sank, and with it the diligence that was put into its study. As Vives argues, “eloquence, out of all arts fell down earlier than others, like a delicate flower when Boreas blows, when that popular aura so healthy for eloquence was removed and the cultivation of language brought down.”⁸³⁰

⁸²⁸ Vives: DD, 136: “Ergo ut erat exercitium hoc gradus ad ingentem potentiam, expetierunt hanc artem homines honorum cupidi, opulenti, occupati negotiis....”

⁸²⁹ Vives: DD, 149: “...in senatu sententiae dicebantur non libere ut antea, sed in adulationem potentiae compositae, erantque magis encomia principum, quam deliberationes de publicis utilitatibus.”

⁸³⁰ Vives: DD, 150: “Quapropter ex bonis studiis maturrime omnium eloquentia est tanquam flos quidam delicatus flante Borea decussus: id est remota illa populari aura eloquentiae saluberrima, deserto linguae cultu....”

There can be little doubt that this development in Vives's mind is an undesirable one down to small details. Mere amusement, for instance, is described as the ultimate flaw of rhetoric in Vives's *De ratione dicendi*, where he proposes that instead of delighting (*delectare*), one should talk about keeping people's attention (*detinere*).⁸³¹ Even more importantly, in many of the sentences employed to paint a picture of these changes, there are very explicit references to the political language of the time. In describing the move in deliberative rhetoric from considerations of public good, to the flattery of existing power, Vives is very consciously using a language every reader of Erasmus would have recognized as the ultimate flaw in rhetoric.⁸³² Moreover, in portraying the rise of specialist jurists to the throne of the wise in questions related to laws and politics, Vives is most certainly describing a development he was pronouncedly critical of in the 1520s – and this critique was a commonplace in wider Erasmian circles. Furthermore, this historical description quite explicitly introduces a section in which Vives's main concern is to call for rhetoric that would raise to the battlefield, a rhetoric capable of reconquering its social and political role.⁸³³

One option for interpreting the history of rhetoric offered here is provided by Don Abbott, who has suggested that *De causis* is only an analysis of a particular historical situation of classical antiquity with little connection to the early sixteenth-century context. This is because the rhetoric Vives is proposing in his own *De ratione dicendi* differs greatly from the rhetoric he is describing in the historical assessment of *De causis*.⁸³⁴ It is true that Vives does not write in a language of strict causal relations between constitutional arrangements, habits, and rhetorical culture in his *De causis*. In general, *De disciplinis* never suggests that the rebirth of true eloquence should happen through constitutional arrangements. However, it is equally clear that Vives is indeed pointing out some possible connections that can be understood as very clear points of critique with clear and explicit links to the questions of language he was dealing

⁸³¹ Vives: DR, 130-133. He might have been influenced by Augustine's hesitant exposition of *delectare*, see Augustine *De civitate Dei*, iii.iii.xii.

⁸³² Vives makes the connection very clear in the early part on the corruption of rhetoric. Vives: DD, 134: "Sed non omnes congregationes quicquid volunt efficiunt. Nam in aliis unus administrat omnia, vel certe pauci consensu, & conspiratione inter se quadam velut fornicati, magnisque viribus & potentia suffulti, si quis imperio repugnet. Multitudo nec ad discernendum, exequendumve quae statuerit habet vires [...] In illis prioribus si quis plurimum dicendo polleat, vel non auditur: neque enim finitur publice loqui: vel etiam si dicat, et persuadeat multitudini, ea tamen & voluntatem habet metu praepeditam, & manus alligatas." Even more explicitly monarchy is interpreted as tyranny in Vives: DD, 149: "Principes raro ipsi loquebantur ad populum, & pauca, plerumque per edicta, haud aliter quam ad servos: in senatu sententiae dicebantur non libere ut antea, sed in adulationem potentiae compositae, erantque magis encomia principum, quam deliberationes de publicis utilitatibus."

⁸³³ Vives: DD, 152: "Hactenus nemo declamavit utique in materia argumentosa, & quasi in certamine & palaestra: tametsi multi delectarunt se oratiunculis, quae adversarium non haberent...."

⁸³⁴ Abbott 1983, 96-98.

with in the 1520s and 1530s. His texts on rhetorical theory are an attempt to find a middle way between a culture of flattery under a prince basing his rule on fear, and a republican culture of open confrontation, difference of opinion, and social rewards that breed sedition. The second point does not concern merely political communities, and all levels of human association that nurture verbal confrontation could be included.

Rhetoric as Elocution

It is of some significance that the history of the republican period performs, among other things, a specific function in the chapter on the corruption of rhetoric, since it leads to a redefinition and delimitation of the scope of rhetoric. This is shown in a part following the short history on the development of the republican deliberative rhetoric, which is suggestively followed by a section dedicated to tackling Quintilian and Aristotle, and is precisely on the true subject matter of rhetoric. In the tradition discussing the scope of rhetoric, it was common to delimit and define its relationship with other subjects that presented knowledge-claims such as philosophy and dialectic. After Plato's attack on rhetoric in his *Gorgias*, one of the main tasks of the great orators of classical antiquity, such as Isocrates, Cicero, and Quintilian, had been to defend their own art by discussing its social usefulness, relation to truth, subject matter, scope, and a range of other issues.⁸³⁵ One of the classical and more aggressive answers had been not only to claim that responsible and prudent civic rhetoric tied to the wisdom of philosophy would be of great use, but also to subject all knowledge to the scope of the universality of rhetoric. In Cicero's *De oratore*, Crassus flamboyantly defends the omnipotent nature of rhetoric as an art that can discuss anything, and in Quintilian, in his desire to create the perfect orator, rhetoric is the art that becomes the yardstick and organising tool for all other arts.

Yet this was not just a remote discussion of classical antiquity. In the Renaissance context, the discussion was present. In the context of his translation of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Leonardo Bruni had debated with Alfonso de Cartagena the extent to which rhetoricians could treat the subject matter of specific arts and disciplines – the question being precisely the interrelation between *res* and *verba* – rhetoric, and dialectic.⁸³⁶ Even more importantly, the omnipotent nature of rhetoric had been famously defended by Lorenzo Valla, who in his

⁸³⁵ For a more comprehensive description of these discussions, see Vickers 1988, 148-196.

⁸³⁶ Hankins 2003-2004, vol. 1, 200-207; Copenhaver 1990, 90.

Repastinatio (also printed with the title *Dialectice*) – a fierce attack on both classical and scholastic dialectical traditions – elaborated largely on why dialectic was merely part of rhetorical invention.⁸³⁷ Vives knew Valla’s *Repastinatio* criticising it in a fierce manner in his *De disciplinis* claiming that Valla, on most points, was wrong.⁸³⁸ The integral union between *res* and *verba* equated with liberal studies had more generally evolved into a commonplace in northern humanism with Erasmus in his *De ratione studii* reminding the reader of it in the very start.⁸³⁹ One of the accusations levied against those orators that spoke hastily in *De disciplinis* was as follows:

“Every day they found a possibility to talk on the Republic, on peace and war, on justice, magnanimity, fortitude, riches, fortune, navigation, winds, rains, on the nature of the ocean, on sky, gods, men, on passions and opinions, hygiene, plague, food; and they thought that all themes belonged to the sphere of this art and that there was nothing that they could not talk about on some occasion.”⁸⁴⁰

What is clear from this is that the part on rhetoric in Vives’s *De causis* is diametrically opposed to Valla’s and Crassus’s claims about the omnipotent nature of rhetoric, and Crassus’s ideas are in fact criticised in *De causis*.⁸⁴¹ More specifically, and arguing explicitly against Quintilian, Vives’s intention is to assert the independence of all other arts vis-à-vis rhetoric instead of bringing their importance back to rhetorical education, thus presenting rhetoric in a much more restricted sense. Countering Aristotle’s assertion that rhetoric is “the power or faculty to see what is probable in each thing,” Vives aims to show that rhetoric is not an art that should decide on the probability of arguments – a task that should preferably be left to individual arts and sciences in their respective subject matters, such as medicine, law, moral

⁸³⁷ Valla, Lorenzo: *Dialectice libri tres*, Josse Bade, Paris 1509, xx.

⁸³⁸ Vives: DD, 133: “Monet in quibusdam neitiquam prave, etsi ea sunt perpauca, in plerisque labitur, ut fuit vir ille vehemens, & ad faciendum iudicium praecipitatus.”

⁸³⁹ Erasmus: *De ratione studii*, ii.

⁸⁴⁰ Vives: DD, 136: “Videbant usu quotidie venire ut de republica dicerent, de pace, de bello, de iustitia, de magnanimitate, fortitudine, opibus, fortuna, de navigatione, de ventis, de hymbribus, de natura Oceani, de coelis, diis, hominibus, de affectibus, & opinionibus, de salubritate, de peste, de cibis: putaverunt omnia esse artis huius, quoniam nihil erat de quo non aliquando esset dicendum.”

⁸⁴¹ Vives: DD, 138-139: “Vellet omnia subiicere Oratori L. Crassus, M. Antonius non sinit, quorum apud Ciceronem disputationes notissimae sunt. Nam Antonio is orator sufficit, qui verbis ad audiendum iucundis, & sententiis ad probandum accomodatis uti possit in causis forensibus atque communibus: quique sit praeterea instructus voce, & actione, & lepore. Tales profecto fuerunt qui Athenis, & in Asia, Romae pro oratoribus habentur, celebranturque....”

philosophy, and so forth.⁸⁴² Not even in the case of civil science should rhetoric reign supreme, and even Aristotle, according to Vives, made the separation:

“Aristotle does not hide the fact that in his rhetorical works he discusses themes related to moral philosophy with very little precision since he adapts them to the capacities of the people to whom the orator, born to mob and popular assembly, is exclusively destined to.”⁸⁴³

Furthermore, the particular task of inventing arguments for a given case should not happen through rhetorical invention, equated here with the use of scattered commonplaces – a practice criticised heavily by Vives – but through dialectic: “the method of searching arguments belongs to the dialectician. For this reason Aristotle placed his eight books on topics [*Topica*] among his logical works.”⁸⁴⁴ In practice, this broadens the set of answers places (*loci*) would imply in invention. Rather than pointing to isolated commonplaces that can be evoked for the analysis of particular questions, places should incorporate the general knowledge produced by individual arts and sciences to an invention that is general in scope and organized through dialectical headings.

The picture of rhetoric that arises here is very much a separation of rhetoric from its function as an inventive art of *logos* understood in the Aristotelian sense. It is not rhetoric but dialectic, the true art of argumentation and *logos*, which finds (*inventio*) arguments for particular cases through general topics in close co-operation with individual sciences. Of course, this does not mean that Vives would not be in favour of orators as specialists in different arts and sciences. On the contrary, any knowledge of these arts is definitely suitable for the orator, and a good speaker should additionally possess – just like the ten orators of Athens – “sharpness, ingenuity, and skill of *ingenium*, common prudence, together with elegance and

⁸⁴² Vives: DD, 137: “Aristoteles Rhetoricen diffiniuit vim seu facultatem videndi quid in quoque sit probabile.” After Aristotle’s definition follows Vives’s attack.

⁸⁴³ Vives: DD, 138: “Nec Aristoteles dissimulat parum exacte tradi sibi in rhetoricis, quae de rebus mortalibus disserit, sed ad captum popularem, cui uni debet orator servire turbis & concionibus natus.”

⁸⁴⁴ Vives: DD, 143: “Sed ratio inquirendi argumenta dialectici est. Ideo Aristoteles octo libros Topicos inter logicos posuit: de ea re quam tenuiter agit in rhetoricis, quam pene nihil.”; Vives: DD, 142: “Quam inepti in his sunt, qui collegerunt ratiunculas aliquot, quibus discipuli in singulis vel causarum generibus, vel orationis partibus uterentur, & dicta aliquot ex Demosthene, aut Isocrate desumpta: nam in hoc plures sunt Hermogenes, & alii Graecii, quam Latini, pro formula nobis obiiciunt dicendi.” Melanchthon made the same point in his *Elementa Rhetorices*, see Mack 2011, 115-116.

certain refinement of speech.”⁸⁴⁵ Yet this is accidental in the sense that rhetoric itself, understood as an art of words, cannot claim to teach any of these skills, nor the kind of specialist knowledge demanded from a good speaker. Like Erasmus in *Lingua*, Vives is indeed hinting that *verba* can be separated from *res* and yet be beautiful and persuasive in the ears of the uneducated people.⁸⁴⁶ As Vives argues against Cicero’s idea about rhetoric that is not only about expression and words but “a method of thinking,” by claiming that the Roman:

“Confuses two very different things and thinks that it is proper to one and the same art to think and speak well. This is a sensible and expedient assessment, and I wish it would persuade men, but it does not coincide with reality since both tasks are different as to their ends, material, and general practice.”⁸⁴⁷

Vives, however, is not finished with the separation of the true sphere of rhetoric from the expertise of different arts, invention, and *logos*. In what follows, he attacks the most traditional definition of the orator as a good man skilled in speaking most emphatically defended by Quintilian.⁸⁴⁸ This, in Vives’s estimation, is simply wrong and something Quintilian himself was not very successful in defending. In going back to Cato, the originator of the commonplace regarding the moral nature of oratory according to Vives, the Spanish philosopher is more than eager to show that the use of *bonus* in Cato did not refer to goodness in the general moral meaning, as it is applicable to Socrates or the Stoics. Instead it referred in a more restricted sense to a good speaker, just as a good farmer is in no way necessarily a morally good man, but simply skilled in fulfilling his task as a farmer. Thus, in opening up the traditional definition, Vives underlies the separation of rhetoric from *ethos*: rhetoric as a specific art is not necessarily united to ethics since a successful speaker is not necessarily someone revealing his ethical nature in any simple way, even though this, of course, is desirable.⁸⁴⁹ The divorce of rhetoric as a merely technical skill of *verba* from questions of ethics and truth is

⁸⁴⁵ Vives: DD, 139: “sed ingenii acumine & solertia, usu, prudentia communi, & in sermone elegantia, & cultu quodam.”

⁸⁴⁶ In his description of the life of an erudite he seriously considered the case where words were separated from things, see Vives: DD, 394.

⁸⁴⁷ Vives: DD, 139-140: “...confundit quae sunt discretissima: atque eiusdem esse artis retur bene sentire, & bene dicere, utiliter sane: atque utinam id hominibus persuaderet, sed non perinde vere quippe quae finibus, materiis, & toto usu separantur.”

⁸⁴⁸ Vives: DD, 139: “quemadmodum Quintilianus colligit, nec oratorem quidem esse posse nisi virum bonum.”; Quintilian: IO, xii.i.

⁸⁴⁹ Vives: DD, 139-140.

visible in a description of the highly revered Church fathers who are praised for both their moral nature, adherence to truth, and knowledge of things (*res*). However, the Church fathers are still unfavourably compared to the pagan rhetoricians of classical antiquity, who mastered the specific subject of rhetoric more skilfully: “the same advantage we [Christian orators] have over them [classical orators] in things (*res*), they have over us in all parts of eloquence.”⁸⁵⁰

Vives’s instrumental redefinition of rhetoric goes hand in hand with social, emotional, and stylistic viewpoints. On numerous occasions, Vives stresses that the true context of rhetoric is a speech to masses. In the historical section, following Cicero, he calls public meetings the theatre of eloquence and moves on to quote Tully, who argued:

“Since the most grandiose stage for an orator was thought to be a popular assembly, nature itself raises him to an ornate style: the multitude has such a huge power that just like a flute-player cannot play without a flute, an orator cannot be eloquent without a multitude that listens to him.”⁸⁵¹

This is closely connected to the fact that rhetoric, as Vives makes very clear, is essentially about emotion and passion, since the primary focus in a discussion with or to the multitude rests on passion.⁸⁵² The dichotomy of passion and reason has in Vives, and in rhetorical tradition more generally, a distinctively social dimension to it since passion is quite systematically linked to the multitude, whereas reason goes hand in hand with the wise.⁸⁵³ Thus, Vives is simultaneously asserting that rhetoric is essentially about rule over passion, and over the multitude – but also potentially over anyone ruled by their passions irrespective of their institutional position. In his *De consultatione*, this category most certainly included those above the speaker, and especially the prince.⁸⁵⁴ This is further supported by the fact that the natural habitat of rhetoric is said to be in elocution – in questions of style and words – and not in

⁸⁵⁰ Vives: DD, 151: “ita sacri concionatores priscis illis oratoribus successere, sed dissimillimo successu: nam quanto illos superamus rebus, tanto partibus omnibus eloquentiae, tota vi persuadendi, sententiis, argumentis, dispositione, verbis, genere orationis, actione inferiores sumus.”

⁸⁵¹ Vives: DD, 149: “Fit autem ut quia maxima quasi oratori scena videatur concio, natura ipsa ad ornatus dicendi genus excitetur: habet enim multitudo vim quandam talem, ut quemadmodum tibicen sine tibiis canere, sic orator nisi multitudine audiente, eloquens esse non poterit.” Cicero: *De oratore*, ii.lxxxiii; see also Cicero: *Disputationes*, ii.i.

⁸⁵² Vives: DD, 151: “Qui nunc dicunt, quam dispares, imperiti, ignari vitae, imo etiam communis sensus: qui sint affectus, aut quemadmodum vel impellendi, vel revocandi omnino nescii.”

⁸⁵³ Vives: DD, 150: “...illa populari aura eloquentiae saluberrima...”; Cicero: *De oratore*, ii.lxxxiii.

⁸⁵⁴ See Chapter three.

invention that traditionally linked rhetoric to argumentation and *logos*. This elocution is not just a question of isolated figures or tropes but of broad questions of style based on the analysis of the audience and other contextual phenomena, as Vives underlined in his *De disciplinis* – paving the way to his own *De ratione dicendi*.⁸⁵⁵

Ultimately, one finds a close connection between the three conceptual dichotomies: the people – the wise, *elocutio* – *inventio*, passion – reason. These are explicative of what rhetoric is truly about; it is about moulding arguments to the passions of the audience, not about the invention of arguments that appeal to the reason of the wise. In this spirit, Vives's 1532 *De ratione dicendi* effectively starts from the premise that rhetoric deals with elocution and style that move the passions of the audience and not with the invention of arguments for particular questions. It rather moulds dialectical arguments to meet contextual requirements. In uniting the three conceptual pairs, Vives is not doing anything completely new since the connection is already visible in classical tradition. Cicero, for instance, argued in *De oratore*: “For this oratory of ours must be adapted to the ears of the multitude, for charming or urging their minds to approve of proposals, which are weighed in no goldsmith's balance, but in what I may call common scales.”⁸⁵⁶ However, unlike in the classical tradition, the idea of rhetoric as dealing primarily with the passion of the multitude leads to a strong claim about its purely technical nature as an art of elocution.⁸⁵⁷

The instrumental view of rhetoric is visible in Vives's emphatic defence of rhetoric in *De tradendis disciplinis*, the second part of *De disciplinis* in which he presents his own views on a large number of questions related to teaching. In somewhat Augustinian fashion, Vives strongly defends the teaching and use of rhetoric precisely in a world in which manners are corrupted, since it is of “extraordinary efficiency and power.”⁸⁵⁸ One of the reasons for the promotion of rhetoric that can “be the cause of greatest good and bad” is that it simply is necessary in all human interaction and that it, consequently, should not be abandoned by prudent men, a point Erasmus had emphasized strongly in his *Lingua* in 1525.⁸⁵⁹ Moreover, rhetoric is the entry to man's mind through passions. As Vives reminds the reader, man is

⁸⁵⁵ Vives: DD, 143-144.

⁸⁵⁶ Cicero: *De oratore*, ii.xxxviii.159: “Haec enim nostra oratio multitudinis est auribus accomodanda, ad oblectandos animos, ad impellendos, ad ea probanda, quae non aurificis statera, sed populari quadam trutina examinatur.”

⁸⁵⁷ Monfasani has probably more than any other argued that Vives systematically tried to restrict the scope of rhetoric, see Monfasani 1988, 199-200.

⁸⁵⁸ Vives: DD, 325: “...quandoquidem efficacissima est ac potentissima & in omnes vitae partes necessaria.” Augustine: *De doctrina* iv.ii; Cicero: “De inventione”, i.iv.

⁸⁵⁹ Vives: DD, 326: “is est maximorum, & bonorum, & malorum causa.”; Erasmus: *Lingua*, 6-7.

regulated through will whose counsellors are judgement and reason, but passions are, “like torches: indeed, passions of the soul are lit up by the sparkles of words and reason is roused and moved.”⁸⁶⁰ In claiming that the use of language is indispensable, and that it is an essential part of all human interaction Vives sustains, following an argument made by Quintilian in his *Institutio* that the use of word and all the problems arising from it precede rhetoric understood as an art.⁸⁶¹ Thus, by not teaching rhetoric one simply could not solve problems arising from bad and irresponsible use of words leading to destruction, although the use of all rhetorical tools for wicked ends would potentially worsen the situation. The only solution is to harness the power of eloquence to the use of *vir prudens* so that he can enhance good things.

Rhetoric Tailored to the Battlefield

If the analysis of the republican period led to a reassessment of some basic ideas of rhetorical theory, the history of the art of eloquence under Roman emperors and subsequent princes introduces a section that strongly calls for a renewal of rhetorical culture. A few themes are developed around this general idea. Already before the presentation of the decadence of eloquence under the emperors, Vives had made a staunch apology of poetry reaffirming his earlier position on a theme more than familiar to him already from his Parisian sojourn. In his defence of poetry, Vives focuses on taking on those calling for a universal ban for the use of metrical language without any considerations of contextual aspects. To those claiming that poetry represents the ultimate instance of dissimulation, and thus of unethical persuasion, Vives answers by arguing that it is actually the avoidance of harmony and verse that requires more dissimulation since language by its very nature contains poetic elements.⁸⁶² Thus, poetry does not produce dissimulation and twisting of truth at all because there is hardly anything more natural in language than a certain kind of harmony. It is, however, the section following the

⁸⁶⁰ Vives: DD, 325: “affectus autem ut faces: atqui & affectus animi sermonis scintillis accenduntur, & ratio incitatur, ac movetur...”

⁸⁶¹ Quintilian: IO, iii.ii.3: “It was, then, nature that created speech and observation that originated the art of speaking.” Quintilian also strongly argues against Cicero’s idea presented in *De inventione* that oratory was born with the founders of cities and legislators. See Cicero: “De inventione”, i.ii.

⁸⁶² Vives attacks those condemning poetry, Vives: DD, 144-145: “Aiunt oportere caelari artem, quae prodit se si fiat versus, & ostendit in concentu & verbis occupatum esse oratorem, non in re: idcirco nec quod habeat versus numerum passi sunt inferri, etiamsi non sit versus: ut munera dare parenti. Tum ad gravitatem & opinionem veritatis cuius sermo, ut matrona quaequam vel puella honestissima non desyderat anxium cultum, & exquisita ornamenta. Audio.” Vives’s answer is that “Nam quod caelari volunt artem, utique tot versuum genera in calore scribendi devitasse maioris est artis mea sententia, quam in aliquod illorum, vel imprudentem incidisse, vel prudentem devenisse. Quis enim omnia illa tam multa, tam varia, quibus undique circumsidemur, effugiat.”

historical analysis that is at the very core of Vives's critique of current rhetoric. Continuing from the argument that rhetoric, after the imperial period, had developed into mere amusement deprived of any significant meaning, he proceeds to an analysis of the current state of the art of eloquence in the form of a critique that is primarily targeted towards humanism itself, and not directed towards scholastic learning. Accordingly, the critique is pointing not to the absence of rhetorical skills but to an overwhelmingly literary and ahistorical understanding of rhetoric focused on words and epitomized ultimately by Ciceronianism, which was fiercely criticised by Erasmus in 1528 in his famous dialogue *Ciceronianus*.⁸⁶³

Vives starts by describing the rediscovery of classical antiquity in Italy, naming a number of prominent Italian humanists who spoke Latin, "with more learning than others and were called orators." He then quickly continues to claim, however, that the newly established contact with classical antiquity does not mean the recovery of rhetoric in any sense.⁸⁶⁴ In the end he declares emphatically that "thus far, no-one has declaimed or at least not in an argumentative matter like in a contest or in palestra, although many have delighted themselves with little speeches without an adversary," proceeding to claim that whenever adversarial rhetoric has been practised, it has been done somewhat in the manner of a rabid dog.⁸⁶⁵ The allusion to rabid dogs resonates well in the context of the dynamics of discussions on questions of learning, religion, and politics in the 1510s and 1520s, associated with non-argumentative feuds by Vives. It is, however, the first idea about the absence of adversarial rhetoric in current humanism that is even more important because it criticises humanism harshly for losing its social relevance.

The point about declamation reconquering its status in *De disciplinis* resembles closely Erasmus's introduction to Vives's *Declamationes Syllanae* from 1520 where Erasmus had argued that Vives, with his *Declamationes*, was the first to revive an ancient genre. Vives himself, in the introduction to the *Declamationes*, had argued for the political significance of the genre albeit mostly as an instruction book to princes. However, there can be no doubt that the faith of declamation in *De disciplinis* represents adversarial discussion more generally. It is

⁸⁶³ He mentions both but focuses on humanism, Vives: DD, 153-160. The beginning of the passage is marked by the word *imitatio* in the margins. Vives: DD, 152: "Et quem admodum ante centum annos qui Ciceronem aut Latinos alios legebant scriptores, sensa spectantes sola, verba non animadverterunt: ita isti qui in verba sola essent intenti, dictionem praeterierunt inanimadversam."

⁸⁶⁴ Vives: DD, 152: "Hos vero, & quotquot doctius Latine loquerentur, quam caeteri, oratores vocaverunt."

⁸⁶⁵ Vives: DD, 152: "Hactenus nemo declamavit utique in materia argumentosa, & quasi in certamine & palaestra: tametsi multi delectarunt se oratiunculis, quae adversarium non haberent: ut laudationibus artium, virtutum, principum hominum: vel rabiose se exercuerunt canina facundia...."

the rhetorical exercise *par excellence*, which in the educational context trains people for the battlefield, for a committed discussion against an adversary, and for the use of all possibilities offered by eloquence.⁸⁶⁶ Continuing his criticism, and weaving it together with his analysis of Ciceronianism and imitation, Vives emphasizes in a typically Erasmian fashion that true imitation should not be about specific words or sentences but should focus on imitating Cicero's, "talent of soul, varied erudition and method of treating each thing."⁸⁶⁷ In the same vein the Valencian humanist writes,

"If therefore they admire his language because he achieved great might and power with his discourses targeted at the people and the Roman senate, and they consider him worthy of imitation, they should imitate his knowledge of present and past things, his examination of the sects of wisdom, his study of human soul, his sharpness in gathering information. These are all virtues through which he persuaded the judgement of the senate and the people more powerfully than with the faculty of words and expression."⁸⁶⁸

Throughout the part, Vives contrasts the idea of flexible emulation found in Cortese and Erasmus that gathers materials from a variety of sources, creating something truly original with it, in accordance with his "*ingenium*, subject matter, place and time."⁸⁶⁹ We should not be apes imitating slavishly the external appearance of our models, but like sons that capture the interior of their fathers.⁸⁷⁰ Ultimately, Vives wants to argue that only through these contextual questions of *decorum* can the vast knowledge of the tradition of classical antiquity be brought to the use of rhetoric in times when all issues related to institutions, religion and moral philosophy had changed.⁸⁷¹

⁸⁶⁶ Vives: DD, 152. See also Vives: DD, 328-330.

⁸⁶⁷ Vives: DD, 156: "Ea igitur animi indoles, & tam varia eruditio, & tractandae cuiusque rei ratio esset istis exprimenda, qui Ciceroniani videri affectant..."

⁸⁶⁸ Vives: DD, 155: "Nam si propterea linguam admirantur, quod in omni populo & senatu Romano tantas dicendo est vires opesque consecutus, ideoque eam imitatione censent dignam, imitentur potius rerum praesentium & praeteritarum cognitionem, scrutationem sectatorum sapientiae, tractationem humani animi, colligendi acumen, quibus potius virtutibus omnia senatui & populo & iudicibus persuaserit, quam facultate verborum & dictionis."

⁸⁶⁹ Vives: DD, 153: "...ut maxime vel ingenio suo congruat, vel exigat materia, vel temous aut locus poscant."

⁸⁷⁰ Vives: DD, 156.

⁸⁷¹ Erasmus made the same point in his *Ciceronianus*. With the mouth of Bulephorus he argued that words have to be moulded to themes, not vice versa, since otherwise one could not talk about anything classical writers had not treated. See Erasmus, Desiderius: "Ciceronianus", 84-163 in Erasmus: *De recta Latini Graecique sermonis pronuntiatione dialogus. Dialogus cui titulus Ciceronianus sive de optimo genere dicendi, cum aliis nonnullis quorum nihil non est novum*, Simon de Colines, Paris 1528, 99: "Mihi ne oratoris quidem titulo dignus haberetur. Si Cicero de quavis re potuit optime dicere: quaenammodum Apelli simillimus erit, qui & deorum & hominum, & animantium, & omnium denique rerum formas penicillo suo poterit adumbrare."

Towards the very end of the section, Vives draws the link from imitation to rhetorical persuasion, in arguing that it is the obsession with words that makes not only the description of the theme but ultimately the persuasion of the audience impossible:

“And those who did not have any other instruments than rhetorical devices, what could they build? When they spoke, they arranged a great mob of words, almost like a battle-line, beautiful in appearance but useless and ineffective, and that did not bring anything suitable for the theme nor could speak to the minds of the audience.”⁸⁷²

Moreover, they have nothing to say about “public and civic things,” which belong especially to rhetoric, as “they do not even know in which commonwealth they live.”⁸⁷³ Ciceronianism, in short, is the supreme expression of an ahistorical understanding of rhetoric where the contextual and particular nature of art of eloquence has been surpassed by an essentialisation of a certain language, which simply in a new historical situation had ceased to speak to people and to persuade. Rather than speaking to the passions of the people, it was aesthetically pleasing but socially useless. Thus, rhetoric starting from the use of appropriate words for current situations is called for – a rhetoric that would regain its social and political importance.

Making Sense of Rhetoric

Vives’s depiction of rhetoric in his *De causis* underlines three broad themes: first, it shows through historical analysis that in certain republican contexts that nurture open confrontation and glory, rhetoric becomes too dominant, and that under bad princes who base their rule on fear the civic possibilities of rhetoric are non-existent. Secondly, the excesses of republican period inscribed in the books inherited from classical antiquity are countered with a demarcation of the proper sphere of rhetoric. Thirdly, Vives calls for a rhetoric that would regain its social and civic importance. All of these themes are more than of anecdotal interest, since

⁸⁷² Vives: DD, 159: “Hi vero qui alia non haberent quam instrumenta, quid potuerunt efficere? quum maximam dicendo verborum turbam, quasi in acie ordinassent, aspectu quidem formosam, sed inutilem tamen atque inefficacem, nihil re ipsa, nihil auditorum mentibus dignum attulere: magno sane artis dedecore, quae ex illi censebatur, tanquam primis ac praestantissimis, tum sua, tum aliorum sententia professoribus.”

⁸⁷³ Vives: DD, 159: “Tam Rhetoricam aiunt, quum de rebus aliis omnibus, tum potissimum de publicis, ac civilibus dicturam. Quid isti dicent, qui eas ipsas res nec per somnium quidem viderunt, nec sciunt in quo orbe, in qua civitate vivant....”

they link to actual projects Vives is undertaking in *De disciplinis* and in other works of the 1530s.

The space between volatile republics and authoritarian princely regimes should be occupied by new humanist rhetoric that understands its proper limits, and exercises civic and other social importance within existing possibilities. Vives's persistent insistence on the importance of the *mores* and *ingenia* of the people suggest that the possibilities of oratorical culture, and the limits of a speaker or a writer to appear as ethical persons, are strongly conditioned by the audience. This point could be found in classical writers such as Isocrates, and something his own interpretation of historical precedents did indeed underline.⁸⁷⁴ This relates to the formation of the prince as well as to the entire educational scheme developed in the second part of *De disciplinis*, *De tradendis*, where the education of not only future orators, but of potential audience and readers is described. Simultaneously, the stress on the liberality of speech and the importance and good counselling typical of Vives's writings is an attempt to make space for rhetoric within the confines of existing institutional arrangements.

The cries for socially and politically important rhetoric that rise to the battlefield have an explicit link to *De ratione dicendi*, *De consultatione* and *De conscribendis epistolis* that outline a programme where the tradition of adversary deliberative rhetoric and declamation is partly transformed from direct confrontation to a gentle curing of the mind. In this new constellation, those in power can be guided by wise counsellors exercising prudent use of words. In this way, discord is inscribed into a culture that never loses the appearance of concord: new genres of writing emerge that adapt the earlier rhetorical tradition to a new and predominantly princely context. Even declamation, which should raise to the battlefield, is given a distinctive outlook in Vives's own *Declamationes* that focus heavily, although not exclusively, on the different ways of addressing the ruler in situations where self-concealment is necessary. The idea of rhetoric as prudent counselling was strong in Erasmus's mind also: the dedication of his *Ciceronianus* effectively opens up with a eulogy of the importance of counselling, where Erasmus goes on to argue that in these tumultuous times the Greek saying that counselling is a sacred thing is truer than ever.⁸⁷⁵

Closely linked to this, in delimiting the scope of rhetoric, Vives does not attack

⁸⁷⁴ At one point, referring to the corruption of rhetoric, Vives argues that both the audience and the orator are equally guilty, Vives: DD, 151: "Cuius rei culpa divisa est inter dicentem, & audientem." Isocrates: *Oratio de bello fugiendo, & de pace servanda*, Basel, Johann Froben 1519, 12; Vickers 1988, 153-154.

⁸⁷⁵ Erasmus: "Ciceronianus", 84.

rhetoric but defends it as a prudential art. Vives has at least two reasons for doing this. First, when rhetoric is presented only as the elocution of an argument in a form that touches the passions and emotions of an audience, the question of the possible responsibility of rhetoric is partly circumvented: beautiful words, style, and poetry that speak to people are the most natural things in language – and rhetoric is nothing more than a mastery of these. If they are misused, it is not strictly speaking a problem in rhetoric, but in ethics and *logos*, moral philosophy, and dialectic. In addition to this, it raises the social and educational question of how not to give linguistic skills to those who might use them incorrectly. Quite explicitly, and with emphatic tone Vives argues that, despite of the dangers, it is exactly in the corrupted world where this kind of rhetoric is relevant; to simply disregard it would not be a solution to the problem at all but would leave the field open to those who are corrupted and bad.⁸⁷⁶ This is essentially a way of defending rhetoric as an intellectual and educational paradigm against those attacking it from different directions.

In the academic context of Louvain, the humanist programme was still often linked to mere rhetoric by members of the higher faculties.⁸⁷⁷ The theological faculty of Paris University had asked for the prohibition of Erasmus's *Colloquia* that could under the guise of eloquence lead men to Lutheranism, linking Erasmian programme intrinsically to flawed rhetoric.⁸⁷⁸ In a somewhat similar vein, the whole Erasmian project had been linked to a separation of beautiful words (*verba*) from substantial knowledge of things (*res*) and from true transformative spirit by the leading reformers. Erasmus himself had been famously criticised by Luther for writing words “without Christ, without spirit” – eloquence without deeper meaning.⁸⁷⁹ The Platonic attack on rhetoric was not voiced only by the strongholds of scholastic learning that united eloquence with heresy, but they were also more widely known. Cornelius Agrippa's *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum atque artium declamatio invectiva* from 1530 had presented all Platonic stereotypes of rhetoric as deceitful speech alien, and to truth, uniting his general argument to current issues of *discordia* and the Reformation, asking “aren't the authors of these heresies the most articulate men, who possess both verbal eloquence and elegant writing style?”⁸⁸⁰

⁸⁷⁶ Vives: DD, 325-326.

⁸⁷⁷ Papy 1999, 183.

⁸⁷⁸ Erasmus: Letters 1802-1925, 310n.

⁸⁷⁹ Luther: *De servo*, 19: “Haec verba tua, sine Christo, sine spiritu, ipsa glacie frigidiora, ita ut etiam vitium in illis patiaturo eloquentiae tuae decor.”

⁸⁸⁰ Agrippa, Cornelius: *De incertitudine et vanitate scientiarum et artium atque excellentia verbi Dei*, Jean Pierre, Paris 1531, xvii: “nonne auctores ilorum homines disertissimi, linguae eloquentia, & calami elegantia instructi?”

The second reason for the delimitation of the scope of rhetoric is that it gives Vives the possibility to tie rhetorical invention to the substantial knowledge of individual sciences, and subdue it conceptually to dialectic. On the surface, this is diametrically opposed to the earlier humanist trends that defended the great importance of the art of eloquence in detriment of dialectic. This had had an evident social and institutional side to it since rhetorical humanists had long defended the rights of teachers of rhetoric to write and comment on the most venerated authorities on each subject such as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* for instance.⁸⁸¹ But one should remember that this is a much-transformed dialectic indeed, one that incorporates rhetorical procedures for arranging the materials of classical learning in a more general form. Moreover, the focus is not on the formal qualities of arguments or formal semantics as had been the case in the older dialectical tradition. Vives's point is that new dialectic could be the place where the invention of the argument occurs through more general categories of reasoning that guarantee the relationship of invention to the knowledge of individual arts and sciences, which are, however, in themselves heavily brought to the scope of humanist methods. Thus, rather than working through isolated commonplaces, a practice Vives strongly criticises throughout *De disciplinis*, invention should point to the overall knowledge of separate arts in a more controlled and organized way.⁸⁸² Moreover, the incorporation of rhetorical procedures into general reasoning was a way of incorporating them into dialectic, which continued as the crown jewel of the curricula of Arts Faculties in Europe. Thus, dialectic did not necessarily have to be replaced by rhetoric but its theory should be changed.⁸⁸³ Ultimately, Vives's answer to problems around rhetoric did not only concern the internal theory of rhetoric, but linked to education and to the modifications introduced to the theory of different disciplines.

Redefining Dialectic

As is demonstrated previously, the answer to the problem of rhetoric fostered by a culture of speaking based on glory, changes the outlook of the problem: since rhetoric is essentially a

(English translation from Rebhorn, Wayne A (ed. and trans.): *Renaissance Deates on Rhetoric*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, 2000, 81).

⁸⁸¹ Lines 2013, 6-12.

⁸⁸² Vives: DD, 142: "Quam inepti in his sunt, qui collegerunt ratiunculas aliquot, quibus discipuli in singulis vel causarum generibus, vel orationis partibus uterentur, & dicta aliquot ex Demosthene, aut Isocrate desumpta."

⁸⁸³ Nauert 1990.

technique of eloquence and style, it is not for rhetoric to solve its own moral ambivalence as an art. Thus, since argumentative practices – be they particular or general – refer back to dialectic, it is essential to understand the predominantly Agricolan interpretation of dialectic the Spanish philosopher is promoting. The problem seems to be in the very core of *De disciplinis*, since the bulk of the third part, very often left out in later editions of the work, is essentially dedicated to different parts of dialectic.

This is in stark contrast to Erasmus's 1512 *De ratione studii*, where the Dutch humanist was, reluctantly, ready to concede that "if someone should decide that dialectic be added to all this I shall not gainsay him much." However, he focused almost exclusively on grammar and rhetoric.⁸⁸⁴ Still in his 1529 *De pueris*, Erasmus was quite silent about the constructive possibilities of dialectic portraying it in very scholastic terms, and juxtaposing it to *studia humanitatis*.⁸⁸⁵ However, the developments in dialectical literature and the experience of the socially, religiously, and politically capricious 1520s had changed the humanist take on the possibilities of dialectic. As in the case of Melanchthon – who tried to fix theological discussions through a set of commonplaces linked to new humanist dialectic – the experience of the volatile and traumatic 1520s must have had an effect in Vives's choice to underline strongly the importance of dialectic as a general method of reasoning – although the theological dimension found in Melanchthon is largely absent.⁸⁸⁶ More generally, the range of *De disciplinis* was effectively much closer to Melanchthon's ambitious project of constructing a new educational system for all levels of learning compared to Erasmus's more restricted focus on liberal arts that rarely covers the entire educational process. Quite unlike any of Erasmus's own works, or anything produced in northern humanism, the third part of Vives's *De disciplinis* is modelled loosely on Aristotle's *Organon*, which moves from categories and predicables, to argumentative forms and topics, aspiring to cover themes of great importance at the university level. Yet, the connection to grammar and rhetoric, as well as Vives's insistence on the importance of dialectic in more elementary education in *De tradendis*, shows that he is by no means exclusively discussing issues destined for the higher faculties of the universities.

In the previous decade after the publication of Vives's invective *In pseudodialecticos*, the field of dialectic had been in constant turmoil. The authors used and the

⁸⁸⁴ Erasmus: *De ratione studii*, iii: "Ad haec si quis Dialecticem addendam statuet, non admodum refragabor...." (English translation from Erasmus: *Literary and Educational Writings*, vol. 2, Collected Works of Erasmus 24 [ed. Thompson], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1978, 670).

⁸⁸⁵ Erasmus, Erasmus: *De pueris statim ac liberaliter instituendis*, Christian I Egenolff, Strasbourg 1529, 47.

⁸⁸⁶ Kusakawa 1999, xvii; Moss 2003, 174-178.

direction and purpose of dialectical education were changing. Compared to Vives's late 1519 polemics, epitomized by *In pseudodialecticis*, many signs indicate that in the universities directly related to Vives's life, the actual education in the Faculties of Arts had already changed, or was undergoing a process of modification.⁸⁸⁷ In 1530, the theological faculty of Paris complained that the Faculty of Arts was teaching more Agricola than Aristotle.⁸⁸⁸ Louvain, the university Vives was so closely connected to especially at the turn of the 1520s, was experimenting with the work of Agricola, as witnessed by the 1535 edition of Aristotle's *Organon* that draws heavily from the Dutch humanist.⁸⁸⁹ In the English universities, similar developments were taking place, as witnessed by the statutes of the Faculty of Arts in Cambridge that put forward the names of Aristotle, Agricola, Melanchthon, and Trebizond as authorities in dialectic.⁸⁹⁰ More generally, it has been suggested that by 1530 writing in purely scholastic tradition on dialectic had almost completely stopped.⁸⁹¹

Thus, the emergence of truly humanist dialectic in the years preceding the publication of *De disciplinis* made possible a constructive proposal – something that was not put forward in *In pseudodialecticis* or in Melanchthon's influential *De corrigendis adulescentiae studiis*. Melanchthon's 1518 lecture, held at the university of Wittenberg and published under the name of *De corrigendis*, presented a new understanding of university education and curriculum, but just like Vives's *In pseudodialecticis*, Melanchthon had very little constructive to say about the teaching of dialectic.⁸⁹² Even though Agricola had gained the reputation as the torch bearer of new dialectical learning, other humanist materials had also emerged in the field, spearheaded by Melanchthon's *Compendia dialectices ratio* and Johannes Caesarius's *Dialectica* (printed for the first time in 1526), both of which enjoyed great success in the printing world.⁸⁹³ Older humanist materials were successful as well. Trebizond's *Isagoge dialectica* was published 14 times between 1515 and 1530, and Agricola's classical *Inventiones dialecticae* had been woven more closely to the emerging humanist tradition through the

⁸⁸⁷ Nauert 1990.

⁸⁸⁸ Mack 1993, 265. In Paris humanism entered especially through colleges, see Rosa di Simone 1996, 290.

⁸⁸⁹ Mack 1993, 269-270; Papy 1999, 182-185.

⁸⁹⁰ Jardine 1974, 51.

⁸⁹¹ Ashworth 1988, 76.

⁸⁹² Melanchthon, Philipp: *Sermo habitus apud iuuentutem Academiae Vittenberg, de corrigendis adulescentiae studiis*, Basel, Johann Froben, 1519, 12-13.

⁸⁹³ Caesarius was printed at least four times between 1526 and 1530 and regularly throughout the 1530s. Melanchthon's *Compendiaria dialectices ratio* (the second version was entitled *Dialectices libri quatuor*) was printed more than 30 times in the 1520s. Not all editions came from the reformed side with Paris producing at least three editions, see Green – Murphy 2006, 91, 298-299.

commentary of Phrissemus, based on his teaching of dialectic at Cologne, and through Bartholomeus Latomus's *Epitome*, which first appeared in 1530.⁸⁹⁴

Despite their significant differences, all these works share a number of issues with Agricola's proposal. First, they focus heavily on dialectical invention, not judgement, which results in a pronounced emphasis on the use of topics for coming up with arguments, and to the detriment of the formal procedures of argumentation and semantic analysis of terms employed. Secondly and closely connected to this, all of them make close links between dialectical learning and other linguistic arts, underlining that the relevance of dialectic is to be judged only as far as it can be useful in providing arguments for a number of practical contexts. Vives had vehemently made this point clear in *In pseudodialecticos*, and both Phrissemus and Latomus strongly defend this in their editions of Agricola by pointing out the connection of dialectic – understood not as an end in itself – to literary studies and a range of practical tasks. In doing so, Phrissemus underlies heavily the rhetorical component of dialectic that convinces, and helps people use language persuasively in their own lives.⁸⁹⁵ In some ways, thus, the Aristotelian distinction between demonstration aiming at knowledge, dialectic dealing with general questions and starting from commonly accepted opinions, and rhetoric aiming at action through persuasive language dealing with particular cases, is blurred.

If the whole part on the corruption on dialectic in *De causis* is meant to pave the way to a new dialectic of invention and judgement, then the third part of *De disciplinis*, *De censura veri*, can be read as its constructive counterpart. To make a comprehensive analysis of the third part would be a daunting task indeed, since it touches upon a wide range of issues somehow related to the themes covered by Aristotle's *Organon*, and medieval dialectic. However, much of how Vives effectively thought about the *trivium* together, as he had implied already in his *In pseudodialecticos*, is visible in the presentation of the central category of definition.

His treatment of essences and definitions in the fourth book of part three, entitled *De explanatione essentiarum*, shows how Vives uses his epistemological scepticism for achieving a flexible and practical understanding of definitions.⁸⁹⁶ Already in *De causis*, he

⁸⁹⁴ Green – Murphy 2006, 5, 215, 264.

⁸⁹⁵ This is very clearly visible in his introductory letter to the lector in which Agricola is favourably compared to Peter of Spain, see Phrissemus, Johannes: "Ioannes Matthaëus Phrissemius candido lectori", in Agricola, Rudolph: *De inventione dialectica*, Hero Fuchs, Köln 1527. See also Mack 1993, 280-291; Vasoli, 1-2, 249-250.

⁸⁹⁶ Vives never denies the existence of essences; his scepticism is rather epistemological in the vein of Cicero's *Academica* that points towards an epistemological discussion in the search for truth. Moreover, he points on a number of instances that the problem of knowledge derives from the condition of our mind, not from the nature of

attacked vehemently the basic method of Aristotelian science – demonstration – by arguing simply that one cannot find first principles necessary for demonstrative science, since what is considered a given – the premises of demonstration – is never certain, as such, but differs from one person to another.⁸⁹⁷ In the section dedicated to definitions in the third part of *De disciplinis*, his aim is to tackle Aristotle’s understanding of essential definitions by complicating the question and moving the attention to what he, following Rudolph Agricola and Cicero, dubbed “division.” What really is at stake here is more than a question of, “what something is?”, understood in an abstract philosophical sense that aspires to capture essences. By arguing that unequivocal answers to such a question are not within the reach of human epistemological capacities Vives attacks the project of Aristotelian demonstrative science, shifting the focus to the epistemological dialogue of probability (*verosimilitudo*) found in Cicero, among others.⁸⁹⁸ In addition to the idea of epistemological discussions, the question for Vives encompasses strong rhetorical viewpoints, such as how definitions can be useful in oratory, in the gathering of material, or in the composition of an argument for a case.

There is no doubt that the history of the concept of definition is a complex one. First, it is one of the key concepts in Aristotle’s *Posterior Analytics* – part of his *Organon*, a set of six books on categories and formal thinking that was the primary source of inspiration for medieval scholastic logic. In the work, the primary importance of definition is to state what something *is* in its essence. For Aristotle, definition has a particular form, and is always composed of a *genus* showing a general category of sameness, and *differentia* establishing a difference called *species* in relation to all other substances of a certain *genus*. The famous definition of human beings, for instance, is composed of what is defined (*homo*), what the *genus* under which it falls (*animal*) and what the difference (*differentia*) is that defines its species (reason, *ratio*). Moreover, some of the dialectical materials used in the teaching of dialectic were specifically designed to test the essential nature of possible definitions – such as Boethius’s *Topics*.⁸⁹⁹ In definitions pointing towards categories one sees, thus, the most essential way something *is* something, and how it is related to all other beings through sameness

things, see Vives: DA, 95: “sed longius tamen progressis tenebrae obvolvuntur ilico, non a rebus, se a nostris ingeniis, quae gravi hac corporis mole onusta, & tarditate impediuntur, vel nube aliqua interiecta perturbantur, atque hallucinantur. Itaque modus cognitionis lucisque in assequenda veritate, nostrarum est mentium, non rerum.” See also Cicero: “Academica”, ii.iii; Cicero: *Disputationes*, ii.ii-ii.iii.

⁸⁹⁷ Vives: DD, 103: “Quod si homines doces, non erit tibi una, & perpetua demonstratio: aliis enim alia sunt immediata, & prima...”

⁸⁹⁸ Vives: DD, 509-529.

⁸⁹⁹ Aristotle: “Posterior analytics” (trans. Treddenick), 2-261 in Aristotle: *Posterior Analytics, Topica*, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1960, book 2; Jardine 1974, 35-42.

and difference.

Yet the concept of definition was by no means absent from rhetorical tradition. Already in Aristotle's *Topica* and *Rhetoric* definition is said to be one of the *topoi* that can help one to gather material. In the Roman tradition, it is very much present as well: *Ad Herennium*, for instance, uses it as a potential conflict in argument and as a topic through which one can come up with material for one's case.⁹⁰⁰ The merging of the two ideas of definition – essential and rhetorical – is visible in the most widely-read humanist books on dialectic, Agricola's *Inventio dialectica*, Trebizond's *Isagoge Dialectica*, and Caesarius's *Dialectica in decem tractatus digesta*. Agricola, for instance, opens up space for non-essential definitions by arguing that proper *differentia* are hard to find. This is an assertion that leads him to an exhibition of the method of division that can use other properties in its search for suitable definitions.⁹⁰¹ Trebizond, for his part, is very clear about the fact that what he calls a substantial definition is just one of four possible genera, and presents rhetorical possibilities inherent in definition at length.⁹⁰²

Vives is, thus, part of an emergent tradition of rhetoric and humanist dialectic that he most certainly knew very well. He starts with a lengthy presentation of the Aristotelian properties of terms, essence, genus, property, and accident, followed with an interesting exposition around definition and division where little room for essential definitions is left, and thus, distances his whole dialectical programme from Aristotle's *Organon*. It is true that he admits the existence of authentic essential definitions, but continues to argue that essential definitions are, frankly, hard to find: "because of this, essential definitions teach us very little, and are of very little uses to us, and for this reason I think they are rare." He continues to remind the reader that individuals do not possess their proper essential differences in the first instance.⁹⁰³ The sheer lack and uselessness of essential definitions, and their incapacity to teach, (a word that refers to one of the three traditional duties of rhetoric – *docere*), opens up a door for definitions based on interpretation, etymology, metaphor, and analogy – among others.

Following this line of thought, Vives's main constructive point is to show how

⁹⁰⁰ Aristotle: *Rhetoric*, ii.xxviii.8; Aristotle: *Topics*, book 6; *Ad Herennium*, ii.xii; ii.xxvi.

⁹⁰¹ Agricola: *Inventionem dialecticam*, 9-11. For Agricola and definition, see Mack 1993, 151-156.

⁹⁰² Trebizond, George: *Dialectica*, Matthias Schürer, Strasbourg 1509, 133: "Diffinitio est coacte i se atque complicate rei, brevis atque absoluta explicatio. Diffinitiorum quattuor genera: Substantiale, descibens, per partitionem, per divisionem, nam qui plura faciunt, ea connectunt q aut ad hec facile reducunt, aut leviora sunt quam ut diffinitiones appellari possint."

⁹⁰³ Vives: DD, 519-520: "...quo sit ut essentiae diffinitiones parum nos doceant, minimeque sint nobis utiles, ac ea de causa, ut puto, rarae." He does not, however, deny their existence, quite on the contrary.

one can build or invent definitions using division, which takes as its point of departure an appropriate working definition of a thing, drawn naturally from authoritative materials, and divides it to a point where its particular nature is revealed.⁹⁰⁴ By quoting Agricola, Vives works through the word *ius* (law, also right or justice) moving from an initial claim that “*ius* contains certain power of force and order,” to a definition that captures its particular nature, and differentiates it from everything else. He wrote, “*ius* is a decree of a higher power for the preservation of the state of the city (*civitas*), established according to equity and good.”⁹⁰⁵ After the presentation of definition and division Vives describes how, through a number of dialectical topics, one can gather material for definitions and divisions. The point here is that if headings are used in a flexible manner one can draw from a variety of things when building definitions and divisions for a wide range of communicative situations. It is, however, in the very last section – a sort of a collection of general precepts for the use of definitions and divisions – that Vives’s rhetorical aim is most flamboyantly visible. He begins by explaining the relative merits of short and long definitions, uniting them with different *ingenia*, moving then to an openly rhetorical consideration of definition that takes as its point of departure the audience. More specifically, Vives reminds the reader that Cicero defines glory in various ways. In speaking to the people he does it according to the character of the people; but when he addresses the few in his *Tusculanae Disputationes*, he defines it philosophically pointing to the traditional distinction between civic discussions among the wise on the one hand, and a rhetorical speech meant for the masses on the other.⁹⁰⁶

In directing the whole discussion from demonstrative science and certain knowledge to more rhetorical viewpoints, Vives is thinking predominantly in terms of invention in a very Agricolan vein. The possibilities in invention would possibly open up a vast panorama of thinkable definitions since their relationship to any fixed list of categories is left open, the emphasis being on the usefulness of definitions in a range of communicative situations.⁹⁰⁷

⁹⁰⁴ Vives: DD, 521: “Quapropter ad recte diffiniendum, sumendum est de principio non tam genus, quam superius quiddam accomodatum experimendae rei, sive id essentiae sit, sive adhaerentis, sive etiam metaphorae: tum concinnandum, & coarctandum adiunctione inferiorum, dum illud totum quadret, ac fiat proprium...”

⁹⁰⁵ Vives follows Agricola almost word by word here. See Agricola, Rudolph: *De inventione dialectica libri tres*, Johann I Knobloch, Strassbourg 1521, 10-11; Vives: DD, 521-522: “Invenimus primum *ius* vim quondam in se habere cogendi, & iussum [...] est *Ius* est decretum maioris potestatis ad tuendum civitatis statum ex aequo & bono institutum.”

⁹⁰⁶ Vives: DD, 528: “aliterque gloriam finit Cicero agens Caesari gratias pro Marcello restituto, nempe ad populum populariter, quam in Tusculanis quaestionibus Philosophice differens apud paucos.”

⁹⁰⁷ Lisa Jardine has pointed out how John Seton’s *Dialectica* printed in 1570 for the first time makes the same move. See Jardine 1974, 55-57.

Vives, however, thinks that defining is a serious matter indeed, and that in its performance the speaker most clearly exhibits wisdom. Very emphatically, he states that the one going about the business of defining should have knowledge both of the thing he is defining and of all other issues relevant to its division. If this is not the case, a definition is given ignorantly, and error will occur.⁹⁰⁸

Vives's dismantling of definitions that are more rigorous is not meant to be a destabilizing move, but a way to provide the humanist orator with organized access to the totality of knowledge. It is worth remembering that in Vives's mind, the section on definition relates to something outside dialectic where the criteria for definitions, and more generally, the construction of arguments seem to lie; it is primarily a general method of intertextuality. Thus, rather than inventing arguments in a creative vacuum, it points towards existing possibilities of argumentation. Throughout *De disciplinis*, Vives is more than willing to remind the reader that even though dialecticians can analyse propositions and arguments as to their formal and less formal aspects, their ultimate truth is decided by specialists on the matter.⁹⁰⁹ There is, however, a very specific way in which this should be understood, namely that the truthfulness of a definition refers back to all the materials that have an authoritative status on whatever is discussed, and they point towards those commonly-accepted opinions by the wise that served already in Aristotle's work as premises for dialectical reasoning. In some ways, the second part of *De disciplinis*, *De tradendis*, and the entire humanist literature of the early decades of the sixteenth century is about showing exactly who the trustful authorities were, with respect to classical antiquity, Church fathers, and fifteenth- and sixteenth-century humanists themselves.

Taking all of this into consideration, it is in no way surprising that Vives's third part of *De disciplinis* is not an empty presentation of the categories of invention, but always points to specific ways of arguing about these issues since dialectic is supposed to refer back to existing authorities, not to a world of endlessly creative relations. But more importantly, the third part is imbued with examples drawn from civic philosophy, and often uses exactly the kind of examples any reader of humanist social and political thought would recognize as

⁹⁰⁸ Vives: DD, 528-529: "At vero haec quae a nobis psoita sunt omnia percipere ac tenere, quum sit divisuro & diffinituro necessarium, apparet profecto quam sit diffiniendi hoc munus magni viri & excellentis [...] Neque ulla nota alia aeque doctum ab indocto, acrem a tardo distinxeris, ut peritia diffiniendi...."

⁹⁰⁹ Vives: DD, 529: "Instrumentum examinandae veritatis singulis disciplinarum atque atrium idem accommodatur. Nec ullam habet certam materiam rerum, in qua versetur: sicut nec illud alterum & quaerenda probabilitate: adhibetur enim a quoque artifice, dum in materia sua inquirat, quam apte enuntiatum sit ad veritatem expromendam: aut quam recte veritatem per probabilia investigarit." This is a very Agricolan argument, see Cogan 1984, 183-184.

acceptable starting-points for political and social deliberations. All this underlines the importance of dialectic and dialectical invention as a place where the knowledge of civil science is contained and brought to mind, highlighting that the subject matter of civil science plays an important part in dialectical education.

In a paragraph where Vives shows how to build definitions from causes that have nothing to do with traditional Aristotelian definitions, he states, “erudition is acquired through exercise, study, and doctrine.” Later, a reader of Vives would find the following definitions placed very close to one another: “a city (*civitas*) without justice is a reservoir of thieves”; “the greatness of a commonwealth comprises the dignity and importance of its body of citizens”; “honour in the eyes of the people is a place of esteem to which blind chance has elevated some without purpose”; and, “a good prince is the one who does not look after his own interests but those of the people.”⁹¹⁰ Thus, humanist commonplaces are integrated into Vives’s dialectic as examples of generally accepted opinions that have a claim to authoritative and prudent opinions of the wise on these matters, and that can be evoked in different contexts. Dialectic stands, thus, in close relation to everything one has learned in grammar and from the example of good authors. It generalizes rhetorical invention, something that is understandable for Vives’s own rhetorical theory as well, since the multiplication of genres makes particular rhetorical invention grounded in specific genres difficult, and ultimately ineffective.

The reintegration of the *trivium* around dialectic has consequences on a number of fronts. On the one hand, it ties the invention of arguments more closely to the general knowledge of the other sciences, but on the other, this generalization provides the writer more literary means for treating his case. His capacity to connect particular questions to general themes is an old rhetorical dream found in Cicero, which in fact broadens rhetorical possibilities since it allows the writer or the orator to find material and arguments by shifting the focus to the general level.⁹¹¹ Simultaneously, invention that occurs through dialectic – the science of truth – reaffirms that invention is a realm of truth suitable for the truly wise and prudent, which Vives’s curriculum in *De disciplinis* strongly supports. Thus, dialectic should guarantee that wisdom and eloquence truly shake hands.

⁹¹⁰ Vives: DD, 524-526: “...eruditio paratur usu, paratur studio, paratur doctrina.”; “honor popularis est locus dignitatis, quo caeca sors sine delectu evehit”; “civitas sine iustitia est receptaculum latronum.”; “Maiestas reipublicae est in qua continetur dignitas & amplitudo civitatis.”; “bonus princeps est, qui non in cogitatione suorum commodorum, sed publicorum est cunctus.”

⁹¹¹ Cicero: *De oratore*, iii.xxx.120; Quintilian: *Institutio*, iii.v.5-18. In his *De inventione* Cicero did not give importance to general questions, see Cicero: “De inventione”, i.vi.8.

7. *De disciplinis*, Educating men to Concord (and Discord)

Chapter seven looks at *De tradendis disciplinis*, the second part of Vives's *De disciplinis*. The focus is on the tension between concord and discord on different ladders of the educational path, and especially on the introduction of rhetoric and dialectic into school and university context. Vives's hesitance to nurture discord in education is visible in his unusually reserved take on all exercises based on open confrontation, in which the pupil might strive for glory that stems from a victory in a debate and not from the truthfulness of his argument. Consequently, Vives's elementary education suppresses all adversity but introduces major Erasmian commonplaces on politics and good government in a non-adversary mode. Dialectic and rhetoric should be introduced thoroughly only later, possibly at the Faculty of Arts level in universities, but even here Vives's cautiousness vis-à-vis the inherent adversity of the arts shines through. The ultimate aim is to educate men of prudence and concord capable of performing a life of *negotium* in a world of deep discord, where the arts and sciences dealing with persuasion and adversity were needed. In the last section of *De tradendis*, Vives paints a picture of the prudent man his *De disciplinis* is forming for an active life. This prudent man has a complex relation to the *fora* in which his active life should be realized. He can be a counsellor but has to remain detached from the courtly life in which he is operating. Thus, differently from Baldassare Castiglione's courtier, or even from Thomas Elyot's gentleman he is not interiorizing the codes that would make his closeness to power and court life more straightforward, but should remain detached from the corruptive elements of the world of discord in order to guarantee the concord and peace of his own mind.

The Teleological Framework of the Arts

It is hardly a coincidence that the second part of *De disciplinis*, *De tradendis disciplinis*, kicks off with yet another historical analysis of the development of the arts woven together with a more formal explanation of their interrelations. Even though much of the presentation is in accordance with the historical opening of *De causis corruptarum artium*, the presence of an historical analysis guarantees that someone presumably interested only in the more practical

second part of *De disciplinis* would not miss Vives's basic views on the philosophical and ontological status of arts. These could be understood only in relation to their ends – as the Spanish philosopher argues repeatedly. True, separate arts have their respective ends according to which their precepts and utility can be judged, but all arts are ultimately brought together in a union with God, a fact that has some fundamental implications to the assessment of individual arts and to the concept of utility attributed to them.⁹¹²

The highest echelon of manly existence is a union with God in love, piety, and sacred wisdom, a union that has to be the yardstick for all other arts and disciplines. In an emphatic fashion, Vives declares:

“Wisdom should be the canon for the rest of education, just like God is for the spirit, and man for other living beings, so that disciplines are considered disciplines in so far as they correspond to this norm in their subject-matter, in their – or our – final cause, in their teachers, in their teaching method and results.”⁹¹³

What follows is a list of practices that have a claim to the status of an art, but fail to qualify for true disciplines and arts because they stand in contradiction to piety and wisdom. This is a major point for Vives since the impiety of the ends posited by different traditions and judgements have been the source of the production of harmful and ultimately diverse interpretations of the true ends of arts, as he writes with concern. Thus, different traditions have understood the utility of an art in relation to pleasure or some other corporeal urge without truly grasping the God-like nature of man as the nucleus that fixes all other knowledge. This, ultimately, represents the separation of knowledge into schools that can be brought together only if men capable of judging rightly and prudently can decide about the true ends of the arts.⁹¹⁴ All this has some implications for the interpretation of some arts traditionally considered branches of civil science, as well as to everything related to warfare. Vives wants to underline that even though these arts could provide information and tools within the question posed, the mere fact that the question is asked is against the basic finalities of all wisdom.⁹¹⁵ Thus, their

⁹¹² Vives: DD, 220-235.

⁹¹³ Vives: DD, 232: “Hanc (*sapientia*) oportet esse reliquarum institutionum canonem, sicut Deum spirituum, & hominem animantium: ut tales quaeque censeantur disciplinae, quatenus huic materia, fine suo vel nostro, praecceptoribus, discendi ratione, et exitu congruunt, aut non congruunt. Pietati nulla est ex se materies contraria, nulla cognitio.”

⁹¹⁴ Vives: DD, 229-231, 235.

⁹¹⁵ Vives: DD, 233: “Nocet pietati cognitionis scopus, ut in artibus, quae ad laedendos homines sunt paratae: de

utility simply is not utility at all if it is approached in relation to the ultimate ends of man.

Vives's emphasis here is, however, firmly on the arts of prudence related to human interaction on various levels, not on contemplative sciences and disciplines, and the idea that wisdom has to be turned into a social imperative to help others is present throughout *De disciplinis*. Moreover, and highlighting the continuum of arts following the logic of *telos*, Vives argues in a section dedicated to prudence for a close union of practical wisdom and piety. Like all Renaissance thought, Vives considered prudence the guiding principle of all human interaction. It was a concept in which virtue and knowledge are closely tied together in an attempt to assess the right course of thinking and action in each particular case; here wisdom (*sapientia*) rubs shoulders with contextual requirements. In *De disciplinis*, Vives strongly subjugates all prudential action to wisdom or piety that represents the highest form of knowledge of the ultimate ends a man can have.⁹¹⁶ The message is clear: it makes sense to talk about prudential action or prudential judgement only if the contextual elements and the nature of the action are considered with respect to the ultimate ends of man, since prudence is essentially about moulding and communicating wisdom (*sapientia*) to the particularities of each situation. Thus, even if prudence is indeed the “the skill to accommodate everything we use in life for places, times, persons, and human occupations,” in order for it not to turn into guile of the flesh, it has to go together with right judgement and appreciation of the *telos* of man.⁹¹⁷ Thus, the basic idea of Vives's first philosophy, a teleological framework of natural harmony wounded by original sin is woven into an educational framework in a way that strongly emphasizes the union of piety, truth and moral virtues as a gateway back to concord.⁹¹⁸ *Sapientia* and *prudentia* are intrinsically tied together, the world of contingency and opinion are never disentangled from the fixed world of *telos*, and the man of *negotium* is always communicating concord in a world of discord.

quo genere sunt philtrea, incantationes, & disciplinae militaris ea pars, quae ad vim hominibus & cladem inferendam pertinet: & tota confectio machinarum belli: reliquae etiam artes malae, quia maleficae. Iam fines nostri impii sunt, quum ea gratia discimus, ut laedamus.”

⁹¹⁶ Vives: DD, 353: “...in rebus divinis pietas, quae qui sit Deus docet, & quemadmodum nos adversus illum decet gerere: eamque unam vere ac maxime proprie sapientiam nominarunt: de qua non est hic dicendi locus, curam sibi peculiarem tanta res postulat...” In his *De anima* Vives argues on numerous occasions that man still has the seeds to know what is naturally good. See Vives: DA, 58: “Oblivisci etiam dicimur eorum, quae a natura ipsa accepimus, quum de primis illis & naturalibus informationibus dubitamus, quae evidentissimae et certissimae veritates nuncupantur, perinde est enim, ac si eas aliquando didicerimus naturae institutione.”

⁹¹⁷ Vives: DD, 353: “Prudentia vero peritia est accomodandi omnia, quis in vita utimur, locis, temporibus, personis, negotiis: haec est moderatrix & clavus in affectionum tempestate.” Otherwise it is prudence of the body: Vives: DD, 354: “una pars (*prudentiae*) eo spectat, quum prudentia ad corporis & affectuum libidinem confert omnia, ut quicquid sive iudicii paravit, sive usus rerum ad voluptates, honores, opes, potentiam solerter convertat....”

⁹¹⁸ Noreña 1989, 76-77, 102-103.

Education in the early sixteenth Century

Resulting from widespread interest in Renaissance education, the pedagogical and social significance of the change in educational structures has been assessed. The central place of education in practically all humanist agendas is beyond doubt, and the changes it introduced to schools and universities touched upon both internal questions of education and pedagogy, as well as its social extension and meaning. For social and political concord, the social extension of different forms of education is more than of anecdotal interest since the reach of central concepts such as the multitude and the wise is tied to what part of population elementary and university education could encompass. What are ultimately at stake are the social and civic implications of Vives's propositions in *De disciplinis*.

Different ways of organizing elementary schooling existed in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Europe, ranging from municipal and private schools based on student fees to church organized institutions of elementary learning.⁹¹⁹ In addition to these, by the early sixteenth century, the amount of private, more practically orientated schools for merchants imparting education either in Dutch or in French, was steadily increasing in the Habsburg Netherlands.⁹²⁰ The bulk of education happened, however, in Latin schools that were more and more frequently publicly administered, although the importance of monasteries as centres of education had not completely disappeared.⁹²¹ The institutions run by the Brethren of Common Life, the crown jewels of fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century elementary education, had not lost their importance, and in some cases represented locally the most elaborate form of Latin teaching in the humanist mould when Vives composed his *De disciplinis*.⁹²²

That education was becoming increasingly widespread in the Low Countries in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is beyond all doubt, and the high level of literacy and learning was widely recognised even by sixteenth-century contemporaries.⁹²³ Moreover, the urban and civic setting, combined with economic prosperity, unrivalled in all Europe – with the possible exception of Italy – created optimal circumstances, as well as a need for educated citizens and merchants who could, in different roles, serve the community. It is hardly surprising

⁹¹⁹ Grendler 2006, viii, 6-7.

⁹²⁰ Goudriaan – van Moolenbroek – Tervoort 2003, 4.

⁹²¹ Goudriaan – van Moolenbroek – Tervoort 2003, 3-5.

⁹²² Post 1968, 553-565.

⁹²³ Goudriaan – van Moolenbroek – Tervoort 2003, 3-4.

then that education in the elementary level was common in the Low Countries, covering a significant number of the urban population. Moreover, it is well known that some tendencies of humanist learning were creeping into the curricula of grammar and Latin schools – many traditional schools run by the Brethren of Common Life being receptive to new influences – and also that the process was fostered by local humanist circles.⁹²⁴ The fact that elementary education had taken clear steps towards a more humanistically minded curriculum is equally perceivable in the development of some of the schools providing towns with elementary education.⁹²⁵ The prevalence of schools was, of course, not only a Dutch phenomenon: many parts of Europe witnessed a significant increase in elementary education throughout the sixteenth century. In England, where Vives had taught in the 1520s, there were about 360 grammar schools in 1575, and France experienced a rapid expansion of its schooling system in the course of the sixteenth century.⁹²⁶ Thus, the proposals of *De disciplinis* dedicated to the King of Portugal were applicable to other European contexts as well.

Despite the general nature of Vives's proposal that do not link a specific scheme of studies to a fixed level or class, many Dutch elementary schools had had fairly structured learning paths based on classes. The famous schools in Deventer and Zwolle both had nine classes, the first two of which were dedicated to very elementary exercises. From class seven to three (the numbering ran downwards), one was educated in Latin through different grammar exercises, and introduced to the basics of the *quadrivium*, dialectic, philosophy, and increasingly to *ars eloquentiae* together with some Greek. In classes two and one, found only in the minority of educational institutions, one was further instructed in philosophy, and possibly law, geometry, and in some cases even theology. These two higher classes already partly coincided with the kind of education one would acquire in the Faculties of Arts at the university level.⁹²⁷ Johannes Sturm, one of the most influential reformed educational writers – who had studied in the Low Countries – based his model of different classes essentially on his Dutch experience. In doing this, he gave pronounced importance to the study of classics, and especially to the art of rhetoric.⁹²⁸

⁹²⁴ Goudriaan 2003, 168-172; Post 1968, 553-567.

⁹²⁵ Koenigsberger 2001, 19-22, 132-140.

⁹²⁶ Vickers 1988, 257; Huppert 1977, 61-65.

⁹²⁷ Post 1968, 561-563.

⁹²⁸ Sturm, Johannes: "The Advice of Johann Sturm on What Organization to give to the Gymnasium of Strasbourg", in Spitz, Lewis – Barbara Tinsley: *Johannes Sturm on Education*, Concordia Pub. House, St Louis, 1995, 61-62. The overwhelming importance given to rhetoric happens especially in 1538 *De literarum ludis recte aperiendis* (Strasbourg, Wendelin I Rihel)

The fact that the Burgundian Netherlands boasted a single university, Louvain, in the first decades of the sixteenth century, should not lead one to believe that Louvain was the only institution providing the Burgundian Netherlands with higher education. It is well known that both the universities of Cologne and Paris, as well as Orleans in the case of legal studies, were regularly used by the inhabitants of the Dutch provinces, and that by the early sixteenth century the number of people going to Italian universities had to be counted in hundreds.⁹²⁹ Although a person with a university education could make a career in a variety of functions ranging from the Catholic Church to academic and scholarly settings, many of the people employed in the highest echelons of civic life were university graduates, and in regional councils for example, people with university education were becoming increasingly numerous. In the Council of Brabant, for instance, the number of university-trained people rose from 40 per cent in the late fifteenth century to practically 100 percent in the later sixteenth century, and the same trend is noticeable in the Council of Flanders. What is more, most of the people employed by the councils were experts in law – a career that became, in some cases, a formal requirement for certain offices.⁹³⁰ Thus, the people in charge of politics, spiritual life, and education in the Burgundian Netherlands in central and regional administration were the ones university education was catering for.⁹³¹

Consequently, Vives's idea of an extended educational system – promoted by a number of humanists as founders of schools – was not only a humanist dream but also an ongoing process that at an increasing pace was turning into reality in different European contexts when Vives composed his *De disciplinis*. The humanist ideal of a large network of schools targeted to a significant number of people was shared by many. Already Erasmus, in his *De pueris statim ac liberaliter instituendis*, was clearly referring to a potentially large audience by arguing in the opening sentence, meant as an exhortation for the reader, to adopt studies of liberal arts: “if you listen to me [...] you will have your child instructed in humanities.”⁹³² Although Erasmus's *De pueris* is effectively framed as a treatise for, “a philosopher, for the navigator of the commonwealth,” the Dutch humanist still reminds the reader that even though not everyone becomes a prince, everyone should be educated for that

⁹²⁹ Tervoort 2005.

⁹³⁰ Damen 2003, 51-52, 4.297-298; Ridder-Symoens 1981, 293-296; Ridder-Symoens 1996; Zijlstra 2003, 297-298.

⁹³¹ Tervoort offers statistics of the careers of those coming from the northern Netherlands who studied in Italian universities. See Tervoort 2005, 381-407.

⁹³² Erasmus: *De pueris*, 4: “si me quidem audies [...] infantem tuum illico bonis literis instituendum curabis....”

purpose.⁹³³ Underlying all this was the close connection Erasmus made between vice, ignorance, and discord: it was only through education and learning that piety could be cultivated, and one's potentiality for social life realized. Erasmus was not alone in his demand: the preceptor of Germany, Melanchthon, also promoted learning as the fundamental antidote to ignorance and vice.⁹³⁴ In doing this, both tried to unite the civic and moral philosophy of classical knowledge with the Christian education of a relatively large population. The ideal of extensive education is at the heart of *De disciplinis*, which calls for a school to be established in every town, and a university to be founded in every province.⁹³⁵ The ideal of raising prudent men for political life most certainly had a distinctive meaning in the context of Flanders – with its civic traditions – where even guilds representing common workers had played a role in the administration of common affairs. They held a strong sense of their own rights and were more than willing to make that known.⁹³⁶

Basic Conceptual Framework for Understanding Pedagogy

The conceptual foundation for schooling lay with the claim that education contributed to the building of a virtuous character; it was what ultimately turned the pupil into a civilized creature. Many northern humanists were capable of linking the call for character to piety. Vives dedicated a significant passage to explaining the relationship between piety and studies in *De disciplinis*.⁹³⁷ Johannes Sturm also affirmed that the main goal of study was piety. But the fact that many treatises affirmed the importance of piety should by no means be interpreted as a call for an education based primarily on religious or pious materials. Vives's *De tradendis disciplinis*, – just like Erasmus's *De ratione studii* – is pronouncedly classical in its outlook, and Johannes Sturm even openly admitted that he had written nothing about sacred literature before dedicating only a very short section to it.⁹³⁸ The absence of religious materials mirrored

⁹³³ Erasmus: *De pueris*, 28, 38: “Nec enim athleticam fingimus, sed philosophum, sed Reipublicae gubernatorem...”; “Quid quod non pauci ex humili loco vocantur ad principatum, interdum & ad summum pontificiae dignitatis culmen. Non omnes huc euadunt, tamen omnes huc educandi sunt.”

⁹³⁴ Melanchthon, Philipp: *Oratio de philosophia studioso theologiae necessaria*, Helmstedt, Jakob II Lucius, 1600, A3.

⁹³⁵ Vives: DD, 248, 259: “Statuatur in unaquaque provincia Academia communis illius...”; “Constituatur in quaque civitate ludus literarius...”

⁹³⁶ Blockmans – Prevenier 1999, 215; Tracy 1990, 20; Tracy 2002, 70-71; Koenigsberger 2001, 42-72.

⁹³⁷ See especially the first book of *De Tradendis*, Vives: DD, 220-246.

⁹³⁸ Sturm: *De literarum*, 25. For the overwhelming importance of classical literature for Sturm, see Spitz – Tinsley 1995, 45.

some of the most widely read Italian educational treatises. A recurrent feature of all the famous Italian educational materials of the fifteenth century, with the partial exception of Leonardo Bruni's *De studiis* destined to a noble woman, was the nearly complete absence of religious materials. True, Pier Paolo Vergerio reminded the reader that "it is proper for a well-educated youth to respect and practice religion and to be steeped in religious belief from his earliest youth." However, he did not provide much information on how the presence of religion in the school context should be arranged.⁹³⁹

Moreover, Vives's *De disciplinis* was, among other things, a reaction to a certain educational paradigm that strove for piety that he was very familiar. As is well known, Vives most likely had first-hand experience of the model practiced in Collège de Montaigu, which put forward a very particular mode of educating teenagers and youngsters in virtue. On a purely conceptual level, the goals of Montaigu, heavily criticised by both Erasmus and Vives, are not completely different from Vives's; ideally both want to educate people to virtue, humility, apostolic spirit and inner piety.⁹⁴⁰ Yet there are almost no traces of any practice of inner piety ascribed to Montaigu in any of Vives's actual pedagogical works. Strict daily routine, organized religious exercise, public confessions, students surveying the morality of one another, among other pedagogical features of Montaigu, are completely absent from all ladders of Vives's educational programme. This, of course, was firmly in line with the general humanist understanding of the shortcomings of late medieval pedagogical models found not only in Montaigu, which are described as being based on punishment and fear.⁹⁴¹ Moreover, Vives not only denounced the method of teaching of Montaigu. The absence of religious materials was also a reaction to a pedagogical tradition of not only Montaigu, but also a whole tradition of medieval schooling found in the Low Countries. By the early sixteenth century, many schools had become receptive to currents of humanist learning, but Erasmus's teacher Alardus – who had studied in the famous school of Deventer influenced by *Devotio* – was still trained by the Bible, the Church fathers, and *De imitatione Christi* by Thomas Kempis. Both Erasmus and Vives, whose understanding of virtue and character is more directed to society and active life, explicitly denounced the pedagogical method of this tradition, and cut almost all literature nurturing mystical inner spirituality out of their own school curricula.⁹⁴²

⁹³⁹ Vergerio: "De ingenuis", 24: "Ante omnia vero debet bene institutum adulescentem rei divinae curam respicumque non neglegere eaque opinione imbui ab ineunte aetate."

⁹⁴⁰ Godet 1912, 43-51.

⁹⁴¹ Erasmus's teacher Alardus, for example, complains of this in 1524. See Tilmans 1992, 13-14.

⁹⁴² Tilmans 1992, 15.

However, the materials that had inspired Vives, namely the classical and humanist traditions, also widely claimed that they contributed to the development of character and virtue. As the well-known pseudo-Plutarchian *De liberis educandis* (*On the Education of Children*) announced in the very first sentence, “let us consider what may be said of the education of free-born children, and what advantages they should enjoy to give them a sound character when they grow up.”⁹⁴³ In understanding the kind of a character humanist education strove to form, it is important to remember that all pedagogical materials emphasized that the right context for exhibiting character was an active life in the service of the community. They explicitly aspire to form men capable of uniting wisdom with literary studies and eloquence useful for the community at large. As Erasmus’s *De ratione studii* declared, “a person not skilled in the force of languages” is “unbalanced in his judgement of things as well.”⁹⁴⁴ Thus, the character and habits of those educated should be suitable for the performance of the virtues needed in human interaction and civic life using language.⁹⁴⁵ Moreover, all educational materials judged optimistically the possibilities of *studia humanitatis* to mould character and judgement to perform the tasks of active life.

Despite of the fact that character-formation was possibly present in all aspects of education, some subjects were generally acknowledged to be of special importance, and most authors agreed that moral philosophy was the basic tool for this task. As one could read in the pseudo-Plutarchian *De liberis educandis*, a child “should honour philosophy above all else,” since, “with philosophy it is possible to attain knowledge of what is honourable and what is shameful, what is just and what is unjust, what, in brief, is to be chosen and what to be avoided.” Vergerio in his *De studiis* argued that “through philosophy we can acquire correct views.”⁹⁴⁶

⁹⁴³ Plutarch: “De liberis educandis”, 1. In what follows I will not try to answer the question of to what extent Renaissance education was capable of achieving its self-proclaimed ends as to character formation but focus on the self-interpretation of the tradition. As Jardine and Grafton claim humanist educational practices, tedious, repetitive and technical in nature, could in no way achieve what highly eloquent humanists themselves proclaimed. More specifically, they did not have any practical educational theory or tools to cultivate the ideal of a union of character and civic wisdom so cried for. This view has been countered by a number of scholars. Brian Vickers saw the Renaissance as the period in which the totality of rhetoric as civic practice was regained both in theory, practice and education. Recently, Paul F. Grendler has explicitly countered Jardine’s and Grafton’s main thesis by arguing that moral *sententiae* and commonplaces formed an important part of education and that this commonplace method did indeed produce men capable of living up to the standards demanded by the society of the time. Vickers 1988, 254-293; Grendler 1991, 407-408.

⁹⁴⁴ Erasmus: *De ratione studii*, ii: “...qui sermonis vim non calleat, is passim in rerum quoque iudicio caecuciat, hallucinetur, deliret necesse est.” (English translation from Erasmus: *Literary and Educational Writings*, vol. 2, Collected Works of Erasmus 24 [ed. Thompson], Toronto University Press, Toronto 1978, 666).

⁹⁴⁵ Monfasani 1976, 241-242; Vasoli 1968; Nauert 1990; Jardine 1974.

⁹⁴⁶ Plutarch: “De liberis educandis”, 10; Vergerio: “De ingenuis”, 2002, 48: “Pre philosophiam quidem possumus recte sentire quod est in omni re primum.”

How exactly moral philosophy would be taught was not always explicitly spelled out but many authors saw a close connection between short moral sentences of different kind and the building of character. Quintilian in his *Institutio* claimed that the development of virtue and character should form an integral part of the education of the orator, and connected the idea to aphorisms and sentences that served as potential building blocks of a virtuous person.⁹⁴⁷ Much in the same vein, Isocrates in the widely read *Epistola ad Demonicum*, argued that moral education should be about the development and acquisition of good character and virtue and that this should primarily be done using moral maxims described as the exercise of the soul.⁹⁴⁸ One further subject that was widely linked to the gathering of worthy examples of virtuous conduct and the teaching of prudence was history. As Vergerio argued, history was the place where moral philosophy and oratory shook hands, since it taught both correct views as well as how to effectively win over the minds of the people.⁹⁴⁹

But character was not formed only through the right combination of selective readings of classical tradition in Vives's *De disciplinis*. Both Vives and Erasmus were quite clear that not only is the modality and context of teaching in which schooling takes place of utmost importance, but that the totality of relations in which character is formed plays a role. Erasmus's *De pueris* and Vives's *De disciplinis* both underline heavily the importance of the private sphere as a place where the early formation of character, manners, civility and urbanity, of utmost important in Erasmus's thinking, should take place. Moreover, they both highlight the importance of creating a certain atmosphere of love, trust, and comfort in the family, school and ultimately the whole life, for the character to develop. In the school context, it is the exercise of love and understanding not fear and punishment that nurtures the interest and diligence of the pupil. Simultaneously, this surrounds the child and youngster prone to imitation, with living examples of virtuous conduct. As Vives wrote in his *De disciplinis*: "with this respect, children

⁹⁴⁷ Quintilian: IO, xii.ii.1: "Quando igitur orator est vir bonus, is autem citra virtutem intellegi non potest, virtus, etiam si quosdam si impetus ex natura sumit, tamen perficienda doctrina est: mores ante omnia oratori studiis erunt excolendi atque omnis honesti iustique disciplina pertractanda, sine qua nemo nec vir bonus esse nec dicendi peritus potest." Already in the preface Quintilian underlines the union of character and eloquence, see Quintilian: IO.preface.9: "Oratorem autem instituimus illum perfectum, qui esse nis vir bonus non potest, ideoque non dicendi modo exmiam in eo facultatem sed omnis animi virtutes exigimus."; Quintilian: IO, i.i.35: "...ii quoque versus qui ad imitationem scribendi proponentur non otiosas velim sententias habeant, sed honestum aliquid monentis. Prosequitu haec memoria in senectutem et inpressa animo rudi usque ad mores proficiet."

⁹⁴⁸ Isocrates: "Epistola ad Demonicum", in Isocrates: *Praecepta Isocratis per eruditissimum virum Rudolphum agricolam Graeco sermone in Latinum traducta*, Johann Rhau-Grunenberg, Wittenberg 1508: the first four pages, quote from the last: "...ut animum quispiam taliter formet nisi multi ante honestis praeceptis fuerit expletus. Corpus namque moderatis laboribus; animus vero actionibus honestis roboratur." Vives's *De ratione studii* also mentions these kinds of short sentences as an antidote to bad things, Vives: "De ratione studii puerilis", 54.

⁹⁴⁹ Vergerio: "De ingenuis", 49.

are monkeys in nature, they imitate everything at all times, and especially those who have authority over them and whom they trust, they consider to be worthy of imitation – such as parents, nurses, teachers, and pedagogues.”⁹⁵⁰

Many humanist materials seem to take a strikingly optimistic view on the possibilities of combining piety and the kind of character needed in action and in public life. Italian *quattrocento* materials, Erasmus’s *De ratione studii* and Johannes Sturm’s *De literarum ludis recte aperiendis*, for instance, adopt quite clearly the civic and oratorical ideal of classical materials, embracing exercises that introduce the pupil to the treatment of truly rhetorical themes. The kind of character developed here is one that thrives in difference of opinion, competition, and the kind of glory that follows from a successful performance in a debate. In addition to humanist materials, confrontation, dispute, and debate had been in the very heart of many of the schools run by Brethren of the Common Life, where advancement was ultimately based on competition.⁹⁵¹ However, contrary to the bulk of humanist educational materials, Vives’s *De disciplinis* takes a rather ambivalent view on the tradition of humanist education. This tradition underlined the fact that education should form men capable of oratory in a world of discord and competition – true emperors of men’s minds exemplified by the most explicit reference point of *De disciplinis*, Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria*’s Book XII.⁹⁵²

There are naturally some obvious conceptual tensions between aiming at self-governance, the control of passion, and inner peace found throughout Vives’s social and political writings on the one hand, and the civic model of educational materials on the other. For to embrace passion and conflict is explicitly linked to the kind of dynamics that nurture discord in all Vives’s social and political texts. As Vives argued in his *De comunione rerum*, discord in opinion led to social discord in all aspects of life, implying that the cost of uncontrollable intellectual disagreement was not merely rational or doctrinal error, but ultimately social and political violence.⁹⁵³ Consequently, enhancing concord in the school context leads to a great distaste for all exercises implying confrontation as Vives made perfectly

⁹⁵⁰ Vives: DD, 254: “Ad haec sunt pueri naturaliter simii, imitant omnia & semper, eos praecipue quos propter auctoritatem & quam illis habent fidem dignos imitatione iudicant, ut parentes, nutricios, magistros, paedagogos.” Erasmus heavily emphasized this in his *De pueris*, see for instance Erasmus: *De pueris*, 15.

⁹⁵¹ Scaglione 1986, 13-14.

⁹⁵² Vives knew well and explicitly reflected on the fact that the point of departure of rhetoric and much of dialectic was confrontation. See for instance Vives: DD, 324: “Utraque ars & dialectica & rhetorica rixosa ex se est, ad contentionem ac pervicaciam proclivis, ideo rixoso & contentioso ingenio neganda: item suspicaci in peius, omnia enim illuc detorquebit: affert etiam utramque ars malitiae plurimum, idcirco nec malitiosum ingenium, & ad fraudem faciendam paratum instrui illis conveniet.”

⁹⁵³ Vives: “De comunione rerum”, A3: “Ex dissensione opinionum ventum est ad dissidium vitae....”

clear not only in *De disciplinis* but also in a number of other texts.⁹⁵⁴ Different from earlier humanist tradition, one finds a problematization of two interrelated issues in the educational *De tradendis*. First, *De tradendis* takes a pronouncedly suspicious stance on all exercises based on confrontation, such as disputations. This is not merely a critique of formal scholastic disputations so typical of all humanist literature, but an attitude that is targeted towards all exercises that nurture confrontation. Secondly and closely connected to the first point, Vives's *De disciplinis* takes a much more cautious attitude towards the side of rhetoric and dialectic that creates debate, cutting out the development of truly oratorical themes from elementary education. But this world of relative harmony and concord found on the elementary level is contrasted to higher education, which, despite all Vives's hesitance, openly prepares men to an active life in a world of discord and strife. If discord was introduced earlier, the delicate balance between wisdom and prudence guaranteeing concord would potentially be threatened. Like in *De causis*, this aristocratic tenet, as to the introduction of difference of opinion, is a way of defending the union of rhetoric and prudence, eloquence and wisdom.

Elementary Education, Realm of Concord

Even though Vives's *De tradendis* rested on classical grounds in its reliance on the ethical possibilities of moral aphorisms and proverbs as guardians the soul, his very first advice for the school context incorporates the basic ideas of Christianity to this method. Thus, if the knowledge of oneself, related to the knowledge of God, was ontologically the first step towards good and virtuous education in general, the cognition of this would constitute the very first task for a young pupil in his path to learning in the form of Vives's own *Introductio ad sapientiam*, according to Vives's precepts for the teacher. When Vives writes that "let the pupil come to the lecture of the pagans," he still reminds them that as an antidote they should remember:

"Through piety man is united to God, it is God who has taught him that what man has contrived is full of error, and what goes against piety is borne out of human vanity, and of the deceitful nature of the Devil, the most skilful of enemies. In general, these should be inculcated without explanations."⁹⁵⁵

⁹⁵⁴ Vives: DP, C5: "Iam ardor ille & impetus iuvenilis animi, non est discordiae stimulus pungendus, id est, quod Pythagoras aenigmate inquit, non addendus igni gladius, quam aetatem magis convenit coerceri ac refrenari...."

⁹⁵⁵ Vives: DD, 291: "Veniat iam ad lectionem gentilium, tanquam in agros venenis infames praemunitus antidoto,

Moreover, in another passage, Vives wrote that “whoever the authors explained are, the pupils will listen once or twice every week to something about morals, which will cure their vices – driving them away – so that they do not invade the pupil and grow more powerful.”⁹⁵⁶

Nevertheless, despite the early religious *ethos*, the syllabus of elementary education was overwhelmingly based on the authors of classical antiquity, and focused on the arts of *prudentia*. In a truly humanist fashion, Vives strongly promotes the study of Greek, and in a slightly more reserved fashion recommends the study of Hebrew and Arabic to divulge the message of Christ. Yet if only one language was to be studied, it certainly had to be Latin. Although a thoroughly conventional choice, the fact that there has to be one language that preferably brings all nations together is an important point for Vives to whom the multiplicity of languages in itself is a postlapsarian fact – a sign of a breakdown of concord. Thus, language, and especially Latin is not only the place where wisdom and erudition lie but a fundamental instrument of human association and concord that could potentially encompass the entire world, or at least the Christian Europe, as the Spaniard points out.⁹⁵⁷ This strong defence of Latin as the language of wisdom happens, of course, in a moment in which the Reformation and the nascent vernacular culture were posing a challenge to it. The Latin wisdom presented in *De disciplinis* is pronouncedly classical; the curriculum and materials presented are predominantly focused on the classical authors of Latin, and to a lesser extent Greek, and the potential theological importance of the Biblical languages for the study of the Bible is not systematically pursued.

Vives is clear that the first stage of grammar education, covering the years between seven and fifteen, would be mainly about the acquisition of language skills so that everyone would “engage with those things in life that are common to all [...] and of which no-

per pietatem homines iungi Deo: eam esse a Deo traditam, quae homines excogitarint, plena esse erroribus: quae contra pietatem sint, ex vanitate hominum orta esse & imposturis diaboli ostis vaferrimi: hoc sufficet in genere absque explicatione.” The path of *In sapientiam* is visible here Vives: DD, 266: “Omnibus initio statim fundamenta sunt tradenda pietatis nostrae, ut noscat se, quam est infirmus, & pronitate naturae malus: ut nihil nec sit, nec potest, nec valet nisi ope Dei: illum implorandum crebro & bona fide: nec speret se quicquam omnino assecuturum absque eius auxilio. Quanta sit caecitas, & fraus in animis vulgi iudicantis de bonis ac rerum aestimatione. Integrae opiniones in vacuum pectus instillindae. Nos inimicos Dei illi esse per crucem filii eius. Deum ut potentem metuat, ut conscium vereatur, ut datorem ac beneficum amet.”

⁹⁵⁶ Vives: DD, 300: “sed quicunque autores enarrabuntur, semel atque iterum per hebdomades singulas de moribus audient nonnulla, quae vitiis auditorum medeantur, vel ut pellantur, vel ut ne invadant atque invalescant.”

⁹⁵⁷ Vives: DD, 272-274.

one is free because of age, condition, or profession.” He rules out explicitly, “the causes of natural phenomena, medicine, laws, civil law, and mathematics,” which should be left for later stages.⁹⁵⁸ More specifically, pupils should “start with light things that every age group can handle – such as games. Gradually one should advance towards bigger themes, such as the home and the whole household, clothes, food, time, horses, boats, temples, skies, animals, plants, the city, and the commonwealth.”⁹⁵⁹ What Vives is describing here is, thus, the curriculum of Latin schools.

In a concise manner, Vives’s own *Schoolboy Dialogues* present exercises on just these themes. This work, published for the first time in 1538, presented a collection of 25 dialogues on a variety of themes ranging from everyday situations to questions of princely rule, focusing on a conscious development of vocabulary together with the teaching of virtuous manners, viewpoints, and sentences. They also present views on the city, the commonwealth, and good government more generally, and in the dialogues, Vives weaves very Erasmian political insights into the larger framework of the schoolbook. The most glaring examples are dialogues 19 (*Royal Palace*) and 20 (*The Prince*), which present views on good government, counselling, and ethical demands of self-governance of those who rule in the form of very short dialogues. In these dialogues, the defence of the sensible and reasonable point is united with one of the characters – easily discernible for the most part as embodying the role of a prudent counsellor, master, or the wise.⁹⁶⁰ What is significant though is that all this is incorporated into a mode discussion that heavily underlines their consensual nature: all the dialogues aspire and lead to concord, even when the subject matter itself might contain polemical elements. Thus, the basic tension is that between a moral teacher and the pupil who is learning, not between two potentially conflicting opinions.⁹⁶¹ The final dialogue on precepts of education between Budé

⁹⁵⁸ Vives: DD, 297: “...magis versabitur iis, quae sunt vitae communia, quibus nulla aetas, nulla conditio, nulla professio eximitur: qualia sunt fere, quae modo connumerabam.”; “...ut de causis rerum naturae, de medicamentis, de legibus, & iure civili, de quantitibus mathematicis: relinquet haec, atque eiusmodi suis quaque artificibus, magis versabitur in iis, quae sunt vitae communia, quibus nulla aetas, nulla conditio, nulla professio eximitur....”

⁹⁵⁹ Vives: DD, 297: “...quorum primordia erunt a levibus, quaeque aetas illa facile sustineat, utpote a lusionibus: sensim ad maiora procedetur de domo, & tota supellectili, de vestimentis, de cibis, de tempore, de equo & navi, de templis, de coelis, animantibus, stirpibus, de civitate & republica...” Earlier in referring to the themes of elementary education Vives had also made similar remarks, see Vives: DD, 276: “Quibus incipiat aperiri philologia, id est cognitio aliqua rerum: nempe temporum, locorum, historiae, fabulae, proverbiorum, sententiarum, apophthegmatum, rei domesticae, rei rusticae: gustus etiam quidam civilis ac publicae, quae omnia maximam illorum ingeniis lucem inferent.”

⁹⁶⁰ In the dialogue 19 it is Sofronius and in the dialogue 20 Sofobolus.

⁹⁶¹ The reception of the dialogues in the sixteenth century underlined their moral nature, see Mahlmann-Bauer 2008, 356-360. The consensual nature of Vives’s dialogues vis-à-vis Erasmus’s more polemical works is well-known, see González González 1999, 65.

and Grympherantes is quite revealing; Grympherantes embodies what a schoolboy should have learnt in school, and is questioned by the famous French humanist. In a serious tone, Grympherantes presents the fruits of education, emphasizing greatly manners and obedience to authority under Budé's questions. When the French humanist implies that "unworthy men" occupy important offices, and asks if they should be honoured, Grympherantes answers by claiming that this was a possibility his teacher did not ignore, but that children of his age were not allowed to pronounce judgement on the matter because they had not acquired sufficient wisdom.⁹⁶² Under further inquiry about what happens to obedience, "if laws and customs are bad, unjust, and tyrannical," Grympherantes reiterates his earlier position that schoolboys should not judge on the matter.⁹⁶³ Thus, humanist commonplaces are introduced but not debated, and strong respect for the opinion of the wise is called for.

Firmly in line with the humanist tradition, Vives's *De disciplinis* never discusses the acquisition of Greek and Latin as a mere question of language, or as a medium of communication, but as containing in itself the knowledge, memory, and commonplaces of a culture that can incorporate classical and Erasmian wisdom.⁹⁶⁴ Furthermore, he is always ready to emphasize, using a typically humanist commonplace, that an education in languages enhances judgement, referring among other things to a more general notion of language as a gateway to an ancient and forgotten fountain of knowledge.⁹⁶⁵ In addition to Vives's own *Dialogues*, what he had in mind is exemplified by encyclopaedic writers or philologues, "who treat simultaneously historical themes, fables, oratory and philosophy." One example of this could be Erasmus's *Adagia*, explicitly evoked in *De disciplinis*. In short, the claim to knowledge acquisition and the development of character that runs parallel with linguistic and compositional skills emanates partly from the selected readings and materials of the teacher, and from the sentences, fables and commonplaces learned and memorized.⁹⁶⁶

⁹⁶² Vives, Juan Luis: *Familiarium colloquiorum formulae, sive linguae Latinae exercitatio*, Guilielmus Montanus, Antwerpen 1539, 123: "Sed dic mihi, an non sunt multi ad dignitatem evecti homines indignissimi velut sacerdotes non respondententes tanto titulo & magistratus pravi, & senes stulti ac deliri?"

⁹⁶³ Vives: *Exercitatio*, 125: "Quid si sunt leges aut mores pravi, iniqui, tyrannici?"

⁹⁶⁴ In the case of Greek he emphasizes this heavily, Vives: DD, 274: "Quid quod multa sunt Graecis literis memoriae mandata in historia, natura rerum, moribus privatis, & publicis, medicina, pietate, quae de ipsis fontibus & facilius hauriuntur & purius."

⁹⁶⁵ Vives: DD, 272 (the page is erroneously numbered as 273): "Facundia in verborum & formularum varietate ac copia: quae omnia efficerent ut libenter ea loquerentur homines, & aptissime possent explicare, quae sentirent: multumque per eam accresceret iudicii."

⁹⁶⁶ At one point Vives presents his view of how the focus in reading process should be directed. Vives: DD, 277: "Sed habeatur in studio delectus, ut prima cura sit circa verborum significatus, & loquendi formulas, proxima circa intelligentiam autorum non tam in rebus, quam in sententia dicti: ut assuescat puer illorum sensa eruere, quae obscure dicuntur ac perplexe: in quo exacuitur iudicium. Tertia circa sententias sumptas de vita, quae *gnomai*

In the list of authors and in the general guidelines of how teaching should be undertaken Vives focuses on a selection of comedy writers, poetry, and history together with other readings that could develop style, vocabulary, and written expression. Vives is very clear that the main task here is the development of style that can be achieved with Erasmus, Quintilian, Diomedes, Mancinelli, Despauterius, and Mosellanus' table of figures. Thus, the development of style, just like in the educational works of both Erasmus and Italian humanism, precedes the treatment of dialectical reasoning, considered the basis of argumentation and rhetoric. It is true that a number of traditional authors of the rhetorical tradition are proposed, such as Cicero's familiarly letters and selected discourses, Quintilian's treatment of elocution and Caesar's work, famous for its mastery of colloquial language. It is also true that the number of authors recommended to be read in privacy is quite impressive, containing not only the three most famous Roman historians, but also Cicero's speeches and Quintilian's *Declamations*.⁹⁶⁷ One, however, should be very careful in analysing what exactly Vives is doing here. The problem derives mainly from the fact that in the third book of *De tradendis* there seems to be incompatibility between the first part presenting general pedagogical advices on different exercises for different levels, and the second part introducing a comprehensive list of authors. The list of authors aspires, clearly, to a more general level of encyclopaedism since it is simply far too exhaustive to be covered by any grammar school curricula, and it is not at all connected to any specific pedagogic tasks or phases – such as the lists developed in Vives's *De ratione studii*, which is more reduced in its scope.⁹⁶⁸ Furthermore, it is hard to see how some of the readings Vives includes here could be useful or even compatible with the level of exercises he is proposing in the first part. Thus, the suggested readings are primarily a general critical index of authors that the teacher or any other reader could draw material.

The way the elementary course in Latinity and Greek is structured leaves a lot of room of manoeuvring for the teacher with respect to specific literature. As a general guideline, Vives underlines the educational responsibilities and the exemplary nature of the teacher throughout and he does present a clearly standardized view of educational practices and

dicuntur Graece: tum dicta praeclara, & proverbia: quarta circa historias, postrema & levissima circa fabulas.” On another occasion, addressing the teacher Vives reminds him that Vives: DD, 279-280: “Verborum quum significatus exponet, adferet de probatis autoribus dictum: in quo potissimum spectabit, ut vim vocis apertissime auditoribus declaret, tum si licuerit, ut aliquid habeat cognitione dignum....”

⁹⁶⁷ Vives: DD, 296-302.

⁹⁶⁸ See also Vives: DD, 241-246. Valerio del Nero has discussed the encyclopaedic dimension of the work, see Del Nero 1991, 12-20; Del Nero 2008, 178-185.

materials.⁹⁶⁹ He, however, does give some more specific instruction to the teacher at the elementary level as to how all of this should be undertaken. The very basic tool for a student should be a notebook or a commonplace book, where the student collects different types of pieces of knowledge gathered from readings. This book supposedly serves as the basis for all later studies, both for memorizing what one has learnt, and for producing one's own material.⁹⁷⁰

Even though Vives brings forward interesting insights into a number of issues, such as memory, what really interests us here is what he says on difference ladders of production, since it is here that the question of how to turn the pupil into someone capable of producing something of his own is treated. In humanist spirit, in *De tradendis* the importance of writing and production is strongly emphasized even in the elementary level.⁹⁷¹ According to Vives at the very first rung of the ladder, the pupil not only recites what the teacher has read aloud but also reformulates it with his own words. Another step is taken with written exercises, the first of which should be a translation both from vernacular to Latin, and vice versa. In Vives's presentation this exercise had both grammatical and factual dimensions, as is demonstrated by the fact that Vives reminds the reader about the dangers of a non-specialist translating Aristotle or Galen. This is not only pointing towards Vives's understanding of translation as an exercise not in words, but in meanings that have to be interpreted, but also more generally to the role of a grammarian or elementary teacher as someone whose role extends far beyond the limits of specific literary questions to the vast fields of knowledge of classical antiquity.⁹⁷²

Other exercises include comparison of the reading of authors with prescriptive rules, followed by "an elementary letter or a tale." Moreover, pupils should, "amplify an example, an apothegm, a short sentence or a proverb. They should untie and unbend a poem tied to metrical rules, expressing it without metrical rhythm."⁹⁷³ All of this is well in line with general humanist precepts and hardly encourages confrontation. Although letter writing is

⁹⁶⁹ See for instance Vives: DD, 234-235.

⁹⁷⁰ The history of commonplace books is presented in Moss 1996. Vives describes a way of collecting material in the class, but not how to organize this into a "bigger notebook." The way this is undertaken is not completely structured in *De disciplinis*. See Vives: DD, 281-282.

⁹⁷¹ Vives: DD, 281, 285: "persuadent sibi, quod revera est, nihil ad amplissimam eruditionem perinde conferre, ut & multa & multum scribere, multum atramenti, & chartae perdere."; "Scribendi exercitatio plurimum confert: stilus inquit Cicero magister & effector dicendi optimus."

⁹⁷² Vives: DD, 285-286. To translate not according to word but according to meaning was typical of humanists, Copenhaver 1990, 86-92.

⁹⁷³ Vives: DD, 286: "Scribent epistolam facilem, aut fabellam: dilatabunt exemplum, apophthegma, sententiam, proverbium: solvent & diffundent carmen numeris astrictum, atque eadem efferent absque numeris...."

mentioned, its civic potentialities are not underlined at all in *De tradendis*. Vives's exposition of elementary education in no way incorporates his ideas of the more politically important genres of letter writing, as presented in his *De conscribendis epistolis*, into its educational precepts. It is true that *De conscribendis* explicitly places letter writing in the tradition of conversation (*sermo*), not in the category of oratory (*oratio*).⁹⁷⁴ It cannot, however, be doubted that his *De conscribendis epistolis* by far exceeds the confines of familiar letters meant for everyday life, providing a developed humanist tool box for various situations, including, among other things, ways of talking to a superior, and denouncing vice. This is a section where Vives is clearly thinking about the prince, but the way these should be included in elementary education is completely absent from *De disciplinis*.⁹⁷⁵

The most in-depth treatment is given to the subject that worried Vives the most – the exercise known as *disputatio*. Out of all exercises where the pupil's own production is treated, *disputatio* was the only one where direct discussion and confrontation between students was the norm. Vives's description of *disputatio* in this elementary level has little to do with the late medieval *disputatio* – the highly formalized exercise of question and answer, which was not only about familiarizing the pupil with the subject matter of the debate, but that served also as an introduction to formal reasoning.⁹⁷⁶ Yet, *disputatio* likewise had nothing to do with the higher rhetorical exercises of *suasoria* and *controversia* – deliberative and judicial declamations respectively. Unlike in *suasoria* and *controversia*, the themes suggested are not political nor judicial, the composition does not aspire to historical specificity, and the adversary element of the exercise is downplayed in disputations. Vives is more than eager to remind the reader that he is talking about insignificant questions (*quaestiunculae*) that treat mostly the kind of uncontroversial themes suitable for elementary education. They should not be about confrontation and victory. More generally, even though Vives hinted that for very young boys,

⁹⁷⁴ Vives: “De conscribendis epistolis”, 3: “Epistola est sermo absentium per literas....” This was not uncommon, Hegendorff's widely read *Methodus conscribendis epistolas* makes the same Ciceronian definition yet uses the three rhetorical genres in building its larger categorization of genres, see Hegendorff, Christoph: *Methodus conscribendis epistolas*, Johann Setzer, Hagenau 1526, Aii: “Epistola est sermo absentis ad absentem.”

⁹⁷⁵ Vives: “De conscribendis epistolis”, 9, 14-20. Some of the most important letter-writing manuals affirmed the civic dimension of letter writing, see for instance Despauterius, Johannes: *Ars epistolica*, Josse Bade, Paris 1513, Aii. The importance of letter writing as a civic genre in the sixteenth-century English context is well-known, see Peltonen 2012, 43.

⁹⁷⁶ See for instance Murphy 2005: xvii, 373. In the Middle Ages, *disputatio* was practised not only in Universities but also in elementary education. See Murphy: 2005, iii, 171. However, in the latter Middle Ages it was mostly reserved to universities, see Murphy: 2005 xii, 201-202.

glory and victory could serve as motivational principles, he always underlined the threats of a confrontation aspiring to victory, and not truth.⁹⁷⁷

The very understanding of a disputation was undergoing a significant change at the time, dissociating it from the formal aspirations of medieval disputations. Leonard Cox, for instance, in his first English book on rhetorical theory meant for grammar schools, discusses disputation as a form of rhetorical exercise through which one can gather material for the treatment of simple or compound themes. Thus, the connection to logic is completely lost, and disputations serve as an exercise for gathering material on a given word through the commonplaces of definition, causes, parts, and effects that refer to existing authors.⁹⁷⁸ In his *The Arte or crafte of Rhetoryke*, he follows closely Melanchthon, who already in the widely published *De rhetorica libri tres* made the connection of logical or dialectical places to this rhetorical task integral, without presenting any theory of the traditional elements of disputation.⁹⁷⁹ Johannes Sturm also discussed disputation as the basic exercise at the elementary level centred on questions and answers. The picture he gives of *disputatio* is also freer and looser as to the formal elements of disputation than what was common in the medieval tradition.⁹⁸⁰

Vives's disputation disregards rhetorical motives altogether, and shows considerable hesitance towards the confrontational aspects of *disputatio*. It should not be about passion, all possible precautions should be undertaken in order to downplay its adversary qualities, and the final aim should be about comparing studies, not about passionate conflict and victory.⁹⁸¹ Moreover, the whole point of the exercise is tied up with grammatical motives of clarifying texts, and the selection of themes testifies to this clearly, as they comprise questions such as:

⁹⁷⁷ Vives: DD, 322: "Disputationes hic & studiorum quietas collatio potius, quam altercatio, non iam ad victoriam pertinebunt & gloriam, quod permittebatur pueris, sed verum intuendum...."

⁹⁷⁸ Cox, Leonard: *The art or crafte of rhetoryke*, Robert Redman, London 1532, 6-9.

⁹⁷⁹ Melanchthon: *De rhetorica*, 12-30. Melanchthon does not use the word disputation but his demonstrative rhetoric clearly presents a way of coming up with definitions for things.

⁹⁸⁰ Sturm: *De literarum*, 27-28. In classical tradition disputation, furthermore, could refer to a discussion between friends without the rhetorical element of passion. Cicero uses the word *disputatio* in this way in his *de oratore*. See for instance Cicero: *De oratore*, ii.v.

⁹⁸¹ Vives: DD, 286-287: "...providebitur tamen ne res longe in odia & rixas abeat: certabunt contente, sed citra acerbitatem: paulatim hi conflictus in studiorum collationem vertentur, & motus illi puerilium animorum sensim ponent. Quandoquidem consultius est adolescentes nihil scire, quam ambitionis & superbiae mancipia fieri."

“To what extent do norms coincide with use, the obscure and entangled passages, the explanation of sentences, proverbs, apothegms, fables, histories or parables? What is its origin, what are the thoughts it entails, what its application. [Other possible questions include] The name of men, of a city, of a mountain, of a river, of a fountain, of a province, of an animal, of a plant, of a stone, of a metal. The meaning of a word and its etymology, its prosody and orthography, the form of an expression, the structure, and law of a poem.”⁹⁸²

Although Vives takes the existence of disputations for granted – and there is nothing revolutionary in his portrayal of their exact content – his hesitance with the exercise is in stark contrast to much humanist literature. Moreover, this element surfaces frequently throughout *De disciplinis* in the context of a number of issues, and Vives makes quite clear that disputations effectively nurture exactly the kind of confrontational culture his entire social and political literature was denouncing. In an earlier section on disputations, Vives likens their logic to the general dynamics of discord: in public disputations *ingenium*, looking for praise, attacks truth in search for a victory showing how disputations, despite being deprived of rhetorical elements, actually nurture the destructive passions of those involved. Because of all this, Vives goes on to argue that it is important that “public disputations are not frequent.”⁹⁸³ Competition had been in the very heart of many of the schools run by the Brethren of the Common Life, and Johannes Sturm’s take on the Dutch school system greatly emphasized the competitive and confrontational dimension. Sturm wrote on disputations that students should “declaim as often as possible.”⁹⁸⁴ Vives’s distaste for competition also greatly differed from the strong vernacular poetical and rhetorical culture found in the chambers of rhetoric of Flanders, where adversity and competition for glory were the norm.⁹⁸⁵

Equally as importantly, there is nothing in Vives’s elementary education that would make room for the treatment of the development of truly rhetorical themes. This is at

⁹⁸² Vives: DD, 287: “Quae porro inter se conferent grandiusculi, haec erunt fere. Quam conveniat canonibus cum usu, de autorum obscure ac intricate dictis, de explanatione sententiae, proverbii, apophthegmatis, fabulae, historiae, parabola: quae origo illorum, quae mens, quae accomodatio: de nomine viri, urbis, montis, fluvii, fontis, provinciae, animantis, stirpis, lapidis, metalli: de vi vocabuli, & eius originatione: de prosodia eius, & ortographia, de loquendi formula, de sturctura, de lege carminis....”

⁹⁸³ Vives: DD, 250: “Idcirco rarae sint disputationes publicae, in quibus non eruitur veritas: nam nemo verius dicenti assentitur, quaeritur modo laus ingenii, vel peritiae....” He also makes clear that they seriously jeopardize the search for truth in moral philosophy, Vives: DD, 199.

⁹⁸⁴ Sturm: *De literarum*, 33, “Haec de declamandi, scribendique consuetudine, sine qua exercitatione nihil praeclarum in literis effic potest.”; Scaglione 1986, 13-14.

⁹⁸⁵ Dixhoorn 2008, 136-141; Spies 1999, 57-58. It is possible that Vives’s critique of theatrical poetry refers to the lively vernacular literary culture practiced by the chambers of rhetoric, see Vives: DD, 84-85.

odds with Erasmus's pre-Reformation *De ratione*, written for John Colet's school in 1512, where rhetoric is given a significant role in elementary education, and where the culmination of rhetorical exercises is exactly the treatment and development of themes – even rhetorical ones – in the classroom. In Erasmus's *De ratione* these declamations on a variety of themes drawn from classical writers could well incorporate questions of political and social importance such as warfare.⁹⁸⁶ Whereas the possibilities of adversary rhetoric in elementary education are set aside both in Vives's own *De ratione studii puerilis*, and in his *De tradendis*, this is not at all the case in Erasmus's *De ratione*.⁹⁸⁷

All this underlines that elementary education in *De tradendis* is primarily about the formation of a large pool of people to a world of concord, where language is needed and employed in non-adversary environments. They are users of literary skills and applied rhetoric in every-day practices – such as non-political letter writing – and they can potentially take part in office holding. Yet they are not educated to participate in the production of knowledge as specialists of arts, in the use of emotional rhetoric targeted to masses, and in the more complicated discussions demanding knowledge of dialectic, judgement, and prudence. There should be a world of concord and harmony, not discord and passion. However, it is clear that they do have a role to play in Vives's larger social philosophy. Even though their tools for participating as producers of rhetoric are limited, they provide a true orator with an audience capable of judging rightly about a range of issues, including political topics, because they should be familiar with the basic elements of Erasmian thought. They are the kind of imagined Christian audience northern humanists were both trying to educate and speak to in their 1520s and 1530s political oeuvre. Thus, they provide a suitable audience for wise and responsible rhetorical culture to emerge for a prudent speaker, since they are familiar with the basic framework of judging correctly about things.

Vives himself describes the kind of education acquired in the grammar school in the following words:

“He will be kept away from the reading of authorities, but he will be taught words appropriate for human intercourse, unless he is completely mad (*furiosus*) or foolish in which case it is preferable to keep him at a distance from the language of the learned so that he does

⁹⁸⁶ Erasmus: *De ratione studii*, vii-viii.

⁹⁸⁷ Vives's *De ratione studii puerilis* printed for the first time in 1524 omits truly rhetorical production.

not understand what is kept secret and confined there and use that knowledge to harm himself and other people. Those who are of healthier *ingenium* and judgement but do not wish to, or cannot ascend higher should be satisfied with the knowledge of languages and authors. This knowledge is useful for life so that he can be a public scribe, undertake less important office holding, or partake in embassies.”⁹⁸⁸

This is quite far from Johannes Sturm’s claim that elementary schools produced eloquent men capable of defending the commonwealth.⁹⁸⁹

Getting Familiar with Adversity

It is after the elementary stage that liberal arts receive full treatment that reveals their conflictual nature. The second stage covered by *De tradendis* stretches until the youngster is approximately 25-years old, as Vives laconically states.⁹⁹⁰ This means that he is describing here a syllabus roughly equivalent to the Faculty of Arts in the universities in northern Europe, and consequently, one is entering socially a more reduced ambiance. In this part, Vives dedicates significant attention to dialectic, rhetoric, physics, first philosophy (metaphysics), and mathematical subjects, and it is here that according to Vives, one evidences a move from language acquisition to the arts and disciplines.⁹⁹¹ It is also in this phase in the chronology of the learning of different skills that the integral union of dialectic and rhetoric enters the picture since the whole basis of these studies lies on the *trivium*.

In the treatment of dialectic, Vives is all the time referring to the particular idea he himself promotes of dialectical reasoning in the third part of *De disciplinis*, an idea that was closely connected to larger developments in the field of dialectic both in Lutheran and Catholic universities. The selection of authors promoted by Vives is revealing indeed: the elementary stages of dialectical reasoning are covered by Trebizond, Giorgio Valla and Melanchthon – some of the most popular humanist introductions to the art of reasoning. Aristotle’s *On the*

⁹⁸⁸ Vives: DD, 307-308: “...arcebitur lectionem autorum. Sermonem vero ad commercium humani generis didicerit: nisi forte furiosus omnino sit & vaecors, quem praestabit a lingua doctorum summove, ne quae sub illa sunt abdita & conclusa, magno tum suo, tum alieno malo intelligat. Qui saniore ingenio ac iudicio nolet tamen, aut non commode poterit altius conscendere, hic erit linguarum & autorum cognitione contentus. Huius porro ad vitam usus fuerit, ut sit scriba civitatis publicus, capessat minores magistratus, fungatur legationibus.”

⁹⁸⁹ Sturm: *De literarum*, 3.

⁹⁹⁰ Vives: DD, 341: “Hoc est adolescentiae curriculum ad quintum & vicesimum annum, aut eo circiter.”

⁹⁹¹ Vives: DD, 315: “Hactenus cognitioni linguarum vacavimus, quae fores sunt disciplinarum omnium atque artium, carum certe, quae monumentis magnorum ingeniorum sunt proditae.”

interpretation is mentioned, although with the qualification that future contingencies should not be touched upon. Furthermore, Aristotle's *Prior Analytics*, a crown jewel of traditional dialectical reasoning, is said to contain knowledge of, "little necessity."⁹⁹²

The treatment of dialectical teaching methods runs parallel to the presentation of suitable materials. It is divided accordingly into two sections dealing with judgement and invention respectively. As a general rule Vives argues that learning must move from dialectical judgement to dialectical invention, and only later to rhetoric, thus underlying a path from *res* to *verba*. In the part dealing with judgement traditionally related to questions of formal coherence, Vives starts by reminding that they should not be "quarrelsome," because confrontation is in the very nature of the subject, and consequently, it should not be encouraged.⁹⁹³ What follows is a presentation that in some respects vaguely resembles traditional scholastic disputations. Vives goes as far as to mention *obligationes* – a branch of dialectic closely tied to the practice of medieval *disputatio* – but strongly underlines that it is not an art, not even a part of an art in itself, making the distance to scholastic learning apparent. As a basic rule of thumb for dialectical disputations, he writes, "in these exercises only two things have to be avoided [...] not to accept contradictory positions and not to reject what corresponds with a position." Thus, Vives's idea seems to be that this method indeed trains the mind to understand the formal nature of the argument if it is done in an unemotional way that suppresses the competitive element of the treatise. This, together with the inclusion of a number of dialectical elements in the third part of *De disciplinis* – starting from the ample description of syllogism – can be seen as an attempt to introduce some training in dialectical judgement into the classroom as a way of countering the merely inventive side of the art of truth.⁹⁹⁴

Yet how exactly Vives's Socratic questions should operate is not completely clear. It is very likely that the method described by Vives is meant to be a modification of the traditional *disputatio*, and the authors suggested by Vives as introductions to dialectical argumentation hardly offered any insights to formal disputations. Thus, Vives's point here might well be to argue for a method of question and answer that trains the pupil – in the tradition

⁹⁹² Vives: DD, 315: "parvum necessaria...." The ambivalent attitude towards Aristotle runs through the treatment: on the one hand, he is an authority of primary importance; on the other hand, commentaries on Aristotle, described as a difficult author, have not been satisfactory. This points to Vives's own assessment of Aristotle's input in the part three. Vives: DD, 316: "Graeci in Aristotelem interpretes Psellus, Mangenetus, Ammonius obruunt lectorem verbis inanibus, qui prope est mos enarratorum illius gentis. Iacobus Faber tum in Aristotelem scripsit, tum Dialecticam ipse composuit: multaue ex receptis suo aevo opinionibus tanquam ex coeno trahit."

⁹⁹³ Vives: DD, 316: "Exercitatio erit in his non rixosa...."

⁹⁹⁴ Vives: DD, 316: "In his duo sunt solum vitanda, quae modo attingi, non recipere pugnans positus, non respuere congruens posito." For syllogism, see Vives: DD, 556-571.

of division presented in the third part of *De disciplinis* – to a formally more loose exercise of reasoning. In the case of natural philosophy, as well as in moral and civic issues, this could point to the kind of Erasmian definitions of key terms described in Vives’s presentation of dialectic. With reference to the purposes of the exercise Vives himself states: “little Socratic questions that employ not only induction but also draw out the understanding of the adversary by using little tricks, divisions and definitions, are very useful for many things: for expressing the truth, for sharpening the *ingenium*, and for refuting the one we are arguing against.”⁹⁹⁵ Furthermore, Vives makes very explicit in this part the link to the fifth book of the third part dealing with the critique of truth (*Censura veri*), which also presents patterns of inference and the law of contradiction. In short, the exercise Vives is describing here is most likely an introduction to the dialectical procedures presented in the third part of *De disciplinis*. With exercises in definitions and divisions, one could introduce the substantial knowledge of individual sciences to schoolboys.⁹⁹⁶

After judgement, the gateway to dialectical invention is open. Once again, Vives underlines the similarities of dialectic and rhetoric “prone to dispute and obstinacy,” and reminds the reader severely about the responsibility of the teacher and about the fact that the student should be suitable for this training.⁹⁹⁷ One really gets the impression that one is entering dangerous terrain indeed and one where harmony and concord are potentially threatened. The close link between dialectical invention and rhetoric is evident in Vives’s presentation of the inventive part of dialectic in a part on the instrument of probability, which deals with dialectical topics. Cicero’s *Topics*, Boece, and especially Agricola, together with explicitly rhetorical materials such as Cicero’s *De inventione* and the fifth book of Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria*, are presented side by side with Aristotle’s *Topica*. In a remarkable fashion, Vives suggests that one has to treat Aristotle’s literature not for the perfecting of Aristotle’s dialectical system, but for, “taking notes on the thoughts and precepts on various themes that have been collected to this work, and for having these at one’s disposal whenever the situation demands their use.” Not only are the traditional works of classical rhetoric presented side by side with Aristotle, but also the Stagirite himself is downgraded merely into a source of abundance that should be suited

⁹⁹⁵ Vives: DD, 316: “Socraticae interrogatiunculae non modo per inductionem, sed eliciendo paulatim velut actis cuniculis adversarii sensu, divisionibus ac diffinitionibus, vehementer sunt ad multa conducibiles, ad verum exprimentum, ad exacvendum ingenium, & ad revincendum eum, qui contra tendit.”

⁹⁹⁶ There is another paragraph where Vives describes discussions leading to truth that seems to link to the last book of *De disciplinis* on inner and outer disputations. Yet, the methodological way in which these two disputations should be imbedded in the curriculum is left open. Vives: DD, 315-323.

⁹⁹⁷ Vives: DD, 324: “...ad contentionem ac pervicaciam proclivis....”

to different situations according to the rules of *decorum*. In this new constellation, Aristotle stands side by side with a range of materials, from which the orator should gather credible material that can be useful in dialectical invention. In this spirit, Vives refers to the classical metaphor of a bee, which in Aulus Gellius's *Noctes Atticae* represented a certain eclectic attitude.⁹⁹⁸

After learning the secrets and method of dialectical invention, the pupil should finally be ready for rhetoric.⁹⁹⁹ Vives starts the section with an emphatic defence of the art of eloquence characterized in ambiguous terms as “the cause of greatest goods and harms.” The reason is simply that in a world in which the use of word and its effect on passions is an undeniable fact, the omission of its use by the prudent would be a terrible mistake.¹⁰⁰⁰ Next, he proceeds to present some of the more general features of rhetorical theory, such as the tripartite duties of the orator, namely, teaching, moving, and delighting, after which the literature that focuses on the prescriptive side of rhetoric as a theory is described.¹⁰⁰¹ Yet Vives, in a typically humanist manner, is quite clear that true training in rhetoric happens in the commentary of texts and in the practice of writing, and not in precepts themselves, introducing the figure of Cicero as someone who did not want to follow any ready-made rules slavishly.¹⁰⁰² The question of exercise is, however, a highly delicate matter and Vives would want to avoid “too careful and frequent exercises,” so that “such an ambivalent instrument does not stimulate the will to harm whenever the occasion presents itself, because then it would produce a tendency to fraud and badness.”¹⁰⁰³ The first exercises training the youth to the secrets of rhetoric should be

⁹⁹⁸ Vives's list of authors in dialectic is thoroughly humanist. See Vives: DD, 324-325: “Ad investigationem probabilitatis enarrabit doctor Ciceronis topica additis commentariis Boethi, aut quod mali, Rodolphi Agricolae dialecticam voluminibus tribus facundissimae & ingeniosissime expositam. Ciceronem vero & Boethum discipulus per se non semel leget, cui M. Tullio totam pene artem hanc debemus, quae ab Aristotele quidem reperta rudis adhuc est ostensa, nec utentibus satis habilis. Leget item per se Quintiliani librum quintum, nec non Ciceronis duo de inventionem volumina, quod opus excidisse sibi dicit iuveni: adiunget Victorini commentarios. Aristoteles octo libros topicos attente, ut omnia illius philosophi, iterum atque iterum evolvat, non tam ad expoliendum aptandum quam instrumentum hoc credibilium, quam ut sententias & praecepta variarum rerum, quae in opus illud sunt congesta, annotet, & ad manum habeat, ubi res poscet. Magister velut diligens apicula per omnia disciplinarum viridaria circumvolitans undique decerpit discipulo suo, & colliget observationis huius exempla...”

⁹⁹⁹ In the schools of Brethren of the Common Life rhetoric followed dialectic, see Scaglione 1986, 14.

¹⁰⁰⁰ Vives: DD, 326: “...is est maximorum, & bonorum, & malorum causa [rhetoric]...”

¹⁰⁰¹ Vives's list names most of the more important authorities on rhetorical theory emphasizing, however, that the teacher should select some of these materials. The importance of Quintilian, Cicero – whose rhetorical works are mentioned – and Aristotle is out of doubt. But Vives also mentions some of the works of the Hermogenean tradition, together with some more modern authors such as Melanchthon. Vives: DD, 326-328.

¹⁰⁰² The idea that oratory was better learned through imitation than prescription was voiced frequently in the classics of rhetorical tradition, see for instance Augustine: *De doctrina*, iv.iii.

¹⁰⁰³ Vives: DD, 327: “Sed neque exercitationes in arte dicendi diligentes admodum & crebras probarim: ne anceps instrumentum laedendi voluntatem titillet, occasione oblata: tum proclivitate ad fraudem & malitiam pariat....”

uncontroversial and consist of, “short tales, histories, amplification of a closed theme, closing [here *synthesis*] of another dispersed theme.”¹⁰⁰⁴ Most likely in Vives’s mind these exercises could be useful not only for the development of style but they also contain a moral function since short histories, in addition to maxims and aphorisms, constituted the primary way of building a virtuous character.¹⁰⁰⁵ These, then, should be followed by different ways of “teaching and delighting” – two of the three duties of rhetorical discourse – and only later should one move to controversial themes where adversity is present. The last echelon of the process is represented by the third duty of rhetoric: “the moving and exciting of the passions of the soul.”¹⁰⁰⁶ Vives’s point is quite clear: of the three rhetorical duties the one dealing with moving and the ruling of passion through literary devices should come only in the very end of rhetorical training, when, supposedly, the prudent and responsible nature of the speaker should not be in doubt anymore.

The impression is further strengthened by the fact that Vives also presents a chronology of the types of questions one should deal with. Once again, a path from general, uncontroversial issues to the governance of passions – represented in its purest form by declamation – is visible. One should start with general questions deprived of contextual elements, which serve as a propaedeutic entry to the gathering of materials on important terms. This trains the pupil to collect all the available material from commonplace books or from his own notes on the central themes of any discussion, and the examples mentioned are “fortune, cruelty, or the world.”¹⁰⁰⁷ Slowly, then, the pupil should move towards particular themes where all the nuances of rhetoric are visible. All along the way, however, Vives never forgets to emphatically underline the union of piety and rhetoric, proceeding at one stage to claim that “true and authentic rhetoric is eloquent wisdom that cannot be separated under any agreement from justice and piety.”¹⁰⁰⁸ Possibly following on from this, Vives takes a strong stance against one of the inherent tendencies of rhetorical practice, namely that everything can always be argued from both sides (*in utramque partem*), explicitly stating that we should not argue “for pleasure against piety and justice.” Erasmus’s *De conscribendis epistolis* – destined for a school

¹⁰⁰⁴ Vives: DD, 328: “Fabellis, historiolis, dilatione contractae rationis, contractione dilatae ac susae.”

¹⁰⁰⁵ Vives: DD, 289: “Subinde admonendi, ut quae de moribus audiunt, ne ita accipiant, ut historiolum quamquam, quam satis est audivisse: hunc esse animorum pastum saluberrimum, concoqui & digeri oportere, et in animi substantiam converti....”

¹⁰⁰⁶ Vives: DD, 328: “Novissime in motu & concitatione affectionum animi.”

¹⁰⁰⁷ Vives: DD, 328: “...de fortuna, de crudelitate, de seculo....”

¹⁰⁰⁸ Vives: DD, 328: “itaque vera et germana rhetorica diserta est sapientia, quae a iusto, & pio separari nullo pacto potest.”

context – had highlighted that it was always possible to come up with arguments on both sides, and that nothing was so inherently bad that it could not be defended. Vives, for his part, demands that “all eloquence should stand in the battlefield to defend what is good and pious against what is shameful and wicked.”¹⁰⁰⁹

The kind of rhetorical exercises involving controversy Vives is thinking about are declamations, and hardly surprisingly, the selection of materials Vives presents as exemplary highlight the importance of Seneca the Elder’s *Declamationes* and *Suasorias*.¹⁰¹⁰ Vives claims that the judicial genre is “of no use,” and that all the questions treated in the classroom “should be useful in life.”¹⁰¹¹ The fact that Vives denies the importance of judicial rhetoric for the Christian orator should not be taken literally since all of his own rhetorical production, including his *Declamationes Syllanae*, draw heavily from the tradition of judicial rhetoric. Here Vives is not suggesting that the precepts of judicial rhetoric for the treatment of *ethos* and a number of other issues should not be employed, but that judicial litigations and specific legal questions as such are not good and present a danger to justice and to truth. This is firmly in line with everything Vives had written about law as simplicity of *epikeia*, rather than open confrontation over the technicalities of law in his earlier writings and in *De disciplinis*.

Yet, the explicit omission of judicial cases implies that Vives’s main themes, truly important questions, should be *suasoria* – political issues – since the only two traditional genres in which controversy is involved were exactly the judicial and deliberative ones. Yet, one should remember that already in *De consultatione*, printed together with *De ratione dicendi* in 1532, Vives had quite clearly enlarged the definition of deliberation by claiming that it can potentially be any theme one is consulted on. Thus, one should not think that Vives, in advising very advanced students, is necessarily implying a closed set of themes familiar from the handbooks of deliberative rhetoric, but that the questions treated could potentially cover all sorts of issues of current relevance. His own *Declamationes* had brilliantly shown how complex themes could activate rhetorical resources from epideictic, judicial, and deliberative traditions in a flexible way. This was also well in line with classical tradition that had affirmed the broad and varied

¹⁰⁰⁹ Vives: DD, 328: “Nunquam contra veritatem affuescent dicere..pro voluptate, contra aequum, & pium....”; “stet tanquam in acie facundia omnis pro bono, & pio contra flagitium & nefas.” Erasmus: *De conscribendis epistolis*. For discussions on the tradition of speaking on both sides (*in utramque partem*), see Skinner 1996, 9-10, 97-98; Peltonen 2012, 62-70

¹⁰¹⁰ The part on declamations is introduced by the word *declamatio* in the margins, Vives: DD, 329. Declamation was the most advanced rhetorical exercise in classical tradition, see Quintilian: IO, ii.viii; ii.x.

¹⁰¹¹ Vives: DD, 328-329: “Iudiciali genere nihil omnino indigemus....”; “Declament iuvenes apud magistros de iis argumentis, quorum aliquis sit deinceps usus in vita.”

scope of declamations, which according to Quintilian “embraces in itself all the things [exercises] of which we have been speaking, and provides the closest image of reality.”¹⁰¹²

Linking to both Vives’s concern about the potentially destructive uses of rhetoric and his method of internal discussion, Vives stresses that pupils, taking the example of Demosthenes, should meditate the composition of their discourse in a quiet place with time.¹⁰¹³ This is supposed to be an antidote against the momentous and passionate nature of disputations, as perceived by Vives.¹⁰¹⁴ Furthermore, even though Vives throughout his early 1530s corpus emphasized that the proper terrain of rhetoric lies in elocution, one of the main points of his presentation here is a balanced treatment of a theme. It is true that a lot of attention is given to elocution, yet the main task of the teacher in assessing declamations lies in questions guided by prudence and *decorum*. He argues it is the *decorum* of the arguments according to all particular elements, that should get the special attention in the classroom. Thus, the task of prudence and *decorum* in moulding Christian arguments to a form suited to particular cases, audiences, and times is at the core of Vives’s advice here.¹⁰¹⁵ In short, in this kind of declamation all Vivesian treatment of argument, elocution, piety, and everything learnt about dialectic and rhetoric should come together into a unified and responsible whole under the guidance of prudence.

The importance given over to *declamationes* as rhetorical exercises dealing with passion situates the Vivesian educational scheme firmly in the humanist tradition that strived for eloquence and the mastery of words for guiding passion. It underlines how, despite the omnipresent reservations of *De disciplinis* to passion, conflict, and discord, a prudent man effectively is taught how to engage with a world of strife and erroneous judgement.

Prudent Man

In the highest echelon of Vives’s *De tradendis* stands the truly prudent man, the wise who is given a section of his own entitled *De vita et moribus eruditi* (*On the Life and Customs of the Erudite*). Before the description of the erudite, Vives presents opinions on studies related to two

¹⁰¹² Quintilian: IO, ii.x.2: “...pauca mihi de ipsa declamandi ratione dicenda sunt, quae quidem ut ex omnibus novissime inventa, ita multo est utilissima. Nam et cuncta illa de quibus diximus in se fere continet....”

¹⁰¹³ Vives does not discuss extempore speeches here at all, Vives: DD, 329. Johannes Sturm for instance wrote about three kinds of speeches; those that are written, those that are extempore, and those that are composed in the mind of the student, see Sturm: *De literarum*, 23.

¹⁰¹⁴ Vives made similar points already in his *De consultatione*. Vives: DCO, 261.

¹⁰¹⁵ This is reiterated in *De ratione dicendi*, Vives: DR, 106: “Hactenus exposita sunt nobis atque ostensa instrumenta artis. Iam deinceps operi accomodari conveniet. Quae actio quoniam prudentiae pars est....”

of the three higher faculties – namely the Medical and the Juridical Faculties, omitting the Theological one. But the main emphasis in the latter part of *De tradendis* lies firmly on prudence, history, moral philosophy, and on the philosophical subject of justice that incorporates legal questions to the arts of prudence. All of this leads to the culmination of *De tradendis*, *De vita et moribus eruditi*. Despite of the fact that the part on history and moral philosophy could provide a teacher at any scholarly level a critical encyclopaedia of all the major authorities in the area, Vives's treatment here is mostly separated from a connection to any specific stage in the educational path.¹⁰¹⁶ However, it is not a mere coincidence that Vives has placed the parts on history, justice, and moral philosophy – mostly politics – in a section dedicated to prudence, right before the exposition of the ethical demands of the life of an erudite. In uniting all these issues to the fifth book of *De tradendis*, Vives guarantees that the close connection of these subjects, cornerstones of active life, to prudence, and to the recommended way of living is not lost.

What is more, the part on the life of an erudite presenting ethical prescription for post academic path puts the whole of *De tradendis* in a larger perspective. What is an implication in the structure of arts and sciences – namely an active performance of the arts in the service of common good on different levels and functions – is quite openly spelled out and given a specific form. The erudite Vives presents the reader is an active humanist working potentially on a range of issues, both inside and outside the academia, without ever losing sight of the binding social imperative. It is no coincidence that the emphasis is firmly on prudence (*prudentia*) and not wisdom (*sapientia*), since the social imperative directs the attention to active life and to interaction with others and, hence, to the continuous performance of the most important of civic virtues: *prudentia*. Because of the highly important role the prudent man plays not only in Vives's educational schemes but also in his entire social thinking, it is justifiable to read the Book five of *De disciplinis* together with *De vita et moribus*. They spell out Vives's most elaborate development of the Aristocratic wise man who should possess the authority to be the true reason (*ratio*) of both particular commonwealths and kingdoms, as well as Christendom at large.

¹⁰¹⁶ What is more, the treatment of history and moral philosophy – mostly politics – is clearly not meant for elementary education since in the description of the elementary education Vives had already presented his views on the main authorities of history. The presentation of history, however, could be suitable for the study of the past as part of the *trivium* in the Faculty of Arts level since Vives explicitly writes about the order (*ordo*) one should follow in studying history.

Vives's most general characterization of prudence refers to it as medicine of the mind, creating an opposition to the medicine of the body taught in medical faculties.¹⁰¹⁷ Because of the social nature of prudence, Vives is not primarily writing about the curing of one's own mind but about the social sphere; Vives is evoking the metaphor here in a social sense, referring to the curing of the passions of the collective body or some of its individual powerful members. More specifically, Vives describes prudence as the ability to, "appropriate everything we make use of in life to places, moments, persons and to occupations," and he is quite clear that its true realm is the corrupted world of passion. Referring to this, he states that prudence, "is the director and the rudder in the storm of the passions, and it tries to hinder that the ship of humankind is not dashed against the shoals and rocks of the violent passions, and is not overpowered by the size of the waves."¹⁰¹⁸

According to Vives, there are mainly two things that contribute to the acquisition of prudence, namely judgement and experience. Judgement, of course, holds a close association with the natural talent (*ingenium*) of each man, but it can also be trained through right kind of humanistic formation. In claiming that the reading of good authors together with historical studies, rhetoric and dialectic train character Vives makes a traditional link from humanist curricula to the acquisition of judgement, with the exception that he explicitly names dialectic as a factor in this process. Even though the move is quite conventional in the humanist discourse, one could argue that if prudence as an intellectual virtue is primarily about the understanding of particularities, then training in rhetoric and dialectic is significant. Dialectic – understood as a rhetorized theory of generalized argumentation that includes an understanding of the audience – teaches the mind to make prudential judgements that take into account all contextual phenomena. It simultaneously provides the skills for turning all this into linguistic production. The other source of prudence – experience – is further divided into two categories: one's own experience, and the experience of others, which is history. Once again, the connection is quite trivial since history, stock of experience and examples had long been the source of prudence in the humanist tradition.¹⁰¹⁹

¹⁰¹⁷ Vives: DD, 353: "Nunc alteram illam aggredimur, qua tum excoluntur animi, tum sanantur, ut in hac quoque sit mentis illustratio, ne morbi invadant, atque ubi invaserint, per rationis imperium depulsio ac restitutio sanitatis."

¹⁰¹⁸ Vives: DD, 353: "Prudentia vero peritia est accomodandi omnia, quis in vita utimur, locis, temporibus, personis, negotiis: haec est moderatrix & clavus in affectionum tempestate, ne hi sua violentia navem totius hominis in brevibus aut scopulis impingant, vel obruant magnitudine fluctuum."

¹⁰¹⁹ Kelley 1988, 236; Kelley 1990, 747.

Vives is eager to argue that history is specifically suited to adults with some experience, implying that it could potentially provide the erudite with useful knowledge on prudence after his studies inside the walls of academic institutions.¹⁰²⁰ In explaining the category of history – true art of governing – one can discern two main points Vives wants to make. First, he is more than keen to remind the reader, in a very Erasmian vein, of the harmful nature of history of violent and warfare. Since the prudence he is promoting is essentially about the control and rule of passion, history should set examples of prudent action understood in this sense.¹⁰²¹ Another point of importance for Vives is that history should train one to understand primarily the unchanged moral character that produces action and response, not only details of antiquarian value.¹⁰²² He had already tried to highlight this interpretation of history in a plea for a war against the Turks in *De Europae dissidiis*, where he had argued that the unchanged character of Europeans and Asians would produce equal outcomes in warfare, irrespective of historical particularities.¹⁰²³ Thus, the real knowledge one learns from history deals with character, *ingenia*, passion, and all dispositions that are active in the production of outcomes. Naturally, this is closely connected to prudence since knowledge of all dispositions and *ingenia* is a prerequisite, not only for successful political action, but also for an effective speech aimed at teaching and moving people to action. In his eulogy of history, Vives does not forget its connection to moral philosophy; the examples of moral philosophy, more useful than precepts, are provided by history.¹⁰²⁴ All this presupposes an understanding of the workings of human judgement and passions from which actions stem, pointing towards the basic thematic of Vives's work on the soul, *De anima*.

If the sources of prudence are clear, Vives similarly leaves little doubt as to the fields in which prudence should be performed and used. While it serves as a guiding principle in all human interaction, Vives clearly unites prudence with some specific social functions. In

¹⁰²⁰ Vives also explicitly states this, Vives: DD, 358: “Verum historia cognita est iam nobis quadam tenus in puerili institutione, sed illa modo ad rationem temporum, & nomina praeclarorum hominum noscenda: nunc vero exactius est ac plenius versanda, quoniam melius ab adultis iam confirmatisque post rerum usum aliquem intelligitur, ut in vitae emolumenta convertatur, iudicio adhibito: tanquam succus naturali calore diffusus per corpus, unde alatur homo, & vita produatur.”

¹⁰²¹ Vives: DD, 358-359.

¹⁰²² Vives: DD, 356: “nimirum negare nemo potest omnia illa esse mutata, & mutari quotidie, nempe quae sunt voluntatis nostrae atque industriae. Sed illa tamen nunquam mutantur, quae natura continentur, nempe causae affectuum animi, eorumque actiones & effecta, quod est longe conducibilius cognoscere, quam quomodo olim vel aedificabant, vel vestiebant homini antiqui.”

¹⁰²³ Vives: *De Europae*, xli: “Dicet vero aliquis, aliae sunt nunc res, alia tempora, alius Asiae stans [...] Nam quam Asiam dixi imbellem, hoc sivel inscitia, vel nullo militaris rei usu contingeret, utique mutare posse confiterer, sed quia naturae est, non casus corrigi utcunque potest, mutari penitus non potest.”

¹⁰²⁴ Vives: DD, 357.

the shortest form, prudence is the art of governing (*regendi artem*), which should be undertaken only by those who are naturally up to the task, who are both experienced and capable of sound judgement.¹⁰²⁵ In a section dedicated to the literature of politics, very Erasmian in its outlook and explicitly referring to *Utopia* and Erasmus's *Institutio principis Christiani*, Vives states, "this is the art of princes, counsellors, judges and, finally, of those who direct cities and people."¹⁰²⁶ In an earlier passage in a section discussing prudence, Vives asks, "What would be more important to know for the tutor of a city or for a citizen?"¹⁰²⁷ Both passages and the totality of *De tradendis* clearly show that Vives is not referring primarily here to the prince, he is not claiming merely that the prince should be prudent, but that those participating in the undertakings of common issues in a variety of functions should exhibit prudence. Making a union between philosophers and political power, Vives writes: "For what reason do we think that our philosophers have not for long been suitable for the guiding of cities (*civitas*) and people?" pointing out that this was mostly because of the lack of knowledge about history.¹⁰²⁸ Part of the demand is naturally a Platonic claim that princes should become philosophers, but Vives insists repeatedly that his main point is rather that philosophers should help in the governing of the state, a point he had made very strongly in his dedication letter to João III.¹⁰²⁹ More generally, the point of departure of the activities of the prudent man as described in *De disciplinis* is that he "is ready and prepared for a fight" in the world of passion and civic life where he has to help others.¹⁰³⁰ Thus, it is hardly surprising that Vives, in discussing the guidance of the city or commonwealth, often employs words other than princes, such as wise (*sapiens*), tutor (*rector*), citizen (*cives*), philosopher (*philosophus*), counsellors (*consiliarius*), and many others. The philosophical nature of government in a corrupted world is more likely guaranteed by wise counsel and the active performance of virtue, not merely by the formation of the prince himself, as important as that might be.

¹⁰²⁵ Vives: DD, 354-355: "Qui eiusmodi sunt ingeniis tanquam ad prudentiam, id est, regendi artem non facti & appositi, ipsi alios non regent, regentur ab iis, quos natura ad prudentiam finxit."

¹⁰²⁶ Vives: DD, 374: "Haec est ars principum, consiliariorum, iudicum, denique eorum, qui civitates & gentes moderantur." Most of these political works are already mentioned in Vives's *De ratione studii*, see Vives: "De ratione studii puerilis", 56.

¹⁰²⁷ Vives: DD, 356: "quid magis vel rectori civitatis, vel civis civium nosse expedit..."

¹⁰²⁸ Vives: DD, 356: "Quid causae esse credimus, cur philosophi nostri regendis civitatibus & populis iam pridem idonei non fuerint?"

¹⁰²⁹ Vives: DD, *Epistola*: "Tum intelligis quanta sit inter principes & eruditos homines munerum consensio: ut non sint duo hominum genera, quae amica inter se magis & coniuncta esse conveniat [...] Eruditio quiete indiget, quam praestat regia potestas: haec vero consilio ad molem tantarum rerum tractandam, quod praestant docti prudentia ex disciplinis collecta..."

¹⁰³⁰ Vives: DD, 388: "Proditurus ad hominum occursus & conspectum vir doctus meditatus & paratus exeat tanquam ad pugnam, ne qua a prava aliqua affectione capiatur, a quibus oppugnamur undique, atque incessimur..."

This all links to what Vives has to say about the life of the erudite in the special part dedicated to the theme. As to the extension of the ideal erudite, various ideas have been put forward: different scholars have suggested that Vives might be educating a new secular ruling class, princes, or heads of households, although few works have focused thoroughly on the question.¹⁰³¹ Valerio del Nero has put forward an interesting explanation in referring to the Vivesian erudite as an “intellectual,” and has emphasized his close connections with power focusing on his role as a counsellor.¹⁰³² This is no doubt true; university education was the primary way of entering the highest echelons of office holding and Vives deliberately focuses on justice, prudence, and politics. He is definitely describing the kind of person he would like to see steering the commonwealth in a variety of functions at court, at the town level, and in undertaking intellectual duties such as teaching. Many of the people participating in the civic life, and office-holding on the level of the town in the Low Countries could be catered by elementary education, but the truly prudent man mastering all arts should occupy the most important offices in towns, in the General Estates, and in the central administration of the prince. However, rather than describing this person, Vives paints a persuasive example of how this man ought to live and occupy himself, underlining strongly the union of civic life to piety and a range of scholarly interests.

In this way, the intellectual Vives is describing bears a distinctively Erasmanian mark in the part on the life of the erudite. *De disciplinis* paints a strong picture of the true erudite that looks suspiciously like an Erasmanian scholar or wise man – someone truly capable of taking the role demanded from a doctor of the soul. He is able to defend and know truth, to be motivated in his intellectual journey by nothing else but truth, to rely in matters of judgement on his own conscience, not on the opinion of ordinary people, to be free from both ignorance and passion, and to realize the social imperative through his knowledge. Vives makes very clear that a true erudite can work in a variety of fields and in a number of ways. First, he can clearly take the role of a counsellor or a tutor close to the prince. In a pessimistic vein, and probably mirroring his own sentiments in his post-courtier days, Vives states that princes are at times so blind that a wise man could do nothing and hence the ruler should be left alone.¹⁰³³ If this were

¹⁰³¹ Vigliano 2013, xli; Vasoli 1968, 225-226. Noreña is silent about this question mentioning only rulers, women and the poor as objects of specific treatises of education, Noreña 1970, 176-199. More generally, humanist education has been linked to the rise of a new administrative class, see Padley 1976, 8-9.

¹⁰³² Del Nero makes this point especially in his 2008 article, see Del Nero 2008, 220-226.

¹⁰³³ Vives: DD, 384: “Corda vero plerorumque principum adeo sunt corrupta, & magnitudine illa fortunae ebria, ut nulla arte refingi queant in melius, medentibus aspera atque insensa. Sinendi sunt valere illi caeci, ut dominus dicit, & duces caecorum....” Running away from corrupted princes is an advice found, for instance, in Castiglione;

the case, all counselling would either be inefficient or worse, flattery that justifies the immoral actions of the ruler.¹⁰³⁴

This is not, however, the only way of contributing actively to the common good with the knowledge of the arts. The wise can, following the example of Christ, also turn their gaze to the people, who are “more easily managed, and who appear to be easier and more compliant in the hands of the one who does the curing.”¹⁰³⁵ The problem where the people typically assume that anyone who addresses them in Latin is wise was even more attuned than in the case of the prince, but this should not lead one to abandon the task of educating them.¹⁰³⁶ Vives is not very precise as to what exactly the medicine of the soul in the case of the people would entail, but it would definitely include all the activities of teaching ranging from the performing of the specific role of a tutor or an educator to the purification of educational materials. Despite his silence on the matter, it would have been quite clear for the reader that an ecclesiastical life would also be a way of realizing the duty to educate people.

The fact that investigatory motives do play a role in Vives is clearly shown by the significant amount of time Vives devotes to the analysis of the components of the right performance of investigative practices. It is highly important that Vives does not see a clear-cut distinction between an active life at court or teaching in educational contexts on the one hand, and contemplative life of a scholar dedicated to the pursuit of arts and sciences on the other. Vives is quite explicit on many different levels that the investigative work of the scholar should always be undertaken with the ultimate goal of furthering the arts, and the common good – something his own investigative projects were aspiring to.¹⁰³⁷ These different realms of social utility effectively point to different levels of the general reform programme. If actual decision-making cannot be influenced, one should focus on reforming the general culture, inside of which civic and other forms of collective life will be assessed.

Vives does give some general guidelines as to how one should go about writing and commentating, in a way that does not put right judgement in jeopardy. On the individual level, the people undertaking these activities should be of the right kind, provided with studies,

see Castiglione, Baldassare: *Il libro del cortegiano, nuovamente con diligenza revisto per Lodovico Dolce* Girolamo Scotto, Venezia 1556, 384-386.

¹⁰³⁴ This argument could be found in the first part of More's *Utopia*, see More: *Utopia* 62-64.

¹⁰³⁵ Vives: DD, 384: “curam nostram traducamus in populum magis tractabilem, quique se curantis manibus faciliorem atque obsequentiorem praebet.”

¹⁰³⁶ Vives: DD, 384.

¹⁰³⁷ The union of these two was not a new idea. In the pseudo-Plutarchian educational manual *De liberis educandis* the connection and interrelation of a life of *otium* and *negotium* is made quite explicitly, Plutarch: “De liberis educandis”, 10-11.

prudence, and *ingenium*. In addition to their qualities, they should always take their time to think and to develop judgement before the publication of any text, in order to guarantee the absence of an error due to a thought process undertaken hastily or passionately. The error, once it is committed, can potentially have disastrous consequences for succeeding judgements and investigations, causing eternal disputes as Vives had argued before. Furthermore, it is important that those showing judgement in their investigations live “in concord and cordially” as friends, and that they help each other collectively before the publication of any text in order to guarantee the best possibilities for correct judgement.¹⁰³⁸ What Vives is describing here is an idealized version of the culture of dialogue in the world of *verosimilitudo*: the collective procedure used by the members of the Republic of Letters around Erasmus who often sent their works to other members of the trusted community and cultivated friendly discussions targeted toward truth. Thus, independently from the field the wise man chooses to work in, he should always be a member of the realm of concord of the Republic of Letters.

In all of his functions, the prudent man is throughout compared to a degenerated version of the true humanist who bears some external attributes of the wise, but is truly corrupted in the inside. A corrupted courtier is a flatterer, and a corrupted erudite is someone ruled by his passions, and both cause tumult and eternal dispute. Corruption is not, however, something that is treated in opposition to the true nature of prudence, but is also described as a reality of the world that surrounds the erudite – indeed – the very world he has to engage. Vives insists that it is only with his peers that the erudite can discuss questions of right judgement, and the rest of the world –ruled by the passion for glory and fame – should be the object of his prudent teaching. Hence, in the very heart of Vives’s notions of reform based on active citizenry lies the aristocratic, Stoic, and prudent man, who teaches others both with his example and his words – a Socrates or Jesus Christ – two teachers who encapsulate the qualities of a moral orator in *De disciplinis*.¹⁰³⁹

Although the audience of Vives’s proposal might be the entire ruling class of the Low Countries, the way the erudite are portrayed makes a very close link to the scholarly pursuits and reformatory programmes of the Republic of Letters. The civic dimension of the activities of the erudite – although of great importance – is only one way among others of

¹⁰³⁸ Vives: DD, 390: “Docti inter se concorditer ac humanae conversentur.”; Vives: DD, 397: “Posteaquam scripseris ostende iis opus, a quibus recte admoneri te posse confidas, eorumque sententiam attentus ac patienter auscultato, quam tecum aequo animo reputes, ut quae videbuntur corrigas. Quanto satius est ab amico privatim admoneri, quam ab inimico publice obiurgari?”

¹⁰³⁹ The idea of Socrates and Jesus as ideal teachers is omnipresent in *De disciplinis*.

enhancing common good – an activity that is never completely detached from other scholarly aspirations. Moreover, the difference of Vives’s erudite compared to some classical and contemporary models is quite glaring. It has been convincingly argued that the example Vives is appropriating in his *De disciplinis* is Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria* where in Book XII, the Roman orator puts forward a model of the perfect speaker.¹⁰⁴⁰ Quintilian’s orator uses his knowledge, “to guide the counsels of the senate, or lead an erring people into better ways,” drawing heavily from moral philosophy and dialectic. But Quintilian’s man is performing his character primarily in cases of law. He is ever ready to bend truth if the cause requires this. In addition, for him the importance of character lies in avoiding shyness and fear through self-confidence.¹⁰⁴¹ The difference to the Vivesian orator – who contemplates on death, fears his own passions, recognizes the potentially dreadful consequences of eloquence, and sees the world as one of profound and threatening discord – is quite striking. Secondly, of course, *De disciplinis* amounts to a systematic condemnation of the kind of specialists of law that use their expertise for the advantage of the powerful – a specialist that referred to an existing court culture possibly epitomized by Gattinara’s and Wolsey’s use of law for the advantage of their respective states, backed also by professional jurists.¹⁰⁴²

More importantly, the cautious relationship to court culture present throughout *De disciplinis* gives a distinctive framework to the kind of active life Vives is proposing. The Italian discourse was beginning to portray the courtier – the man of *sprezzatura*, and aesthetic *decorum*, capable of securing his place in the court by interiorizing and mastering its manners, ways of speaking, and general culture. The Vivesian erudite, by contrast, bases his authority on a certain distance from courtly life, which for the Valencian humanist represented a world filled with corruption.¹⁰⁴³ The aesthetizing trends, and the shaping of the body of the courtier found in Castiglione, have strong political implications in creating proximity to the prince, yet they are completely absent in Vives. Even where Elyot, in his 1531 *The Book named the Governor*, amply described practices such as hunting, hawking, and dancing, Vives’s intellectual is quite removed from these exercises, mentioned only once in the whole *De disciplinis*, and in very

¹⁰⁴⁰ Vigliano 2013, lxii-lxiii.

¹⁰⁴¹ Quintilian: IO, xii.i.26: “...sed maioribus clarius elucebit, cum regenda senatus consilia et popularis error ad meliora ducendus.”

¹⁰⁴² Vives’s condemnation of Wolsey’s use of law in the divorce process of Henry VIII is one of the instances when this becomes visible.

¹⁰⁴³ The Renaissance metaphor of the theatre was employed by Vives to describe the social creation of fame deemed superficial, unnecessary, and alien to true virtue. See Vives to Erasmus, Allen 21-36.

suspicious terms.¹⁰⁴⁴ But he is not primarily the man of the civic culture of Flanders either: he is an erudite who in his civic pursuits should never abandon academic circles of scholarly Latin, and not the vernacular chambers of rhetoric of Bruges or town administration. His skills and knowledge are put to use primarily in the literary world, not in the oral world of day-to-day politics.

Thus, Vives's prudent man has a somewhat schizophrenic relationship to power and court life. He wishes to be inside – in close proximity to power – without ever truly engaging with all its social codes, and being ever-so afraid for the corruption of his own soul.¹⁰⁴⁵ Vives's prudent man obtains his authority from humanist circles and desires to cure the world of corruption and passion from a certain distance, not to master its social code in order to succeed in it. His prudence and *decorum*, rather, are meant for an orator assessing, directing, and criticising politics – not for the self-fashioning of a courtier or a gentleman. But he does have some specific tools at his disposal that make the use of prudence in civic contexts possible, and two of these – rhetoric and the knowledge of the soul – where to receive deeper treatment in the 1530s.

¹⁰⁴⁴ Elyot, Thomas: *The Boke Named the Governor*, Thomas Berthelet, London 1531, 70; Castiglione, *Il libro del cortegiano*, 41-45; Kristeller 1988, 291-292. For a comparison between the two although with a particular focus on style, see Kennedy 1996. For Castiglione's *sprezzatura* see also Rebhorn 1993; Berger 2000; Kolsky 2003.

¹⁰⁴⁵ This attitude is typical of northern humanism. For More's conflictual relationship with court life, see Headley 2003, 119.

8. Words, Cognition, *Ingenium*

The educational path described in *De tradendis disciplinis* ends with an affirmation of the importance of a life of *negotium* and social utility for a prudent man. The life of social utility can be undertaken through various kinds of activities related to the use of language in teaching, counselling, and a range of scholarly pursuits. Much of Vives's 1530s writings elucidated specific problems linked to these activities, with *De epistolis conscribendis* (1536) focusing on the art of letter writing, *De ratione dicendi* (1532) on the use of rhetoric in a variety of situations, *Exercitatio linguae latinae* (1538) on elementary education, and *De anima et vita* (1538) on the study of mental dispositions, intellect, and passions.¹⁰⁴⁶ In what follows, I will focus on the two works that were most explicitly connected to *De disciplinis*, with a series of intertextual allusions to it – *De ratione dicendi* and *De anima*. Both works offer an analysis of the effects of language on the human mind that could be of useful to the life of *negotium* of a prudent man. Moreover, both partake in the basic tension running through Vives's social and political reflections that lingers between the perfecting and formation of a virtuous character, and on the use of existing dispositions in a more instrumental way. I will argue that this tension remains throughout Vives's 1530s reflection, and that the idea of the inevitability of twisted characters and false judgements on truth grows ever stronger. Thus, social and political life cannot simply be based on the formation of virtuous character through various educational means, but the activities of the prudent have to find ways to subsist in a world where individual difference, passion, and conflict will be present in some form. In the world of discord, *De ratione* provides ways of incorporating the basic duties of oratory in new contexts. *De anima*, for its part, offers the most in-depth look into the functioning of mental procedures – a knowledge that can be of enormous help for Vives's prudent orator or teacher in any quest to understand the mental dispositions he is either reforming or using.

¹⁰⁴⁶ In the chapter, I will use both passion and emotion in order to express what Vives means by *affectus*, *affectio* and *perturbatio*. Although Vives subscribes to a distinction between ethical emotions and harmful passions, he does not systematically employ different words to make the distinction. When Vives employs *affectus* in clearly negative sense, passion is preferred whereas emotion is used for constructive emotions.

Finding Ways to Persuade, *De ratione dicendi*

Considering the scope and quality of Vives's rhetorical writings, it is surprising that his main rhetorical work *De ratione dicendi* has not been the subject of any large-scale scholarly interest.¹⁰⁴⁷ What has been pointed out in the few excellent analyses of the work is Vives's yearning for originality, his insistence on the importance of the general notion of *decorum* to detriment of more specific advice, his expansion of the category of elocution to cover more than tropes and figures, his categorization of a large number of styles – replacing the three traditional ones – and finally, his attempt to set aside the three classical genres of judicial, deliberative, and demonstrative rhetoric.¹⁰⁴⁸ Peter Mack has also emphasized Vives's general urge to adapt rhetorical theory for a new context – something clearly visible in the expansion of the category of genre in the Part three where a number of non-traditional rhetorical genres – led by history – get their own treatment.¹⁰⁴⁹ On a different note, Hidalgo-Serna has argued that *De ratione dicendi* is, “the inevitable answer to the linguistic and cognitive necessity to conceptualize artfully [with *ingenium*] what is relative and indiscernible for the eye of reason,” placing the work more in the tradition of the creative philosophy of *ingenium* than in the discourse of classical rhetoric of the time.¹⁰⁵⁰ In what follows, I will not assess the place of *De ratione* primarily in the internal history of rhetoric, but I will discuss it together with Vives's social and political thought. I will show that some of the modifications in rhetorical theory described by Mack can be seen as a continuum of Vives's larger programme of adapting rhetorical theory to new circumstances, where persuasion should be undertaken through various measures by the prudent orator. I do not claim that this is the only feature of *De ratione*, and I do not want to sustain that Vives's presentation is systematic, or particularly clear or successful. However, I do argue that one feature of *De ratione dicendi* is it presents all the traditional duties of oratory dealing with persuasion, but claims that they should be incorporated into new, more contemporary, and less adversarial genres, and in relatively flexible ways. In this way, adversity and discord can be built into genres and modes of writing and talking that never break the public image of concord. Thus, *De ratione* can be read as a counterpart to the problem over the use of

¹⁰⁴⁷ The only larger study focusing on *De ratione dicendi* is Cooney's dissertation defended in 1966 and entitled *De ratione dicendi: a Treatise on rhetoric by Juan Luis Vives*. Recently the most significant contributions have been George 1992; Rodríguez Peregrina 1996; Mack 2005; Mack 2008.

¹⁰⁴⁸ He strongly defends the development of new styles in his *De disciplinis* as well. See Vives: DD, 140-141.

¹⁰⁴⁹ Mack 2008, 263, 274; George 1992, 166-171.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Hidalgo-Serna 2002, xxxviii.

rhetoric as it was presented in *De disciplinis*.

All the developments described by Mack, and the partial lack of specific examples in *De ratione* turn it into a somewhat strange rhetorical work because of its complex structure and differences vis-à-vis the existing corpus, which might explain its rather modest successes in the market for rhetorical handbooks.¹⁰⁵¹ Consequently, Vives's *De ratione* cannot be situated in the long tradition of simplification and visualization of rhetorical theory, described famously by Walter Ong in his *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue: From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason*. Unlike the tradition culminating in Petrus Ramus that aspired to clear organization, Vives has very little faith in a closed and manageable set of categories for realizing the duties of rhetoric, which in truth led to a complication of some basic points of rhetorical theory.¹⁰⁵² The fact that the work is pronouncedly non-practical and unsuitable for elementary education, however, might have a distinctive reason in Vives's own mind. Already Mayans y Siscar noticed that Vives's *De ratione* was meant for those acquainted with the arts and sciences, and not for elementary education – something that is picked up by Bonilla.¹⁰⁵³ If one takes into account that in *De disciplinis* a knowledge of things guaranteed by dialectical learning actually precedes rhetorical education, and that Vives's *De disciplinis* heavily criticises rhetorical invention based on a collection of commonplaces, it might be inferred that Vives's aim is not to write a simple handbook on the art of eloquence in the first place. Despite the presence of certain genres related to school exercises in Part three, Vives's *De ratione* effectively represents a glaring complication of rhetorical theory, something that should be avoided in any practical handbook of rhetoric where it would be important to keep the categorization relatively simple. Thus, *De ratione* does not provide a clear-cut entry through a few easily approachable categories to rhetoric for young schoolboys because it is not meant to do that in the first place. Rather, *De ratione*'s more general focus on *decorum* heavily suggests that it aspires to advice those already familiar with the traditional framework of rhetoric found in Roman handbooks, who know their dialectical invention, and who can already be considered experienced and prudent – one of the preconditions for an entry to the secrets of persuasion already in *De disciplinis*.

But one does not have to interpret all the implications of *De ratione* in the light

¹⁰⁵¹ It was printed three times in the 1530s. In 1533 in Louvain, in 1536 in Basel, and in 1537 in Cologne. The existing scholarship agrees that the work was not very successful, Mack 2008, 275; González González 2007, 98-99.

¹⁰⁵² Existing scholarship has often noticed this, see Noreña 1986; George 1992, 157.

¹⁰⁵³ Bonilla y San Martín 1903, 398. George has also noticed this, see George 1992, 154.

of Vives's other works in order to claim that *De ratione* is not meant for elementary education, since the Spaniard himself explicitly argues this in the preface. Once again, he starts by claiming that two things form the bonds of societies, justice and language, and that language is the stronger and more influential for humans, since it draws the minds of all men unto itself, and dominates the passions. Thus, whereas justice appeals only to those of appropriate minds, language can potentially cover all men with its immense power.¹⁰⁵⁴ After presenting the capacities of rhetoric for good and bad, Vives proceeds to criticise heavily those who believe that rhetoric should be taught straight after grammar in the educational ladder, by arguing that this would be a way of disassociating rhetoric from a substantial knowledge of *res*. After making the link to dialectical argumentation, he finishes by claiming that if one wants to get something useful out of rhetoric, it should not be studied by young boys, and adults who are ignorant of, "all arts, customs, laws, passions of the soul, experience of all civil and human life."¹⁰⁵⁵ In short, Vives reaffirms the position taken in *De disciplinis* that rhetoric is meant for the experienced and prudent – not for elementary education.

The treatise is divided into three parts, the first of which is dedicated to the abundance of style and knowledge of words, the second to further questions of style and elocution, duties of the orator, *decorum*, and disposition, with the third part being organized around different genres. Out of the three books, it is mainly in the Parts two and three that Vives focuses on the aspects of rhetorical theory that truly deal with the persuasive possibilities of rhetoric in a relevant manner. In Part three, organized around the genres of eloquence, Vives introduces rather drastic modifications into the very core of rhetorical theory, doing away with the three traditional genres of the art of eloquence – namely judicial, deliberative, and demonstrative. Their place in Vives's treatment is taken by genres that either teach about things (*res*) – namely description, probable narration, history, apologues, fables, and poetic fictions, – or teach about words (*verba*) – including paraphrase, epitome, explication, commentary, and

¹⁰⁵⁴ Vives: DR, 3: "Qui humanae consociationis vinculum dixerunt esse iustitiam et sermonem, hi nimirum acute inspexerunt vim ingenii humani, quorum duorum sermo certe fortiori est ac validior inter homines, propterea quod iustitia, ut mitis & blanda, in solis mentibus recte ac probe instituta aliquid impetrat iuris; sermo autem & mentes ad se allicit, & in affectibus dominatur, quorum in totum hominem impotens est regnum, & praegrave." Vives's use of justice here refers to it more in the general spirit of *aequitas* and natural law than positive law since he underlines the fact that it binds only men who already judge rightly. Moreover, it is described as soft whereas coercive positive law in *De disciplinis* is portrayed as strong.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Vives: DR, 7: "His iactis fundamentis discenda est Rhetorice, si quem illius exercitationis fructum cupimus, non in pueritia vel adolescentia, in ruditate illa artium omnium, morum, legum, affectuum animi, consuetudinis vitae civilis ac humanae."

translation.¹⁰⁵⁶

There are certainly a number of rather diverse reasons for opting for these genres. Description and narration in themselves do not necessarily constitute fully-fledged genres, but offer insight into one of the basic duties of the orator, which is to create static and temporal mental pictures in a way that can be applied to almost all other genres mentioned here. Some other genres, such as fables, reflect closely the kind of exercises a pupil would face in an educational context, and are thus of practical use since their connection to *progymnasmata* and rhetorical tasks proposed by Vives himself in *De disciplinis* is quite evident – although they could potentially be activated for other purposes as well.¹⁰⁵⁷ Others, moreover, reflect a transformation in the use of rhetoric and writing in an exceedingly literary world. Thus, the sections on commentary and translation, to take an example, describe the basic humanist tools of the philological project of regaining and adapting the tradition of classical antiquity to Renaissance context. Furthermore, the seminal importance given to history as an ethical genre of teaching through *exempla*, constituted a key humanist genre in the early sixteenth-century princely context, as epitomized by Thomas More's *History of Richard III* – a critique of tyranny written in the form of a history. Unsurprisingly, Vives's depiction of history underlines, among other things, its potentially moral nature and describes the kind of oration included in histories as being political.¹⁰⁵⁸

Since Vives's description in the Part three disregards traditional genres of eloquence as cornerstones of rhetorical theory, what is effectively missing in *De ratione* is the presence of deliberative or adversarial rhetoric as a distinctive genre of the art of elocution. When assessing this, it should however be borne in mind that Vives's *De consultatione*, printed in 1533 together with *De ratione*, is indeed partly based on deliberative rhetoric traditionally centred on considerations of the good (*honestum*) and the useful (*utile*). *De consultatione* is essentially a handbook for counselling that tries to incorporate theory from deliberative rhetoric into a context that is pronouncedly different.¹⁰⁵⁹ Moreover, Vives's *Declamationes syllanae* had already witnessed a remarkable understanding of how to place precepts drawn from different rhetorical genres – judicial, deliberative, and demonstrative – into a coherent whole in a manner

¹⁰⁵⁶ For a similar categorization of different genres, see George 1992, 166.

¹⁰⁵⁷ In *De consultatione*, Vives discusses the use of fictional fables as a non-adversary genre that can be useful for the counsellor in approaching the prince, see Chapter four.

¹⁰⁵⁸ Vives: DR, 192: "Oratio, atque orationis sensa erunt plane politica: cuiusmodi esse solent senum, in republica prudentum."

¹⁰⁵⁹ See Chapter three.

that effectively blurs the strict lines between the three. Vives's letter writing manual *De conscribendis epistolis* too incorporated some of the theory of epideictic rhetoric into its overall structure in order to be able to denounce vice, and praise virtue in those who are superior to oneself.¹⁰⁶⁰ More generally, one of Vives's main points about rhetoric throughout his work is that the duties and precepts of oratory can be very flexibly realized in a number of genres, and adversity is indeed present in *De ratione* despite the absence of explicit adversarial genres. What Vives is essentially doing throughout *De ratione* is incorporating the theory of persuasion found in classical tradition into circumstances that do not necessarily favour open and symmetric confrontation – so crucial to deliberative and judicial genres. It is indicative of this that in his later *De anima* – openly meant to be in an intertextual dialogue with his other works – Vives writes, “we give our consent more easily to a simple fable than to arguments prepared for a fight and for competition. And for this reason rhetoric is more useful than dialectic for inspiring confidence in the people, as we have shown elsewhere.”¹⁰⁶¹ This, however, does not mean that adversity and conflict are absent from Vives's understanding of discussion and rhetoric – quite on the contrary.

This is glaringly visible in the second part of *De ratione* where the duties of an orator (*offici*) are thoroughly treated. The second part starts with an extensive description of a number of issues related to the selection of correct style built around the classical metaphor of discourse as human body found in Cicero.¹⁰⁶² This metaphor aspires to explain the elements of a beautiful oration as to its body and soul.¹⁰⁶³ A decisive turn takes place, however, in the Part 11 of the second book dedicated to the dignity of an oration (*dignitas*), where Vives informs the reader that henceforth the focus will not be on the separate instruments of a discourse, but on the adaptation of these to different tasks under the guidance of prudence.¹⁰⁶⁴ What follows, before Vives moves on to the different duties (*officium*) of rhetoric, is yet another staunch defence of the necessity of persuasion. Once again, Vives argues that language was given to men in order to communicate one's thoughts transparently to others, and that this would have

¹⁰⁶⁰ Vives: “De conscribendis epistolis”, 16-17.

¹⁰⁶¹ Vives: DA, 77: “Quocirca promptius fabellae consentimus simpliciter narratae, quam argumentis ex praeparato ad pugna, certamenque instructis: eoque ad fidem vulgo faciendam utilior est rhetorica, quam dialectica, uti est a nobis alio loco demonstratum.” Dialectic refers here to *disputatio*.

¹⁰⁶² Cicero: *De oratore*, iii, lii.199.

¹⁰⁶³ Vives: DR, 66-103. This part describes an abundance of qualities of oration discussing their suitability to different persons, times, subjects and persons.

¹⁰⁶⁴ Vives: DR, 106: “Hactenus exposita sunt nobis atque ostensa instrumenta artis. Iam deinceps operi accomodari conveniet. Quae actio quoniam prudentiae pars est....”

indeed been enough in a world of pure and simple communication where everyone could have expressed their minds directly and nobody would have suspected that they lied.¹⁰⁶⁵ But in the world of sin, this harmony and trust of concord ceased to work, and instruments of persuasion were searched for instead. Thus, in the current state there are two modes of persuasion: one appeals to reason whereas the other speaks to the immensely powerful passions that must be activated when reason is not enough.¹⁰⁶⁶ It is the second mode of persuasion he is dealing with in *De ratione dicendi*, which is dedicated to rhetoric.

After the dignity of the discourse, Vives moves on to the goals of the discourse and the orator, which he thinks are four. The first of these is teaching (*docere*), and it belongs to the discourse itself, whereas the three others are strictly speaking the duties of the orator. These three are: persuading or proving, moving, and what he prefers to call retaining (*detinendi*), and not delighting. This last point emphasizes the fact that rhetoric should never be only about pleasure but that retaining should only serve the duty to teach.¹⁰⁶⁷ After presenting his basic view on teaching, which describes ways of making oneself understood, Vives moves on to a large presentation of persuasion, dealing with ways, “of making the other believe what we want him to believe.”¹⁰⁶⁸ The Valencian starts by affirming, very much in the vein of *De consultatione*, that there are things that persuade without words – the most important being the integrity of life.

As to the persuasive elements of the discourse (*oratio*) itself, Vives moves quickly to the presentation of the *stasis* theory, strong in the Greek and Byzantine traditions, through which the exact point of disagreement in a question can be reconstructed.¹⁰⁶⁹ This is of some importance since the finality of each persuasive task can only be fixed in relation to the main status of the question – the point on which the disagreement depends. What is presupposed in the exposition of question is adversity, whether it is a real disagreement with an existing adversary or with an imagined opponent, against whom we argue in our own head, as Vives writes.¹⁰⁷⁰ Thus, under the treatment of status, he situates questions explicitly dealing with

¹⁰⁶⁵ Vives: DR, 106: “Hoc solum suffecisset in natura illa integra, & qualis e manibus artificis sui prodiit, scilicet in claritate illa ingeniorum, & quisque facile esset, quacunq; voluisset, elocutus, & audiens liquido intellexisset, tum in tanta animorum probitate ac simplicitate, et dicens recta exprompsisset, quae sentiebat, & audiens habuisset fidem ei quem suspicatus non esset mentiri.”

¹⁰⁶⁶ Vives: DR, 107.

¹⁰⁶⁷ Vives: DR, 108-109, 130.

¹⁰⁶⁸ Vives: DR, 111: “Persuadere, est efficere, ut credat quis, id quod volumus.”

¹⁰⁶⁹ Vives: DR, 112-114. For *stasis* theory in the Byzantine tradition, see Monfasani 1976, 250-252.

¹⁰⁷⁰ Vives: DR, 112: “Quam enim rem duo contra dicentes ambigam faciunt, ea est quaestio, & velut scopus, sive re vera sit adversarius propositus, sive animo fingendus.”

deliberative, forensic, and even demonstrative rhetoric, which often, according to Vives, can be something more than a mere exposition of facts if the ultimate goal of the discourse is to persuade.¹⁰⁷¹ The inclusion of the demonstrative genre as a place where debatable questions can be found is very revealing: the question at stake is not necessarily an explicitly stated one, but can be based on one's assessment of the point on which the possibilities of persuasion hang. Thus, even in seemingly non-adversarial genres there might be a hidden question related to the hearer's world of ideas, and to what the speaker is aiming to achieve with his discourse.

After the presentation of the status of the question, Vives moves on to persons, arguing that one has to consider, "who you are arguing against, and who you yourself are," and progresses to discuss different kinds of asymmetrical situations.¹⁰⁷² What follows is a description of the different strategies for refuting adversaries' arguments, depending on their quality. From the analysis of the adversary, Vives moves on to the different ways in which the hearer can be persuaded, underlining heavily the advantages of speaking in a manner that hides the adversarial nature of one's rhetoric. True, those who do not mind being beaten in an argument, like students, can be openly attacked, but to "those who resist" one has to speak in a manner that "does not create the impression that we fight them."¹⁰⁷³ Vives discusses more open strategies where fighting is not suppressed, and argues that this can be especially useful when, "we are not persuading the one we are arguing against, but those who are present," but much of the emphasis is on the different ways of hiding confrontation.¹⁰⁷⁴ Throughout the section on persuasion, Vives never forgets to stress that the words we are using should also be adapted to the understanding of the one we are persuading.

In this section much of the key issues of adversary rhetoric are explicitly treated, and although the part is detached from the traditional genres of adversary rhetoric, some theory for treating deliberative and judicial questions is presented. Despite of this, *De ratione dicendi* gives the reader the impression that whenever there is a question of any sort in which differing opinions can be presented explicitly or in the mind of the audience, then all the precepts offered can be activated in a flexible manner. One can thus imagine that highly debatable opinions can be introduced in a veiled form into a variety of genres that avoid open confrontation, yet aspire to achieve persuasion. All this plays a role in what Vives says about passions and emotions in

¹⁰⁷¹ Vives: DR, 111-114.

¹⁰⁷² Vives: DR, 114: "Intuendum diligenter [...] contra quem dicas, & tu qui sis."

¹⁰⁷³ Vives: DR, 116: "ad eos, qui repugnant, ita dicendum, ut nihil videare minus quam praeliari...."

¹⁰⁷⁴ Vives: DR, 118: "licebit etiam aperte adhiberi artem contra adversarium, si non tam illi persuadere quippiam contendis, ut iis, qui adsunt."

De ratione.

The section on passions and emotions entitled, *De movendis affectibus*, presents a dual categorization of emotions as good ones, borne out of love, and bad ones stemming from hatred, and, despite some ethical *ethos* and deep reservations about destructive passions, presents ways of dealing with both. Vives argues that since original sin men begin to love themselves so much that they are unjust judges of their own qualities, and consequently extremely prone to destructive passions vis-à-vis others – a reason for which it is easy to activate harmful passions born out of hatred (*odium*).¹⁰⁷⁵ The use of constructive emotions, born of love, for its part, demands more skill and art in the current corrupted state of man. The most general and the most important advice Vives gives to the reader is that one should analyse as thoroughly as possible the mind of the one we are persuading, and, if possible, “find out his mentality and character,” while considering the question and arranging the material. In analysing thoroughly the passionate dispositions of the audience towards different objects, one can reconstruct the basic attitudes one is using or potentially changing through one’s own discourse. Moreover, one should consider the kind of things that would raise the hearer’s passion or emotion in concrete cases.¹⁰⁷⁶

Passions hold an intermediate position between the mind and the body. Since they are, however, slightly closer to the corporeal, they are better stimulated through “singular cases” than universal ones, since the particular is closer to one’s immediate senses.¹⁰⁷⁷ This kind of a truly emotional speech has to draw from a great abundance of places, proceeding very swiftly through the discourse, and it does not lead to great harm if the arguments presented are somewhat mixed and confused. Vives is adamant in his demand that the use of passion and emotion he is talking about should hide this art cleverly, since one does not have to fight with a passion openly, but draw it from its hiding place and use it with skill and artfulness.¹⁰⁷⁸ The whole section underlines the duty of the one using passions to be a true master of them, to play them with a subtlety that goes unnoticed by the one used, and that circumvents open confrontation.

After a short treatment on the art of holding the hearer’s attention, Vives moves

¹⁰⁷⁵ Vives: DR, 119-121.

¹⁰⁷⁶ Vives: DR, 121: “Invenda mens illorum, & totum ingenium, tantisper, dum quae ad rem nostram faciant, excogitamus...” The verb used here is *invenio* referring to rhetorical *inventio*. What is suggested here is exactly what Vives’s *De consultatione* had realized in its precepts for deliberations.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Vives: DR, 123: “...ideoque rebus singularibus celerius, quam universalibus...”

¹⁰⁷⁸ Vives: DR, 123-130.

on to the last and by far the most extensive part of the second book dedicated to *decorum*. It is in the treatment of *decorum* that all the separate parts of rhetorical theory come together. This is because *decorum* decides the correct balance of viewpoints in particular cases – taking into consideration a number of contextual elements. As Mack has argued, Vives’s treatment of *decorum* is rare, and by the far the most extensive since classical antiquity.¹⁰⁷⁹ Among other things, it testifies to a typically Vivesian attitude to a simplistic theory of rhetoric where separate elements could be used for producing certain specific outcomes. This is essentially the ultimate message Vives wants to convey, irrespective of all individual elements: “every active action has what puts it in motion, and every passive action has its goal; all instruments of rhetoric have to be adapted to these.”¹⁰⁸⁰ More concretely, *decorum* could be seen as the guiding principle for the arrangement and proper use of all the material of elocution, style, sentences, words, arguments, and a number of other issues treated in other parts of the work, and it is only partially united to the traditional exposition of the right arrangement of oration (*dispositio*). This very general notion of *decorum* has visible links to a number of issues in *De ratione*.

First, the whole section on *decorum* is closely tied to the concept of prudence, which links to all questions of practical wisdom, moral philosophy and the hierarchy of the *trivium* as they were presented in *De disciplinis*. The close intertextuality with *De disciplinis* is perceivable on a number of occasions; in relation to the adaptation of arguments into different contexts Vives argues for instance, “these things have been exposed in the treatments on probability and first philosophy.” accentuating the link between dialectic and rhetoric.¹⁰⁸¹ With this respect, the more specifically rhetorical virtue of *decorum* is ultimately subjected to the more general ethical virtue of *prudentia* – practical wisdom. *Prudentia* should guide what the ultimate balance of *decorum* can be. As a matter of fact, and witnessing the integral union between the two, Vives argued explicitly in his *De conscribendis* that all invention, not only epistolary, ultimately stems from prudence even though the overall treatment could be said to fall under notions of *decorum*.¹⁰⁸² More generally, the humanist urge to unite *decorum*, prudence and the duty of *docere*, has been noted by scholarship. Victoria Kahn has argued for

¹⁰⁷⁹ Mack 2005, 84.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Vives: DR, 134: “Porro actio quaecunque agens habet, a quo, & patiens, in quod proficiscitur; istis aptanda sunt instrumenta huius artis.”

¹⁰⁸¹ Vives: DR, 134-135: “Quum ergo dicimus, haec sunt cogitanda omnia, dicens, audiens, locus, tempus & materia, seu res, de quibus dicitur. In his sunt illa omnia, qua exposita sunt in tractatu probabilitatis, & prima philosophia....”

¹⁰⁸² Vives: “De conscribendis epistolis”, 4: “Initio illud praefandum est, inventionem omnem non solum epistolae, verum cuiuscunque alterius generis sermonis orationisve, ut etiam in his quae loquimur, haud penitus artis esse, sed prudentiae: quae paritus ex ingenio, memoria, iudicio atque usu rerum....”

a very close connection of oratorical *decorum* to some standard of ethical prudence. According to Kahn, inborn disposition or innate ideas found in the classical tradition were invoked in order to highlight the close of connection of ethics, prudence, and *decorum* in Aristotle and Cicero – as well as in Erasmus’s practices of writing and reading. Cicero, in his *Orator*, drew an analogy between prudence in life and *decorum* in oratory, arguing that they shared the same general rule that consisted in considering propriety, and discussed *decorum* together with moral goodness in his *De officiis*.¹⁰⁸³

Yet, *decorum* itself clearly refers to the specific use of prudence in the domain of rhetoric in *De ratione*. Very generally, in classical rhetoric *decorum* could refer to the organic unity of an oration, to a beauty derived from the right proportions of all its constitutive parts in relation to the duties of oratory, audience, and the matter at hand – something taken up by Vives in *De ratione*.¹⁰⁸⁴ Many of Vives’s conceptual distinctions in this part draw from the most exhaustive classical treatment of *decorum* found in Quintilian’s *Institutio*’s eleventh book starting with the most general categorization of *decorum* as dealing with the speaker, the recipient, the place, and the time.¹⁰⁸⁵ In *Institutio*, Quintilian had also made the point about the centrality of *decorum* as a general guiding principle for the selection of rhetorical instruments.¹⁰⁸⁶ What is lacking in Vives, however, is the specific stress on judicial cases that covers the last part of Quintilian’s treatment, giving Vives’s account an even stronger appearance of generality detached from a particular style or genre of rhetoric. Despite this, what he shares with the Roman orator is an understanding of *decorum* that always points towards fulfilling the duties of oratory, ultimately facilitating persuasion. In fact, the organization of Vives’s earlier *De consultatione* could be read as an example of applied rhetoric where most of the issues described under the heading of *decorum* were given a more specific form in the genre of counselling. Thus, just like in Quintilian, *decorum* is a way to think about the particularities of situations, but only insofar as it helps the speaker perform his tasks of moving, delighting, teaching, and ultimately, of persuading. Rather than forming part of the tradition of later sixteenth-century civilized discussion where conflict and adversity is played down, *decorum* is the most general tool through which right tone, arguments, and style for the purposes set are

¹⁰⁸³ Cicero: *De officiis*, i.xxvii-xxviii; Kahn 1985, 31.

¹⁰⁸⁴ Cicero: *De officiis*, i.xxvii-xxviii; Cicero: “Orator” (trans. Hubbell), 297-509 in Cicero: *Brutus – Orator*; Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1939, xxi.70-71.

¹⁰⁸⁵ Quintilian: IO, xi.i.

¹⁰⁸⁶ Quintilian: IO, xi.i.1: “est cura ut dicamus apte [...] quaequae est meo quidem iudicio maxime necessaria.”

chosen.¹⁰⁸⁷ Inside these parameters, it might be of utmost importance to hide adversity but only because it provides the most effective way to achieve one's ends. Vives's *decorum* is, thus, a form of prudence that is intrinsically bound up with the most classical duties of rhetoric that cannot be confined in a closed set of precepts – a point Erasmus also made in his most extensive discussion on *decorum* in his *Ecclesiastes*.¹⁰⁸⁸

This kind of adversity can of course be interpreted in various ways in different texts. The most general idea is that there is an adversity to overcome whenever there is a possible counter argument explicitly stated, or merely imagined. The adversity described in *De ratione* has at some points connotations that go way beyond rhetoric understood as a confrontation between merely two or more conflicting opinions. Vives's emphasis on prudent men as doctors of the soul throughout his written work underline often that this is an adversity between truth and error, cure and disease, good and bad, reason and passion, or even piety and sin. The point is simply that non-adversarial-genres and modes can often get things done in a more effective way.¹⁰⁸⁹ What is more, the change in genres can link to the upholding of concord in further fruitful ways. When the duties of oratory are embedded in pronouncedly non-adversarial genres, rhetoric combines a claim for concord with a strong call for persuasive speech. This is because non-adversary genres both recognize and reproduce existing hierarchies and status quo while simultaneously offering possibilities of persuasion inside that framework.¹⁰⁹⁰ This is an important point indeed in Vives's mind, and presents a partial answer to the problem of rhetoric in republics and monarchies in *De disciplinis*. Republics were highly susceptible because they presented a culture nurturing discord, whereas in monarchies language had ceased to be of any importance. In *De ratione* discord functions largely inside concord: it is only under the surface of concord that questions of discord are negotiated. Here one has to remember that one of Vives's main points throughout *De disciplinis* and *De ratione* – clearly visible in the selection of genres – is that rhetorical persuasion is not merely directed to action in contexts where decision making is involved; rhetoric is present in most language uses some of which frame expectations on a much more general level.¹⁰⁹¹ One can also think of Erasmian dialogues that do not necessarily lead to action, but are staged as curing the mind, a great

¹⁰⁸⁷ The tradition of courtly civility and civilized discussion focused on *decorum* as an aesthetic concept crucial for the self-fashioning of a courtier, see Peltonen 2003, 22-23.

¹⁰⁸⁸ Mack 2011, 101-102.

¹⁰⁸⁹ Vives: DR, 116.

¹⁰⁹⁰ George has argued that *De pacificatione* is an example of rhetoric of submission that does not aspire to power but to concord, see George 2000. In *De ratione*, these two are definitely not exclusionary.

¹⁰⁹¹ Vives: DD, 140-141.

example of which is *Ciceronianus*, where the position defended by Nosoponus – the spokesperson for strict Ciceronian imitation – is systematically described as sickness. More generally, one can think of all Erasmian literature in general that aims at transformation. But as *De consultatione*, printed together with *De ratione* three times in the 1530s clearly shows, one crucial aspect of rhetorical theory deals with deliberations in the court context where open discourse should also be avoided.

What is more, unlike in discussions (*sermo*), in rhetoric (*oratio*), the negotiation is predominantly one-way traffic. The prudent man harnesses all his knowledge on the question and dispositions of the audience to achieve what he has set as his goal. In fact, despite the presence of some *stasis* theory, *De ratione* is not very helpful for inventing arguments or analysing particular questions. It rather focuses on elocution as a place where arguments can be given a persuasive form starting from the analysis of a range of contextual phenomena and especially the qualities of the audience. The prudent man employing the selection of genres and strategies of *De ratione* for the communication of truth is a humanist scholar of Vives's mould, drawing from a variety of literary – even academic – genres in his rhetorical activities. It is true that while the treatment of emotions draws heavily from oral rhetoric, no thorough distinction between the emotional possibilities of oral and literary rhetoric is ever made in *De ratione*. However, the classification of genres reveals a deep interest in the possibilities of literary rhetoric and *De ratione* could indeed be more useful for a scholar writing in non-adversarial genres who aims at persuasion than to an oral speaker in the institutional context of the court or the General Estates.

One of the main trends of Vives's *De ratione* is an emphasis on the general nature of rhetoric stemming from prudence, and *decorum* that cannot be condensed into any set of closed precepts. The notion of prudence, however, was often intrinsically linked to an understanding of the mind of the audience, and on taking their world of ideas as the point of departure in the selection of style and arguments. But ultimately the understanding of the audience for the successful performance of the duties of oratory was an interpretation of the mental processes of his mind – of the ways in which judgements were made and the will moved. This strong emphasis on the mind of the recipient was one of the reasons why *De ratione* explicitly referred back to the knowledge of *De anima*, to an understanding of how the mental procedures of human mind worked, and how judgements came about.¹⁰⁹²

¹⁰⁹² In writing about man's dispositions for attention and benevolence, he refers explicitly to *De anima*. Vives: DR,

Studying the Mind in *De anima*. Reason, Judgement, and the Will

If *De ratione dicendi* is a somewhat understudied text, this most certainly is not the case with *De anima*, which has been claimed to be the precursor of modern psychology in a number of twentieth-century interpretations.¹⁰⁹³ More recently, its significance for western thought and empirical psychology has been praised, but some more historically minded studies have emerged. In these, the focus has not been on understanding the work primarily as a precursor of later developments on the study of the soul and psychology, but on placing *De anima* in the context of some form of contemporary intellectual discourse. The scholarship of Mario Sancipriano, Carlos Noreña, Valerio del Nero and Lorenzo Casini has shed light on the connections of *De anima* to the traditional discussion on the soul – in its medieval and classical forms – with all four agreeing on the fundamental principle that we should read *De anima* in relation to its historical precedents. There is some divergence, however, about what exactly the right context for reading Vives should be.¹⁰⁹⁴

All four have insisted in one way or another on the traditional point that Vives's *De anima* participates in the timeless questions of the soul from the point of view of a moralist and educational writer.¹⁰⁹⁵ As all scholars have noticed, throughout the work one can perceive a strong urge to guide the discussion away from metaphysical considerations of the soul to a

161: "Caeterum quae sunt attentions et benevolentiae, ea vero non sunt loci huius, sed tractationis de anima." In the part on the moving of emotions and passions Vives also writes that proper treatment of emotions belongs to a treatment of the soul (*De anima*), Vives: DR, 119, "Quorum omnium exactior tractatio, non est loci huius, sed propria librorum de Anima." Even though *De anima* was printed only in 1538, the allusions to a book on the soul in *De ratione* and *De disciplinis* indicate that Vives was already working on *De anima* at the turn of the 1530s.

¹⁰⁹³ The idea was possibly coined by Foster Watson in his article entitled "The Father of Modern Psychology" published in 1915. Sancipriano also underlines the originality of the work Sancipriano 1957, 5-7, 87. Noreña has also supported this idea to a certain extent, Noreña 1970, 290-291. Abellán calls this interpretation "totally justified", Abellán 1986, 114. Ijsewijn also reproduces the idea, see Ijsewijn 1988, 196.

¹⁰⁹⁴ Casini has emphasized the continuum from Middle Ages to the Renaissance whereas Noreña and Del Nero have focused more although not exclusively on its classical and humanist context, see Casini 2006, 11-12; Noreña 1989, 71-80, 99-100; Del Nero 2008b, 279-280. Sancipriano also argues that Vives should not be read only as a precursor of later philosophy, but as an innovative reader of Aristotle and Galen who is compared to Amerbach and Melanchthon among other sixteenth century writers on the soul, see Sancipriano 1957, 125.

¹⁰⁹⁵ Casini 2006, 16 "In order to emphasize the complexities of our intellectual and emotional life, he avoided the systematic rigidity of scholastic philosophy, preferring a looser descriptive approach, which, in the opinion of William Dilthey, marks the transition from metaphysical to descriptive and analytic psychology." 19 "It is also in light of this fact that Vives's constant effort to understand human nature not as a metaphysician but as a moralist and a pedagogue should be understood."; Noreña 1970, 255; Noreña 1989, 93: "Here, as on other occasions, the reader has the overwhelming impression that Vives was much more interested in those operations of the soul that are directly or indirectly related to the study of man's emotional and moral life than in those operations that are more relevant to a speculative theory of knowledge." Del Nero 2008b, 284-285. Dilthey saw the work as a major contribution to analytic and empirical psychology, Dilthey 1977, 423-429. The practical dimension of the work is emphasized in Ebbesmeyer 2013, 291.

more descriptive and humanist approach. Yet, even though there are numerous links to questions of ethics, politics and, the private sphere, how exactly the connection from the problematic around the soul to moral and social thought works is not always spelled out. Here, as usual, Vives himself can partly be blamed, since despite the numerous and almost omnipresent hints at the importance of the analysis of the soul for prudence, education, judgement and ethics – the way in which this connection is supposed to function – is never explicitly expounded. Moreover, the eclectic nature of the work should never be forgotten: it does indeed partake in discussions that are of purely metaphysical nature, and somewhat eclectically moves across traditions that have seemingly little to do with one another. Some of this is because a treatment of the soul was supposed to cover all issues relevant to a set of questions as they appeared in the tradition. Thus, rather than being a book built around one overarching argument, it is a work based on constant discussion with the existing tradition on a variety of points that are at times only loosely related to each other. It is symptomatic that under the heading of a single emotion, one can move from a definition of an emotion to its physiology and to a description of its empirical manifestations in a relatively loose and unorganized way.

The presence of very traditional elements, stemming from the medieval developments around Aristotle's corpus as well as from some sixteenth-century metaphysical discussions has been acknowledged by modern scholarship.¹⁰⁹⁶ The Aristotelian framework of the work is quite evident: the basic tripartite division of the soul into vegetative, nutritive, and intellectual corresponds to Aristotle's categorization in his *De anima*, and much of the vocabulary employed is from the toolbox of the Aristotelian tradition. Moreover, Aristotle's *De anima* – embedded in the institutional framework and especially in the curricula of the Faculties of Arts throughout Europe – had given the initial push to various problems regarding the soul that could not be easily circumvented.¹⁰⁹⁷ In Aristotle's treatise, the soul was defined as the formal cause of all animated beings – blurring any clear-cut distinctions between psychology and biology. This made the emergence of all kinds of conceptual problems related in different ways to the relationship of the body and the soul possible. These problems were discussed in the Middle Ages, and in the Renaissance, and is a feature not absent from Vives either.¹⁰⁹⁸

Not all questions on the soul were investigated in a theological and metaphysical vacuum. The problem of intellect and intellection contributed to the theory of knowledge in the

¹⁰⁹⁶ Casini 2006, 18-23; Noreña 1989, 71-72.

¹⁰⁹⁷ Park – Kessler 1990, 456.

¹⁰⁹⁸ Park – Kessler 1990, 455.

late medieval context, and the discussion arising from the material basis of human soul so much emphasized by Aristotle lead to a number of specific problems. The most pressing one was that of the immortality of the soul – widely discussed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries – a problem that could be linked both to the possible material extension and to the individual nature of the soul. At the heart of the problem, there lay a potential conflict between two roles of the intellect soul. It could be the individual form of a man on the one hand, but it simultaneously had to partake in universal knowledge that was of general nature. How to account for the unity of intellection and the individuality of the soul was a pressing question indeed, and in 1513 the Fifth Lateran Council gave a declaration according to which the soul was immortal yet infused individually – a position that could be proven philosophically and that should be defended by everyone. In the aftermath of the Council, Pietro Pomponazzi famously argued – initiating a heated debate – that the immortality of the soul was a purely revealed truth by sustaining that all intellection was intrinsically linked to matter and physiology, and that, hence, there was no rational basis to believe that the soul does not die with the body.¹⁰⁹⁹ In addition to the theological and metaphysical debates arising from the soul, much discussion was also dedicated to questions detached from immediate metaphysical connotations in the language of Aristotelian natural philosophy. Thus, sense perception and its relation to the body and the intellect had long been debated in purely philosophical terms in the scholastic tradition.¹¹⁰⁰ The questions around the Pomponazzi affair are at the heart of Vives’s longest section of the first part entitled, “what is the Soul?” Drawing eclectically from different traditions, Vives strongly argues against Pomponazzi’s duality of reason, and vehemently defends the immortality of the soul – although he never goes in depth to the conceptual problems involved in the discussion.¹¹⁰¹ However, despite the presence of a number of traditional problems on the metaphysical status of the soul, on intellection, free will, and individuality, a clear move towards the language of moral and educational treatises is perceivable in Vives leading, among other things, to a strong intertextuality with both his *De ratione* and his *De disciplinis*. Thus, the work should also be read as a reflection on some of the basic educational, moral, and pedagogical problems Vives was tackling in his earlier works.

The ethical and political dimension of the book is flamboyantly visible right from the start. The most general idea of the usefulness of the treatise is spelled out in the dedication

¹⁰⁹⁹ Kessler 1990, 485-506.

¹¹⁰⁰ Kessler 1990, 485; Park 1990.

¹¹⁰¹ Vives: DA, 36-49. For more in depth analysis, see Noreña 1989, 132-137; Casini 2006, 64-75.

letter to the duke of Béjar, in which Vives announces that he wants to purge the soul – “the fountain and origin of all our good and bad things” – so that the streams of our actions would “run pure.” He united this claim in the paragraph to self-knowledge.¹¹⁰² In discussing the significance of the Book three dedicated to emotions and passions Vives, however, emphasizes that knowledge of them constitutes, “the foundation of all moral disciplines, both public and private,” and that no other art or discipline would be more useful, “for a prince to govern himself, his subjects, and all people.”¹¹⁰³ Furthermore, already in his *De disciplinis* – which refers to *De anima* – Vives had made very similar points emphasizing the importance of the knowledge of the soul and passions for everyone as a form of self-knowledge. This knowledge functioned as a continuum of the precept “know thyself,” but also as an introduction to how passions and emotions could be evoked, stimulated, and tempered linking all this to moral and political philosophy.¹¹⁰⁴

Thus, Vives is arguing both that self-knowledge and the knowledge of others is ultimately based on our understanding of the soul and passions, and that the social point is extremely important for those in need of moral philosophy as doctors of the social body, a category that can supposedly comprise not only the prince but anyone dealing with these matters. The social dimension can potentially refer to a range of activities undertaken by the doctor of the social body who has to purify the source of human activities. He could use the information in pedagogical tasks as a teacher in assessing the *ingenia* of the pupils, but also in all of his work as a writer or a speaker since the information provided by *De anima* can potentially help him to select the right tone to both address the emotions in an edifying way and to educate them.¹¹⁰⁵ The ultimate goal is to purify the soul and the rational faculty so that, free

¹¹⁰² Vives: DA, *praefatio*: “Est quoque ipsa tam admirabilium vitae totius operum inventrix & artifex, ut spectari nec sine ingenti voluptate possit, nec sine grandi admiratione. Iam vero quod illic fons est atque origo bonorum omnium nostrorum, & malorum, nihil est conducibilius, quam probe nosci: ut purgato fonte, puri dimanent rivuli omnium actionum.”

¹¹⁰³ Vives: DA, *praefatio*: “fundamentum universae moralis disciplinae, sive privatae, sive publicae....”; “iure id quidem optimo, nam nec alia ulla est atque viro principi conveniens, ad se ac suos, totamquam rempublicam rite gubernandam.” Plato also highlighted the importance of knowing the nature and habits of souls in politics, see Plato: *Laws*, I.650.

¹¹⁰⁴ Vives: DD, 343: “Contra vero speculatio de hominis anima maxima disciplinis omnibus adfert adiumenta, propter ea quod ex animae intelligentia & captu de omnibus fere statuimus, non ex rebus ipsis.”; Vives: DD, 368: “Ad suppetias ferendum rationi cuncta moralis philosophiae praecepta sunt comparata velut exercitus quidam. Quare noscendus est homo totus intus & foris: intus vero in animo affectus & mens, affectus quibus incitantur rebus, vel augescunt, quibus contra cohibentur, sedantur, tolluntur: hoc demum est hominem se ipsum nosse, quod veteri sapientiae monitu iubemur facere. Sed haec ostensa esse iam oportet in disputatione anima.”; Vives: DD, 372-373: “...haec philosophiae politicae consyderatio & cura, quos affectus esse conveniat civium inter se, subditorum erga principes & magistratus, magistratum inter se, & adversum subditos, quae ex his affectibus actiones, & opera nascantur.”

¹¹⁰⁵ Noreña emphasizes the links of *De anima* to an educational reform, see Noreña 1970, 298.

from internal impediments, it could cultivate emotions rightly and partake in truth in a simple way, a point Vives stressed in his later *De veritate fidei Christianae* as well.¹¹⁰⁶ Understood in this sense, *De anima* provides the best possible tool for a statesman or a humanist to act as a doctor of the social and individual bodies, it makes possible the realization of an old Greek ideal.¹¹⁰⁷ Moreover, it provides a partial answer to Vives's own analysis of social and political discord as passional disorders that hinder right judgement, and Vives effectively tells the reader that he has written about the multiplicity of judgements elsewhere.¹¹⁰⁸

In the introduction to the third book of *De anima* on passions, Vives criticises Aristotle on presenting passions and emotions only insofar as they are useful for the “political orator” implying that a purely technical understanding of emotions that can be mastered by the orator is not called for.¹¹⁰⁹ Vives's presentation of single emotions in Book three most definitely does not rule this out; the exact context in which emotions and passions take place could also be employed for these purposes, and the explicit references in the rhetorical *De ratione dicendi* to the knowledge of *De anima* rather strengthens the ties between rhetoric and knowledge of passions.¹¹¹⁰ Even though the general *ethos* of the work stresses, far more, the therapeutic ideal of teaching and learning how to cultivate emotions in an edifying way, its contents could well be evoked for the understanding of the mind of the people in order to use their mental dispositions and beliefs in different oratorical tasks.

The idea that passions and emotions should not only be cured and restituted to their original and natural state, but effectively used or countered had been the presupposition of both *De consultatione* and *De ratione dicendi*, and it was the centrality of the audience that led Vives to argue in his *De ratione dicendi* that one should adopt its mind-set.¹¹¹¹ Among other things, the third book of *De anima* provides information on just these issues; how value-judgements are affected by emotions and passions, what triggers them, and what calms them. In addition to *De ratione* openly referring to *De anima* in the part on passions, *De disciplinis*

¹¹⁰⁶ Vives: *De veritate*, 191: “Radius [ratio] lucis derivatus in nos, eaque de caussa quo hic radius purior est & copiosior, hoc conformior fonti suo: & quo conformior, hoc ad veritatem propinquior, ita mens exercitata & exulta recte institutione altius se attollit, quam deiecta & torpens, atque eo magis, si affulgeat aliquid divinae lucis, quae sepe universum genus humanum spargit...” The idea of politics as education of the soul and habituation to virtue is very prominent in the Greek tradition, see Plato: *Laws* II; VI; Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, II.V.

¹¹⁰⁷ Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, i.xiii.1-8.

¹¹⁰⁸ Vives: DA, 146: “Caeterum caeca ignorantia multa in nos invexit bonorum genera, in animo, in corpore, in externis: quae non est hic percensendi locus, a multis sunt suse enumerata atque explicata, et saepe a nobis alibi.”

¹¹⁰⁹ Vives: DA, 145: “Aristoteles in Rhetoricis tantum de materia hac exposuit, quantum viro politico arbitratus est sufficere.”

¹¹¹⁰ Vives: DR, 119. Mack has also emphasized their interconnections, see Mack 2008, 254.

¹¹¹¹ Vives: DR, 121.

had made the connection of rhetoric and passion integral; what *vir prudens* should do in a postlapsarian world comprises the need to be able to speak to emotions and passions, even those that are not necessarily edifying and good. These two uses of *De anima* could point to two different projects: the long-term humanist reform programme gets its culmination in the right cultivation of man's cognitive and emotional dispositions, whereas rhetoric striving for immediate action could draw from *De anima* in ways that are more instrumental.

How to cultivate, educate, and use the possibilities of emotions of oneself and others is intrinsically linked to the functioning of the soul. The one central theme uniting *De anima* to all Vivesian social and moral philosophy can be described as the problematic around prudent judgement – the key point of all political and social thought, since human judgement is quite simply the origin of all moral actions. Since all Vivesian political and social reflection refers back to virtuous conduct dependent on the actions of the mind, the possibilities of prudent judgement to occur conceptually condition Vives's educational and rhetorical reflections.¹¹¹² Moreover, it frames the possibilities of Vives's social *concordia*, since social concord is predicated on inner peace and virtuous judgement. Thus, in the following I will focus on describing the possibilities and hindrances of prudent v as they appear in *De anima*.

Prudence, Judgement, Reason, and the Will

The teleological element of *De anima* guarantees that all human faculties, in a prelapsarian state, would perfectly perform the duty they were created for, something heavily emphasized by the Valencian throughout the work. Thus, in perfect harmony, all the faculties would fulfil simply the task they were meant for, reason would know what is true and what is good, and the will would embrace the judgement of the reason. The emotions too would be in a harmonious relationship with the ends they were destined for – they would be felt at right times for right reasons under the guidance of reason and judgement.¹¹¹³ But after the fall, the actions of our soul do not run pure, a number of complications and internal strifes have risen that make the harmonious relationship between different parts of the soul difficult.¹¹¹⁴ Yet, even though all

¹¹¹² Judgement can be cultivated in education and drawn in rhetoric. Already Aristotle's *Rhetoric* declared that the object of rhetoric is judgement, although it did not refer to it as a mental faculty, see Aristotle: *Rhetoric*, ii.i.

¹¹¹³ See especially Vives: DA, 145. More generally, all separate instruments are discussed in relation to the ends they were created for. For reason and will, see Vives: DA, 66, 97-98: "Ratio data est homini ad inquirendum bonum, ut id voluntas amplectatur...."; "Est igitur voluntas, facultas seu vis animi, qua bonum expetimus, malum aversamus, duce ratione...."

¹¹¹⁴ Vives: DA, 145-146.

our faculties have become less perfect for achieving their respected ends, Vives emphasizes throughout the work that man still possesses in the postlapsian world the seeds of goodness and truth – *synderesis* – that can be perfected through “practice, experience, instruction and meditation” opening thus a door to at least a relative earthly perfection.¹¹¹⁵

These complications affect a number of procedures on different levels but the focus lies firmly on rational soul, and more concretely on the relationship between the composite intelligence, memory, and the will – with the output of passions interfering in manifold ways. Vives does of course present a system of internal senses preceding rational procedures, a feature of the sensitive soul shared with animals that played a crucial part in the tradition of faculty psychology by building a bridge from sense perception to reason.¹¹¹⁶ All the five traditional internal senses, imagination, common sense, fantasy, estimation, and memory are present in Vives’s account on the soul, and all participate in different ways in the process of constructing objects based on sense perception for the use of reason. All five internal senses that had delimited, although very much interrelated functions come under the heading of simple intelligence (*simplex intelligentia*), because their operations were tied to sense perception, and they lacked the capacity to produce and handle propositional structure. Simple intelligence, responsible for the first understanding of the objects presented to the mind without engaging in a reasoning process, does have some internal and external impediments because of disturbances of attention, or because of a problem in the bodily composition. Yet, the main error in human understanding does not lie there. By far the most severe threats to understanding are posed on the level of the complicated procedures of reasoning, judging and willing, that take place on the highest echelon of the intellective soul.

The first of the procedures dealing with mental objects in a truly compositional way is reason (*ratio*) that operates with the kind of mental objects prepared by the simple intelligence, and is directed to truth and good in its speculative and practical forms respectively. The basic structure of reason is discursive. It can vary as to its penetration to the nature of things, the procedures it employs in its analysis, and in the way in which it advances through the mental pictures presented to it by the internal sense of fantasy, but throughout it employs

¹¹¹⁵ Vives: DA, 67: “Sed restant nihilominus in nobis reliquiae illius tanti boni, quae satis testantur, quantum id fuerit quod amisimus, haec a vulgo theologorum synteresis nominator....”; “Philosophi quiddam tale sunt procul intuiti, qui anticipationes tradunt, & naturales informationes, quas non didicimus a magistris, vel usu: sed hausimus, & accepimus a natura, tametsi alii aliis pro magnitudine ingenii plures certiores que sunt has regulas sortiti: tum excoluntur, elimiaturque usu, experimentis, disciplina, meditatione.”

¹¹¹⁶ Park 1990, 470-471.

syncategorematic terms constructing propositions and arguments out of the material it has at its disposal.¹¹¹⁷ One more hint as to what Vives has in mind can be found in the part on judgement where the Spaniard underlines the similarities between reason and the part of dialectic dealing with the invention of arguments.¹¹¹⁸ Invention in dialectic is primarily a procedure for analysing a term using places (*loci*), so that its connections to surrounding terms can be mapped in depth. In the construction of propositions, reason, just like dialectical invention, will skip certain steps or places underlining its intuitive and unorganized dimension. All this is highly accentuated by the fact that the activities of reason take place in a close and potentially threatening connection to the most ambivalent of all internal senses – fantasy.

Fantasy appears in Vives's *De anima* on various occasions from the last part of the first book all the way to the part on emotions. As opposed to the passive imagination, fantasy is always described in creative terms: even though its range is defined by what is perceived through senses, it nevertheless produces its objects, phantasms, in a wonderfully creative and free manner for the use of reason.¹¹¹⁹ Typical examples of the creation of *phantasma* would be objects that are not directly perceived, yet are produced from perceivable elements, such as God or places one has not seen, but its creative touch is present in all objects produced for the reason.¹¹²⁰ Predictably, Vives highlights its importance for rational discourse, greatly underlining simultaneously that it is of utmost importance that reason is not entangled with phantasms taking the example of drunken and crazy people.¹¹²¹ If fantasy takes over thinking, imposing its pictures on reason, understanding descends towards the mental world of animals ultimately lacking composite intelligence and reason that frees them from immediate experience, and makes serious deliberation about future impossible.¹¹²²

Vives tells much about fantasy, something possessive of a strong corporeal element, which lacks propositional structure, and is ultimately based on mental images that can

¹¹¹⁷ The idea of reason as discourse was present also in the medieval tradition, see for instance Marenbon 1991, 124-128.

¹¹¹⁸ Vives: DA, 75: "Et sicut ratio utitur formulis dialecticis, quae sunt de probabilitate, ita iudicium iis quae de argumentatione...."

¹¹¹⁹ Many are the moments where Vives underlines this fact. See Vives: DA, 32-33, 64-65. Existing scholarship has also strongly highlighted the importance of fantasy, see Noreña 1970, 259-260.

¹¹²⁰ Vives: DA, 52-53.

¹¹²¹ Vives: DA, 64-65.

¹¹²² Vives: DA, 70, 105: "Accedit huc, quod brutum sequitur id quod vel sensu est simpliciter cognitum, vel a phantasia copulatum compatumque, vel ab extimatrice stimulatam, tanquam tacito calcari naturae, homo autem componit ac dividit, & ab aliis ad alia transit, conferens ea inter se, ex quibus aliquid pariat atque eliciat."; "Nec aliter perversus est animus, quum affectibus cedit iudicium, vel ratio phantasiae: quam corpus, si capite in terram posito, & erectis sursum pedibus tentet ingredi."

be composed of larger units than simple words, such as entire discourses.¹¹²³ Thus, the kind of objects or images fantasy can potentially bring to the consideration of reason can be clusters of things understood not necessarily as clear propositions but as pictures that present what is captured in the form of an image. What is potentially so threatening here is that Vives considers situations where what is presented to the next mental procedure – judgement – never truly passes through reason, but is a mere creation of fantasy. He states that this kind of judgement is “more frequent,” and based solely on fantasy that “draws violently to itself a certain kind of an opinion and judgement on what is good and bad.”¹¹²⁴ Moreover, even if a stereotypical situation for describing fantasy were a context in which, in the absence of sensible objects, one creates an emotion through the mere activity of fantasy – as in dreams – Vives is not referring merely to the subset of mental procedures that have a place in all of us; it is indeed possible that fantasy becomes dominant in some people. Actually, in a short part dedicated to composite intelligence, Vives argues that fantasy skips even copula, just lumping things together, and that this domination of fantasy is revealed in the language of, “children, and unwrought and dull men.”¹¹²⁵

This problem has, however, two links to Vives’s larger social thought since the question of how reason and judgement function is crucial for the possibilities of word to have an effect in the first place. First, it links closely to what he says about fantasy and description in his rhetorical *De ratione dicendi*. Even though Vives’s description of fantasy underlines its unpredictable nature, he emphasizes that it can be moved and the kind of material it has at its disposal can be affected. As Vives writes in his *De anima*, “men agitate each other’s fantasy and minds with words, consent, gestures, writings, signs that surpass the cognition of the brutes,” implying heavily the social dimension of fantasy.¹¹²⁶ In *De ratione dicendi* one could

¹¹²³ There is a moment where Vives likens the images of simple intelligence to simple words and fantasy to combined words, but in other moments, he is very clear that the objects of simple intelligence and fantasy can be comprised of bigger entities such as discourses. See Vives: DA, 83, 52: “...tanquam ex fonte fluit sermo: & simplicia verba, ex simplici intelligentia, composita ex phantasia, apta vero et connexa ex ratione coniungente & separante, sermo integer ex ratione discurrente, & iudicio aptante clausulas.”; “Neque vero simplex nominatur ideo, quod simplicia tantum cognoscat, hoc est singular rerum, ut sensus: sed quod nihil aliud quam comprehendit, ac velut intuetur, quae offeruntur, ea vero quantumlibet varia, composita, connexa: ut ratiocinationes, sermones longos, & multiplices, visa confusissima.”

¹¹²⁴ Vives: DA, 147: “illud sufficit, & est frequentius, quod imaginationis movetur visis. Itaque sola phantasia trahente ad se tumultu suo specie quendam opinionis & iudicii, quod bonum sit, aut malum quod est ei obiectum, in omnes animi perturbationes versamur...”

¹¹²⁵ Vives: DA, 63-64: “Phantasia nihil coniungit, aut separat per copulam, velut hoc est tale, aut non est tale, sic agens aut non agens; sed sic coaceruat hoc tale non tale, hoc vel illud agens, hoc modo aut illo, vel e contrario, quod ostendit puerorum & crassorum hominum sermo....”

¹¹²⁶ Vives: DA, 33: “nam quemadmodum homines alii aliorum & phantasia commovent, & mentem, verbis, nutibus, gestibus, literis, signis, quod brutorum cognitionem excedit....” In discussing shame he also makes the

read how descriptions should “present something to gaze upon for the soul,” focusing not on the essences of things but on portraying them through accidents created by *energeia* in the footsteps of poets uniting all this to the creation of fantasy.¹¹²⁷ Vives makes a distinction between a philosophical description reminiscent of what he had proposed in *De disciplinis*, and a more poetical one deriving from poetry and pictorial language. The concept of philosophy for instance can be described propositionally as accurately as possible using the more refined understanding of description based on definitions and divisions. However, description should take into account the level of the audience, and those, “who do not have mental force, need sensible things,” and for this reason, spiritual things, “are dressed with a sort of mask.”¹¹²⁸ Following this, Vives moves on to a description not based on the enumeration of attributes, but on painting a picture. Philosophy for instance could be described as “a woman of saintly and respectable face, honourable thinness, decorous paleness – of such extended stature that it rises above skies and stars, of eyes that do not close in the face of the threats and roars of fortune.”¹¹²⁹ These descriptions, destined to *vulgus*, are frequent and allowed for poets and, “not unusual in orators and philosophers.”¹¹³⁰ Thus, as Quintilian had eloquently pointed out, the most powerful way of talking to passions happened through the creation of *energeia*, a vision that made things present and tangible.¹¹³¹ Some of Vives’s own production gets a distinctive interpretation as well; his *Veritas fucata* conducted in common language not only discussed literary studies and truth, but created strong *energeia* around the theme.¹¹³² Vives’s presentation in *De ratione dicendi* is essentially a way of uniting different ways of speaking to not only dialogue and rhetoric destined to different audiences, but all this clearly addresses different faculties of the mind – fantasy and reason – that are dominant in these respective audiences.

Secondly, the highly important role given to the pictures of fantasy links closely to what has been called the sociological tenet of Erasmian humanism that highlighted the importance of signs. Thus, the call to rewrite the external signs surrounding humans referring

same argument, Vives: DA, 251: “causa est, quod verba movent necessario intelligentiam, & phantasiam audientis.”

¹¹²⁷ Vives: DR, 172-181. The quote is from the page 172: “Finis eius [descriptio] est, aliquid animo intuendum proponere, quod quum fit adeo exacte, ut prope oculis videamur id cernere....”

¹¹²⁸ Vives: DR, 175: “Nam qui non perinde valet mente, huic sensilibus est opus. Idcirco spiritalia haec persona quadam induuntur, ut pictura: & habent venustatis plurimum, ad vulgi quoque intelligentiam efficacitatis non parum.”

¹¹²⁹ Vives: DR, 175: “foeminam sancto et reverendo vultu, venerabili macie, pallore decoro, statura adeo procera, ut caelos et sydera superet, oculis ad fortunae minas et fremitus inconniventibus, et aliis in hunc modum....”

¹¹³⁰ Vives: DR, 175: “sed & oratoribus non insueta, etiam philosophis.”

¹¹³¹ Quintilian: IO, vi.ii.29-36.

¹¹³² Moss has also noted this aspect of *Veritas fucata*, see Moss 2003, 209.

to everything from statues to proverbs, important in Erasmus's *Institutio* and Vives's *De concordia* gets a specific explanation in Vives's faculty psychology. Since the images of simple intelligence and the material of fantasy are based on the images arising from sense experience, what kind of examples and signs surround the mind is relevant. True, fantasy can never be totally controlled because of the unpredictable nature of its compositional activity, but the images it is surrounded with still have an importance for its functioning since they create models where good and bad are assessed in a visual form. Moreover, as Vives writes, fantasy works somewhat in the manner of memory that uses places which means that if some objects have been presented to it together, the presence of one of the objects implies the other. In fact, the portrayal of the functioning of recollection explicitly points to fantasy, and makes very clear that the structure of one's memory, what things are lumped together, is of utmost importance here.¹¹³³ Overall, this is ultimately the best way to try to frame the judgement of those not capable of true reasoning, since any argument based merely on propositional structure would be destined to fail. Thus, truth needs the pictures of poetry, rhetoric, literature, statues and paintings in order to triumph.

After reason, the next intellectual process is that of judgement the activity of which starts only after reason has prepared its discourse. Judgement's role consists simply in accepting or rejecting what reason proposes. Its activity can be likened to a dialectical judgement, and Vives emphasizes its formal aspects when arguing that if it accepts the discourse, it has to accept conclusions, although proceeding to argue that if the conclusion is in contradiction with what the mind has earlier thought about the matter, the judgement suspects error, and postpones its final verdict. This additional aspect guarantees that the activity of judgement is not only formal, but also that substantial content matters a great deal; even though what rational discourse has prepared would be formally valid, good judgement can also assess the propositions that serve as premises for reason. However, the best way to persuade judgement in a healthy mind is argumentation and probable reason.¹¹³⁴

Just like reason, judgement, however, has its problems. One of them is that since part of its activity consists in comparing what is true and what is good, as well as uniting general rules provided by *synderesis* with particular situations, its task is simply something very

¹¹³³ Vives: DA, 59-61. In 59: "Nam quae simul sunt a phantasia comprehensa, si alterutrum occurrat, solet secum alterum repraesentare...."

¹¹³⁴ Vives: DA, 74: "Itaque dum ratio est in actione sua, quiescit iudicium: ea ubi functa est suo, munere, exurgit censura, & iudicat primum de connexionione, hinc de discursu: quem si aprobet, non potest reprobare clausulam."

difficult in the postlapsarian state – a point Vives insists on over and over again.¹¹³⁵ Its main nemesis is the passions, although the exact relationship between passions, emotions, and judgement is not always easy to pin down. In line with Stoicism, Vives’s starting point is that passions and emotions do indeed follow judgement but that certain “movements of the soul” anticipate any kind of act of judging.¹¹³⁶ Yet in accordance with Stoic tradition, these first physical movements of the body are not genuine emotions or passions, and are not described as such.¹¹³⁷ It is, however, very clear that Vives’s intention here is not to defend a purely rationalistic understanding of emotions as beliefs or judgements that one finds in the orthodox Stoic tradition as it was presented and criticised by Plutarch in his *De virtute morali* (*On Moral Virtue*), and he discusses at length the interference of passions in judgement.¹¹³⁸

There are different ways of talking about this process. At one point Vives writes about fantasy that imposes itself not only to reason but also to judgement leading not only to natural impulses but also to true emotions, so that “we are afraid, we are happy, we cry, and we get sad.”¹¹³⁹ It is, however, in the treatment of anger that Vives most clearly refers to the relationship between judgement and emotions, as Lorenzo Casini has pointed out.¹¹⁴⁰ Vives writes that “there is a natural motion of irritation” as “we find among wild animals,” but immediately moves on to present the kind of irritation not based on “sudden judgement” but on a firmly established conviction. This firmly established conviction refers to the judgement one has of one’s own worth, which is to believe that “we are good, educated, generous, hardworking, and distinguished, and that we ought to be honoured and revered rather than despised,” and it is in relation to these preceding judgements that our irritation and anger bursts out.¹¹⁴¹ What Vives has in mind was visible in *De concordia*: the existence of bad judgement,

¹¹³⁵ See for instance Vives: DA, 67: “Sed menti nostrae magnas & densissimas nebulas scelus offudit, itaque depravati sunt recte illi canones.”

¹¹³⁶ Vives: DA, 146: “Sunt quidam animorum motus, seu impetus verius naturales, qui ex affecto corpore consurgunt....”

¹¹³⁷ Vives: DA, 146; Casini 2006, 139.

¹¹³⁸ Plutarch: “De virtute morali” (trans. Helmbold), 16-89 in Plutarch: *Moralia*, vol. 6, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1957, 3.

¹¹³⁹ Vives: DA, 147: “Itaque sola phantasia trahente ad se tumultu suo speciem quandam opinionis & iudicii, quod bonum sit, aut malum, quod est ei obiectum, in omnes animi perturbationes versamur, timemus, laetamur, flemus, tristamur....”

¹¹⁴⁰ Casini 2006, 155-159.

¹¹⁴¹ Vives: DA, 211: “Est motus quidam offensionis naturalis, adversus eum qui laesit corpus, qualis est in feris, est alter, qui subito quidem existit, & quasi sine tempore ad primum tactum contemptus, ita ut nonnulli naturalem esse ducant, & iudicio antevertere, is nonnunquam fit ex bile immodice inflammata, alias vero non ex iudicio a contemptu orto subito, sed ex illo quod in animo habemus praeceptum, & confirmatum, bonos esse nos, doctos, generosos, industrios, praestantes, oportere nobis honorem exhiberi, & reverentiam, non oportere nos contemni, ex hoc iudicio informato intus atque infixio subito ira incalescit, ubi primum contemptus vel procul sese protulit, ac ostendit.”

stemming from pride (*superbia*), affects the way in which particular situations are assessed since the existing judgement creates a framework, inside of which separate situations can be interpreted.¹¹⁴²

Against Stoics, Vives argues that anger does not burst suddenly sweeping over us but, following Plutarch, argues, “it grows from its causes.” Plutarch’s treatise *De cohibenda ira* (*On the Control of Anger*) seems to be an influence here on Vives, and the work heavily emphasized the possibilities of right judgement and temper to counter the attacks of anger that does not just simply run us over.¹¹⁴³ Vives’s treatment of anger organized around places (*loci*), such as definition, causes, effects, time, place, and a number of others, attempts to analyse as exhaustively as possible all contexts in which anger grows. It is true that the analysis mixes physiological viewpoints with a meticulous analysis of all contextual elements such as professions, and specific relations to the possibilities of anger. But ultimately much of the analysis comes to be understood through the kind of judgements one typically holds. For example, philosophers tend to get angry if philosophy is scorned, but only because what is scorned seems “extremely dear” to them.¹¹⁴⁴ Likewise, all the different contexts that tend to give birth to anger are united to the kind of judgements that usually go together with the situation portrayed.

The social dimension of the interpretations influencing judgement is also perceivable throughout the work. Very generally, *habitus* that is presented in the Part two of *De anima* refer to the inclination of our soul to produce certain acts and suffer certain passions in the right way because of the process of habituation. *Habitus*, understood as disposition, does not equal the mental process of judgement but encompasses all the mental operations leading to action. Even though *habitus* is not natural, but gradually formed, it becomes sort of a second nature that makes easier the performance of good actions, since it turns into a disposition or inclination to judge and feel correctly in different situations.¹¹⁴⁵ The language employed in the

¹¹⁴² See Chapter five.

¹¹⁴³ Vives: DA, 213: “Seneca totam iram subito dicit existere, cui merito Plutarchus refragatur, crescit enim ex suis causis, ut ignis fomento subiecto”; Plutarch: “De cohibenda ira” (trans. Helmbold), 90-162 in Plutarch: *Moralia*, vol. 6, Loeb Classical Library, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts 1957, 3.1. “But if judgement at once opposes the fits of anger and represses them, it not only cures them for the present, but for the future also it renders the soul firm and difficult for the passion to attack.”

¹¹⁴⁴ Vives: DA, 215: “Incandescimus, si parvi pendatur id, quod nos plurimi facimus, sive in nobis, sive in aliis, & de quo volumus aestimari magni vel nos, vel chari nostri: ut philosophus, si philosophia vituperetur....”

¹¹⁴⁵ Vives: DA, 116-118. The importance of *habitus* as a formed and educated source of moral action is central in Aristotle’s ethics, see Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, ii.i.

¹¹⁴⁵ Vives: DA, 116-118. The importance of *habitus* as a formed and educated source of moral action is central in Aristotle’s ethics, see Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, ii.i.

section on *habitus* that refers to one's capacity to endure disturbing images is taken up in the section dedicated to shame, one of the most socially loaded of all emotions in the treatise, and one that is defined, following Aristotle, as "fear of disgrace."¹¹⁴⁶ Much of the early passages dedicated to shame describe the kind of natural feelings of shame attached to those bodily parts that in the postlapsarian state are not under the guidance of reason.¹¹⁴⁷ Moreover, shame related to the natural violence of the senses is portrayed.

There is, however, a moment in which Vives's treatment dissociates itself from natural bodily shame, moving to all possible vices that provoke shame, and, what is more, to "all allegories, images, signs that in themselves are vices; everything that is done against piety, divine law, equity, justice, laws, the institutions of the ancients, the customs of the fatherland, precept of the wise and the counsel of the prudent."¹¹⁴⁸ He writes explicitly that from the natural forms of shame and *decorum* are born those others, "based on the customs and opinions of men," and that it is very important to know how we assess the world as well as to be aware, "how those whose judgement moves us" judge these things.¹¹⁴⁹ Even if judgement is used here in an extended sense not referring merely to a mental faculty but to a general opinion, Vives's point throughout is that the judgements one makes are deeply embedded in the general interpretative framework of a culture that offers general patterns of assessment through which things can be understood. Thus, passionate judgements that are not mere reactions refer to the kind of preceding general opinions we hold on the matter that are activated in particular cases. Moreover, these general opinions are largely present in the whole culture surrounding us, and, consequently, in our *habitus*.¹¹⁵⁰ Simply put, the kind of examples, actions and signs we are surrounded with interfere in the judgements we make of the world.

But even if judgement could be cultivated through education, one would still face the task of convincing the will to act on the advice and counsel provided by reason and

¹¹⁴⁶ Vives: DA, 117: "Fit porro interdum, ut genus actionis naturale sit: species vero vel adiectum, aut circumstantia sit exercitationis, velut sensus quidem naturae sponte accepimus, videre, audire, gustare, olfacere, tangere...."; Vives: DA, 250: "Pudor est metus dedecoris...."; Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, iv.ix.

¹¹⁴⁷ Vives: DA, 250-252.

¹¹⁴⁸ Vives: DA, 252: "In universum autem, quoniam nihil est virtute formosius, vitia omnia incutiunt pudorem, quin & eorum similitudines, imagines, signa, vitia sunt: quae fiunt contra pium et fas, contra aequum, contra ius, & leges, contra maiorum instituta, contra mores patrios, contra praecepta sapientum, & prudentum consilia...."

¹¹⁴⁹ Vives: DA, 252: "Ex hisce foeditatis & decoris generibus nascuntur illa, quae hominum moribus atque opinionibus nituntur, plurimum interest, quemadmodum vel nos ipsi de rebus sentiamus, vel alii, quorum iudicio movemur."

¹¹⁵⁰ In general, the link from a passional reaction to ignorance in judging is extremely close in Vives. See for instance Vives: DA, 150: "Nam ingentes illae agitationes & praeturbidae ab ignorantia sunt, & inconsideratione, aut a falso: quod bonum malumve maius censemus esse, quam revera sit...."

judgement. The will: “the faculty of the soul that looks after what is good and turns away from evil under the guidance of reason,” is the last mental act needed for action.¹¹⁵¹ As Casini has convincingly shown, Vives’s understanding of the will is heavily influenced by medieval discussions on the matter, and especially by Jean Buridan’s intermediate position between the intellectualist and voluntarist traditions.¹¹⁵² Vives’s discussion on the will focuses overwhelmingly on deciding its exact relation to the mental processes of reason and judgement with the discussion on the freedom of will and providence being of secondary importance. Vives merely confirms his earlier position that free will is compatible with God’s foreknowledge happening in his *nunc-stans*.¹¹⁵³ What interests Vives here is, however, the relationship of the will to composite intelligence – mostly reason and judgement – and his starting point is that will is indeed free yet capable of choosing only an alternative that has in some way being judged good by the intelligence. Despite the close link to the judgement of the intellect, Vives leaves a lot of room for the will to manoeuvre and his description here underlines the ultimately unpredictable nature of the will likened to a monarch who has numerous ways at its disposal for ignoring the advice of reason and judgement, its supposed advisors.¹¹⁵⁴

In a section on love, Vives writes that only God in his perfection does not contain any elements of wickedness, and hence, it is not in our power to resist him, but that all other things contain aspects by which they can be judged good or bad.¹¹⁵⁵ He gives detailed descriptions of the ways in which the will works. At the heart of the will lies the activities of approval (*approbatio*) and disapproval (*reprobatio*), as well as privation or deferment of the act of willing.¹¹⁵⁶ Approval and disapproval are guided by reason and judgement, so that the will cannot want something that has not been judged good in some way, and it cannot hate what judgement presents as good – the only possible act of resistance being the deferment of willing. Thus, the will cannot do against what is judged good, but it can decide not to will it and defer its judgement.

The ways in which the will can work its way out of the judgement of the goodness and badness of a given thing, are elaborately depicted and contain almost all possible cases

¹¹⁵¹ Vives: DA, 98: “Est igitur voluntas, facultas seu visa nimi, qua bonum expetimus, malum aversamur, duce ratione, nam mutae animantes duce natura, quae sensus extimulat.”

¹¹⁵² Casini 2006, 117-130. See also Casini 2006b.

¹¹⁵³ Vives: DA, 102-103.

¹¹⁵⁴ Vives: DA, 99-100.

¹¹⁵⁵ Vives: DA, 170.

¹¹⁵⁶ These are purely internal processes. Action needs a further decision on the possibilities of executing what is proposed. Vives: DA, 103.

since the only thing it cannot not will is the love of God. First, the will is free to put or not put any given object under the deliberation of reason and judgement. Moreover, during the deliberation, “it can impose silence” moving the attention of the mind to consider other objects.¹¹⁵⁷ After the deliberation, the will can furthermore decide not to act on the assessment of the object and it can impose another deliberation looking for something potentially better, or more adequate. Finally, the will can put aside and reject what has been presented to it as good or bad with strong reasons by judgement, and focus on something that has the smallest of appearances of goodness, and here it is of great help that “everything is a mixture of good and bad.”¹¹⁵⁸ Most flamboyantly, and making the connection to social deliberations very explicit, Vives argues that “often the will even rejects and spurns everything in order to demonstrate its rule, like a prince who excludes and rejects the healthy warnings of his counsellors so that it does not look like he is ruled by another. He acts like the person in the satire: this is what I want, this is what I order: arbitrariness takes the place of reason.”¹¹⁵⁹ Vives’s description of the actions of will – praised for its freedom – is highly ambivalent to say the least, and it almost seems like the passions work inside the will directing its activities.¹¹⁶⁰

Concord, Discord, and *Ingenium*

From the point of view of social and political concord, the general theory on the functioning of the soul gets a distinctive interpretation with the strong presence of the concept of *ingenium* that underlines individual differences in both *De anima* and *De disciplinis*. *Ingenium* had an unusually complex semantic history with varying meanings in different genres of writing. The complexity of the concept makes it very difficult to give it a clear definition that would be applicable to all its uses in *De anima* and *De disciplinis*. Depending on the context, it could refer both to the innate qualities and potentiality of individuals, or to a formed disposition of character to produce prudential judgements and moral acts.¹¹⁶¹ The varying ways in which it is talked about makes quite impossible its interpretation through strict dichotomies such as nature and culture, or potentiality and actuality.

¹¹⁵⁷ Vives: DA, 99: “...silentium indicere...”

¹¹⁵⁸ Vives: DA, 99: “...quod res nostrae omnes mistae sunt bonis ac malis...”

¹¹⁵⁹ Vives: DA, 99-100: “Saepe etiam ut se ostendat voluntas esse dominam, reiicit ac spernit omnia, haud aliter quam princeps, qui ne videatur a quoquam regi, salutaria omnia consiliariorum suorum monita excludit & respuit, fitque (quod dicit ille in satyra) Sic volo, sic iubeo, sit pro ratione libido.”

¹¹⁶⁰ Casini 2006, 146.

¹¹⁶¹ Noreña’s description of the different meanings of the term accentuates this, see Noreña 1989, 108.

Despite its complexities, Vives's most in-depth treatments of *ingenium* in *De disciplinis* and *De anima* draw from recognizable traditions. Vives's interest in *ingenium* in *De disciplinis* is heavily indebted to the educational discourse where the concept had been present ever since Quintilian's *Institutio*, which underlined the examination of *ingenium* and *natura* as the basic method through which individual talent and capacities of each student could be found out. Quintilian emphasized, above all, that memory and the ability to imitate are crucial for a potential pupil. His idea that the *ingenium* of the child had to be taken into consideration in determining his possibilities in the educational path remained a commonplace in different forms in most fifteenth-century educational literature from Agricola's *De formando studio* to Vergerio's *De ingenuis moribus ac liberalibus studiis*.¹¹⁶²

Erasmus's educational literature too referred *ingenium* although sometimes employing the word *natura* in referring to the traditional discussions on individual talent. First of these was the question of nature and *ingenium*. In his extensive *De pueris*, Erasmus claimed, in line with the pseudo-Plutarchian *De liberis educandis*, that three things contributed to human happiness: nature, reason and exercise, and argued that ideally reason should guide nature and be helped by exercise understood as formation.¹¹⁶³ For Erasmus, a life under the guidance of reason was what differentiated man from beasts and made him truly human, and the Dutch thinker exhibits great optimism towards character formation for achieving just that. He did make a distinction between general nature shared by all humans, and an individual nature that made some people more suitable for, "mathematical sciences, some to theology, others to rhetoric and poetry, still others for military career."¹¹⁶⁴ However, he was keen to argue that "the power of discipline" is such that if it is helped with "precepts and exercise," it is capable of guiding nature almost everywhere.¹¹⁶⁵ The general *ethos* of Erasmus's treatise heavily emphasized the almost-endless malleability of human nature, which made theoretically possible the perfecting of man through education, character formation, and the building of *habitus*.¹¹⁶⁶

Although Vives's *De disciplinis* reflects the educational tradition in its portrayal of *ingenium*, it makes at least two nuanced additions to the existing tradition. First, it

¹¹⁶² Quintilian: IO, i.iii; Vergerio: "De ingenuis", 15-29; Agricola: *De formando*, 4-6.

¹¹⁶³ Erasmus: *De pueris*, 17: "Tota vero ratio felicitatis humanae tribus potissimum rebus constat, natura, ratione & exercitatione." In Plutarch these three are nature, reason and habit. Plutarch: "De liberis educandis", 4.

¹¹⁶⁴ Erasmus: *De pueris*, 21: "Sed est natura huic aut illi peculiaris, veluti quosdam Mathematicis disciplinis, alios Theologiae, hos Rhetoricae aut Poeticae, illos militae natos dicas."

¹¹⁶⁵ Erasmus: *De pueris*, 22: "Tametsi meo quidem iudicio, vix ulla est disciplina, ad quam hominis ingenium non docile nascatur, si praecoribus & exercitatione institerimus."

¹¹⁶⁶ Erasmus: *De pueris*, 9: "efficax res est natura, sed hanc vincit efficacior institutio."

accentuates the importance of the surveillance of *ingenium* to a degree uncommon in the humanist tradition, and most certainly not found in major northern humanist educational treatises.¹¹⁶⁷ As Vives argues, the examination of one's *ingenium* corresponds to the examination of one's soul, and that its parts are "acuteness of consideration, capacity to understand, comparison for judging" making a close union to the key mental operations described in *De anima*.¹¹⁶⁸ After presenting a large and varied categorization of different *ingenia*, he goes on to argue that children reveal their *ingenium* in games because in playful activities they show all their "natural qualities since disputes draw out and show *ingenium*, just like heating draws out the smell and natural force of herbs, roots and fruits." *Ingenium* does potentially develop; the surveillance of the development of *ingenium* is something that should be undertaken throughout the educational path every two or three months, and if this is done, "an enormous utility will follow for all mankind."¹¹⁶⁹ Although the surveillance of the development of students was the norm, Vives's emphasis on it is quite rare.

The second transformation is that side by side with the educational tradition, Vives's *De disciplinis* also points to a predominantly Galenic discourse where different *ingenia* could be analysed through a physiological language based on a typology of standard human temperaments dependent on the combinations of four bodily fluids. This language was extensively appropriated by Vives in *De anima* to discuss the physiological states that go together with mental operations and passions.¹¹⁷⁰ Thus, in *De disciplinis* some of the concepts employed in the categorization such as *furiosus* (frantic) appear again in *De anima* in an analysis conducted in the language of physiology, although the connection is far from systematic.¹¹⁷¹ Moreover, Vives himself was more than willing to make the link from education to an analysis of the soul evident in his *De anima* in arguing: "from these humours and breaths of life not only the great variety and diversity of *ingenia* is borne but also the great opposition

¹¹⁶⁷ The exceptional importance of *ingenium* in Vives has been largely acknowledged, see Noreña 1970, 268-269; Noreña 1989, 108-112.

¹¹⁶⁸ Vives: DD, 260: "ingenii partes sunt acies ad intuum, capacitas ad comprehendendum, collatio ad iudicium."

¹¹⁶⁹ Vives: DD, 265: "...sed omnia exhibunt naturalia: quippe concertatio omnis ingenium educit, ac ostendit, haud secus quam exalfectio herbae, aut radice, aut fructus odorem, vel vim naturae."; "Incredibilis per totum hominum genus utilitas sequetur, si id fiat."

¹¹⁷⁰ Vives's treatment is purely conceptual and speculative and far from the late sixteenth-century anatomical theory of Juan de Huarte explained in the 1575 *Examen de ingenios para las ciencias*. For Juan de Huarte, see Noreña 1975, 210-263. Casini has written more extensively on Vives's relation to what he calls early modern dualism dealing with the relation of the sensitive and intellectual soul. However, he does not come to any definite conclusion and it does seem that Vives is never very clear about how exactly the relation works, see Casini 2006, 76-82.

¹¹⁷¹ Vives: DD, 267; Vives: DA, 79.

that exists in the external appearances of men. I have spoken of these issues something in the work *De tradendis disciplinis*.¹¹⁷²

In *De anima*, the reader is told that *ingenium* “is the whole power of our mind” that it is revealed and manifested in the use of its instruments, and that it operates primarily in the body.¹¹⁷³ In *De anima*, one could also read that the mind would like to enjoy “great and exquisite thoughts,” its bodily organs more suitable for “amusement, absurdities, and most superficial things” prevent it.¹¹⁷⁴ The organs of rational functions are very thin and luminous spirits situated in the brain, and it is towards them that the blood of the heart, origin of all actions and thinking processes, exhales. Taken together, these are “the organs of all cognition.”¹¹⁷⁵ This framework of four bodily fluids together with the heat of blood originating from the heart provides a framework for an analysis of different character traits that, as it is well known, is exceptionally rich.

However, in addition to physiological and educational discourses, *ingenium* could well point to the performance of virtuous deeds. In Roman history writing, *ingenium* could refer very generally to character as it was revealed in the moral actions of subjects, not merely to the innate abilities for learning or to the categorization of temperaments according to the theory of humours.¹¹⁷⁶ In Vives too, *ingenium* appears frequently in his 1530s oeuvre as a key concept that explains the capacity to produce correct judgements. In a section dedicated to judgement in *De anima* Vives forcefully claims:

“It is only by the qualities of judgement that men of greatest and most extraordinary *ingenium* stand apart from lower and mediocre ones; not on account of experience, of the knowledge of many varied things, of sharpness, of erudition, of the familiarity of science, disciplines, and arts.”

¹¹⁷² Vives: DA, 80: “Ex hisce humoribus atque spiritibus, nascitur ingeniorum non varietas solum ac diversitas, sed adversitas quoque tanta, quanta est inter hominum facies, de quo sum locutus nonnulla in opere *De tradendis disciplinis*.”

¹¹⁷³ Vives: DA, 77: “Universam mentis nostrae vim, de qua sumus hactenus locuti, ingenium nominari placuit, quod se instrumentorum ministerio exerit & patefacit, mens enim est in hoc corpore, sicut qui clausus in cubiculo, non aliam habet fenestram, per quam foras prospiciat, quam vitream...”

¹¹⁷⁴ Vives: DA, 78: “Cuperet quidem mens plerunque optimis ac praeclarissimis cogitationibus se oblectare: sed impediunt eam organa, avertuntque invitam ac repugnantem, & traducunt ab excellentibus contemplationibus ad lusus, ad ineptias, & res levissimas., quibus facilia se & tractabilia exhibent instrumenta.”

¹¹⁷⁵ Vives: DA, 78: “Sed functionis rationalis organa sunt in cerebro, spiritus quidam tenuissimi & lucidissimi, quos illuc exhalat sanguis cordis, ii sunt organa intima cognitionum omnium.”

¹¹⁷⁶ Gill 1983, 485.

This contrasts *ingenium* explicitly with all aspects of character formation.¹¹⁷⁷ In the same passage, the importance of judgement is greatly hailed for all arts and disciplines and the totality of life.¹¹⁷⁸ All prudential behaviour is ultimately produced by good judgement, turning the ability to judge correctly necessary for the performance of virtuous and morally correct actions, and not all this is completely detached from one's *ingenium*.

It has frequently been noted that Vives's *ingenium* is a plastic one, and that it is influenced by one's age, environment, and a range of other contextual matters.¹¹⁷⁹ The fact that *ingenium* does not exclusively denote a stable bodily condition is a key point in *De disciplinis*, and much of the advice in the second part of the monumental work on the physical placement of schools, nutrition and health can be viewed as a way of cultivating the possibilities of *ingenium*. Moreover, Vives's understanding of *habitus* as a second nature formed through culture shows how highly he ranked the possibilities of moulding the basic dispositions and forces of the mind that get a specific form only in the complex interaction of physical, moral, and natural contexts. Furthermore, the discourse of bodily liquids could easily incorporate viewpoints that underlined how they could be influenced through different human means, and Vives at one point suggests, "the pneuma of those who have it very thick should be fattened by moving to another place or by changing the way of life."¹¹⁸⁰

But it is equally clear that in no way is *ingenium* endlessly malleable. Vives makes this point explicit on numerous occasions. Emphatically in his *De disciplinis*, he reminded the reader in the section dedicated to the erudite that "erudition consists of four things; *ingenium*, judgement, memory, study. Tell me, from whom do you possess the first three ones? Are they not from God?"¹¹⁸¹ Even more explicitly in his *De anima*, Vives wrote under *De discendi ratione* – largely dedicated to *ingenium* – that "great and eminent *ingenia* versed in all disciplines and cognition are so by the privilege of nature".¹¹⁸² Now, in the tradition hailing Vives as the founder of modern pedagogy, the theory of *ingenium* has been linked to a certain

¹¹⁷⁷ Vives: DA, 75: "Non usu, non cognitione rerum multarum & variarum, non acumine, non eruditione & scientia disciplinarum atque artium, sed hoc solo [right judgement] distant maxima & praestantissima ingenia ab infimis, aut mediae notae."

¹¹⁷⁸ Vives: DA, 75.

¹¹⁷⁹ Noreña 1989, 111.

¹¹⁸⁰ Vives: DA, 82: "Expedit iis, qui tenuissimos habent spiritus, incrassari a loco, vel victus ratione: qua de causa melancholiam biliosis & sanguines utilem diximus."

¹¹⁸¹ Vives: DD, 382: "Quatuor rebus constat eruditio, ingenio, iudicio, memoria, studio: tria prima cedo unde habes? nunquid non ex Deo?"

¹¹⁸² Vives: DA, 88: "Grandia & praestantissima quocunque in genere disciplinae ac cognitionis ingenia sunt naturae beneficio...."

sensibility to individual differences that could then be turned into a tailored educational guidance.¹¹⁸³ In this view, the pronounced focus on *ingenium* could be seen as one of the basic tenets of Vives's modern pedagogy that moved from general precepts to embrace individual and particular differences based on acute observations of students' capacities. However, the focus on *ingenium* could also be understood in a different light inside Vives's educational and social work. It was simultaneously a way to set certain limits inside of which individual perfection and malleability could be discussed and Vives's *De disciplinis* explicitly does just that in its focus on classifying the kind of *ingenia* unsuitable for certain studies.¹¹⁸⁴

Vives wishes to convey to the reader that all this is of enormous social importance, since it is ultimately the setting of all people to the educational path, and social role suitable for their *ingenium*, that guarantees social and political harmony and concord. Reflecting this general attitude, Vives, before moving to the presentation of rhetoric and dialectic in *De disciplinis*, reminds the reader emphatically, "rhetoric and dialectic should be denied for those *ingenia* who are contentious, and prone to dispute [...] It should not be taught to evil *ingenia* prone to fraud."¹¹⁸⁵ Within this scheme, those of great *ingenium* hold a special place, they are the ones capable of judging rightly, and moulding truth to others according to the possibilities set by the *ingenia* of the audience. They are the ones in possession of all wisdom, and capable of transmitting it to others with a deep knowledge of all rhetorical and dialectical tools. They are the true doctors of the soul, exhibiting great *ingenium*, and understanding the *ingenia* of others as Vives explained in his *De disciplinis*:

"Like a doctor speaks of bodies with some experience, so does a prudent man speak of souls equipped with *ingenium*, judgement and doctrine required for this. To these faculties of having a well-founded opinion he adds some experience. We will contribute to these issues by the explanation of *ingenia*."¹¹⁸⁶

¹¹⁸³ Noreña for example mentions this in his classic study, Noreña 1970, 193.

¹¹⁸⁴ Vives's *De disciplinis* introduces a section entitled *Quae ingenia inepta literis*, Vives: DD, 267. Aristotle was also very clear that the limits of habituation were set by the natural abilities of the individual, Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*, x.ix.

¹¹⁸⁵ Vives: DD, 324: "Utraque ars & dialectica & rhetorica rixosa ex se est [...] ideo rixoso & contentioso ingenio neganda [...] idcirco nec malitiosum ingenium, & ad fraudem faciendam paratum instrui illis convenient..."

¹¹⁸⁶ Vives: DD, 235: "At vero ut sit quisque affectus, quomodo contemplandus, ut cui rei sit idoneus, iudicetur, a qua illi abstinendum, sicut de corporibus dicet peritus medicus post usum cum illi aliquem, ita de animis vir prudens excellentia ingenii, iudicii, doctrinae, ad tantum munus ascitus: quibus tantis ad arbitrandum facultatibus consuetudinem adiunget aliquam. Cui nos rei nonnihil adiumenti afferemus explicatione ingeniorum, sed hoc post paulum."

This is a condition on which every possibility of earthly concord is ultimately predicated, and all of his 1530s main works from *De ratione dicendi*, *De disciplinis* and *De anima* take the diversity of *ingenia* and all problems and possibilities related to it as their starting point. Social and political concord cannot be based on the coming to reason of each individual, since in the postlapsarian state of a multiplicity of *ingenia* the unity of reason is never seriously considered as an attainable possibility without Divine intervention. Vives explicitly argues in his *De anima* that the diversity of judgement and reason, the main problem of all social concord, is due to differences in *ingenium*.¹¹⁸⁷ Mirroring his more realistic understanding of social concord, Vives already in his *De disciplinis* argued that Plato's *Republic* and More's *Utopia* would be possible in a world "inhabited only by wise," and although Vives praised both works, he suggested the reading of Aristotle's *Politics* more suitable for *ingenia* and manners.¹¹⁸⁸ The differences in *ingenium* guarantee that all the possible threats in the mental process will always be made by some, since the acuteness of mind is simply not attainable for everyone. Man's epistemological, intellectual, and moral capacities are just too diverse to be moulded to the understanding of one harmonious reason. What one is left with is a world where the only way of asking humbly for God's grace – the main point of *De concordia* – is an organization that underlines the importance of the wise and the prudent in guarding and transmitting truth through various means. They have to serve as doctors of the soul who cure passion disorders through formation but they also have to use the powers of language and rhetoric to talk to the fantasy of those who cannot be reached through abstract reasoning. Finally, they have to communicate concord and wisdom to those in power employing self-concealment and a more instrumental use of language if needed. In this way, the educated elite – men of letters – have to strive for social and political renewal and critique, but only inside the existing institutional framework that should not be openly defied.

¹¹⁸⁷ Vives explicitly argues in his *De anima* that the diversity of judgement and reason, the main problem of all social concord is due to differences in *ingenia*. Vives: DA, 206: "Sequitur enim quisque affectum, aut ingenium suum, non rectum examen rationis. Idcirco in iudicando tanta diversitas: quippe ratio vel unica est, vel non admodum multifaria: ingenia autem infinita, diversissima, difformia." Already Thomas More in his *Utopia* argued that not everyone can be made good, More: *Utopia*, 62: "Nam ut omnia bene sint, fieri non potest, nisi omnes boni sint, quod ad aliquot abhinc annos adhuc non expecto."

¹¹⁸⁸ Vives: DD, 373: "De republica scripserunt olim Plato primus: secundum cuius institutionem tum demum vivent homines, quum aliqua existet civitas solis sapientibus habitata."

Conclusions

In my concluding remarks, I will not present the main content of different chapters separately, but will focus on presenting a synthesis of the central arguments of the thesis that deal with the importance of language to social and civic life in Vives's *oeuvre*.¹¹⁸⁹ I will first discuss the main conclusions of this dissertation putting them into a larger context of political thought, and then proceed to an assessment of the possible importance of Vives's work to some later developments of early modern thought. After presenting the general framework of political and social thought, I move on to a discussion of the ways in which language and rhetoric modifies this generally accepted picture of the basic elements of Vives's political thought. In the latter part of my conclusions, I will not analyse the historical reception of Vives in depth, and the attention will be on larger conceptual issues. Throughout, I will emphasize the intimate connection between language and political or social thought by arguing that it is language and questions concerning it that reveal deeper dynamics of concord and discord in Vives's treatment of these themes.

In Chapters four and five, the basic assumptions of Vives's social reflection have been described. In a traditional Christian vein, the point of departure for all Vivesian reflections on political associations is that they are always predicated conceptually and temporally on the social possibilities of man. Despite political communities being man-made and pertaining to a postlapsarian reality, their basic reason of being is to facilitate the betterment of man – to reconstitute man to his God-like nature within the possibilities allowed in light of his fallen nature. Although some forms of coercion and force are expected of political and other authorities, this is a thoroughly Erasmian understanding of society where human associations are primarily reformatory, and not coercive, as was the case in different Augustinian traditions.¹¹⁹⁰ Indeed, a predominantly optimistic view on the possibilities of collective life is an explicit rebuttal of different traditions of the Reformation drawing from Augustine, and above all, from Martin Luther.

Understanding different forms of political communities, be they cities, republics, princely regimes, or kingdoms, as manifestations of human social nature is of some importance. Political associations are not primarily discussed as autonomous realms of civic prudence;

¹¹⁸⁹ A reader will find a presentation of the main arguments of separate chapters at the beginning of each of them.

¹¹⁹⁰ For the reformatory ideal in Erasmian thinking, see Todd 1987; Tracy 1996, 204-208.

rather, they are part of a larger story of Erasmian or northern humanist social reform leading to peace and concord that incorporates all social associations in its scope. All these social associations should help man to become truly man – to regain his godly nature. Even though man becoming himself is predicated on individual self-government, the peaceful and concordant nature of social and political communities contributes to the possibilities of individual renewal in a number of ways. Not only do they create peaceful circumstances and the right kind of material conditions for man to live free from warfare and poverty, but they also provide a collective framework that educates man as to the right direction. In addition to schooling, which was central to Erasmian tradition, education succeeds through the right kind of example set by the powerful, and through the kind of culture where all external signs testify to human glory not that is not tied to warfare and violence, but rather to constructive intellectual, peaceful, and paternal practices.

Despite the understanding of some social dynamics for the formation of character and judgement, this deeply ethical philosophy puts forward a strong moral demand to all those in possession of power and social instruments. This is especially the case with princes and monarchs, true lawgivers whose capacity for prudential judgement is predicated on their self-governance and freedom from passions. Their duty to be just and to govern virtuously is largely echoed in Vives's ideas on civic prudence and law. To govern prudentially, and in accordance with law, can never be discussed merely in the context of positive law, since the interpretation of law and justice always happens in the context of Aristotelian *aequitas* and Stoic natural law. Thus, an action can be lawful and just only if the laws are promulgated in accordance with natural law – and if they are interpreted in the right spirit. But the ability to achieve this is a thoroughly ethical practice. Only someone in control of his or her passions can partake in natural law, and interpret it in the correct reformatory spirit with the common good as a guiding principle – and certainly not in accordance with his own personal private interest. A central way of bringing this about is the larger Erasmian yearn to educate princes in virtue, to mould their character to produce prudent judgements.

Despite a somewhat eclectic use of sources, the basic framework for Vives's social and political reflections has some obvious conceptual links to existing traditions. First, the concrete intellectual context inside of which it is devised is that of ethical Erasmian humanism. It is through Erasmian humanism that politics becomes understood as a continuum of positive Christian ideals of general social renewal, under the powerful example of Jesus Christ. It is also inside a thoroughly Erasmian interpretation that concepts found in classical

political thought – such as concord and discord – never lose their reference to a Christian ethical framework. Side by side with this, Vives’s admiration from the late 1510s for Greek philosophy of wisdom and for Thomas More’s *Utopia* – together with a strong link of civic prudence to wisdom – is also indebted to the originally Platonic ideal of philosophical and wise rule.¹¹⁹¹ However, the connection of the ideal of the rule of the wise with the ethical self-governance of the one ruling is predominantly Christian and Stoic in its strong emphasis on freedom from passions or sin. The Senecan tradition present in the medieval and Renaissance mirror-of-princes genre, which posited that self-governance was at the very centre of legitimate rule. Ultimately, it was only the ethical nature of the ruler that justified his use of power, since only his self-cure made the curing of the social body possible. It allowed him to translate universal precepts into actual political communities.¹¹⁹² This Senecan prince, in control of himself, was in many ways a secular version of Erasmus’s Christian prince, whose self-governance made possible his paternal and shepherd-like activities towards his people who should not be ruled by fear, but through love and other virtues. All these ethical ideas of wise paternal rule in accordance with common good resonated, furthermore, well with the longer tradition of Dutch political thought, although they are not employed primarily as a defence of princely rule, but as a remainder of its limitations.¹¹⁹³

This general framework reconstructed in Chapters four and five is, however, modified and nuanced with the introduction of the social and political importance of language that forms the main thesis of this dissertation. The general claim is that Vives’s interest in language and rhetoric shows how he tried to incorporate what might be called a Ciceronian ideal of socialization of wisdom to a princely context. As Vives argued, it was the wisdom of the counsellor that sustained the ethical nature of government – although this claim is never linked to a republican understanding of justice.¹¹⁹⁴ This affects a number of issues surrounding political thought: not only are political instruments separated from political reason, but also those in power can be conceptualized as objects of persuasion – ruled by their passions. Moreover, educational patterns deliberately socialize political commonplaces, as well as form prudent men to deliberate on common issues, and to cure the social body as doctors of the soul. Rhetorical works and studies of the soul, furthermore, provide a theoretical and practical corpus

¹¹⁹¹ This has been highlighted in Bradshaw 1991.

¹¹⁹² Stacey 2007, 30-56; Stacey 2011.

¹¹⁹³ Blockmans 1988, 144-148.

¹¹⁹⁴ The idea of socialization of wisdom is from Stacey, see Stacey 2007, 26.

of knowledge for the prudent man to get things done with words. As will become clear, while Vives's version of the importance of rhetoric and language drew predominantly from Roman sources such as Cicero and Quintilian, it diverged from Roman republican theorists on a number of points.

Chapter two argued that Vives encounters humanism in the context of the debate between scholasticism and humanism that developed from a relatively non-conflictual transformation in language teaching into an outright confrontation on the limits of humanist philological methods and linguistic tools. In this debate, Vives's *In pseudodialecticis* can be read as an attempt to turn dialectic into the central tool of humanist linguistic production, which aimed at use in the service of one's political community and Christendom. Vives's first contacts with humanist rhetoric and linguistic paradigms already interpreted rhetoric primarily as a persuasive means to exercise responsible social influence and power, and this view runs throughout Vives's career. In Chapter three, Vives's membership in the Republic of Letters is discussed as a source of his authority and *ethos*, as well as a space where discussions (*sermo*) could be conducted with learned men of letters. This is contrasted to counselling, where some ideas of the rhetorical (*oratio*) tradition are incorporated into asymmetrical political discussions with the prince, whose mental dispositions the counsellor should master.

While much of Erasmian humanism took a positive approach to rhetoric in educational works in the 1510s and 1520s, and gave it a central place in their educational schemes, Vives's attitude towards rhetoric in his 1530s writings – especially *De disciplinis* and *De ratione dicendi* – is decidedly ambivalent as Chapters six and seven made clear. In line with a certain humanist tradition originating from Agricola, Vives delimits the scope of rhetoric primarily to elocution that speaks to the passions of those ruled by them. Simultaneously, he turns dialectic into the central humanist intellectual tool for argumentation that can connect general precepts to particular cases in a relatively flexible way. Ultimately, *De disciplinis* and *De ratione* underline greatly the social power of rhetoric, but attempts to unite it with the dialectical knowledge of prudent man (*vir prudens*), who should use the power of rhetoric – so decisive for the world of discord – in a manner that does not necessarily break the appearance of concord. In doing this, he should also use his knowledge of the soul, and understanding of how different *ingenia* make judgements about things. Ultimately, Vives's *De anima* can be seen as a reflection on the possibilities of language to produce an Erasmian reform, since the curing of the social body is related to a correct diagnosis of how passions interfere in judgement. *De anima* provides information for curing one's own harmful passions, as well as the emotional

dispositions of those ruled by their passions. But it also shows ways of using harmful passions for the advancement of social and civic concord through linguistic means. Ultimately, it paints a picture of a world where the only possible concord attainable for man is based on a combination of curing and managing passions by those capable of wisdom and prudence.

These developments in Vives's attitude to rhetoric – to its function, and internal theory – greatly underline its value and decisive importance for collective life. This has a number of crucial consequences for assessing the general framework of social and political thought found in Vives and in Erasmian humanism more generally. The rhetorical tradition that is incorporated and adapted to social and political thought is essentially classical and predominantly Roman that explicitly treats civic and ethical matters – a point that is never lost in Vives's rhetorical works. However, most of the central points of the larger Ciceronian understanding of the importance of rhetoric that were incorporated into Italian humanism are lost or altered. In the Ciceronian model, rhetoric is understood as an element of a republican tradition that emphasized the importance of political self-government as the only way to guarantee that a political community was governed according to its own will and common good. Faction and discord should be avoided through the right kind of institutional and constitutional arrangements, but ultimately the faith of the commonwealth was dependent on the capacity and will of its citizens to partake in the management of common issues through the performance of a virtuous life of *negotium*. In this constellation, rhetoric is the main tool available to a free citizen to participate in political deliberations on common issues. Its performance is crucial for the proper functioning of a republic or a mixed republic ruled by its citizens.¹¹⁹⁵

This model is not adopted as such in Vives. While Vives endorses the political culture of the Low Countries, based on a consensus between the General Estates and the Habsburg princes, he does not theorize on the active performance of citizenship guaranteed by a political system, he does not discuss liberty primarily in the context of political self-government, and he most certainly does not connect the active life with the military duties of citizens. Rather, his citizens are Stoic citizens of the cosmic and universal republic of reason, whose liberty is ethical self-governance – a precondition for understanding true wisdom. They transmit universal wisdom to civic prudence, turn general precepts into particular suggestions, moulding them to different *ingenia*. Moreover, they bring concord, *aequitas*, and natural law to

¹¹⁹⁵ Skinner 2002, vol. 2, 3-7; Van Gelderen – Skinner 2003, 4-5. For the importance of rhetoric in all this, see Skinner 1996.

a world of discord through the use of language. Theirs is a life of *negotium* in the service of the common good as doctors of souls. While the activities of these doctors of the social and individual bodies comprise a range of activities that are not tied to civic practices, it is very clear that one central arena in which wisdom should be brought to the world was political and civic life.

True, these doctors of social bodies do not necessarily participate in symmetrical civic deliberations in Vives's work, but they are well equipped rhetorically to speak about common issues from the position of the citizen of the world. In fact, Vives is very clear, and notably so towards the end of his career that the reason of political communities is separate from their will and instruments equated often with the prince. This reason resides in the counsellor, in the *vir prudens*, whose ethical self-government and capacity to prudential judgement is crucial for the well-being of political communities. In this way, the ethical demand is transposed to these prudential men from the sources of institutional power and the prince. It is their ethical self-governance that guarantees the well-being of political communities, and they should turn these ethical languages into a source of exhortation or critique of actual decisions. Firmly in accordance with this view, the *vir prudens* as described in *De disciplinis* is very capable of doing just this – he is educated to a life of *negotium* that comprises the possibility of guiding political communities to the common good through a prudential use of language. Moreover, his knowledge of rhetoric, passions, and different *ingenia*, enable the teaching of wisdom to a world of discord.

But if reason resides with the prudent, then one must ask who they are, where they should make a difference, and how. The immediate context of Vives's political and social thought is that of England and, most importantly, the Low Countries. In the Dutch debate, it is evident that most of Vives's interventions for peace can be understood in the context of the Dutch system of mixed government as a way of defending Dutch towns from the international military politics of Habsburgs – many issues, from the importance of light taxation, and a general appraisal of the civic culture of the towns, support this reading. However, while Vives's thought presupposes and supports the consensual system of Dutch politics, it does not present a systematic theorisation of its dynamics. Contrary to later developments where the relationship grew increasingly antagonistic, leading to the final breakdown in the form of the Dutch revolt, Vives rather defends the simplicity of the system that should never nurture any kind of discord or open distrust. As is well known, in the course of the latter part of the sixteenth century the Dutch, in the context of the revolt, developed a language that emphasized the freedom of the

political community guarded not only by the virtue of its citizens but also by representative institutions and a constitutional framework inherited from the late Middle Ages. Moreover, based on freedom of conscience, the Dutch emphasized the right to disobedience, and developed a strong language of resistance, highlighting the fact that the prince was a magistrate instituted by the people.¹¹⁹⁶ While many later developments – such as freedom of conscience, the idea of princes as magistrates instituted for the common good, and Grotius’s insistence on the primacy of the philosophical nature of natural law – bear a visible Erasmian and Vivesian mark – the clear demarcation of the rights and duties of towns and Habsburgian princes is not Vives’s central concern.

Closely linked to this, Vives’s rhetorical writings, depiction of educational schemes, and ideas on the life of the *vir prudens* do not portray the ideal man primarily as a citizen of the civic life of towns. Although almost all classical civic knowledge is present in *De disciplinis* and the objects of Vives’s educational schemes are definitely the primary office holders of the Low Countries, they are not described primarily as men of day-to-day politics. They are not specialists of positive law, they should not emphasize the legal possibilities of action, they should not participate in open confrontations, and their rhetoric incorporates deliberations into less-controversial genres. They are rather portrayed as academic doctors of the soul, who perform the duties of the citizen of the world, and cure the social body from a certain intellectual distance while simultaneously being close to power. Thus, even though the *vir prudens* could well in practice be someone defending the civic culture of the towns, Vives’s description of the prudent man in *De disciplinis* and the portrayal of his linguistic skills in *De ratione* and *De consultatione*, denote a humanist working close to the prince rather than someone defying him openly.

If the *vir prudens* approaches power, it does not happen in open confrontation with the prince but by working close with him. Not only does Vives underline the importance of being a friend of the prince, but also many activities of humanists actually take place in close proximity to power as tutors and counsellors, with Vives himself being an example of this. This *vir prudens* has at his disposal all the knowledge of the art of persuasion for moulding Erasmian political commonplaces to the ears of the prince, as *De consultatione* made clear. Moreover, he should employ political languages and commonplaces in order to point to those in power in the right direction. However, the *vir prudens* is not a courtier, his hesitance to adopt the rules of the

¹¹⁹⁶ Van Gelderen 1992, 260-287.

world he is curing, portrayed in More's *Utopia*, is blatantly clear. He should not interiorize the manners and ways of the court, but keep himself distant from its corruptive elements, while simultaneously trying to teach virtue and civic prudence within the reach of the possibilities and the limitations set by the people he is trying to convince.

However, this thesis has argued there is a further element to the system in which language transmits civic prudence to those in power. This is because the *vir prudens* is not only a man whose ethical nature to perform the duties of the citizen of the world is presupposed, but who is incorporated into the supposed world of concord of the men of letters, understood as an actual historical process. In more restricted Erasmian circles the Republic of Letters created a framework inside of which ethical qualities can be mirrored, and where politics and other social matters can be discussed on terms that are equal in a circle of friends who help each other to create possibilities for counselling and to print political texts. This idealized world of friendship and symmetrical discussion (*sermo*) is contrasted to the engagement with the rest of the world ruled by emotion and discord, where passionate rhetoric is the only way to get things done. More generally, the ethical nature of Vives's *vir prudens* is contrasted to the false virtue attributed to nobility by the multitude utterly incapable of understanding that the performance of true virtue should constitute the only source of nobility. In this more general interpretation, Vives is portraying a world where wisdom and prudence lie with the men of letters, not with the traditional nobility who still held an important place in decision-making procedures. This creates a close link between learning and education on one hand, and self-governance that is the presupposition for a participation in wisdom on the other. But it equally shows that the possibilities of concord in Vives's thought presuppose the process in which men of letters in fact become socially important, and conquer important positions reserved for the aristocracy of the soul.

The activities of the Republic of Letters add a further dimension to counselling. Whereas counselling in the General Estates or in the court belongs to the oral world of face-to-face rhetoric, the literary element of counselling further changes the dynamics. A crucial dimension of Erasmian humanism, be it More's *Utopia*, Erasmus's *Institutio principis Christiani* or Vives's 1520s political writings, is that they are printed and thus incorporated a larger audience to the sphere of political deliberations. This is not incidental; Vivesian and Erasmian educational materials, from Erasmus's *Adagia* to Vives's *Dialogues*, socialize the basic commonplaces and pacifist ideas through which political action can be understood. In doing this, they turn the Latin-speaking elite of the Low Countries who are familiar with the

civic tradition, into an audience of political deliberations and other texts. What is more, there is an awareness that the possibilities of political action are framed by the expectations of the people, and by the general culture in which politics is assessed. As Erasmus had made clear, only a part of counselling was to deliberate on a given course of action; equally as important was to explain and change the general culture inside of which certain courses of action are assessed. If the culture surrounding the prince and the audience Vives and Erasmus are addressing expects peaceful and virtuous action from the ruler, then his glory is tied to these conditions.

The description of the *vir prudens* who has to uphold concord happens in a critical moment of European history. There are three developments closely linked to one another that form the background of Vives's thought. First, warfare among main European princes was continuous during the 1520s. Secondly, this warfare conditioned the relationship between Dutch towns and Charles V in the Low Countries, since the warfare of the Emperor required the fiscal participation of the towns. Thirdly, the Reformation represented a possible threat to the unity of European concord, and in Vives's mind showed how theology in the hands of the multitude led to politically radical action. In this situation Vives's own work creates an example of the life of a wise man who strives for a critique of the powerful – but only inside the existing institutional framework (both religious and secular) which itself should not be endangered. This is, furthermore, a way of enhancing separate causes simultaneously, since to work in the context of the international Republic of Letters for European peace and concord, is directly to enhance the cause of the Dutch towns in the wider European context. Moreover, Vives's move to a more hesitant and exclusive understanding of the teaching of rhetoric at the turn of the 1530s is a reaction to the more optimistic rhetorical programme of earlier humanism in a situation where only the educated few should be familiar with the linguistic tools of persuasion.

The Vivesian project as it is developed in the 1530s is, thus, a clear elaboration or amplification of some of the classical northern humanist themes of ethical civic action based on the use of language. The general Socratic and Ciceronian trust in the power of words is realized as part of a scholarly life, but the cautiousness and ambivalence with the forces of language contrasts to the 1510s playful, witty, and optimistic understanding on the possibilities of language found among Erasmian humanists. Moreover, the problematization of the abilities of language to bring about good judgement through an appropriate use of emotion and passion in *De disciplinis*, *De ratione*, and *De anima*, is to my knowledge unique in the northern humanist context, as to the links built between rhetoric, education and the soul.

Vives's, and more generally an Erasmian defence of *status quo* that incorporated a critical point to itself in the face of the problems of princely warfare and the Reformation was, as we know well, a failure. While the rhetorical and transformative capacities of language are adopted by Vives precisely in order to realize a life of social and political utility, his classical Latin proved inadequate to compete with the more popular vernacular answer of the different branches of the Reformation. Moreover, the highly ambivalent relation to power that characterizes his rhetorical programme guaranteed that the Vivesian scholar could hardly compete with the legal expertise of the jurists, or with the emerging courtier. But the evocation of freedom of speech and the importance of counselling, the attempt to turn the linguistic and material culture into an advice for those in power, and Vives's investigations into language and cognition, had more lasting echoes.

The reception of Vives has been tackled in the thorough studies of Enrique González González, and Valentín Moreno Gallego both of whom have engaged systematically with different aspects of the transmission and reading of Vives's work. As is always the case, the reception of Vives never happens as a systematic engagement with his overall work, but in a confrontation with separate treatises that are woven together and printed with a variety of materials from various traditions, in a process that dynamically created new meaning in Vives's writings. Different works have different receptions in different traditions, and the close intertextuality between Vives's separate 1530s works is quite naturally lost or modified in the process. I have little to add to the material process of transmission and the reception of Vives's separate works in this study. However, I would like to discuss briefly certain conceptual possibilities in Vives's social thought, the importance of which on later developments would need further research.

The union of rhetoric with the ideal of *vir prudens* has some clear links with the more institutional and religious Jesuit proposals. Despite his suspicious connections to Erasmian humanism, Vives did have a material reception in the Jesuit order, but mostly, although not exclusively, in the form of the schoolboy dialogues: *Exercitatio*.¹¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, some central Jesuit developments are clearly detached, or even opposed to Vives's core ideas, starting from the development of casuistry for a categorization of moral and legal cases, which broke with Vives's general trust in *aequitas*. The focus on preaching is, furthermore, quite absent from Vives. But the general idea of educating pious men in internal harmony and

¹¹⁹⁷ Moreno Gallego 2006, 557-598; González González 2007, 205-209.

concord, who could engage with the world of discord with all the knowledge of humanist learning, is Erasmian and Vivesian. The Jesuit developments present an even more religious and organized way of reaching that union.¹¹⁹⁸ What is more, the Jesuit understanding of the close links of language and power led them to appreciate pronouncedly asymmetrical genres of rhetorical production, which facilitated the persuasion of one's superiors.¹¹⁹⁹ On a different note, the conceptual importance of Erasmus's and Vives's humanism for the development of different traditions outside Low Countries has been emphasized to varying degrees.¹²⁰⁰

However, if one wants to attribute Vives a role in a longer history of the development of political thought, one must think of the intertextual links that Vives created between politics, rhetoric, education, and passions, which frame the possibilities of all social and political reforms. This is not a well-constructed architectural philosophy, but rather an attempt to think of these issues together in a critical moment of European history. If one of the crucial developments of seventeenth- and eighteenth-centuries political thought is the incorporation of man's cognitive, social, and emotional possibilities to the centre of political theories, then Vives's attempt to think of how prudential judgements are formed, and how passions work both individually and collectively, point in this direction.

It is well known that Vives's major 1530s works, *De disciplinis* and *De anima*, had a large reception in sixteenth-century Europe; but how exactly they were conceptually incorporated into different areas of study has not been systematically investigated.¹²⁰¹ Moreover, even if already a classical tradition of studies of Vives has noted some links to Bacon, Descartes, and a range of later thinkers, the potential conceptual points of contact have rarely been studied in depth.¹²⁰² But even more important would be to pursue a line of research that does not try to interpret Vives as an originator or precursor of any tradition or strand of thought, but simply as one of the most philosophically reflective representatives of northern humanism, whose engagement with classical tradition lead to an acute interest on the social importance of

¹¹⁹⁸ Fumaroli 1999b, 101; Höpfl 2004, 12-22.

¹¹⁹⁹ Höpfl 2004, 80.

¹²⁰⁰ Vives played a role in the development of the civic education of England, see Skinner 1996; Peltonen 2012, 45, 47. His influence on the English tradition is also discussed in Curtis 2008, 168-176. He also figures prominently in the development of humanist dialectic and rhetoric, see Vasoli 1968; Noreña 1986; Mack 1993; Mack 2011, 129-131, 247-249. His importance for the history of education is already a commonplace, see Noreña 1970, 293-296; Roest 2003. For the importance of Vives for English pietism, see Todd 1987. For the place of Vives in Spanish Erasmianism, see Abellán 2005.

¹²⁰¹ González González 2007, 90-98, 109.

¹²⁰² See Moreno Gallego 2006, 107-121; Noreña 1970, 275-299. For a presentation as well as a critical assessment on studies of Vives's reception, see González González 2007, 119-161.

language together with the ethical, passionate, and civic problems that arose with it. In this respect, one could try to understand the role that Vives's synthesis of Stoic-Christian framework (with an awareness of rhetoric and passions) played in the larger developments of *decorum* into manners and politeness; rhetoric into conversation; civic culture into sociability; *ingenium* into an anatomical concept; and the literary culture of the Republic of Letters into a more public, and even popular form of civic and scientific debate.¹²⁰³ More generally, one could give Vives a place in a story of early modern thought, where the study of passions and the natural possibilities of man evolved into one of the central themes of seventeenth-century philosophy.¹²⁰⁴

¹²⁰³ Some of these have been partially addressed. For the civic dimension, see Skinner 1996. For Vives, *ingenium* and anatomy, see Noreña 1972, 75.

¹²⁰⁴ James 2006, 1-21.

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