

Views of Peace and Prosperity – Hopes for Autonomy and Self-Government, Antwerp 1599

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Abstract

In Flanders, the Entry of a new ruler into one of the cities of his domain (*Joyeuse Entrée*) transformed the urban landscape into a visual pamphlet – an opportunity to lay out the most urgent needs, hopes and demands of the people through a series of ephemeral monuments and civic ceremonies. The triumphal procession of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella into Antwerp in 1599, was likewise used by the city and by the creator of the pageant, humanist and city secretary Johannes Bochius, to lay out the main concerns and worries of their time. The article focuses on two of the monuments and the two ceremonies of oath taking in order to reveal the use of the pageant's structure as a 'progressing viewing experience'. The consideration of the viewing order reveals not only the strive for peace and the call to establish a self-governmental system under the rule of the new governors, but also the political thought of the time and the surprising demand to establish a mixed government, containing the fundamentals of aristocracy and democracy within the monarchic rule of Spain.

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Introduction: The Triumphal Entry of the Archduke Albert and the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia into Antwerp, 1599

[1] In the Seventeen Provinces of the Low Countries, after decades of strife and discontent, civil war and religious turmoil, Archduke Albert of Austria and the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, the newly appointed Spanish governors of the Netherlands, were regarded by most in the southern provinces as the great hope for a future of peace and prosperity. Led through the city streets of Antwerp, the entering archdukes were presented with the demands and expectations of the city and its citizens of them – demands, which called for autonomy and self-government; and expectations, which called for the implementation of a virtuous, just and good government.

[2] Their procession through the city – their Triumphal Entry – was planned by the City Council in honor of their arrival. In fact, for the city of Antwerp, Albert and Isabella's Entry provided a unique opportunity – as stated by the City Council:

So as not to do less than all the other cities and to show them the honor they deserve especially to the Infanta, who has never before visited our city [...] and of whom are expected the benefactions, help and support that good old states can and must expect from their Princes in order to see the country and the city once again in its old prosperity and unity, for which we have been praying to God Almighty, for so many years, and are still doing so.¹

[3] As it turned out, Antwerp's voice seems to have found an attentive audience in Albert and Isabella. Instead of pursuing the imperial aims, they implemented a national policy that met the expectations presented to them at their Triumphal Entry, bringing respite to the country and partial economic recovery along with cultural prosperity.²

[4] The Triumphal Entry of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella into Antwerp was afterwards recorded in a book describing the pageant in its entirety.³ Published in 1602, it was written by Johannes Bochius, humanist and Antwerp city secretary,⁴ who had also

¹ SAA. PK 1661, *Magistraatsboeken* (1596-1599), register f° 346r-345v: "Soo om nyet min te doen dan alle dandere steden als om hun eenichssints te acquiteren van tghende de voorscreven onze Prinsen schuldich is ende besondere oyck de voorscreven vrouwe Infante die noyt binnen deser stadt en is geweest ende daert aff men verwacht de weldaeden hulpe ende assistentie die goede oude staeten van henne Princen moighen ende moeten verwachten om het landt ende de stadt wederom te sien in henne oude prosperiteyt ende eenicheyt, daeromme wy Godt almachtich soo langhe jaeren gebeden hebben ende noch syn biddende." I wish to thank Simon Laevers for his helpful comments in this translation. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine.

² Jonathan Irvine Israel, *Conflicts of Empires: Spain, the Low Countries and the Struggle for World Supremacy, 1585-1713*, London: Hambledon Press, 1997, pp. 1-22.

³ Succession of a new regent to the throne in Renaissance Europe was marked by the regent's ceremonial Entry into the leading cities and towns of the realm. These Triumphal Entries can be divided into two main artistic traditions: the Italian and the Flemish. The former, based on the traditional Triumphal Entry of classical Rome and intended for the glorification of the new ruler, was revived during the Renaissance, first in Italy, and then adopted by the Holy Roman Emperors of the Habsburg dynasty. Thus the phenomenon spread north of the alps to Germany, Spain and the Netherlands. The latter's tradition, based on the *Joyeuse Entrée* of Burgundy, in Flemish the *Blijde Inkomst*, acquired a political significance, representing a form of pact between regent and town. These ceremonies, which in a relatively short time became an indispensable part of civic and cultural life in Renaissance Europe, demanded a great display of pageantry that included the visual arts of architecture, painting and sculpture, and the performing arts of theater and music. Great-scale monuments were made entirely of ephemeral, expendable and consumable materials – wood, stucco and canvas – that were painted to imitate more enduring and nobler materials, such as marble or bronze. The monuments were erected for the duration of an event, transforming the city by giving new façades to buildings and decorating squares. As soon as the event was over, they were dismantled, even destroyed. For further reading, see J. R. Mulryne, Helen Watanabe-O'Kelly, Margaret Shewing, eds., *Europa Triumphans, Court and Civic Festivals in Early Modern Europe*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004; Roy Strong, *Art and Power, Renaissance Festivals 1450-1650*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, pp. 75-97; William Alexander McClung, "A Place for a Time: The Architecture of Festivals and Theatres", in: *Architecture and Its Image. Four Centuries of Architectural Representation: Works from the Collection of the Canadian Centre for Architecture*, ed. Eve Blau and Edward Kaufman, Montreal: Centre canadien d'architecture, 1989, pp. 87-108.

⁴ Johannes Bochius, *Historica narratio profectionis et inaugurationis serenissimorum Belgii Principum Alberti et Isabellae, Austriae archiducum. Et eorum optatissimi in Belgium adventus, rerumque gestarum et memorabilium, gratulationum, apparatusum, et spectaculorum in ipsorum susceptione et inauguratione hactenus editorum accurata descriptio, ex officina Palantiniana, apud Ioannem Moretus, 1602.* – Johannes Bochius (1555-1609) was a latinist and humanist, which won him the appellation 'the Virgil of the Netherlands'. Born in Brussels on 27 July 1555, Bochius

been entrusted by the city to plan and execute the actual Triumphal Entry – both the ceremonies and the monuments.⁵ The fact that Bochius was both 'inventor' (*inventeur*) and documenter of the same event, allows us to understand his account, not as a mere description of a viewer or witness, but as a re-creation of the visual and ephemeral image. Accordingly, we can analyze the text with the tools of the art historian, treating the order of description as the description of a composition.⁶ As a historical document this book, written at a time of great changes, presents a valuable insight into the central and internal expectations and main concerns of the city. This insight is more so significant when considering the choice of imagery and the order of viewing it.

received an excellent education from childhood on and later studied law in Leuven. Upon graduation he went to Rome, where he mastered in Canon Law. See: Aubertus Miraeus, *Elogia Belgica sive Illustrium Belgi Scriptorum, Qui nostra patrumque memoria, vel Ecclesiam Dei propugnarum, vel disciplinas illustrarum, Vitae breviter commemoratae, Studio Avberti Miraei Bruxellensis Canonici Bibliothecarii Antverp.*, Antverpiae: Apud Davidem Martinium, 1609, s.n. See also: Melchior Adam, *Vitae Germanorum Philosophorum: Qvi Seculo Superiori, Ex Quod Excurrit, Philosophicis AC Humanioribus Literis Clari Floruerunt*, Haidelberg Impensis Ioane Rosae Librarii Francof. Typis Iohannis Lacelloti, Acad Typograph, 1615, pp. 497-499; Pierre Bayle, *Dictionnaire historique et critique* (1697), Paris: Editions Sociales, 1974, pp. 504-505; Christian Gottlieb Jöchers, *Allgemeines gelehrten-Lexikon*, Hildesheim: G. Olm, 1960-1961, p. 1150; Valerius Andreas, "Boch (Jean) ou Bochius", *Bibliotheca Belgica*, 461, as in: Anna Sarrazin, "Johannes Bochius (1555-1609)", in: *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 28 (1937). Antwerpen: Bureel der Bijdragen, p. 244; *Biographie nationale de Belgique, Tome 2*, Académie Royale de Belgique, H. Thiry-Van Buggenhoudt: Bruxelles, 1868, pp. 541-544. The council commissioned Johannes Bochius to compile a commemorative volume in honor of Albert's and Isabella's arrival, documenting all the different events celebrated in various cities in the Southern Netherlands. The book was subdivided into four parts, each marked with a separate title page. But in order to praise the Anwerp Entry over all others, the second part, dedicated to the Anwerp Entry, was the most elaborated of all four parts. It was also the only one written by Bochius himself and was the only one of the four parts of the book to contain beside a descriptive text, also 13 single and 15 double leaf engravings with scenes of the event. L. van den Broeck, "Het beeld van de vorst bij de Blijde Inkomst van Albrecht en Isabella in Antwerpen", in: *Bijdragen tot de Geschiedenis* 71 (1988), p. 126. Part one of the book (compiler undictated) describes the Archdukes' journey to the Netherlands and their entries into Brussels, Leuven, and Mechelen. The second part, compiled by Johannes Bochius, records the entry into Antwerp. Part three, compiled by Maxaemylianus Vrientius describes the entry into Ghent and the fourth part, compiled by Henricus d'Oultremannus, records the entry into Valenciennes. See: Dirk Imhof, ed., *The Illustration of Books Published by the Moretuses*, Antwerp: Plantin-Moretus Museum, 1997, p. 106.

⁵ SAA. PK 1636, f° 24v. According to this document, dated 17 April 1600, Johannes Bochius was paid 900 pounds for the planning of the event: "Paid to master Jan Boghe (Johannes Bochius), secretary of this city as inventor and director of the works, concerning the entrance of his highnesses" (SAA. PK 1636, f° 23v). In another clause, we find a specification of the literary work he did, i.e. the inscriptions that he wrote for the different monuments and the writing of the book: "Paid by his lordships the mayor and aldermen to master Jan Boghe, above his inventions and inscriptions serving the pieces and works that honored his highnesses, the sum of 1,100 pounds for the pattern of the book, that will be printed on this subject and for all the other services and settings provided by him according the letter, placed in the margin of his request", signed J. Brandt, dated 17 April 1600 and his receipt executed by Jacquest van Huffel, public notary, on 16 September 1600 (SAA. PK 1636, f°24v).

⁶ The possibility of recognizing Bochius – the author of the book – as responsible also for the planning of the physical event was suggested by Hans Mielke (*The Ceremonial Entry of Ernst, Archduke of Austria, into Antwerp, June 14, 1594*. Text by Johannes Bochius, Engravings by Pieter van der Borcht, after design by Marten De Vos. Originally published Antwerpen, ex officina Palatiniana, 1595. Introduction by Hans Mielke (Museum Palatin-Moretus, Antwerpen), New York: Published by Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1970) and George Kubler ("Archiducal Flanders and the joyeuse entrée of Philip III at Lisbon in 1619", in: *Jaarboek van het Koninklijk Museum voor schone kunsten Antwerpen*, 1970, pp. 157-212). However, unsupported by documentary evidence, they do not deliberate on this fact in their reading of the monuments. Margit Thøfner offers another view in her book, *A Common Art: Urban Ceremonials in Antwerp and Brussels During and After the Dutch*

[5] These will be demonstrated through two of the monuments, positioned in the two most distinguished locations, i.e., at the Meir-Bourg Square the Versatile Theater, and at the market square, in front of the City Hall, the Political Stage; as well as through the two vow-taking ceremonies, celebrated on the first and last days of the Entry. I will argue that beyond the actual analysis of each of the monuments and their imagery, we can also detect a visual and thematic connection between the two monuments and the final ceremony.

[6] These examples stress the importance of considering the Entry as a 'progressing viewing experience' – a dynamic depiction of the needs and demands of the city that could only have been revealed in its full meaning, and consequently understood in its entirety, by progressing along the route of the procession. That is by walking, seeing, considering and contemplating over the various stages and by applying the intrinsic connections between the different ephemeral monuments, ceremonies and city scenery.

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War and Discontent: The Spanish Rule over the Netherlands

[7] Antwerp, one of the main trade centers in the early modern world, was considered by its own citizens to be unique amongst the provinces of the Low Countries. They took pride in their city's pluralist nature and in maintaining their privileges and self-government.⁷ This unique character became even more distinctive after the city joined the Protestants against Spain on 4 November 1576. Two main factors may explain the distinction of Antwerp and why it led to its uniting with the Protestants. The first was the necessity to maintain accessibility to the river Schelde, which had been under the control of the Protestants since 1572. The second, as demonstrated by Marnef, was rooted in the long struggle between the local government, which tried to obtain autonomous rule, and the Spanish government.⁸ This struggle had its roots in Charles V's time, long before the contentions of the 1570s.

[8] Charles V had led an economic and pragmatic policy which was guided by the understanding that in order to safeguard Antwerp's commercial and economic prosperity,

Revolt, Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 2007. In her book she presents the art of festivals as what she phrases as "common art", as a collective civic "self-portrait" (p. 11). Thøfner's basic approach derives from the anthropology of art and her methodology is centered on the analysis of the "actors and the audience and on how they interact with one another and with the ceremonial artifact" (p. 22). A similar approach is offered by Emily J. Peters, "Printing Ritual: The Performance of Community in Christopher Plantin's La Joyeuse & Magnifique Entreé de Monseigneur Francoys... d'Anjou", in: *Renaissance Quarterly* 61 (2008), p. 370-413. Peters analyzes the book recording the Entry of Hercule François de Valois, Duke d'Anjou and Alençon into Antwerp (1582). Peters argues that the book and the event were a collective effort. The 1582 book is, however, a single, unique, and exceptional example and counters Peters' claim, and therefore cannot serve as a case study from which to deduce the overall norm.

⁷ Guido Marnef, *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation, Underground Protestantism in a Commercial Metropolis 1550-1577*, Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996, p. 4.

⁸ Marnef, *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation*, pp. 14-19.

he had to maintain a delicate balance between the local and the general government. Thus, in spite of his ideology and his wishes to enforce imperial and religious hegemony, he maintained Antwerp's privileges, including the protection of Protestant and other non-Catholic traders. This situation was preserved even after 1520, when Protestants were persecuted all through the Empire. Marnef argues that Charles V's reason for guarding this political and social status quo was his understanding that Antwerp's prosperity depended on the presence of foreign traders in the city and consequently on allowing freedom of beliefs.⁹

[9] This delicate balance was violated when Philip II, upon gaining the throne, decided to forsake his father's pragmatic policy and adopt an aggressive anti-Protestant policy. Before long, this policy led to an economic crisis and to a radical contradiction between Antwerp's and Philip II's interests, leading eventually to the joining of Antwerp with the Protestants. As a result, Philip II ordered Alexander Farnese to re-conquer Antwerp, who, after a fourteen month siege (1584-1585), regained control of the city and was appointed by the king as its governor.

[10] Philip II's problems continued well into the 1590s with his failure to capture the French Crown, along with the continuing Protestant revolt, which had increased the danger of losing the Low Countries.¹⁰ The loss of the territory would have cost too dearly to Philip II. Indeed, it would have weakened the Spanish Crown's position in Europe as well as in the New World; compromised Philip II's own position and authority – especially morally as the defender of the Christian Empire; and above all, it would have threatened the Spanish House of Habsburg's title as the champion of the war against heresy.¹¹ This had engendered a change of policy in the Spanish Court, and as a result, Philip II tried to bring about an accord between Spain and the dissidents in the Low Countries and France through diplomatic means rather than force. Ensuing this change of policy, Philip II had appointed Cardinal Archduke Albert VII of Austria as the governor of the Spanish Netherlands in 1595 and consequently sent the newly appointed governor to try and dissolve the volatile situation in the Low Countries.

[11] Albert arrived in Brussels in 1596 and, following the Spanish Court's instructions, he signed the Treaty of Vervins in 1598, ending Spain's war with France. However, his efforts to reach a similar agreement with the United Provinces ended with his defeat in a battle near Turnhout. Philip II, in a final attempt to maintain Spanish control, turned again to

⁹ Marnef, *Antwerp in the Age of Reformation*, p. 20.

¹⁰ During the French Wars of Religion (from the middle of the sixteenth century to the Edict of Nantes in 1598), when it seemed that most of Western Europe was succumbing to Protestantism, Philip II tried to gain control over the French crown by marrying his daughter, the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia (who later married Albert of Austria), to Henry of Navarre. However, all hope was lost with Henry's succession to the throne as Henry IV and his conversion to Catholicism and marriage to Marguerite de Valois.

¹¹ Jose Alcala-Zamora y Queipo de Llano, *España, Flandes y el Mar de Norte. La ultima ofensiva Europea de los Austrias madrileños*, Barcelona: Editorial Planeta, 1975, p. 160.

the political sphere, married his daughter Isabella Clara Eugenia to Albert,¹² and appointed them as independent, joint governors of the Seventeen Provinces of the Netherlands. Thus, by giving the new governors autonomy, but for several restrictions, Philip II managed to ensure Spain's continuing rule over the region.¹³

[12] On 5 September 1599 the new governors entered Brussels. However, the hope that the autonomy granted by the Spanish Crown would satisfy the Protestants was shattered immediately upon the arrival of the governors with a pamphlet published by the Protestants expressing their distrust of the new regime and the scheme contrived by Philip II:

[...] by a sterile marriage they want to mislead us and tempt us to return under the Spanish yoke, and the Archduke, surrounded by weapons and Spanish councilors, has beside the name of a governor, nothing but a fake title of a Prince.¹⁴

[13] The southern provinces, despite an appearance of delight and joy expressed by Triumphal Entries celebrated in the honor of the new governors, welcomed them with mixed feelings and skepticism, taught by history to mistrust the Spanish Crown's promises.

[14] A year before the arrival of Albert and Isabella, the General Council of Brabant sent a letter to Jean Richardot, president of the State Council, calling for truthful and real autonomy under the new rulers. In this letter they wished to ensure the authority and functions of the council, withdraw all foreign armies from the lands of Flanders, diminish the influence of foreigners in the government of the state, and strive for peace with the Protestant provinces.¹⁵ Spain, however, had no intention of accepting these demands. In fact, all through the period of Albert's and Isabella's 'autonomous' reign, the army was financed and controlled by the Spanish Crown and, accordingly, the governors had been divested of all real authority and leadership. For example, the fortresses in Antwerp, Ghent, and Cambrai, as well as some other fortresses that were conquered from Holland and France, remained under the Spanish Crown's control and were directed by a commander appointed in Madrid, whose loyalty was, of course, to the Spanish Crown and

¹² Albert of Austria and Isabella Clara Eugenia could marry only after the Pope had released Albert of his ecclesiastical position and duties.

¹³ The restrictions included an assurance that if the couple had a son he must marry into the Spanish Court, and if they were childless, the Netherlands would return under the rule of the Spanish Crown after Albert's death. A. Rodríguez Villa, "Introducción a la correspondencia de la Infanta Clara Eugenia con el Duque de Lerma", in: *Boletín de la Real Academia de la Historia* 49 (1906), pp. 74-76.

¹⁴ Cardinal Guido de Bentivoglio, *Relaciones del Cardenal Bentivoglio, Publicadas por Enrico Puteano y traducidas por Francisco Mendoza y Céspedes de Italiano en lengua castellana*, Madrid, 1638, p. 83: "[...] por contrario los rebeldos mostrandose mas pertinaces que jamas, se apercibieron con todo calor para la guerra, aviendo publicado, que por medio de un matrimonio esteril, les querian engañosamente inducir aque volviesen de baxo del yugo de España, y que el Archiduque rodeado de armas, y de consejos Españoles, no tenia fuera del nombre de Governador, sino un aparente titulo de Principe."

¹⁵ Van den Broeck, "Het beeld van de vorst bij de Blijde Inkomst van Albrecht en Isabella in Antwerpen", pp. 124-25.

not to its representatives in the area. Thus, although Albert was appointed as supreme commander of all armed forces in the area, all major strategic military and political decisions were taken in Madrid and not in Brussels. In addition, a secret clause in the autonomy agreement determined that Albert and Isabella were compelled to combat heresy, and thus, from the very onset could not – in effect – attempt any type of treaty for peace or reunification with the Protestant northern provinces.¹⁶ Thus, despite the support the new governors had encountered upon their arrival, they also had to confront some criticism, or at the very least some amount of skepticism.

[15] The contemporary historian Emmanuel van Meteren (1535-1612) reported a charged atmosphere at the first meeting held in Nivelles between Albert and Isabella and the representatives of Brabant's cities. Albert, according to Van Meteren, did not remove his hat, and the Infanta did not want to vow to hold and protect Belgian privileges, claiming that those lands were given to her as a present from her father. However, continues Van Meteren, they soon understood that,

it will be less harmful for them to pledge than to object, for they will be able to get possession of all the property, and thus even if only for appearance sake, it would be best to accept Brabant's demands.¹⁷

[16] Admittedly, this report cannot be entirely trusted, as it reflects to some extent Van Meteren's own views, who was at the time in England, having joined the Protestant representatives. Nevertheless, it can serve as an indication of the complex situation the archdukes found upon their arrival. In other words, beside the joy and bliss expressed in Antwerp's Triumphant Entry, they encountered among their new subjects also the hope for a truthful execution of the apparently promised autonomy mandate. Among these claims was, first and foremost, the call for participation in the local government, and second, the call to try and reach a peace treaty and reunion with the northern provinces.

[17] These hopes, as the skeptics had foretold, were only partially realized. In lack of an heir, autonomy only lasted until Albert's death in 1621. Peace had not been achieved; the war with the United Provinces ended only temporarily in 1609, when Spain agreed to a truce with the Dutch and granted them full independence – even if only *de facto* – in the 'Twelve Years Truce'.¹⁸ In effect, peace was only achieved when Spain accepted the Northern Provinces' claim for independence, and not by the attempt to compel the idea of

¹⁶ Werner Thomas and Luc Duerloo, eds., *Albert and Isabella 1598-1621*, Koninklijke Musea voor Kunst en Geschiedenis and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Brussels: Brepols, 1998, pp. 3-4.

¹⁷ Van Meteren, quoted from: Van den Broeck, "Het beeld van de vorst bij de Blijde Inkomst van Albrecht en Isabella in Antwerpen", p. 125.

¹⁸ The war recommenced in 1621, ending in 1648. Under the Twelve Years Truce Spain granted the United Provinces independence, describing them as "Free lands, provinces and states against who they make no claim" for the duration of the truce. Nevertheless, Philip III had not abandoned his goal of uniting the Low Countries under Spanish rule. Paul C. Allen, *Philip III and the Pax Hispanica, 1598-1621: The Failure of Grand Strategy*, Yale Historical Publications, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2000, p. 236.

autonomous Spanish governors.¹⁹ It was in this atmosphere that the City Council of Antwerp decided, on 18 August 1599, to welcome the new governors of their country with a Triumphal Entry, which was entrusted to Bochius. No doubt, this was a mission of great complexity – a delicate balance between the needs to proclaim Antwerp's wishes, the political necessities and the city's duty to satisfy the new governors.

[18] Less than four months later, on 9 December 1599, the two governors arrived in Antwerp. Albert's and Isabella's triumphal procession began the very next day, on 10 December at the city gates (Sint-Jorispoort or Porta Caesarea). The order of the procession was both historical and symbolic as it was set according to the plan of Cornelius Grapheus, the city secretary at the times of Charles V, for the 1549 Prince Philip's Entry to Antwerp.²⁰

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First and Last: The Ceremonies of the Taking of the Oaths

[19] The first section of the reception took place outside the walls in front of a large crowd. Entry of a ruler in Flanders was not just symbolic in character, but judicial as well. It was a contract drawn between the ruler and his subjects containing the legal form of the *Joyeuse Entrée*.²¹ Thus, the description of the multitude gathering outside the city walls served to depict the people as the second party of this contract and as active participants in the civic event.

[20] A round ephemeral chapel was built to host the ceremony of the solemn vow of the archdukes (Fig. 1). The chapel was twenty feet wide with eight Doric columns decorated with golden ivy leaves and above them an inscription reading: "If this one is guarded, we will all be guarded".²² According to Bochius, the director and inventor of both ceremonial event and ephemeral monuments, this was meant to address the two most significant matters that were both valid and fitting for the event. On the one hand it addresses the need to guard the privileges as vowed upon on this occasion, and on the other the need to safeguard the Catholic faith.²³ Thus, both the chapel and inscription point to a religious significance for the ceremony of the first vow, set outside the city walls. Accordingly, both the administrators and the actual characteristics of the ceremony were of a liturgical and ecclesiastic nature. In front of the chapel stood all of Antwerp's clergy, headed by the

¹⁹ Rafael Valdera, in: Thomas and Duerloo, *Albert and Isabella 1598-1621*, p. 53.

²⁰ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 176. While describing that order, in which he had to introduce some changes, Bochius counts himself amongst the four city secretaries, and offers yet another indication of his role by declaring that he is "the author of this work, Magister Ioannes Boghe" (Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 175: "M(agister) Ioannes Boghe huius operis auctor").

²¹ Bryce D. Lyon, "Facts and Fiction in English and Belgian Constitutional Law", in: *Medieval et Humanistica* 10 (1956), pp. 82-101.

²² Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 180: "Hac servata servabimur omnes."

²³ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 180

Bishop Guillaume de Berghès, who welcomed the archdukes and handed them a crucifix, which they kissed while kneeling. Then, holding the Holy Scriptures and facing the chancellor of Brabant and all the clergy, the archdukes vowed to preserve the rights and privileges of Brabant.²⁴



1 The first oath ceremony at the chapel outside the city walls near Sint-Jorispoort (Porta Caesarea). Johannes Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, 1602, pp. 182-183. Museum Plantin-Moretus/Prentenkabinet, Antwerpen-UNESCO World Heritage, collection museum. R 45.1

[21] The same oath was taken once again on 12 December, the third and last day of the Entry ceremony, but this time in a very different setting and with a very different implication (Fig. 6). That day began with a similar procession, ordered in the same way as on the first day. The archdukes first walked from the palace to the cathedral where they attended Sunday mass, celebrated by the bishop, and then proceeded to the city square. There, in front of the Senate House stood now an empty stage, which during the first day had served as the fifteenth monument: the Political Stage (Fig. 2). On that stage, the senate members took their places to witness the ceremony of the second vow, proclaimed once again by Albert and Isabella. Thus, whereas the first vow was of a more religious nature, the second, by the mere changing of the setting and its audience, was of a more civic one.

[22] To fully understand the significance of this second ceremony, we must first, as the participants had done, follow the 'progressing viewing experience' and thus turn to the Political Stage, as it was set on the first day of the triumphal procession. Second, we must follow Bochius' explanations as he reveals in his book his views on the significance of the vow on this second stage.

²⁴ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 180.

The Political Stage: The Psychomachia of Peace and Justice

[23] Bochiuſ, a prominent latinist and humanist of his time, arranged his Political Stage following beliefs that were then widespread. One ſuch belief roſe from the religious wars of the ſixteenth century, which had contributed to the development of moral political thought, centralizing on the ſpecifically deſired virtues of a juſt and good king; i.e. the more the old Republic weakened, the more 'guidebooks for the prince' appeared. In the Netherlands, for example, the writer of one ſuch book was Sebastian Fox Morcillo, a Spaniſh humanist, who published in Antwerp in 1556 a book following Roman moral thought.²⁵ In this book he claimed that a good king is one who rules by the virtue of juſtice, and that the difference between tyrant and king lies ſolely in the good qualities and virtues that a king poſſeſſes but a tyrant does not.²⁶ The ſame view was expreſſed by the Italian humanist Giovanni Viperani, protégé of the Flemiſh ſtateſman Cardinal Granvelle, and by the famous Flemiſh humanist Juſtus Lipſiuſ.²⁷ Accordingly, Bochiuſ' Political Stage was dedicated to the deſired virtues of the government, ſuch as Peace, Juſtice, Prudence, and Temperance. Theſe were the virtues that the people of Antwerp had hoped to ſee manifested in the rule of the new governors entering the city.

[24] The Political Stage (Fig. 2) hoſted, according to Bochiuſ' deſcription, "ephemeral ſcenery", i.e. a *tableau vivant* which was compoſed of perſonifications representing "figureſ connected to ſtate affairſ" ſitting in a pyramidal ſtructure of four ſteps and ſurrounded by a temple-like ſcenery.²⁸ The ſtage carried a dedication:

Remember to govern lightly, oh great leader,
and may theſe artſ ſtand by you to make peace a law.²⁹

[25] The uſe of the word 'artſ' is ſomewhat unexpected and can only be clarified by analyzing Bochiuſ' text through a progreſſing viewing or rather reading, following hiſ deſcription from the top of the ſtage to the bottom and from left to right.

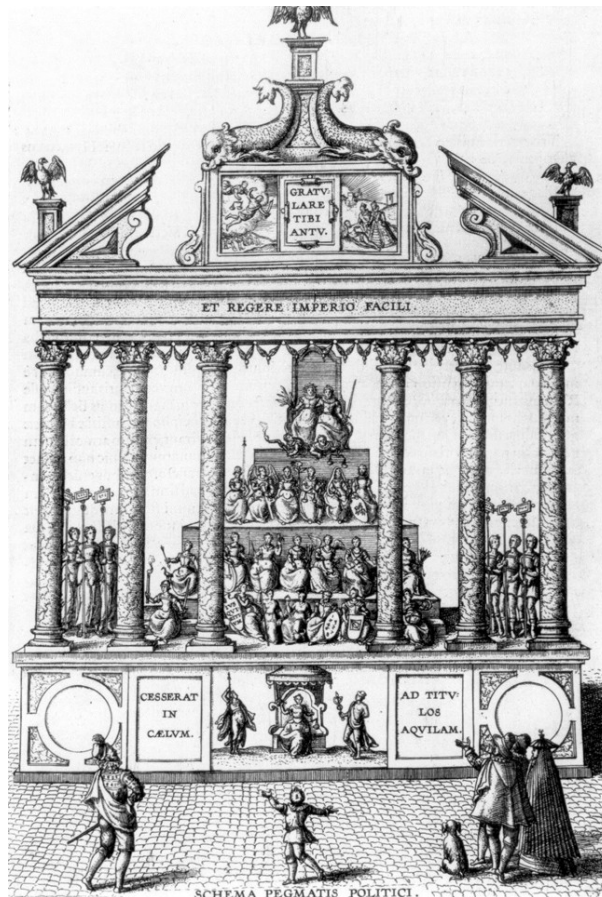
²⁵ Sebastian Fox Morcillo, *De regni, regisque institutione libri III*, Antverpiae: apud Gerardum Spelmannum, 1556

²⁶ Richard Tuck, *Philosophy and Government 1572-1651*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 34.

²⁷ Giovanni Viperani, *De rege, et regno liber. Ad regem Philippum Caroli V. Imp. F. Eiusdem Io. Anto. Viperani De Historia scribenda liber*, Antwerpen: ex officina Christophori Plantini, 1569; Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 34; [Lipsius:] pp. 39-48; Comtesse M. De Villermont, *L'infante Isabelle gouvernante des Pays-Bas*, Paris, 1912, n. 26, pp. 404-405; J. H. M. Salmon, "Cicero and Tacitus in sixteenth-Century France", in: *The American Historical Review* 85 (1980), pp. 307-331.

²⁸ Bochiuſ, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 276.

²⁹ Bochiuſ, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 278: The engraving ſhows only the beginning of the inſcription, while in the text Bochiuſ citeſ the inſcription in its entirety: "Et regere imperio facili, Dux magne, memento, / Hae tibi ſint artēſ, pacique imponere morem."



2 The Political Stage in front of the City Hall. Johannes Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, 1602, p. 279. Museum Plantin-Moretus/Prentenkabinet, Antwerpen-UNESCO World Heritage, collection museum. R 45.1

[26] On the top left first step sits *Pax* (Peace) and next to her, on the right, *Iustitia* (Justice). Thus, the two personifications are a visual reference to the last words of the written dedication: "make peace a law". Each of these figures has one foot placed on its opposed vice: *Pax* over *Furor* and *Iustitia* over *Iniustitia*. According to Bochius, this image is based on Pausanias's description of the figure of *Iustitia* in Elis:

A beautiful woman is punishing an ugly one, choking her with one hand and with the other striking her with a staff. It is Justice who thus treats Injustice.³⁰

[27] Hence, from Pausanias, Bochius had derived the initial idea showing the personification of Injustice with the split tongue of a snake and holding a broken pair of scales, but to this pair he adds the personification of Peace stepping on *Furor*, one of the attendants of Mars, the god of War. *Furor* holds a broken torch and represents the personification of Fury and Rage. By adding this second pair, the general and moral concept of Pausanias is now focused on representing specifically the triumph over war through a just government of peace.

[28] The first step of this stage represents, therefore, the goals of the state, the ideals the archdukes must strive for: a state governed by the principles of peace and justice

³⁰ Paus., 5.18.2.

that will not allow any violence or injustice. These teachings are the same as Aristotle's, Cicero's, and Plato's, who believed that the state's first purpose cannot be limited to enabling life but must ensure a good life to all its citizens. Cicero states that

A commonwealth is a constitution of the entire people. But the people are not every association of men, however congregated, but the association of the entire number, bound together by the compact of justice, and the communication of utility.³¹

[29] Additionally, the presentation of Peace and Justice stepping on their opposed vices depicts an allegorical battle, which can be further connected to another source, the tradition of *psychomachia*.

[30] The battle between virtues and vices is well known in philosophy, literature and art, both in antiquity and in Christian culture. In antiquity, Plato, Aristotle and Cicero dedicated much of their moral writings to the issue of social and political virtues and vices.³² In early Christianity, these virtues and vices were recognized as part of human nature, and they were thus transformed from an external force or deity, whose rage can be invoked or favor gained, into individual qualities. With the advent of Christianity, the virtues and vices of antiquity – those of social and political meaning – were no longer associated with the civic, but had rather become the personal qualities or habits by which each and every individual had to conduct his life. These qualities were first arranged by Evagrius, in the fourth century, into nine categories and translated by Prudentius, at the end of the century, to an allegorical battle over the human soul, in his allegorical poem the *Psychomachia*.³³

[31] The archdukes as well as the spectators had undoubtedly understood this reference to the *psychomachia*, as their viewing and experience, while walking through the route of procession, had gradually progressed, since this idea had already been introduced in a previous stage: the Versatile Theater at the Meir-Bourg Square. Therefore, before continuing with the meaning of the Political Stage, we too must turn to examine this theater.³⁴

³¹ Cic. Rep., 1.25.39.

³² Aristot. Vir.; Cic. Off.; Plat. Rep., 4. For further reading see: Eve d'Ambra, *Private Lives, Imperial Virtues: The frieze of the Forum Transitorium in Rome*, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993.

³³ Prud. Psych., 1.274-343. See also: S. Georgia Nugent, "Virtus or Virago? The Female Personifications of Prudentius Psychomachia", in: *Virtues and Vices, The Personifications in The Index of Christian Art*, ed. Colum Hourihane, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2000, p. 13.

³⁴ As discussed above, Bochiuis is thus using a visual and thematic connection in order to display his argument to both the viewer in the actual event, and to his reader in the reconstruction of the event in the text. This connection is carried out through a meticulous description of the monument in a specific and meaningful order that must be followed very closely by the reader in order to reveal his thesis. Thus, by unfolding the connection between the two monuments in this way, we will be able to understand both Bochiuis' main argument and reinforce our conclusion about his role as the sole architect of both book and ephemeral event.

The Versatile Theater: Horrors of War – Virtues of Peace

[32] The Versatile Theater (Fig. 3-4) was created in the form of an amphitheater, and was composed of two parts: an outer part, in the form of a semi-circular wall resembling the coliseum; and an inner part, in the form of a circular-pyramidal stage hosting numerous personifications of virtues and vices. This inner stage was versatile, and had two facets: one representing war and the other peace.



3 The Versatile Theatre: the face of War. Johannes Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, 1602, pp. 218-219. Museum Plantin-Moretus/Prentenkabinet, Antwerpen-UNESCO World Heritage, collection museum. R 45.1

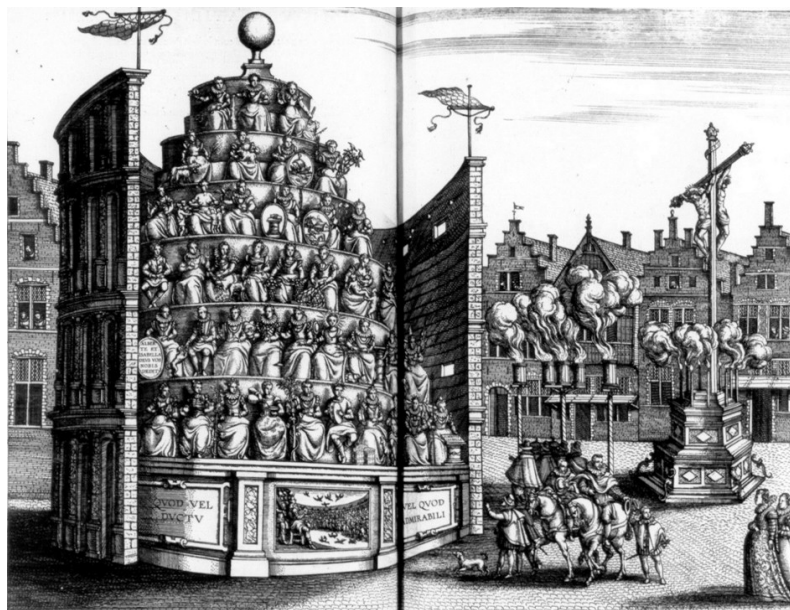
[33] When the archdukes arrived at the square and stood in front of the stage, they saw first what Bochius described as a "fearful scene of terror and fright" – the face of war (Fig. 3).³⁵ Following Bochius' description, we begin with *Bellona* (sitting at the top right side of the stage), the goddess of war; next, and in the center, sits *Furor*, the god of war's companion, representing fury; and to his left (top left side of the stage), sits *Caedes*, the personification of slaughter and murder.

[34] Although *Furor* – who represents a moral vice – is situated at the center of the composition and appears to be the most prominent figure of the three, he is not the figure opening both the physical and the written formations. Instead, following Bochius' order of description, the first and opening figure is *Bellona* (War). We can therefore surmise that war, and not moral vices, is the subject of this scene. Furthermore, as Bochius explains in his book, the purpose of this scene was to stage for the new governors the sorrowful situation they were stepping into in Belgium³⁶ and the hope for drastic changes under their rule:

³⁵ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 217; see note 36.

The Versatile Theatre had two sides, one covered with a red cloth, presenting the figures of the fearful scene of terror and fright, exhibiting before the eyes of the spectators, the current situation and suffering of the unlucky Belgium; the second, covered with a green cloth, depicted happier figures [seen] by their expression and feeling. When the princes arrived at the huge structure, the stage was operated by a hidden mechanism, [and] the first figures disappeared into the structure and instead revealed the good signing of our hopes.³⁷

[35] Thus, Bochius arranged this stage, starting with war – the origin of all evil and disaster – and then all of war's vices, in descending order, from the most generic to the most particular and personal. The more generic *Terror*, for example, is positioned on the second step, while the lesser – more private notion of fear – *Timor* is seated on the bottom step.



4 The Versatile Theatre: the face of Peace. Johannes Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, 1602, pp. 222-223. Museum Plantin-Moretus/Prentenkabinet, Antwerpen-UNESCO World Heritage, collection museum. R 45.1

[36] After viewing the first scene, the stage revolved and a second scene was displayed exposing to the archdukes and the crowd the exact opposite: the face of peace (Fig. 4). This scene – read/viewed from top to bottom and right to left – again begins with the virtues of Peace, starting with the figure of *Pax*. Contrasting the two scenes we discover

³⁶ Although the modern state of Belgium was created in 1830/31 and in the sixteenth century this region was commonly known as Southern Netherlands, or the Spanish Netherlands, Bochius continually uses the term "Belgium" in his book. Therefore, throughout the article this region, in accordance with Bochius and the book, is referred to as Belgium. One can only assume that Bochius had an agenda choosing to use this particular term (i.e., Belgium) to further enhance his preferences.

³⁷ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 217: "Duae theatridii versatilis erant facies, haec in instrata panno rubro per dramatis personas truculentas et horribiles, ac Panici terroris plenas, praesentem infelicis Belgii statum perpessionemque ob oculos ponebat: illa viridi panno ac vultu sensuque laetioribus personis, quae Principibus ad molem propius accedentibus machina latenti artificio circumducta, prioribus cum mole sensim retrocedentibus, in aspectum veniebat, votis nostris blandiebat."

that Bochius placed *Pax* at – and as – the exact opposite of *Bellona*, and thus exhibits that not only are the two scenes of the Versatile Stage opposed in their general hypothesis – war versus peace – but they are, as Bochius himself declared, the exact antithesis of each other.³⁸ In other words, each one of the personifications in the first scene opposes its counter-part in the second scene. For example, *Pietas*, who is the first figure on the second step of the peace scene, is sitting as an exact antithesis to *Impietas*, who is the first figure on the second step of the war scene. Thus, Bochius creates in art-form the structure of *psychomachia*, according to which each vice has a counter-virtue.

[37] Although the moral *psychomachia* is a battle over the human soul, in Bochius' stage we cannot find the dynamic composition of a battle, nor the moral content of the religious concepts of good and evil. Neither can we find any other political model according to Greek or Roman philosophy.³⁹ Instead, Bochius states that the purpose of this stage was to present to the new governors, literally side by side, both the present and the future; despair and hope; the vices of war and the virtues of peace.⁴⁰ Thus, we must understand that all virtues and vices on this stage were not of spiritual or religious practice, but served as civic and political recommendations or warnings. For example, the figure of *Redemptio* (Redemption) on the Peace side is represented as an antithesis of *Captivitas* (Captivity), who is seated in the same place on War's side. Thus, she does not represent theological salvation, but rather the political ransom of prisoners of war.⁴¹

[38] The political usage of virtues and vices to encourage governors to strive for peace and prosperity recalls an example from a different art form, the fresco painted by Ambrogio Lorenzetti (1338-1340) on the walls of the meeting room of the Nine Governors (the *Sala dei Nove*) in Siena's City Hall (the *Palazzo Pubblico*). There too, virtues and vices are depicted in a political context, as Lorenzetti shows on one wall the image of a tyrant with *Superbia* – the vice of pride –, *Avaritia* – the vice of greed –, and other vices ruling over a cursed city; while on the opposing wall, Peace along with the according virtues rule over a blessed city. The consequences of good government are shown in a peaceful and prosperous city. Lorenzetti's fresco, in very much the same manner as in the Versatile Theater in Antwerp, shows vices as war, destruction, poverty, and misery; and virtues as the governors of peace, prosperity, and content.

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³⁸ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 221.

³⁹ For, if Bochius had arranged his stage according to any of these models – moral or political – we should have found a recognizable system: first the cardinal virtues or vices, and then those derived from them. Instead, as mentioned above, the virtues and vices are all related to the concept of Peace or War. The three virtues on the first step of the Peace scene, for example, are *Pax*, *Securitas* (security) and *Victoria* (victory). Following on the second step are *Unanimitas* (unity and agreement), *Tranquillitas* (tranquility), *Mansuetudo* (tameness or mildness) and *Placabilitas* (placability). All are pacification forces that help to bring and maintain peace.

⁴⁰ See note 36.

⁴¹ Regarding *Redemptio*, see an additional discussion by Thøfner (see note 42).

The Bringers of Peace

[39] This raises the question whether this message was sent solely to the 'good prince' Albert or to both governors – i.e. also to the Infanta, the 'good princess' Isabella. Was there an almost 'revolutionary' regard of the infanta as an equal to the archduke, or were the couple seen and regarded as one entity – the new governors? The illustration of this stage included in Bochiuss' book shows a small crowd gathered next to the stage on the Meir-Borgh Square. Margit Thøfner in her article assigns iconographic meaning to the depiction of the two women in the lower right corner of the second image (peace) of the Versatile Theater. She identifies the figure on the left as a courtly lady and interprets her as a "bringer of peace" due to her position below the double-sided crucifix.⁴² According to Thøfner, the association of peace and courtly femininity refers to late sixteenth-century debates over the suitability of female rulers. Based on this assumption, Thøfner argues that the courtly lady is in effect a representation of the ideal image of the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, whose role is to show the infanta how to gain the one feminine virtue becoming to a female ruler (i.e. bringer of peace). This she must do in imitation of the crucifix placed near her, i.e. she should be willing to sacrifice her body for the polity in order to bring it peace.⁴³

[40] The double-sided crucifix, however, as Thøfner rightly mentions, was part of the actual city scenery of the Meir-Borgh Square and accordingly, it is shown at the same place in both the Peace and War staging of the Versatile Theater, and is depicted in the same way as the other buildings surrounding the square. Moreover, in the first image of war, another couple is depicted at the very same place under the same crucifix. However, Bochiuss does not confer or suggest an iconographical meaning to the description of the crowd or city scenery anywhere in the book. It is, therefore, much more likely that these visual references were added by the draftsman as illustrations to enhance the feelings of horror and delight of the spectators on each side of the stage; i.e. a differentiation which was done by depicting, for example, a startled crowd in the first image and a serene and rejoicing crowd in the second; or, a poor and poorly dressed crowd in war, as opposed to rich and affluently-dressed in peace – in much the same way as he added the city scenery surrounding the monument.

[41] Additionally, Thøfner bases her interpretation upon the fact that amongst the personifications on the stage is the figure of *Redemptio* (Redemption).⁴⁴ But as I have argued above, this personification, as all other personifications on this stage, bears political and not theological meaning. I will, instead, contend that the key to

⁴² Margit Thøfner, "Marrying the City, Mothering the Country: Gender and Visual Conventions in Johannes Bochiuss' account of the Joyous Entry of the Archduke Albert and the Infanta Isabella into Antwerp", in: *Oxford Art Journal* 22 (1999), p. 21.

⁴³ Thøfner, "Marrying the City", pp. 19-22.

⁴⁴ Thøfner, "Marrying the City", p. 21.

understanding the meaning of the entire stage is the scene depicted on the fixed part of the stage, according to which the message was directed to both Albert and Isabella, and was actually based on an example of a male-ruler, and not addressed to the infanta alone, unlike Thøfner's proposal.

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The Call for Independence, Autonomy and Prosperity

[42] In Antwerp as in Siena the message is directed to the entire board of governors – the Nine of Siena and the two archdukes in Antwerp –, but whereas in Siena the threat was from a possible impending danger, in Antwerp the danger of war was already present. This may well be the reason why in the Versatile Theater Bochius added one more component to refine his message. On the fixed part of the stage under the versatile pyramid, which is represented in both illustrations of the stage, there was a painting representing a scene from the life of Titus Quintus Flamininus (Fig. 5).



5 Titus Quintus Flamininus at the Isthmian games (detail from the Versatile Theatre). Johannes Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, 1602, pp. 218-219. Museum Plantin-Moretus/Prentenkabinet, Antwerpen-UNESCO World Heritage, collection museum. R 45.1

[43] On the left sits Flamininus and in the background a large crowd is seated in an amphitheater. Above is seen a flock of ravens flying toward the center of the arena, with some having already fallen on the ground. Plutarch tells that the Roman Senate advised Flamininus on the one hand to give the Greeks their freedom, but on the other to retain Corinth, Chalcis, and Demetrias under garrisons as a safeguard against Antiochus. The Aetolians then stirred up the cities,

asking the Greeks whether they were glad to have a fetter now which was smoother than the one they had worn before, but heavier; and whether they admired Titus as a benefactor because he had unshackled the foot of Greece and put a collar round her neck.⁴⁵

⁴⁵ Plut. Flam, 10.

[44] Bochius could find many similarities between this story and the present situation of Belgium. As mentioned above, before the archdukes' arrival, the northern provinces had published the pamphlet accusing the Spanish Crown of trying to deceive them "by a sterile marriage [...] and tempt us to return under the Spanish yoke".⁴⁶ In Greek history this same accusation and feelings of mistrust had conducted Flamininus to reject the Senate's advice and to grant these cities their independence. This he had announced during the Isthmian games, celebrated for the first time after many years of war. Then, shouts of joy arose so loud, tells Plutarch, that

ravens which chanced to be flying overhead fell down into the stadium. The cause of this was the rupture of the air; for when the voice is borne aloft loud and strong, the air is rent asunder by it and will not support flying creatures, but lets them fall, as if they were over a vacuum, unless, indeed, they are transfixed by a sort of blow, as of a weapon, and fall down dead.⁴⁷

[45] The analogy between Greece and Flanders is clear: the Aetolians' saying is very much similar to the Protestants' pamphlet, and both demand independence: from Flamininus then, as from the archdukes now. Thus, facing the accusation of the Protestants, the archdukes were expected to follow Titus Quinctius Flamininus' example and prove them wrong, as the inscription on the right side states:

And under the rule and leadership of Albert and Isabella, our most happy Princes, who administer their war by their own presence, after the enemies had been scattered, destroyed and made to flee, the Provinces had been given and taken, and the remainders of the detestable war is wrecked, an end will be to the suffering of the public.⁴⁸

[46] According to this inscription the arrival of Albert and Isabella as independent governors is decisive for ending the war by the 'giving and taking' of the Provinces under their rule. Therefore, the autonomy granted to them was not only expected to end the public suffering, but also to change the essence of the Spanish policy in the Low Countries, as the second inscription on the left side explains:

Thus, by their admirable clemency that is more pleasant than the arts of government, which they have manifested to the same people that in the past had betrayed the country in order to restore sanity back to its place; and towards the people that attached themselves to an ephemeral foundation facing an enduring danger, they act not by the power of the most clement rulers (so as not by some rock to insert their moral sword into those that must be restrained tenderly) but by faith; and all past complaints they assess better by justice, by what is beneficial and what is harmful for the people, than by the confidence they have in their own powers; once peace had been reached on sea and land, the awful

⁴⁶ See note 13.

⁴⁷ Plut. Flam, 10.

⁴⁸ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, pp. 224-225: "Quod vel ductu et auspiciis Alberti et Isabelae Principum nostrum felicissimorum, praesentia sua suum bellum administrantium, hostibus fisis, deletis fugatisque, provinciis deditis et receptis, teterrimi acerbissimique reliquiis confectis, calamitati publicae finis imponetur."

situation of the state emerging from the long war, will reverse and be restored to its past prosperity and affluence.⁴⁹

[47] Bochius has thus called for a completion and realization of the autonomous mandate given by Spain to the new governors. They are called not to govern by the virtue of clemency alone, but by faith, i.e. by trust. In other words, they are called to establish new relations that are more suitable between allies.⁵⁰ Consequently, instead of regarding Belgium as just another province of Spain, under the new mandate it had to become an autonomous ally. Only with the passage from a conquered province to an autonomous ally would all past complaints be forgotten (referring to Antwerp's revolt) and could the new government be instituted on a firm and lasting foundation of trust. By including the scene of Titus Quinctius Flamininus, Bochius states more clearly his meaning with regard to the entire Versatile Stage. Although he had already used the structure of an amphitheater previously, when he was asked to plan and record the Triumphal Entry of Archduke Ernst of Austria (1594), this time he connected the form to a new and actual meaning.⁵¹

[48] In Ernst's Entry, the stage, which was a much simpler structure, was used to exhibit only personifications of peace and of the provinces. In the Albert and Isabella Entry, on the other hand, not only a much more complex, versatile structure was used, but the actual form of the amphitheater is relevant to the message of the stage; the vices of war versus the virtues of peace. Bochius does this using the same amphitheater structure that in the history of Greece marked the liberation of several Greek cities from the yoke

⁴⁹ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, pp. 224-225: "Vel quod admirabili eorumdem clementia, quae gravior est operibus artis imperatoriae, populis qui a Rep. defecerunt facta ad sanitatem redeundi potestate: ipsisque ne periculo perpetuo se alligent fundamento non perpetuo, se non viribus principum clementissimorum (ne velut cote quadam virtutis suae ferrum in illis debellandis acuire cogantur) sed fidei committentibus: ac superiorum temporum indignationem omnem iudicii potius utilitatisque ac damni publici ratione, quam virium suarum confidentia metientibus, pace terra marique parata status reip. ex bello diuturno calamitosissimus in prosperium, pristinum, et florentem convertetur et restituetur."

⁵⁰ It is interesting to note in this context emblem 38 in Alciato's *Emblematum liber* (Paris 1534); Henry Green, ed., *Andreae Alciati Emblematum fontes quatuor*. (Reprints of Augsburg 1531, Paris 1534, and Venice 1546.) Manchester: Holbein Society (4), 1870). The emblem *Concordiae Symbolum* shows four crows; two are standing on the edge of a water fountain topped by a scepter and two are flying together towards it. Alciato explains this image as symbolic of harmony thusly: "The crows' harmonious way of life amongst themselves is marvelous, and mutual trust remains undefiled for them. Hence these birds support the scepter, which is to say – all leaders rise and fall by agreement of the people. Yet if you remove harmony from the midst, discord flies in headlong, and drags with it the fate of kings." Several editions of this book were published in Antwerp by Christoph Plantin between 1565 and 1581. Thus, this emblem containing the same symbolic elements as in the story of Titus Quinctius Flamininus, may have served Bochius as a second source for the image on the base of the Versatile Theater.

⁵¹ Joannes Bochius, *Descriptio publicae gratulationis, spectaculorum et ludorum, in adventu ... Ernesti archiducis Austriae ... an. M.D.XCIII. XVIII. kal. julias, aliisque diebus Antverpiae editorum. Cui est praefixa, De belgii principatu ... brevis narratio ... Cum carmine panegyrico ... denique oratio funebris*. Antverpiae: Ex officina Plantiniana, 1595; Hans Mielke, ed., *The Ceremonial entry of Ernst, Archduke of Austria, into Antwerp, June 14, 1594. Text by Johannes Bochius, Engravings by Pieter van der Borcht, after design by Marten De Vos. Originally published: Antwerpen, ex officina Palatiniana, 1595. Introduction by Hans Mielke (Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerpen)*, New York: Benjamin Blom, Inc., 1970, p. 13.

of the Roman Empire. Therefore, the presentation of the personifications of virtues and vices in this scene does not relate to moral practices; nor are they a reference to the theoretical civic virtues required of a good ruler as opposed to the vices of the tyrant, as is the case in Lorenzetti's fresco. The Antwerp Versatile Theater relates to a historical event that won the Greeks their liberation from a foreign government and brought them peace. In a similar way, the 1599 Versatile Theater depicts the present and sorrowful situation of Belgium and opposes it to the future situation as it may be if the new governors would follow the challenge presented to them by this stage: to imitate the Greek hero and become the liberators and saviors of the Belgian nation.

[49] For it was well known that there was some truth in the northern provinces' pamphlet – the autonomy granted by Spain was indeed conditional and limited. Nevertheless, much depended on the archdukes and the substance they would give it. Bochiuss, in his plan of the Entry and even more specifically in this monument, expresses Belgian expectations for a true and real autonomy that would bring peace and self-government. If this were accomplished then the horrors on the stage of war would turn and, as in the Versatile Theater, peace with all its virtues would rule in its place.

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The Political Stage: The Versatile Arts Government

[50] In the Political Stage (Fig. 2), as we have seen, Bochiuss opposes on the top step the same virtues with the same vices as on the top steps of the Versatile Theater (Fig. 3-4): in both stages Peace (*Pax*) is opposed to Terror (*Furor*). The viewer of the spectacle could have identified this arrangement and would have recognized the personifications in both stages as virtues. Furthermore, in the inscriptions of both stages the word 'arts' is mentioned. In the Political Stage the governors are encouraged to use them in their rule; and in the Versatile Theater they are more clearly explained as the "arts of government".⁵² Hence, this clear connection between the two monuments suggests that as in the Versatile Theater so in the Political Stage, the scene is that of a political *psychomachia*: a battle between the destructive consequences of an ill and oppressed government led by the vices of war, and the prosperous fruits of the good autonomous government using the virtues of peace.

[51] The Political Stage, however, only represents a confrontation between virtues and vices on its first step while the others are occupied by virtues alone. A close examination of these virtues reveals that they are organized according to a specific order, having on each step a common subject: the first is, as mentioned, peace and justice.

[52] On the second row are six goddesses, all derived from the virtue of justice; first on the left is *Temis*, the goddess of justice, dressed like Palas-Athena with a long spear and a helmet. Next to her, is her daughter *Astraea*, the goddess of justice, who was last of

⁵² See notes 29, 48.

the gods to abandon earth after the Golden Age. By holding the Lesbian ruler she represents the flexibility of the law and the need to adjust it to the will of the majority.⁵³ The goddess of order and legislation in Greek mythology *Eunomia* (good order) is next and after her is equality – *Eaquitas* – representing just attitude in society. Last on this row are *Ratio* (reason) and *Religio* (piety). These two can appear as an irregularity to the topic of justice, but, in fact, according to Plato, piety or *Hosiotes*, also belongs to the virtue of justice: justice towards the gods.⁵⁴ In the same manner, reason, by which discipline and wisdom are driven, is one of the characteristics in Plato's *Res Publica* of a well balanced and just man, or state.⁵⁵ In this way both reason and piety are counted among the virtues of justice.

[53] The third row of the stage represents the four cardinal virtues. First is Prudence, holding an arrow and a remora fish in her right hand and a mirror in her left. Prudence (or *Sophrosyne*), according to Plato is one of the virtues of government necessary to ensure harmony and unity in the state.⁵⁶ But, the remora fish suggests yet another meaning: used as a mascot in the courts of justice, it connects her yet again to the law.⁵⁷ The second cardinal virtue, Fortitude, is not represented by a single personification, but by the figures of *Potestas* and *Auctoritas* both referring to the fortitude of a governor sustained by God's will and power.⁵⁸ In the same way the third cardinal virtue, Justice, was represented by *Jurosdicio*, the personification of judgment, and by *Nemesis*, the goddess of justice. The fourth cardinal virtue, Temperance, was represented by *Eubulia* (the good advisor) and *Homodoxia* (unanimity), for both good advice and unanimity regulate the use of power in accordance to the people's will and to the philosophical principles of politics. Thus, in this stage, political temperance acts in a similar way to the moral virtue of temperance, which regulates the use of senses and impulses.

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⁵³ The Lesbian ruler is a strip of metal, bent to the shape of the surface being measured, as opposed to the straight edge ruler, only measuring in a straight line. Aristotle in *Nicomachaen Ethics* says that not everything must be ordered by law, and some things must be decided by special vote: "Hence the equitable is just, and better than one kind of justice – not better than absolute justice but better than the error that arises from the absoluteness of the statement. And this is the nature of the equitable, a correction of law where it is defective owing to its universality. In fact this is the reason why all things are not determined by law, that about some things it is impossible to lay down a law, so that a decree is needed. For when the thing is indefinite the rule also is indefinite, like the leaden rule used in making the Lesbian molding; the rule adapts itself to the shape of the stone and is not rigid, and so too the decree is adapted to the facts" (Aristot. Nic. Eth., 5.10, 2.37b20-31).

⁵⁴ Julia Annas, *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982, pp. 110-11.

⁵⁵ Plat. Rep., 4.428b-d.

⁵⁶ Plat. Rep., 4.430e, 4:431e-432a.

⁵⁷ Aristotle, *Historia Animalis*, 2.60.

⁵⁸ *Potestas* representing magisterial power and rule carries a large shield with an emblem of an arm reaching through a cloud, referring to the helping and directing hand of God. *Auctoritas* too, depicts the governmental vocation given to the archdukes by God and thus is shown holding a royal scepter and a pair of keys.

A Good Advisor Maketh the Good Prince... and Princess

[54] The importance of good advice, said sixteenth-century Spanish humanist Sebastian Fox Morcillo, is based on its ability to educate and guide the prince and to guard his moral standards.⁵⁹ In very much the same accord, in the Political Stage, the personification of *Eubulia* – the good advisor – stands for much more than just the need for political temperance. Bochiuss' long and detailed explanation of this figure, spread over more than two pages, provides a valuable insight into the true meaning of the entire stage. He opens his discourse by saying that there is nothing more useful and more necessary for government and state than this divine advisor.⁶⁰ This, he adds, does not imply an underestimation of the governors, their wisdom or their virtues; for despite all their virtues, they too need assistance, in the same manner as even the best of ship captains are in some need of the assistance of a rowing hand.⁶¹ The position that the advisors must take, he specifies later on, is not to be only that of a "rowing hand", but of those "who see the best way to reach the best goal".⁶²

[55] Relying on Plato's teaching, Bochiuss further explains that this "best goal" can be recognized by the good advisor's wisdom and reason (*Logismos*).⁶³ Bochiuss warns that a good, reasonable advisor will employ his good virtues not to advise what is wanted and expected, but rather what will be most useful for both Prince and State.⁶⁴ This argument brings Bochiuss closer to the core of his discussion, for he aims to argue not only of the importance of good advisors, but specifically of the role these advisors must take in Flanders' present situation. To clarify this idea he leans yet again on a historical example: the letter of Nicias to the Athenian council, warning them of deceptive words of flattery sent to them by those who had stopped advising and had, instead, only contributed to the failing of Athens in the Peloponnesian War:

I might, it is true, have written to you something different and more agreeable than this, but nothing certainly more useful, if it is desirable for you to know the real state of things here before taking your measures. Besides I know that it is your nature to love to be told the best side of things, and then to blame the teller if the expectations which he has raised in your minds are not answered by the result; and I therefore thought it safest to declare to you the truth.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 34. Sebastian Fox Morcillo (1526-1560), Spanish scholar and philosopher, born in Seville between 1526 and 1528, studied in Spain and Leuven and remained in Flanders until 1559 when he was appointed tutor to Don Carlos, son of Philip II. He was lost at sea on his way to Spain. He published commentaries on Plato and Aristotle. Among his works are: *De philosophici studii ratione ad Franciscum fratrem liber*, Louvain, 1554; and *De demonstratione, eiusque necessitate ad vi, liber I*, Basileae: per Ioanem Oporinum, 1556.

⁶⁰ Bochiuss, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 276.

⁶¹ Bochiuss, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 276.

⁶² Bochiuss, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 276: "Haec ille. sunt igitur optimi Principum consiliarii qui optimi finis rationem spectant."

⁶³ Plat. Alc., 2.145-146

⁶⁴ Bochiuss, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 276.

⁶⁵ Thuc., 7.8.1-3.

[56] By mentioning this anecdote Bochius forms an analogy, as he did earlier with the Titus Flamininus story, between Greek history and his contemporaneous situation. For just like the Athenian Council so has the Spanish Court preferred to listen to deceptive accounts from its advisors and messengers, rather than recognize the true situation in the Low Countries. Furthermore, the letter of Nicias mentioned by Bochius can be interpreted as an echo of the accusations published in the Protestants' pamphlet against the Spanish advisors surrounding the Crown's initial appointment of Archduke Albert.⁶⁶

[57] To explain how to avoid the dangers of advice given by advisors acting out of flattery, misleading rather than helping, Bochius recalls for the reader the history of the Habsburg rule under Maximilian I. Johannes Hautemius, the chancellor at that time, explains Bochius, was an example of a good advisor. He had succeeded in obtaining the cooperation of the Belgian people with the Spanish cause during the war with France. After emphasizing this, Bochius progresses further in his argument, leaning on Hautemius' own words, as quoted by the Dutch historian Pontus Heuterus in a book published in 1598, a year before the archdukes' entrance into Antwerp:⁶⁷

It has been proven by the experience of many centuries, that the Kingdom of Belgium stands strong, when the monarchy is supported by prudent and honest advisors. I say "supported by honest advisors" because the people, being generous by nature, noble by spirit and easily despise death and even the fate of their wives and children, if they are treated with no generosity and as slaves, [they] immediately stand up for revenge. And the Kings of Belgium have nothing else to expect, having whatever concept, art or ability to protect themselves as may be, if they start to govern against the laws, in a rude, dishonest and arrogant way, they can expect nothing but conspiracies, rebellions, massacres and bloody secessions.⁶⁸

[58] Bochius' use of this citation challenges Philip II's past aggressive policy and his governing of the region and the people "with no generosity and as slaves". It further implies and accuses that that policy had, in fact, caused the civil war. Thus, following

⁶⁶ "And the Archduke, surrounded by weapons and Spanish councilors, has beside the name of governor, nothing but a fake title of a Prince", see note 14.

⁶⁷ Pontus Heuterus, *Rerum Belgicarum libri quindecim, quibus describuntur pace belloque gesta a principibus Austriacis in Belgio, nempe Maxaemiliano primo caesare, Philippo primo Castellae rege, Carolo quinto caesare, Philippo secundo Hispaniarum rege*, Antverpiae: Ex officinal Martini Nutii, 1598.

⁶⁸ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 277; "regnum, inquit, Belgicum monarchia prudentibus probisque consiliariis fulta stare durareque multorum seculorum experientia comprobatum est. Dico fultam probis consiliariis, quod populus natura generosus, animi excelsi, mortis, fortunarum imò uxorum liberorumque facile contemptor, si ingenerose serviliterque habeatur, cito in vindictam exurgat. Nec aliud Belgarum Regibus exspectandum est, quacunquē etiam se muniant ratione, arte et potentia, si contra leges dure, inhoneste ac superbe imperare coeperint, quam continuaē coniurationes, rebelliones, caedes, sanguinariaeque secessiones." These words are leaning on Cicero (*De Officiis*, 2.23) and on Viperany's discussion against tyranny (*De rege, et regno liber*, Antwerpen, 1569, p. 34): "he whom they fear, they hate and he who someone is afraid of he hopes to see dead."

Lipsius and other contemporaries, Bochius too sees the time of Maximilian I as the 'Golden Age' of the Habsburg regime.⁶⁹ He therefore turns back to Hautemius, who promises Belgium's loyalty to those who treat its people with respect and according to the law (i.e. the return of privileges) and wishes Maximilian that his descendants after him will follow the same path.⁷⁰

[59] Referring to these quotes on the occasion of the Triumphal Entry of the archdukes bears a prophetic resolution obliging the descendants of Maximilian I, Albert and Isabella. Thus, Bochius presents them with an obligation to follow their own tradition and preserve the same privileges they swore to uphold and protect during the first oath outside the city walls and be faithful to the meaning of their appointment as governors of an autonomous province. To fulfill this prophecy, suggests Bochius, they, like Maximilian I, must make good use of the Good Advisor:

Oh you faithful advisor, that knows the spirits of the Province! The nature of the people you want to govern must indeed be known as well as the will of the citizens – he who knows them is called wise, according to Plutarch.⁷¹

[60] Bochius' conclusion is now clarified: the Good Advisor, by the standards set in the Habsburg's own Golden Age, is he who knows his people. Such a man can only be an autochthonous advisor. He alone can gain Belgium's loyalty and cooperation with the Spanish governors – being familiar with the country's political and social structures and knowing the desires and needs of his own folk.

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The Call for Autonomy and Self-Government

[61] Similar to the Versatile Theater, Bochius in the Political Stage suggests the need for autonomy. A clear image of this implication is further presented on the fourth and last step of this stage, dedicated to even more specific and practical ideas of politics, such as the need of vigilance (*Vigilantia*) and the use of eloquence (*Eloquentia*), and also of autonomy (*Autonomia*, second from the left), emphasizing and illustrating his last argument (Fig. 2).

[62] *Autonomia*, according to Bochius, is "the ability to live under their own rules".⁷² The personification is represented holding a large shield with the inscription of *Ius Quiritium* – the citizens' privileges or rights. Thus, Bochius connects between autonomy and citizens' rights and differentiates them from Civil Law (*Ius Civile*), which he places later on, and in a different context, as we will soon see. *Ius Quiritium* and *Ius Civile* are closely related

⁶⁹ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 47.

⁷⁰ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 277.

⁷¹ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 277: "O fidelem consultorem, ac animum provinciae gnarum! Noscenda si quidem populi quem regere vis natura est, civiumque voluntates, quique eas callet, prudens dicitur teste Plutarcho."

⁷² Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 278: "suis legibus vivendi potestas."

concepts in Roman law, as both define the law of the Roman citizen.⁷³ In its later meaning, *Ius Quiritium* related to private issues of private citizens and thus differs from *Ius Civile*, i.e. the entirety of Roman Civil Law.⁷⁴ Hence, according to Bochius, autonomy will grant Belgium the ability to live under its own laws – at least with regard to internal and private affairs.

[63] *Aeternitas*, the final personification on this step, sums up the political and moral meaning of the virtues on the pyramidal structure. She is dressed in blue robes embroidered with golden stars and holds in one hand a snake biting its tail, as a symbol of eternity, and in the other a globe. Bochius explains this personification, in its political connotation, as stability and says that this virtue is guaranteed to any government, which would be sustained by the virtues presented up to this point. Thus, this final figure promises the archdukes that, if indeed they apply and fulfill the political scheme visualized before their eyes on this stage, they will enjoy a stable regime.⁷⁵

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The Future of an Empire: Monarchy, Aristocracy, Democracy?

[64] Bochius did not limit himself to the way the archdukes must rule within the limits of their own domain, but also revealed his ideas regarding the best governmental system, which must be applied to the entirety of the Empire by the Spanish Crown. These ideas follow the writings of Aristotle and Plato concerning the best of all possible governments, and are visualized by Bochius through two groups placed on each side of the stage. Each of the figures in these groups is holding a Roman standard bearing a name identifying its holder. The first group, on the left, consists of three young women representing Monarchy, Aristocracy and Democracy, while the right side group features three young men representing the three types of law: Natural Law (*Ius Naturale*), International Law (*Ius Gentium*) and Civic Law (*Ius Civile*).

[65] The first group representing the combination of all three forms of government was, according to Cicero, the best form of government. Cicero explained that the history of the Roman Republic represents the perfection of this system, at least up to the breaking of the civil war between Pompeius and Julius Caesar – the beginning of the Republic's decline.⁷⁶ According to Cicero, as virtues are the political basis of the state, so the

⁷³ Suet. Jul., 70; Plut. Caes., 51.1; Liv., 45.37; In Suetonius, Plutarch and Livius the term *Quirites* is equal to the term *Cives*, both referring to Roman Citizen.

⁷⁴ William Smith, *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities*, London: John Murray, 1875, pp. 655-59.

⁷⁵ Additionally and although Bochius does not mention it, the first and foremost meaning of eternity is eternal life promised to the virtuous faithful. This also had to be the viewers' and readers' first understanding of the figure of eternity and thus she represents the double meaning of the virtues, both moral and political. Accordingly and in order to fulfill their calling as governors, the archdukes (as Christian princes) are obligated both to their people and to God by following the principles of moral political thought.

⁷⁶ Cic. Rep., 1.35.

weakening of morality was the reason for the decline. Consequently, as the Republic continued to decline, Cicero presented a theoretical possibility of having to choose between the three forms of government: monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. If worst came to be and if indeed he had to confine himself

to one of the particular forms simply and exclusively, [then] I must confess I prefer the royal one, and praise that as the first and best.⁷⁷

[66] This, he stated – as a purely theoretical argument –, is due to the fact that in a monarchy one can

find the title of father attached to that of king, to express that he watches over the citizens as over his children, and endeavors rather to preserve them in freedom than reduce them to slavery."⁷⁸

[67] It seems as if Boetius could identify with Cicero's worries, as his own era, which was plagued by civil war, had managed to weaken the existing Empire, both morally and physically. In fact, as it had been in Cicero's day, so it was in his own day and age: war brought about a regime of vices and ill government – just as he had staged it for the entering new governors in the Versatile Theater. However, whereas Cicero raised the possibility of renouncing the ideal of a mixed regime and brought up the choice of the less awful form of regime, that of monarchy, Boetius presented the choice of a mixed regime as a substitute for the failing Spanish monarchy.

[68] The three young women representing the three forms of government correspond with the three men representing the three forms of law. These are, first, Natural Law (*Ius Naturale*), which according to Cicero is the law engraved within the human soul by God, and according to Aquinas, defines within man the good he must obtain and evil he must reject.⁷⁹ The second, International Law (*Ius Gentium*), regulates all that concerns the relations between nations, such as trade and war. And the third, Civic Law (*Ius Civile*), is the Roman citizen's law.⁸⁰

[69] The separation between the *Ius Civile* and *Ius Quiritium* helps to establish the meaning of this last group of six figures on the stage itself. As we have seen, *Ius Quiritium* which was placed in the hands of Autonomy, relates to the private issues of private citizens and thus differs from *Ius Civile*, which is the entirety of Roman Civic Law. Accordingly, the three forms of government and the three forms of law represent the general rule of the Empire, whereas the other figures on the gradually descending structure represent the values and orders of the Belgian government alone. Moreover, the clothing and Roman standards of the six identify them as Roman figures and thus

⁷⁷ Cic. Rep., 1.35.

⁷⁸ Cic. Rep., 1.35.

⁷⁹ Cicero, *De inventione*, 2.22.65; Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Art. 94.

⁸⁰ *Ius gentius*: Cic. Off. pos=3.69; *Ius civile* (*quiritium*): Cic. Balb., 45.

offer a correlation between the Roman Empire and the Holy Roman Empire of the House of Habsburg, and thus the Kingdom of Spain.

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The Ideal State: The "Mixed-Republican Monarchy"

[70] Following this reasoning, we can now interpret this group representing the mixed-Republican regime along with the three foundations of universal law and justice, as fitting for the entire Habsburg Empire. By suggesting this kind of government, Bochius calls for the restoration of the Golden Age of the Holy Roman Empire – as Maximilian I's reign was perceived – since only a mixed governmental regime (as opposed to the absolute monarchy of Philip II) would not only allow Belgium some degree of self-government and autonomy, but is by definition the ideal regime. Such autonomy would not govern as a royal act of benevolence or by political default, but within a constitutional frame that is, by its own definition and structure, prepared and established for the participation of local entities within the imperial policy. This explains why Bochius so painstakingly explained the figure of *Eubulia*: to refer his reader to the political model formed by Maximilian I, who had set an example by allowing the participation of both democratic (the citizens and their leaders) and aristocratic factors within his regime in governmental decisions, while preserving Belgium's traditional privileges.⁸¹

[71] The dependence of internal autonomy on the global external frame of a republican mixed regime is also stated in the inscription placed above the scene as part of a picture located between the two parts of the gable:⁸²

Rejoice Oh Antwerp for you have received Albert and Isabella as your governors,
the cultivators of peace and justice, the defenders of religion and freedom, under
whose rule you will live again, using your laws and your justice, once the republic
is restored thanks to the excellent examples and the institutions of the
ancestors.⁸³

[72] The practical implication of this principle is further explained through yet another image on the stylobate: that of the figure of *Justitia*. *Justitia* is seen seated on a throne

⁸¹ Lipsius had expressed similar views in 1588, when he presented Maximilian I as an example of the "new Habsburgians": "What did I myself see at Vienna? Into audience with you came private citizens and princes, peasants and knights, men and women, even old men and boys, all together. They brought their quarrels and petitions, and you not only listened patiently, but encouraged them by look and gesture, in case the unaccustomed splendor bowled them over when they ventured in", quoted from: Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, p. 46.

⁸² The scene depicted in this picture is of the two archdukes standing on the right side, behind them the rising sun lifting up *Justitia* (the personification of Justice) who is lying on her side in front of them. On the right corner are *Hymenaeus* – the god of marriage – and *Justitia* flying towards them, emerging from dark clouds and above a landscape of ruins. Thus, this scene illustrates the idea that the wedding of Albert and Isabella is God-given grace to restore Belgium from its ruin and re-establish law and justice.

⁸³ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 280: "gratulare tibi, Antverpia, principes nacta ALBERTUM ET ISABELLAM. Pacis et Iustitiae cultores, religionis et libertatis vindices, sub quibus reformata optimis exemplis et maiorum institutis Rep. tuis legibus ac iudiciis utens, restituta revivisces."

between Palas-Athena and Mercury with the inscription: "when she flourishes we thrive".⁸⁴ Bochius explains that this image represents the wider meaning of justice called by Plato *Eutaxia*, which contains not only law and order, as an instrument against delinquency, but also morality, justice and the establishments founded by the ancestors.⁸⁵ The conservation of justice in that meaning, says Bochius, implies the conservation and restoration of the juridical system and of Belgium's privileges that the archdukes had vowed to respect and protect in the first ceremony outside the city walls. These were the same privileges which were injured during the civil war and Spain's rule. The way to correct the damage is clear in Bochius' mind; Prince Albert must reassemble the different people's committees and thus,

after receiving law proposals from all of society's ranks the Prince will give his support; these matters must be fixed by law, decorated by custom and protected by weapon.⁸⁶

[73] Bochius now expresses clearly not only the need to cling to the historical privileges, but also the need to restore the three councils of the people: the Council of State, the Council of Finance and the Privy Council. These three councils embody the democratic and aristocratic factors in a mixed government which he advocated and supported. Moreover, restoring the democratic and aristocratic foundations within the state regime would strengthen and guard both stability and unity within the state.⁸⁷ For, he continues, relying on Aristotle's teaching, the stability of a state depends on legislative equality, whose essence is the protection of the rights and honor of all its citizens. Such a state would maintain the stability of its establishments, as each citizen would then fulfill his role in accordance to common will and civic morality.⁸⁸

[74] The views expressed here by Bochius were clearly influenced by fifteenth-century Italian civic humanism.⁸⁹ Humanists such as Leonardo Bruni defended the same principles almost two hundred years earlier in Italy. They too advocated the republican state and autonomous government, freedom of speech, the participation of citizens in politics, and legislative equality – finding arguments to support their views in Aristotle's and Cicero's teachings.⁹⁰ Thus, although the historical and political background for these humanists

⁸⁴ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 280: "Florente vigemus."

⁸⁵ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 280.

⁸⁶ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 280; "...sed coactis comitiis, Ordinum rogatione, Principe auctore legibus erunt emendata, moribus ornanda, armis defendenda."

⁸⁷ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 280.

⁸⁸ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 280.

⁸⁹ Hans Baron, ed., *Leonardo Bruni Aretino. Humanistisch-philosophische Schriften*, Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1928. Hans Baron was the first to coin the term "*Bürgerhumanismus*" in the preface of this work.

⁹⁰ Hans Baron, *The crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny*, Princeton: Princeton University Press in cooperation with the Newberry Library, 1966. See also: James Hankins, "The 'Baron Thesis' after Forty Years and some Recent Studies of Leonardo Bruni", in: *Journal of the History of Ideas* 56 (1995), pp. 309-338.

was very different from Bochiu's, he could still find in their writings the ideological foundation he needed to balance between his 'pro-Spanish' views on the one hand, and the need he saw in self-government and autonomy on the other. His claim was simple: only an interlacing of the democratic and aristocratic elements within the Spanish monarchy would ensure that the constrained autonomy, unwillingly granted by Philip II, would have the possibility of becoming a truthful and lasting reality. In practice, this required the reestablishment of the councils that had been weakened, if not completely disappeared, during the long years of war.

[75] Two poems, inscribed on the two sides of the goddess of Justice depicted on the stylobate, illustrate the hope set upon the new governors. The first poem welcomes the return of *Aestrea*, the goddess of Justice that had left earth because of men's corruption. Now, it says, she returns to earth as a result of Isabella's arrival who, as a just leader, will reject fear, crime and the unworthy, and reestablish law and order.⁹¹ The second poem was directed to both Albert and Isabella, as descendants of the House of Habsburg, and more importantly, it refers to Belgium as an ally:

It was worthy that our eagle had united with your standards,
and join resources with the ally folk.
Both of you lead a race of Caesarian root
And you count ancestors among kings.
We as a part that is not unworthy to [self] government
Germany does want to see under its rule as family kinship.⁹²

[76] According to this concluding poem, the relation between Belgium and the Habsburg Empire is that of an alliance between equals and kin, not between rulers and subjects. Furthermore, Belgium as an "ally folk" and part of the Empire, is not only capable or worthy to maintain self-government, but is entitled to it by justice. The entire stage thus represents the essence of Bochiu's political views; through it he presents to the archdukes a request to change the form and concept of Spain's rule in Belgium. He does, on the one hand, express his support of their rule, but on the other he suggests some basic regulations. First, they must put real substance into the dwindling and forced mandate of autonomy they obtained from Philip II. Second, to achieve this goal, they must involve the local institutions in their government, and therefore create a republican form of regime.

⁹¹ Bochiu, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 280; "Cesserat incaelum terris Astraea relictis, / Iniustos hominum diva perosa dolos. / At nunc illa redux superum de sede revisit / Freta patronico nos, Isabella, tuo. / Auferet et noxas moderatrix iusta frequentes, / Vimque metu, poenis crimina, iure nefas." Aestrea left earth and went to heaven/ the goddess hated the unjust intrigues of mankind. / But now returning from the throne of the gods she comes back to us/ relying on your patronage, oh Isabella. / She also will waft away much harm for she is a just leader, / and force through fear, crimes through punishment and the unworthy through Law.

⁹² Bochiu, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 280; Ad titulos aquilam vestros accedere nostram / Fas erat et sociae nectere gentis opes. / Caesarea de stirpe genus vos ducitis ambo / Et decus, augustos et numeratis avos./ Nos haud indecorem regno Germania partem, / consortem Imperii sed cupit esse sui.

Conclusions

[77] Considering the meaning of the Political Stage, we can now fully appreciate the significance of Bochius' intention in setting the concluding ceremony, the second taking of the oaths, beside this stage (Fig. 6). The stage, situated in front of the City Hall – the house of government – represented the request, if not demand, to include local institutions within the new autonomous government. Restaged, it now hosted the members of the city's Senate, who were seated in place of the virtues – the arts of government – facing the two archdukes and the congregation of Antwerp.



6 The second oath ceremony at the Political Stage in front of the City Hall. Johannes Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, 1602, pp. 308-309. Museum Plantin-Moretus/Prentenkabinet, Antwerpen-UNESCO World Heritage, collection museum. R 45.1

[78] In this ceremony the same oaths were taken by the archdukes as in the first, which was held outside the city walls, vowing to safeguard and defend the rights and privileges of the city. However, two significant changes had been introduced that altered the second oath. First was an added sentence, stating that if some privileges had been violated or changed in the past, the archdukes were now obliged to restore them.⁹³ Second, whereas the first ceremony was of a religious nature and held in a chapel-like structure facing the clergy, who stood in the front rows, the second ceremony was of a civic nature. The setting – a political stage located in front of the City Hall – and the audience – holders of civic positions, seated in the best rows in the front and serving as witnesses to the ceremony, determined, leaving no doubt of Bochius' intentions, its civic nature and purpose.

⁹³ Bochius, *Historica narratio...Alberti et Isabellae*, p. 306.

[79] Although the vows were almost the same, their significance is different. By choosing this stage as the location for the concluding ceremony of the Triumphal Entry, Bochius augments his message depicted in the two stages we have examined. The Theater of Horror had now been turned and a new government had physically taken the seats of the virtues in order to finally, after decades of strife and discontent, bestow upon the city the much awaited peace and consequent prosperity. Moreover, by replacing the personifications of the Political Stage with the Senate members, they represented the political principles, which were now employed according to the ideas of concord and conviction, within the framework of a mixed government.

[80] This last stage and last ceremony concluded the pageant as well as the book – both realized under Bochius' guiding ideas and ideals, voicing the needs and wants of his people. His message was now augmented to its fullest. His use of a 'progressing viewing experience' – building up from the very first monument and ceremony to the culminating last ones – made sure that the message was both carried and received accurately, not only by Albert and Isabella, but also by the city audience, or rather the educated, more erudite of the city citizens.

[81] Thus, with this last monument and oath taking ceremony, the utopian image depicted by Bochius throughout the entire pageant, has finally materialized: the civic battle between vices and virtues is now ended and the hope for a new future for Antwerp was assuming a more tangible form within the ephemeral structure and ceremony of the Triumphal Entry of Albert of Austria and the Infanta Isabella Clara Eugenia, the new Spanish governors of the Netherlands.

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