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When the Stoic Chameleon Came Across the Cylinder
Stoicism and the Matter of Confessions

Introduction

Joseph Hall was a Calvinist bishop, who was also an early supporter of Stoicism in England. As a clergyman, he was an advocate of the theses accepted by the Synod of Dort rejecting the views of Arminians.[1] Armenians were famous for (1) their leaning towards Rome in ecclesiastical affairs, but even more importantly (2) for their endorsement of quasi-Pelagian attitudes concerning human salvation, and (3) for their libertarian position in metaphysics.[2] The latter two clearly contradicted some presuppositions which were crucial from a Calvinist point of view, including the doctrine of double predestination.

As a supporter of Stoicism, Hall wrote a treatise on the virtue of constancy (*Heaven Upon Earth*), for which reason he was even called the English Seneca by some of his contemporaries,[3] although he openly stated that without divine grace, philosophy was not sufficient to achieve human salvation: "[i]f Seneca could have had grace to his wit, what wonders would he have done in this kind!", as he said. As a consequence of his rather ambiguous stance towards the school, he compared the Stoics to dogs "swift of foot" (due to their philosophical apparatus) but not "exquisite in scent" (suggesting that their aims were wrongly established).[4]

However, it is also more than likely that Seneca was not the only Stoic influence Hall had ever had, since some parts of his treatise bear considerable similarity to the views of Justus Lipsius. Lipsius is most often referred to as the initiator of *Neostoicism*, a movement intending to harmonize Stoicism with Christianity. If this was really the case, Hall should have had many good reasons to respect Lipsius and his project.

However, this was not entirely the case. In his *Mundus Alter et Idem* (*Another World and yet the Same*), a Menippean satire written almost at the same time as his aforementioned Stoic treatise, Hall showed clear disregard to Lipsius. The satire gave a dystopian description of an imaginary land called *Fantasia*, which had four regions, each maintaining customs highly different from each other. *Moronia* was one such region, and her portrayal was intended to ridicule practices exercised mainly by Catholics. We could say it was Hall's own *Inferno* full of wicked customs with mendicant friars walking

1 Chew 1950, 1130–1145.
2 Colie 1957, 36–49.
3 Chew 1950, 1130–1145.
4 Hall 1808, 5.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

barefoot only to kiss a piece of stone, while others converting metals into gold.[5] But Catholics had an even more annoying group (living in the province of *Variana*), where everything was constantly in motion and nothing ever stayed the same: the magistrates gave orders to vary the names of the cities, while the inhabitants, who were dressed into "colourful feathers", always changed the position of these feathers only to "fake a new fashion".[6] From my point of view, the most interesting episode here is the description of an archeological discovery.

> There was a circular coin with a middle-aged man in toga on one side: he was leaning on the head of some cute dog on the right, while holding a book half open on the left. On the other side [of the coin, there was] a colour changing chameleon, and the writing above: <CONST. LIP.>.[7]

It is not as if the metaphor of the chameleon needed any further explanation, but Hall still made sure that none of his readers should misunderstand his point by emphasizing the chameleon's colour-changing ability. Such a portrayal of Lipsius immediately raises two major questions. (I) Why Hall portrayed him this way, and (II) whether this negative representation was merely intended to be some kind of an *ad hominem* accusation, or it also entailed philosophical considerations.

(I) To the first question, the answer might simply lie in Lipsius' biography. He was the firstborn child of a Catholic family near the city of Louvain. He began his studies at the Jesuit college of Cologne, after which he returned to his hometown to study law. Between 1572 and 1574, he was a professor of history in the Lutheran city of Jena, but he spent the most important period of his life in the Calvinist city of Leiden between 1579 and 1591. It was here that he published two of his most important philosophical treatises (*De Constantia in Publicis Malis,* 1584; *Politica sive civilis doctrina*, 1587), but this was also the place of his conversion to Calvinism. However, after he left Leiden in 1591 only to return to his city of birth, he also abandoned Calvinism for the sake of Catholicism. His latter Stoic treatises (*Manuductio ad Stoicam Philosophiam*, and *Physiologia Stoicorum,* both from 1604) were hence already written in a different intellectual milieu. Moreover, the reasons behind his sudden departure from Leiden, and behind his recatholicization are absolutely unclear, which is also shown by Jacqueline Lagrée's recent account of his life: "Lipsius was motivated to leave Leiden for a variety of reasons, including certain tensions in international politics, the ambiguity

5 Hall 1839, 49–50.
6 Hall 1839, 49–50.
7 Hall 1839 47–53.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

of his religious position, his weak character, his desire for tranquility rather than glory, and the influence of his wife".[8]

(II) With such personal characteristics in mind, one is tempted to regard Hall's portrayal as an *ad hominem accusation,* and even as a fair one. However, the aim of this paper is to show that Lipsius' underlying reasons for such chameleon-like behaviour might have been mostly philosophical (and, hence Hall's accusations did not merely touch on his *person*, but on his *philosophy* as well). Therefore, in the first part of this paper (1) I intend to show that the definition of *Neostoicism* as a movement aiming at the reconciliation of Stoicism with Christianity is inaccurate and often misleading, since it entirely dismisses the importance of particular confessions. According to my claim, Lipsius never intended to harmonize Stoicism with Christianity *in general*, and his original ambition was the employment of Stoic philosophy in order to support Calvinism *in particular*. Beginning from the second part, (2) I intend to show how this project failed, and led him to the reconsideration of some of his original views. In (2.1) I will outline a crucial claim of Lipsian Stoicism, which was substance dualism (a position which remained unchallenged by him even in his later works). Here, we will see that (2.2) different laws applied to the physical and to the spiritual substance, while the question concerning their interaction was of crucial importance from the Lipsian point of view of theodicy and theory of responsibility. Hence, in (3) I will reconstruct Lipsius' early theory of causation (based on his account in the *De Constantia*), which might explain (4) why this account failed to meet the requirements posed by Calvinism. I will then come to Lipsius' latter theory (outlined in the *Physiologia Stoicorum*). (5.1) Although some scholars have recently argued that no significant difference can be found between the two accounts,[9] I will endorse a different claim. While in the *De Constantia* Lipsius had denied that the soul had causal effects on the body, in the *Physiologia*, he already seems to claim that human volitions can alter the physical world. As we shall see, this is clear both from his (5.2) novel definition of divine providence, and the way he interprets Chrysippus' parable of the cylinder. This shift is of importance, because it seems to accommodate his position on some libertarian requirements, first of all the counterfactual criterion of liberty.

1. *E philologia philosophiam feci*

Regarding their literary genre, all of Lipsius' philosophical treatises are compilations. They consist of quotations mainly by ancient and early Christian authors, and their goal is to unveil the outlines of Stoicism hidden by the fragmentary and often unreliable

8 Lagrée 2016.
9 Sellars 2014, 653–674.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

nature of its sources. Lipsius hence did not intend to seem like a genuine thinker, but rather as a historian, a hard-working man of letters, who uncovers the system behind the fragments. However, he also realised later in his life that his project was not purely philological. The invention and the arrangement of the fragments (not to mention his commentaries) were all made by a philosopher rather than a historian with no presuppositions in mind. "I created philosophy from philology"[10], as he claimed in one of his letters.

Therefore, what Lipsius provided his readers with was evidently not *stoicism proper*, but stoicism from a Lipsian prism, drawing on particular presuppositions. But what kind of presuppositions? When Léontine Zanta created the umbrella term, *Néostoïcisme,* she suggested that the underlying presupposition was Christianity: "[Stoicism] had a contact point with Christianity, which was the notion of divine providence […]".[11] Zanta was obviously right when she observed an early modern attempt to identify the stoic *logos* with the Christian concept of *divine providence*, but she did not even try to articulate it further, even though this is where one of the greatest fault lines lay in post-Reformation Europe: the questions on the scope of divine providence (whether she related only to universals or to particulars as well), or whether she only foresaw the events to come or she was also the efficient cause of these events etc. were of crucial importance. Hence, Zanta's unqualified usage of the notion of divine providence, and the umbrella term constructed upon it is at least misleading.

It must be also due to Zanta's original definition of the term of *Neostoicism* that historiographers of the "movement" have been reluctant to admit the importance of confessional nuances ever since. On the other hand, according to Jonathan Israel's famous, and often contested claim, "before 1650 practically everyone disputed and wrote about confessional differences", [12] meaning that literary products of the period were motivated, even if implicitly, by confessional convictions and religious presuppositions.

According to my claim, the latter methodological aspect can highlight a more nuanced view of Lipsius' oeuvre. If we can discover a shift in his thinking concerning the nature of providence and fate before and after his recatholicization, then this would prove *a posteriori* that his philosophy was not intact from confessional matters right from the beginning. However, this claim is entirely unrelated to his piety and personal convictions (to which we have no access), and only presupposes that Lipsius always accommodated his views to the particular intellectual milieu he was staying in.

10 Lipsius 1607, 69.
11 Zanta 1914, 9.
12 Israel 2001, 4.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

2. Stoic monism vs. Lipsian dualism

Although the principal aim of this paper is to show how Lipsius' later thought evolved from his earlier positions, there are some obvious questions concerning which he never changed his mind. One of these was *substance dualism*. This might sound surprising, since ancient Stoics generally held a monist position, regarding the universe as a systematic organisation of the *pneuma* or *spiritus*, and claiming that souls or bodies were constituted according to its tension (*tonos*).

2.1 Dualism: the foundation the Lipsian theory of theodicy and responsibility

However, Lipsius does not share the traditional Stoic view:

> It should not be overlooked, that men consist of two parts: of soul [*anima*] and body [*corpus*]. Since the former is more noble, it is akin to spirit and fire. The latter is inferior, since it is akin to earth.[13]

The reason why Lipsius had to distance himself from the Stoic tradition was his intention to construct a plausible theory of theodicy. As it is well-known, the *De Constantia* was intended to provide one with cures for the soul either elevated by false goods (*falsa bona*), or tormented by false evils (*falsa mala*).

> Two things in humans are besieging the bastion of constancy: false goods, and false evils. I call them so, since they are not within us, but around us, and they do not – properly speaking – help or harm the internal man or the soul.[14]

From the point of view of theodicy, the crucial question is where evils come from. According to Lipsius, these evils can be either private (like pain, poverty and death) or public ones (like war, pestilence and famine), but in both cases, their origin lies in our opinions, which are defined by him as movements of corporeal origin.

However, the connection between the substances is somewhat obscure, since, according to Lipsius, it is the "outermost layer of the soul" (*summa animorum cute*)[15] which is affected by such bodily movements, but it is also the realm of mental agency, since it is up to the soul whether to consent to attitudes evoked by these passions or not. "This is how the communion or forged society [works] between the soul [*animam*] and

13 Lipsius 1615, 7.
14 Lipsius 1615, 10.
15 Lipsius 1615, 6.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

the body [*corpus*]"[16], as he said. Hence we should only look for the origin of evil in the physical world, and all turbulences of the soul are only due to the latter's connection with the body. But still, this theodicy would be implausible if one accepts the traditional thesis of the physical world's creation by God.

This is the point where the *Physiologia Stoicorum* has to pick up the thread and further elaborate on the subject. Lipsius still maintains his dualist claim here, although in a somewhat novel way: "two principles exist: *God* and matter".[17] Still, this novelty is only a seeming one, since the human soul is regarded by him as an emanation of divine spirit, (which possesses the human body as its vehicle [*receptaculum*]),[18] and hence, the new wording only emphasizes the close interconnectedness of the spiritual substance with God. What is surprising, is the way Lipsius is willing to defend his dualist position:

> In my view, the Stoics held that the principle of evil was not in God, but in matter (which is coeval with God and eternal – as they claimed). As a consequence, when God created humans together with other creatures, he made each and every one of them good, and prone to be good. However, there was some kind of repellent and malicious power [*repugnantem vim et malitiosam*] in matter, which attracted [men] elsewhere: internal and also external evils have existed thence".[19]

Lipsius expressly identifies his position with that of the 3rd-century Manicheist theologian, Hermogenes of Chartage,[20] but he claimed that "this was also the view of the ancient [church fathers]".[21] Lipsius hence clearly endorses a Manicheist position in order to break with the ancient Stoic view only to make a real distinction between the soul and the body.

2.2 Different substances, different laws

The underlying reason why Lipsius had to make such a surprising move was to be able to claim that different laws of causation applied to different substances. Such laws binding either the corporeal *or* the spiritual substance were called *fate* by Lipsius, but according to his account in the *De Constantia*, fate in the strict sense was confined to physical

16 Lipsius 1615, 8.
17 Lipsius 1610, 69.
18 Lipsius 1610, 159–160.
19 Lipsius 1610, 37.
20 Benett 2001, 38–68.
21 Lipsius 1610, 37.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

events, while mental events were carried out freely. Hence, his whole distinction between two substances was aimed at providing the soul with freedom from physical causes.

Before turning to his own position, he also outlined some rival accounts of fate and ordered them into a fourfold historical taxonomy. He labelled the first group of views as (F.1.) *fatum mathematicum*, which was the alleged theory of the Pythagoreans and Hermetic thinkers. According to this view, heavenly bodies operated as *physical causes* as such, which necessarily determined all natural events. The second group was called (F.2.) *fatum naturale*, according to which causes always produce the same effects whenever they are not impeded on by another cause. This was in Lipsius' view the position of the Aristotelians. These two types did not seem plausible to him and he therefore dismissed them almost without any consideration.

The first such group of views on fate which was taken seriously by him, was (F.3.) *fatum violentum*, a system of claims attributed to the Stoics. The name *violent* was given to it, since it "refers to all things and actions, [the chain of which] is not broken by any kind of power."[22] Lipsius, however, did not endorse this allegedly Stoic doctrine of determinism due to four reasons: according to him it was unacceptable, that (O.1.) this implies the identification of God with fate, which was defined by him as "a firm and certain necessity between events" [*firma ac rata necessitas eventorum*];[23] (O.2.) that it implies an eternal chain of physical causes; (O.3.) that it implies the denial of any contingent events; (O.4.) and also implies the denial of free will in humans.

He hence provided a correction of this allegedly Stoic doctrine and introduced the concept of (F.4.) *verum fatum*, later to be endorsed by him. He first claimed, that (C.1.) God, or divine providence was not identical to fate, but fate was a *decree* of providence; (C.2.) the eternal chain of causes can be broken, according to him, but only by God himself: "God has often acted in the case of his marvels [*prodigii*] and miracles independently [*citra*], or even against nature".[24] As it is clear that these two objections and corrections were meant to guarantee the omnipotence of God over the physical world. However, as we shall see, the rest of his corrections were meant to provide freedom to the soul from physical determinism. According to his third correction added to the Stoic doctrine, (C.3.) there exist some contingent events produced by *secondary causes*: "when there exist such secondary causes, we allow some events to be contingent and fortuitous".[25] As it turns out from the somewhat obscure phrasing ("when there exist such secondary causes"), Lipsius identifies mental states with these secondary causes, as a consequence of which only a very small part of creatures (namely, humans) are endowed with them. But whoever is endowed with such secondary causes

22 Lipsius. 1584, 57.
23 Lipsius. 1584, 53.
24 Lipsius 1615, 65.
25 Lipsius 1615, 65.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

(C.4.), must by definition be endowed with free will as well: "[y]our will is also among the secondary causes, and you should not think that it is agitated or drawn by God".[26]

3. The causal interaction between substances according to the *De Constantia*

What we have seen so far is that (p1) Lipsius was a dualist who claimed that (p2) the two substances were subject to different laws. While the physical substance or body was subordinated to such physical laws that otherwise could not be broken (or only by God's miracles), the spiritual substance or soul, preserved its freedom (and only its outermost layer could be affected by physical causes). Hence, (p3) whoever was endowed with a spiritual substance, was also endowed with free will. As a consequence, people were endowed with free will. The only remaining question will be the exact *scope* of this freedom. As we shall see, the spiritual substance could not produce effects in the physical world, but only on itself according to the account of the *De Constantia*.

3.1 Body-soul causation

As we have seen, Lipsius maintained that bodily movements or passions could affect the "outermost layer of the soul [*summa animorum cute*]".[27] The phrasing is partly obscure and partly obvious: obscure, since he never specifies what he means by "outermost layer," but obvious, as it is regarded as a part of the soul (instead of the body). As a consequence, Lipsius clearly seems to admit to the body's capacity to make causal effects on the soul.

3.2 Soul-soul causation

However, the same phrasing suggests that the soul is capable of producing effects on itself. This claim is (I) reinforced by the very goal of the treatise, according to which the movements transmitted through the body should be eliminated by *constancy* defined as the motionless firmness of the soul (*rectum et immotum animi robur*),[28] and (II) also by the previously seen Lipsian claim, according to which creatures with a spiritual substance were endowed with the capacity to operate as *secondary causes* and hence had free will. Moreover, if the soul was unable to hinder the activity of external, bodily movements, the project of the *De Constantia* would be entirely pointless.

26 Lipsius 1584, 65.
27 Lipsius 1615, 6.
28 Lipsius 1584, 10.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

3.3 Soul-body causation

What we have seen so far is less than surprising. However, as it later turns out from the *De Constantia*, secondary causes are not capable of producing physical effects, and according to the first Lipsian theory, no soul-body causation exists at all.

> […] fate is like a master of ceremonies, which holds the strings during the dance in which the whole world takes part: but in a way, that our parts should be able to will and not will [certain things]. But we do not have more power [*vis efficiendi*] than this, since we were given only the opportunity, to be free, to be reluctant and to struggle against God [*reluctari et obniti*]; but power [*vis*] *was not given by which we could do that.*[29]

Hence according to this earlier account, it is only God or the supreme power (*vis supera)* only whom Lipsius endows with power. What the author offers here is a radical departure from the traditional notions of agency by drawing a distinction between will (*voluntas*) and power (*vis*). Since it is a necessary condition for anything to be endowed with power in order to be able to cause an effect on physical bodies, volitions are not capable of doing that.[30]

The difficulty is that all this entails God's efficient causation of evil, and even Lipsius has to admit this. However, he adds that by consenting to evils (or sins), the responsibility of humans is not taken away.

> [Y]ou err out of necessity. But you should also add, that through your will [*per tuam voluntatem*], since [God] foresaw that you will err the way he foresaw it, and he foresaw you erring freely: you err freely, hence, out of necessity.[31]

29 Lipsius 1584, 68.

30 Although the claim that Joseph Hall drew considerably on Lipsius has often been contested, he seems to repeat the Lipsian theory of the *De Constantia* in his *Heaven Upon Earth*. "Not that thou desirest shall come to pass; but that which God hath decreed. Neither thy fears, nor thy hopes, nor vows shall either foreslow or alter it. The unexperienced passenger, when he sees the vessel go amiss or too far, lays fast hold on the contrary part, or on the mast, for remedy, the pilot laughs at his folly; knowing, that, whatever he labours, the bark will go which way the wind and his stern directeth it. Thy goods are embarked now thou wishest a direct north-wind, to drive thee to the Straits; and then a west, to run in: and now, when thou hast emptied and laded again, thou callest as earnestly for the south and south-east, to return; and lovvrest, if all these answer thee not: as if heaven and earth had nothing else to do, but to wait upon thy pleasure; and served only, to be commanded service by thee. Another, that hath contrary occasion, asks for winds quite opposite to thine. He, that sits in lieaven, neither fits thy fancy nor his: but bids his winds spit sometimes in thy face; sometimes, to favour thee with a side blast; sometimes, to be boisterous; otherwhile, to be silent, at his own pleasure." (Hall 1808, 35.)

31 Lipsius 1584, 66.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

3.4 The "synchronization" of substances

According to the previously seen Lipsian account, no causal relationship can be established between a mental state (e.g. my will to lift my hand), and a physical action (e.g. the movement of my hand). However, that the physical and mental events coincide is not entirely accidental, and it is due to divine providence that mental and physical events are in harmony with each other. God, due to his providence, has always foreknown that in a certain moment a volition to lift my hand will arise in my mind, and hence, he has ordained the physical world in a way that it would be in harmony with my volitions. Due to this act of "synchronization," physical events seem to be caused by my mental volitions even though no real causal relationship exists between the two.

4. Why did Lipsius fail to meet Calvinist demands?

Lipsius' previously outlined considerations were written and published during his Calvinist period in Leiden. His intention to redefine the concept of free will (as mere *voluntas* lacking *vis*), and hence his willingness to deprive humans of the capacity of agency (in the traditional sense), seems to be in harmony with Calvinist demands. However, Calvin, a former admirer of Seneca, famously did not sympathize with the Stoics, for which he might have had two major reasons: (I) their theory of emotions (prohibiting even the feeling of sympathy towards those in need), and (II) their "libertarianism." The latter objection is palpable in his *Institutio Christianae Religionis* as well.

> Those, who wish to invoke animosity against this doctrine [viz. against the doctrine of predestination], berate it as if it was the teaching of the stoics concerning fate […]. Although we do not usually debate over the usage of words, still we cannot accept the term fate […]. Since, as opposed to the Stoics we do not imagine any kind of necessity resulting from the invisible connection and concatenation of causes [*ex perpetuo causarum nexu et implicita quadam serie*], that might be containded *in nature*; but we make God the judge and governor [*arbitrum ac moderatorem*] of the world, who has – according to his wisdom – ordained from eternity whatever is to be done [*quod facturus esset*]; and now, based on his power [*potentia*], he executes whatever he has *decided* [*decrevit*]. Whence we claim, that his providence governs [*gubernari*] not only the heavens, the Earth and inanimate beings, but also the *decisions and volitions* [*consilia et voluntates*] of humans, in order that they should tend towards their destination [*destinatum scopum*].[32]

32 Calvin 1559, 64.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

The indictment above enumerates three major concerns regarding the Stoic theory of fate, which also highlight Calvin's own views. The latter can be reconstructed as follows: (p1.) God possesses knowledge both concerning physical and mental events; (p2.) via his power [*potentia*], he instantiates all this knowledge; as a consequence of which events either physical or mental, originate from God. As we have already seen, while the account of the *De Constantia* endorses (p1.), it rejects (p2.). Although Lipsius admitted that God foresaw mental events as well, he denied that his providence caused them. As a result, Lipsius should have denied the consequence as well, according to which God would be the efficient cause of *all* events in the world.

5.1 The theory of causation according to *Physiologia Stoicorum*

According to my claim, it was the friction outlined above that prevented Lipsius from providing Calvinism with Stoic foundations (as a result of which he might have abandoned Calvinism for the sake of a more genuine kind of Stoicism). From a Calvinist point of view, it must have been unacceptable that he held a libertarian position regarding mental events, and confined his determinism merely to physical ones (by claiming that the soul had no power [*vis*] to affect the body). Moreover, as we shall see, he further extended his libertarianism to the realm of the physical world in his later works (already written in a Catholic milieu).

It has to be noted that Lipsius expressly denies any break with his earlier theory in the *Physiologia Stoicorum*. Mostly at least. However, when his interlocutor asks him about the origin of evil, he surprisingly admits to have (albeit only slightly) changed his mind: "[y]ou are stirring up old questions [*vetera moves*], which are alien to most people, and in cases [*alibi*] to me as well; or partly at least."[33]

Although he introduced his departure from his earlier position in a rather cautious way, its philosophical importance will be considerable. Lipsius' main concern here is to construct a theory of theodicy once again, but he choses a rather different path. He acknowledges, that there are three kinds of evil in the world: (1) natural evils (like monsters or venomous snakes), (2) internal (like sins) and (3) external ones (like punishments). The most pressing question is that of internal evils, since if God is the creator of the universe (which, in turn, operates according to deterministic laws also created by him), then this claim would render God guilty of any wicked action to be carried out by humans. As we have seen, Lipsius had to admit in the *De Constantia* that God was the efficient cause of sin (since the human soul was not endowed with power

33 Lipsius 1610, 52.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

[*vis*] to act on the physical world), but still maintained that by willing to act sinfully, humans were also responsible for the wicked action.

In the *Physiologia*, he (1) maintains the soul's inability to have causal effects on bodies, but (2) denies God's role as the efficient cause of evil, (3) assigning this role to the human soul. But how is this possible? Although the *De Constantia* provided his readers with extensive raw material on ancient Stoicism, one remarkable fragment was missing from the early Lipsian compilation at least: Chrysippus' well-known parable of the cylinder, preserved in Cicero's *De Fato*. Due to his parable, Lipsius regards Chrysippus as a libertarian, claiming that (1) mental events were free of any determination, as a consequence of which (2) humans were to be held responsible for their actions instead of the gods.

> But it is clear even from Chrysippus' [claims], that such objections [regarding the responsibility of gods] are in vain, biased, and it is not an impartial judge, who speaks through them. [Cicero] clearly states, that [Chrysippus] is more similar to those, who hold that our souls are free from the necessity of being moved.[34]

And this is where the parable of the cylinder comes up, since this is where Lipsius bases his interpretation.

> According to Cicero's report, [Chrysippus] made a distinction between *perfect* or *primary causes*, and *auxiliary* or *proximal* ones. Thence, the principle of movement and action follows from these; but the quality of the particular motion depends on the proximal causes [*causis proximis*], that is to say, from our will [*á voluntate*]. As he says, <the principle of movement is transmitted [to the cylinder] by whoever has pushed it, but the volubility was not transmitted by him>.[35]

Lipsius, hence makes a distinction between the (1) principle of motion, and (2) its quality. What the reasoning intends to prove is that while the principle of motion is determined by the primary cause, its quality is contingent upon the auxiliary ones. However, this still does not prove that Lipsius intended to distance himself from his earlier position, since it is not clear whether auxiliary of proximal causes can alter the physical world, or they are simply identical to the *secondary causes* of the *De Constantia*. Furthermore, the well-known passage from the *De Fato* goes on with the discussion of *assensio*, or the soul's capacity to consent to bodily *passions*,[36] and this fact may easily suggest that the parable is unrelated to the physical world. But Lipsius interprets it in an entirely different way.

34 Lipsius 1610, 35.

35 Lipsius 1610, 35.

36 "The object seen imprints its species into the soul, but *assensio* will be up to us [*in nostra potestate*]: and for the remaining part, as it was said concerning the cylinder, it will move according to its own power

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

> What Cicero says concerning the thing seen […] does not necessarily seem to refer to the internal thing: [and] I believe he added to it much more, which parts have perished ever since.[37]

Lipsius therefore cautiously indicates here that the fragmentary text of the *De Fato* must have contained parts where the scope of proximal or auxiliary causes was not confined to the internal representation of objects but was extended to physics as well. This is also confirmed by his own commentary attached to the parable, where Lipsius first intends to narrow the scope of fate in order to extend that of the proximal or auxiliary causes to the physical world.

> Analyzing carefully the meaning of the word *energos* you will find that fate, according to Chrysippus, is constituted by the primary causes […].[38]

Here Lipsius clearly equates fate with Chrysippus' primary causes (which also implies that the *auxiliary* or *proximal* causes *do not constitute* a part of fate). However, this alone would still not necessarily exceed the claim formulated in the *De Constantia*, where secondary causes were also beyond the boundaries of fate. But Lipsius specifies his point further.

> It seems to me at least, that everything works according to nature (except for God, who is the primary cause), and each and every person is inclined to goodness or evil in a different way, since they were created differently; however [*sed tamen*], by their will [*voluntate*], they are capable of moderating [*temperari*] and deflecting [*flecti*] these primary and innate [*insitus*] causes a bit [*leviter*]; and we consider this will to be among the proximal and auxiliary causes[39].

Lipsius unsurprisingly regarded bodily dispositions (according to which "each and every person is inclined to goodness or evil") as determined by the primary cause, and this stance is consistent with the spirit of the *De Constantia* once again. However, his willingness to admit that humans could "moderate" or "deflect" these dispositions is entirely novel and even contradictory to the claims of his earlier work. By this, Lipsius approached a libertarian position, according to which an action can be regarded as freely carried out if and only if it could have been done otherwise.

due to being pushed externally." (Lipsius 1610, 35.)

37 Lipsius 1610, 35.

38 Lipsius 1610, 36.

39 Lipsius 1610, 36.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

5.2 Divine providence in the *Physiologia*

By endowing humans with the ability "to act otherwise" (and hence abandoning the thesis of the causal closedness of nature), Lipsius evidently had to reconsider his views on divine providence as well. As we have seen, divine providence had a fourfold role in the *De Constantia*: (1) foreknowledge and (2) causation of physical events; (3) foreknowledge of mental events; and (4) their "synchronization". In the *Physiologia*, however, Lipsius could not endorse (2), and had to at least modify it in order to provide a more or less consistent theory of causation. However, for such a libertarian approach, the earlier Stoic framework might have proved too narrow for Lipsius, as a result of which he started drawing on Platonic doctrines more considerably.

At a certain point he even criticized the Stoics for their negligence concerning distinctions, as a result of which they regarded God, divine providence and fate as identical to each other.[40] Although Lipsius repeatedly claimed that fate was closely connected (*cum ea nexum*) or even intertwined (*innexum*) with divine providence, he also maintained that the two were distinct.[41] Furthermore, he even extended this twofold distinction in order to make place for contingent events.

> It is fate, due to which the necessary thoughts [*inevitabiles cogitationes*] and initiations of God come to pass. […] The Platonists defined the first kind of divine providence [*primam providentiam*] <as the thought or will [*cogitatio sive voluntas*] of the highest God>. They further described the second kind as the providence of secondary Gods – dwelling continuously in the heavens – due to which [providence] all inferior and mortal things are arranged according to their species or genre>. The third kind [of providence] refers to daemons around the Earth, as judges [*arbitros*] and guards [*custodes*] of human actions.[42]

He comments Apuleius' previous words the following way.

> [The Platonists] distinguished [these kinds of providence], and deduced them to us so, that <the first kind of providence should contain fate, the second should be fate itself, while the third should be everything whatever part of fate is instantiated [*quod ex fato esset*].[43]

This novel threefold distinction signals some kind of departure from Lipsius' earlier position. While the "first kind of providence" seems to be identical to the concept of divine providence outlined in the *De Constantia*, the concept of fate (now called

40 Lipsius 1610, 28.
41 Lipsius 1610, 28.
42 Lipsius 1610, 28.
43 Lipsius 1610, 28.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

as the "second kind of providence") is more strictly defined by its operation confined to the arrangement of phenomena "according to their species or genre." Fate, hence, is not related to particulars anymore, but only to universals. Particulars, in turn, constitute the territory of the "third kind of providence" or daemons, who do not force or necessitate, but only "judge" and "guard" events which are to be instantiated from among the physical laws. All this suggests that while the *specific* or *generic* characters of creatures are strictly determined by fate (or the second kind of providence), individual features are contingent on the "judgement" of the daemons (or the third kind).

There is, however, a crucial point which was left entirely without clarification by Lipsius, namely the relationship between this hypostatic theory of divine providence and the Chrysippean *auxiliary* or *proximal* causes. We have previously seen that according to the *Physiologia*, the human soul was still not endowed with power [*vis*] to act, but it could still alter the physical world. The question is how this hypostatic theory of divine providence can help explain this.

In my view, Lipsius came close to endorsing occasionalism (in a weak sense) by employing Apuleius' framework, even if he did not elaborate on it in detail: although agents were not endowed with power to act, still, their mental dispositions could serve as occasions for the "daemons" to materialize these dispositions. However, the scope of these daemons' activity must have been limited, since fate (or laws applied to universals) defined their framework. The major problem is that this new concept of providence and fate is made up of quotations from different authors and hence, is not even constructed from a coherent terminology. We could even say that it was not elaborated sufficiently. However, Lipsius' intention to distance himself from his earlier deterministic position is clear enough.

Our train of thought intended to highlight a certain shift in Justus Lipsius' considerations on divine providence, fate and free will. This shift can be regarded as a move from a compatibilist position to a libertarian stance, which also coincided with the author's recatholicization. However, the overall aim of this paper was to call attention to the importance of particular confessions in terms of "Neostoicism", as either by conviction or due to hypocrisy, authors related to this "movement" vary their positions in order to accommodate it to their circumstances. This however also bears philosophical consequences.

DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5

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DOI: 10.54310/Elpis.2018.2.5