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### Known Unknowns: The Mutilated and Missing Pages of Leiden MS. Lips 3 (2)<sup>1</sup>

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Leiden University ms. Lips 3 (2) is a small, apparently unremarkable manuscript, measuring just 22,0 by 16,0 centimetres. In its present state it consists of a mere 20 folio pages, although it used to have more. What survives seems to tell a rather sad and violent tale. Text has been repeatedly struck out and pages have been cut or have gone missing. This mutilation is puzzling: what did this manuscript do to deserve such apparent vandalism? Its contents make the matter more pressing. The letters, sent between 14 April 1591 and 31 July 1593, are of considerable importance for their author's biography. Composed by the Brabant humanist Justus Lipsius (1547-1606) to the Jesuit Martin Delrio (1551-1608), a confidant and old university friend, they document the scholar's reconciliation with the Catholic Church and his return to the Southern Netherlands, after a 13-year stay in Protestant Leiden.<sup>2</sup> Both as a stalwart defender of the Habsburg monarchy and as a devout Jesuit, Delrio became something of a guarantor of his friend's religious orthodoxy. Lipsius himself once even credited the Jesuit as the "author of his conversion".<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A first, rougher version of this note was written years ago. Jeanine De Landtsheer commented on it at the time. At some stage, she and I contemplated publishing a codicological description of ms. Lips 3 (2) together, but this never materialized. It seemed fitting to publish this reconstruction now in her honour, although I am also aware that she might have taken issue with some of my conclusions.

<sup>2</sup> Leiden, Universiteitsbibliotheek, ms. Lips 3 (2) [hereafter simply ms. Lips 3 (2)]. On the relationship between Lipsius and Delrio, see J. Machielsen, "Friendship and Religion in the Republic of Letters: The Return of Justus Lipsius to Catholicism (1591)", *Renaissance Studies* 27.2 (2013), 161-182 (doi: 10.1111/j.1477-4658.2011.00773.x). For Lipsius' return to Leuven, see J. De Landtsheer, *In Pursuit of the Muses: The Life and World of Justus Lipsius*, ed. M. Crab, I. François (Gent, 2021), 113-148.

<sup>3</sup> See the report sent by Johannes Busaeus in Mainz to Franciscus Benci in Rome included as Appendix 1 to J. De Landtsheer, "From North to South: Some New Documents on Lipsius' Journey from Leiden to Liège", in D. Sacré, G. Tournoy (eds), *Myrica: Essays on Neo-Latin literature in memory of Jozef IJsewijn* (Leuven, 2000), 303-31, at 328: "auctore conversionis

The contents of these letters – to the extent that they survive – no longer pose any mystery. They can easily be consulted in parts IV, V, and VI of the *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae* (ILE), which cover the years 1591 to 1593, all of them edited or co-edited by Jeanine De Landtsheer.<sup>4</sup> We will not, therefore, revisit the letters themselves – at least not in any detail – but a great deal more remains to be said about the manuscript itself, in particular its missing pages. Why were they removed? What secrets could they have contained? These gaps, as we shall see, are true “known unknowns”: with *ILE*’s help, we can determine with some accuracy what has gone missing and – just as importantly – why.

The current mutilated state of ms. Lips 3 (2) is not the only puzzle, however: the document’s genesis is as well. While the letters were once written by Lipsius, the manuscript contains only copies made by *Delrio*, their addressee. Why would a recipient sit down to copy letters and return them to sender? This article’s first hypothesis is that study of the materiality of ms. Lips 3 (2) will throw new light on the relationship between the two correspondents and how it may have changed over time. Their relationship was encoded into this document: the letters were written by Lipsius, then copied and arranged by Delrio, and then (though not, upon closer examination, “vandalised”) still substantially reshaped once more by Lipsius.

Study of ms. Lips 3 (2) therefore causes us to reflect on the ways in which a letter’s material condition can (re-)shape its meaning and significance in ways that may not be immediately apparent from a scholarly edition, such as *ILE*. Lipsius’ letters took on new meanings as they traversed from manuscript into print. Some of the correspondence which Lipsius published in his 1586 *Centuria* ahead of his first (ultimately aborted) attempt to leave Leiden was originally composed in the late 1570s prior to his arrival. A new public audience would have read them in a format and political context that was very different from their original private recipients.<sup>5</sup> Their text may not have changed, but their medium, their purpose and the times

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eius.” The exact phrasing must have belonged to Busaeus; Lipsius always preferred “reconciliation” over “conversion”.

<sup>4</sup> J. De Landtsheer, J. Kluyskens (eds), *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, vol. 5: 1592 (Brussel, 1991); J. De Landtsheer, *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, vol. 6: 1593 (Brussel, 1994); S. Sué, J. De Landtsheer (ed.), *Iusti Lipsi Epistolae*, vol. 4: 1591 (Brussel, 2012).

<sup>5</sup> I am not convinced all of these letters were written and sent when Lipsius claimed they were: Machielsen 2013 (as in n. 2), 166-168.

all had: with the Dutch Republic in crisis, these letters now publicly justified Lipsius' original defection to the Protestant North.

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The correspondence contained in ms. Lips 3 (2) covers a crucial period in Lipsius' life. Its opening letter (ILE IV, 91 04 14 D) may well have been the most important epistle the humanist ever wrote. In it, Lipsius announced to Delrio, in Liège at the time, his reconciliation with the Catholic Church at the Jesuit College of Mainz, an event that not only sent shockwaves through the Republic of Letters but upset many erstwhile friends in the fledgling Dutch Republic as well. The letter provided proof of the scholar's Catholic devotion (as later ones in the manuscript do as well), and after their death, it was excerpted in the published *Vitae* which celebrated the lives and piety of both men.<sup>6</sup> The correspondence collected in ms. Lips 3 (2) thus captures Lipsius in transition. They follow him from his arrival in Catholic Mainz to his temporary refuge in (politically neutral) Spa and Liège, before he returned, as the long-lost prodigal son, to Leuven in August 1592, his home for the remainder of his life.

Two preliminary points are worth making about the letters' material condition. First of all, because they originally survived only in handwritten form, we may be tempted to see them as part of an essentially private exchange between two old friends, intended for their eyes only. This assumption is not entirely misplaced, and the equation of manuscript material with privacy points to the most fundamental way in which the material form can shape and reshape a letter's meaning and purpose. Yet it very much remains the *wrong* way to look at ms. Lips 3 (2), and indeed, at Lipsius' correspondence in general. Given the public fall-out caused by his departure from Leiden, it would be naïve to think that these letters could ever have remained private. Indeed, at least one close contemporary was keen to follow the exchange between Lipsius and Delrio while it was still in progress.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Aubertus Miraeus, *Vita Iusti Lipsi* (Antwerpen, 1609), 29-30 [USTC 1506620]; [Heribert Rosweyde], *Martini Antonii Del-Rio ... vita* (Antwerpen, 1609), 25-26 [USTC 1009795].

<sup>7</sup> See e.g. ILE V, [92 08 begin]; we could also cite Francisco Benci's efforts for news about Lipsius' arrival here: De Landtsheer [2000 \(as in n. 3\)](#), ~~"From North to South"~~, 328-31.

Privacy in Renaissance letter-writing was itself also a complex and paradoxical idea. Lipsius' claims about the familiarity, sincerity, and intimacy of his own epistles are well-known. He claimed, for instance, that letters flowed from him "through a certain transparent channel straight from an open heart; they are as my mind or body is at the moment I write."<sup>8</sup> Yet he made these assertions in the prefatory epistles that accompanied his *Centuriae*, his *printed* correspondence. Renaissance letter-writing was therefore often paradoxical; it was a seemingly private language that (often) invited others to look in. Study of ms. Lips 3 (2) shows that both Lipsius and Delrio knew they were writing in full view of a potential *future* audience. Privacy, in that sense, is a temporary state, a cloak of intimacy that could be withdrawn, but that same cloak of intimacy could also be appreciated by outsiders. While autographs and even manuscript copies, such as ms. Lips 3 (2), may convey a sense of privacy, both Delrio and Lipsius encoded a public potentiality in the material remains of ms. Lips 3 (2), ready to be activated from the outset.

Secondly, examination of ms. Lips 3 (2) points to the importance of possession, because possession shapes meaning. The original autograph version of ILE IV, 91 04 14 D, that all-important letter announcing Lipsius' arrival in Catholic Mainz, illustrates this point in miniature. Martin Delrio grasped both its importance and its public potential as soon as he received it: he drafted his response on the letter's *verso* side. He did not want to forego the opportunity to offer a literally inefaceable first response.<sup>9</sup> The document's present location makes the same point in a different way: the exchange survives in the archives of the Museum Plantin-Moretus, the publishing house that printed one of the *Vitae* that publicly disseminated it. The entire Lipsius collection – housed at the university the scholar had so publicly spurned – tells the same story yet again. When Lipsius' papers resurfaced at auction in The Hague in 1722, Leiden University empowered Petrus Burmann (or Pieter Burman) the

<sup>8</sup> Justus Lipsius, *Epistolarum selectarum centuria prima* (Antwerpen, 1586 [=1585]), sig. \*5v [USTC 429138]: "Profluunt mihi ex liquido quodam canali aperti pectoris: et ut animus aut corpus meum est cum scribo, ita illae."

<sup>9</sup> Antwerpen, Museum Plantin-Moretus, ms. Arch. 86, f. 405-406, (recto, verso or both?) [406 is the verso of 405; never quite know what to do when archivists paginate manuscripts!]

Elder to buy them and make Leiden the final resting place for the humanist's literary remains.<sup>10</sup>

That these two points about ownership and privacy can also interact to create new meanings is demonstrated by Burmann's publication of around 800 of Lipsius' letters (including most of ms. Lips 3 (2)). By describing them as essentially private, the Leiden scholar was able to remove this protective layer and jubilantly unmask the "real" Lipsius as a slave to the Jesuits: "You will finally see how he made himself subject to the command and dictates of the Loyolites."<sup>11</sup> When we approach Lipsius' letters to Delrio not as texts, but as material objects carefully fashioned by two sets of hands, it becomes even more apparent that they were written, collected, and edited with a public audience in mind. More speculatively we can even see the manuscript as a tug of war between two men about the meaning of their friendship.

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At some point late July 1593, Martin Delrio sat down to copy the 46 letters Lipsius had sent him during the previous two years in his own exceptionally clear hand. The letters themselves do not include any request for a copy from Lipsius' part. It is nevertheless possible that the humanist had asked for them; Delrio once returned a copy with his reply.<sup>12</sup> But Lipsius was also keeping copies of his own; in one instance he read over two already sent letters and realized that he had misdated them.<sup>13</sup> Given that they are among Lipsius' personal papers and edited in his hand, we may safely assume that Delrio had prepared it for him. One straightforward explanation – bearing in mind our observation about the importance of possession – is that Lipsius asked for the autographs to be returned to him, and that Delrio,

<sup>10</sup> De Landtsheer [2000 \(as in n. 3\)](#), 303.

<sup>11</sup> P. Burmann (ed.), *Sylloges epistolarum a viris illustribus scriptarum*, 5 vols (Leiden, 1724-1727), vol. 1, sig. \*\*3recto: "Tandem videbis [...] Loiolitarum imperio & dictatis subiecisse." This commentary is not present in all copies.

<sup>12</sup> Leiden University, ms. Lip 4 (verso of ILE V, 92 10 14 D); ILE V, 92 10 08. Gerlo and Vervliet already note that other correspondents returned autographs "en vue de leur publication dans les *Centuries*": A. Gerlo, H.D.L. Vervliet (ed.), *Inventaire de la correspondance de Juste Lipse, 1564-1606* (Antwerp, 1968), 11, n. 1.

<sup>13</sup> ILE V, 92 06 13 D.

**Commented [k1]:** Please check the orthography of this name: Burmann or Burman? There are two version in the current version of the article.

**Commented [JM2R1]:** Born in Utrecht of German parents so both versions are correct. I have gone for Burmann.

recognizing their value and unwilling to oblige, set out to copy them instead. Yet it is also possible – and I would argue, perhaps more likely – that the initiative for its composition came from Delrio, which (as we shall see) would underscore the potentially public nature of the letters still further.

When we examine the manuscript, its formal nature is immediately striking. The cover has a title in Delrio's hand: "letters by the *vir clarissimus* Justus Lipsius to Martinus Antonius Delrio, priest of the Society of Jesus."<sup>14</sup> The documents themselves were generally presented chronologically. When they were not (exceptions are discussed below), the numbering was adjusted.<sup>15</sup> Each letter is headed by a Roman numeral, as they would have done had they been included in one of Lipsius' *Centuriae*. Delrio also numbered the folios. One letter that Delrio accidentally copied out too early received the comment – an instruction to a typesetter perhaps? – that "this pertains to the following year and should be placed at number [blank space]."<sup>16</sup> (The Jesuit did not go back to add the right number, perhaps because he inadvertently copied out the letter in full a second time in its rightful place.) Delrio also added clarifying comments to describe Lipsius' movement between Spa, Liège, and Leuven. All of these are in the third person.<sup>17</sup> For obvious reasons, they are of negligible value for Lipsius himself. Underlined and clearly set apart from the text, they resemble instructions that would have allowed a printer to typeset them in the margin of the text.

Delrio commented only twice on the contents of the letters themselves, in both cases in order to elucidate the meaning of that all-important first letter that Lipsius sent from Mainz. In ILE IV, 91 04 14 D, Lipsius had indicated that Delrio's *salutares litteras* – his health-giving, salvific letter – had acted as a spur for his actions. Delrio's note – *in tuas* 1577, "in [reply to]

<sup>14</sup> Ms. Lips 3 (2), f. 1r: "Iusti Lipsi V[iri] Clariss[imi] Epistolae Ad Martinum Antonium Delrio Soc[ieta]tis Iesu sacerdotem." References follow the modern folio numbering, not the original set out by Delrio (see Table 1).

<sup>15</sup> Delrio made a false start, copying out the opening lines of ILE V, 92 05 27, on *ibid.*, f. 9v (which he then crossed out).

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 5v: "Haec p[er]tinet ad annum seq[ue]ntem et ponenda i[n] l[oc]o n[um]ero." I am grateful to Jeroen De Keyser for discussing these abbreviations with me.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 9v, 16r, 16v: "Quae sequuntur scripsit postquam Leodium venit de rebus, prout se loccasio dabat"; "Post rediit Leodium, inde in Grudios se ~~aeiingeri~~ accingens; sed ante scripsit sequentem"; "Lovanium mox discessit, unde sequentes."

yours [of] 1577” – gives us a clue as to the context of this lost letter. Delrio can only have meant ILE I, 78 03 04, a letter that Lipsius had included in his 1586 *Centuria*. As I have argued elsewhere, the *Centuriae* of 1586 and 1590 included several letters which justified the humanist’s original departure for Protestant Leiden, while at the same time reaching out to old contacts on the Catholic side.<sup>18</sup> ILE I, 78 03 04 did both. It thanked Delrio, an old university friend, for keeping Lipsius’ library out of the hands of greedy Spanish soldiers. It is a reasonable inference that Delrio did not receive the lost (or never sent?) original and only replied to the published version. The Jesuit Francesco Benci did the same.<sup>19</sup> An earlier marginal note clarified which communities of Jesuit fathers (“ope Patrum”) helped “free” Lipsius. It has become corrupted because the page has been cut, but Delrio seems to have used it to emphasize the role played by specific Jesuit colleges.<sup>20</sup>

If Delrio edited ms. Lips 3 (2) with a public audience in mind, then Lipsius did so as well, as his changes to the opening letter again make clear. Lipsius changed the salutation from the rather pious “Reverende Pater” to the more formulaic “Martino Delrio Presbytero Soc[ietatis] Iesu” and he suppressed the closing greeting: “Now finally truly your brother.”<sup>21</sup> Perhaps the line suggested too strongly that Lipsius had lapsed as a Catholic. Lipsius also struck out “apud Patres” to remove an explicit reference to the Jesuits. Other letters received less attention, but the changes made indicate that Lipsius took the idea of publication serious. The original rather informal abbreviated salutation – “R. P.” (for “Reverende Pater”) – of ILE V, 92 06 03 D<sup>2</sup> is replaced with “Epist. V | Martino Delrio | Sacerd. Soc. Iesu | Leodicum” (“Letter V, to Martin Delrio, Priest of the Society of Jesus, Liège”), a clear indication that the letter was considered for inclusion in one of Lipsius’ *Centuriae*.<sup>22</sup> (The humanist also

<sup>18</sup> Machielsen 2013 (as in n. 2), esp. [164-69](#).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 174.

<sup>20</sup> Ms. Lips 3 (2), f. 2r. The surviving comment, spread across four lines, [has become corrupted](#). It reads: “Leonis | , Mogun- | logiam | tis.” Half a centimetre of text is missing. “Mogunt-” is undoubtedly a reference to Mainz ([“Moguntia”](#)), but it is striking that Delrio placed this second to another Jesuit College. “Leonis” could refer to Léon, where Delrio had been based earlier in the 1580s, or be a corruption for Liège. Neither reading is entirely convincing.

<sup>21</sup> ILE IV, 91 04 14 D: “Nunc demum tuus vere frater.”

<sup>22</sup> Ms. Lips 3 (2), f. 14r.



numbered the letters of Leiden ms. Lips 3 (8), suggesting that manuscript was intended for print.<sup>23</sup>) Lipsius, tellingly, also struck out the name of a Protestant visitor, Johannes Vivianus, he had received while in Spa, replacing it with “N. N.” Although not given a number, new salutations were also added to ILE V, 92 07 26 and to ILE V, 92 10 08.<sup>24</sup> Postscripts, where Lipsius tended to be more informal and more gossipy (these reported, for instance, Joseph Scaliger’s arrival in Leiden), were systematically crossed out.<sup>25</sup>

Yet it is only when we zoom out and consider the manuscript in its entirety that Lipsius’ intention to publish a considerable subset of the letters becomes apparent. Delrio had not been the only person to number the letters, Lipsius had done so as well, at times by erasing or tweaking part of Delrio’s original numbering but often also by inserting new numbers in his own hand.<sup>26</sup> This numbering suggests that the humanist considered publishing 35 of the 46 letters that his friend had copied (or 36 out of 47, when we include a final, inserted letter in a different hand, discussed in Table 1 below). This numbering, less careful than Delrio’s, indicates that Lipsius considered omitting many letters from the period when both men lived in Liège. Generally undated, these were usually of little importance (Lipsius, for instance, forwarded a copy of Cesare Baronio’s *Annales ecclesiastici* to the library of the Jesuit College).<sup>27</sup> Petrus Burmann, their original editor, rightly commented on the manuscript that these were “not letters, but notes.”<sup>28</sup> Some were also crossed out – not by Burmann who actually published them and who in marginal comments instructed the printers “to keep what has been struck out” or simply clarified that “this must remain” – but by Lipsius himself.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>23</sup> A point already noted by Gerlo, Vervliet 1968 (as in n. 12), 11, n. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., f. 16r: “Epist. | Mart. Antonio | Delrio, Soc. | Iesu”, and ibid., f. 17r, where Lipsius tweaks the salutation and adds “Leodicum”.

<sup>25</sup> See e.g. ILE IV, 91 06 01 D on ms. Lips 3 (2), f. 4r; ILE V, 92 06 13 D on ms. Lips 3 (2), f. 15v.

<sup>26</sup> E.g. on ms. Lips 3 (2), f. 9r-v, Lipsius changed XII to XI and XIII to XII by either erasing or crossing out an I. Most notable is the change on ibid., f. 13r, where the outside X and an I were deleted to change 47 (XXXXVII) to 36 (XXXVI).

<sup>27</sup> ILE V, [92 00 00] D<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> ms. Lips 3 (2), f. 9v: “non epistolae sed schedulae.”

<sup>29</sup> ms. Lip 3 (2), f. 10r, 20r: “blijven dus doorgehaelt is”; “dit moet blijven.”

This was not, however, because the humanist wanted to suppress these letters, but because he considered printing what remained.

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The obvious objection to the argument sketched out above about the essentially public nature of these letters is the fact that Lipsius in the end decided *not* to publish ms. Lips 3 (2). Only one letter (ILE V, 92 06 03 D<sup>1</sup>) present in the manuscript appeared during Lipsius' lifetime. We could reasonably argue that Lipsius reconsidered his decision in the years following his safe arrival in Leuven. The (re-)publication of his *Centuriae* ran into opposition from the censor, but perhaps his position in the Habsburg Netherlands had also become secure enough to avoid the possibly humbling display of piety.<sup>30</sup> Publishing these letters as a collection would have enhanced Delrio's public standing; it would hardly have helped his own. While we can only speculate about the many publication paths not taken, consideration of ms. Lips 3 (2)'s *missing* pages throws important new light on how Lipsius viewed these letters – and how he edited them.

The table below (Table 1) provides a schematic description of the manuscript. The table provides both the modern folio numbering (in bold) and Delrio's original (in the first column). It lists all the surviving letters, providing them with Delrio's and Lipsius' numbering (where applicable), as well as their date and current position in *ILE*. A dotted line is used to indicate when a letter continues onto the next page. Where the beginning or end of a letter has gone missing, an incipit or explicit is indicated in the notes.

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<sup>30</sup> De Landtsheer 2021 (as in n. 2), 178.

Table 1. ms. Lips 3 (2) in numbers

Delrio's folio number	Modern folio number	Delrio's letter number	Lipsius' letter number	Reference in ILE	Notes
[1r]	2r	1		91 04 14 D	
[1v]	2v	2		91 05 03	Fragment; explicit: "viro. Plura")
[2 missing]					
3r	3r	[4]		91 05 27 D	Fragment; incipit: "ac consilium")
		5		91 06 01 D	
3v	3v				
4r	4r				
		6		91 06 03 D <sup>1</sup>	
4v	4v				
		7 [=32]		92 06 03 D <sup>1</sup>	NB Delrio misread the year and misplaced this letter in the ms
5r	5r				
		7		91 06 04 DE	
5v	5v				
		8		91 06 06 D	
6r	6r				
6v	6v				
		9	8	91 06 16 D	
7r	7r				
7v	7v				
		10	9	91 06 21	
8r	8r	11		91 06 23 D	
8v	8v				
9r	9r				
		12	11	91 06 25 D	
9v	9v				

	13	12	[91 07 07]	<b>NB</b> This letter is the first of a series of (often undated) notes sent when both men were in Liège
10r	<b>10r</b>			
	14	13	[91 09 end]	
	15	14	[91 07 00]	
	16	14	[91 2 <sup>nd</sup> half]	
	17	14	[91 08 30]	
10v	<b>10v</b>			
	18	15	[91 12 11] D	Fragment; explicit: "Ego tamen vanum"
<b>[11 missing]</b>				
[12r]	<b>11r</b>	<b>NB</b> <i>The top 4 lines of fol. 11r (and 11v) have been cut.</i>		
	20	17	[91 09 26]	
			DE	
	21	18	[91 09 00] D	Fragment (because the top of 11v is missing); explicit: "R. Tua hoc cum"
[12v]	<b>11v</b>	22	18	[92 07 2 <sup>nd</sup> half]
	23	19		<b>NB</b> This letter has not been published. It was included in the 1968 inventory prepared by Gerlo and Vervliet as 92 00 00 D <sup>8</sup> . The editors of ILE V wrongly sent it to ILE IV (1591). Jeanine De Landtsheer has since dated the letter to June 1592.
	24	20	[92 00 00] D <sup>2</sup>	
13r	<b>12r</b>			
	25		[92 08 beginning]	
	26		[92 00 00] D <sup>1</sup>	

13v	12v	27		[92 00 00] D <sup>3</sup>	
		28		[91 09 26] DE	
		30		[92 05 end]	Fragment; explicit: “et hospiti renunciavimus”
[folio 14 missing; a new folio, described at the end of this table, has been inserted in its place]					
15r	14r	[32]		92 06 03 D <sup>1</sup>	Fragment (just two lines); incipit: “et sanctam familiam totam”
		33	22	92 06 03 D <sup>2</sup>	
15v	14v				
		31	23	92 05 27 DE	
16r	15r				
		34	23	92 06 13 D	
16v	15v				
17r	16r	35	24	92 06 14 D	<i>vere</i> 92 06 06 D; Delrio commits a rare error here. In a postscript to 92 06 13 D, Lipsius informed him that his last two letters had been misdated (he had written “ides” for “nones”).
		36	25	92 07 26	
17v	16v				
		37	26	[92 08 middle]	Fragment; explicit: “Tui sunt plane mei; Laborant”. <b>NB</b> The editors of ILE

			V, not realizing a folio had gone missing, accidentally published this as the opening of ILE V 92 09 15 D <sup>l</sup> .
[18 missing]			
19r	17r	[39]	92 09 15 D <sup>l</sup> Fragment; incipit: “iam denique”.
		40	29 92 10 08 Lipsius crossed out the
19v	17v		final lines and added a new closing in his own hand. A postscript has been preserved elsewhere.
[20 missing]			
[21 missing]			
22r	18r	[42]	92 12 08 D Fragment; explicit: “fato functum esse audiui”
		44	32 93 03 24 Lipsius added a new
22v	18v		postscript referring to the publication of Delrio’s <i>Syntagma tragoediae Latinae</i> (1593/94)
		43	33 93 01 29 D
23r	19r		
		45	34 93 06 14 DE
23v	19v		
24r	20r		
		46	35 93 07 18 D
24v	20v		

“14”	13r	47 [not in 36 93 07 31 D Delrio’s hand]	<b>NB</b> This last letter, in a different hand, was used to fill an early
“14”	13v		gap in the ms.

The table above helps us identify three minor errors in ILE V (once described to me by one of the editors as her *juvenilia*):

- A study of the original pagination and numbering suggests that ILE V, 92 09 15 D<sup>1</sup> is an accidental amalgamation of two different letters (letters 37 and 39 in Table 1). The editors of ILE V followed Petrus Burmann who similarly had not realized that a folio had gone missing.<sup>31</sup> The first part was likely written in August 1592, shortly after Lipsius’ arrival in Leuven.
- A second letter, ILE V, 92 05 end (letter 30), is similarly a fragment (it cuts off because folio 14 is missing) but was not identified as such in ILE.
- The editors of ILE V missed letter 23, inadvertently sending it back to ILE IV. Jeanine De Landsheer has since dated the letter to June 1592. It should appear as part of ILE XIX.

As I have already flagged, the gaps in the manuscript are of even greater importance. Six folios have disappeared, and with them five letters – 3, 19, 29, 38 and 41 – have apparently gone missing in their entirety, with a further nine lacking either a beginning or end. These five missing letters are real “known unknowns” in that we know some of their properties: using their position in the manuscript, we can deduce both their length and their date with some accuracy.

It is at this point that we may wish to compare these known gaps against letters that have been preserved elsewhere – an exercise for which *ILE* is indispensable. The implicit starting point of our codicological investigation has been that ms. Lips 3 (2) originally contained all of Lipsius’ letters to Delrio during the period 1591-1593. This is a reasonable assumption given the trivial nature of some of the notes the two men exchanged in Liège. The hypothesis could be easily disproven by the discovery of a letter that does not, either because of its

<sup>31</sup> Burman 1724-1727 (as in n. 11), I, 529 (no. 506).

length or its date, fill one of the lacunae identified. As it happens, five additional letters exist, but they each fills an absence in the manuscript perfectly. Table 2 provides a list of the letters involved and identifies the corresponding gaps in ms. Lips 3 (2).

**Table 2. Letters absent from ms. Lips 3 (2).**

Surviving letters <u>not</u> in ms. Lips 3 (2)	Missing Folio in ms. Lips 3 (2)	Number of Lost or Fragmentary Letter in ms. Lips 3 (2)	Approximate date	Present Location
91 05 16 [DE]	2	3 (lost)	91 05 03-27	Lips. 3 (9), f. 3v (s.n.)
91 05 27 D	2	4 (fragment; last two lines only)		Lips. 3 (9), f. 5r; Cent. Belg. II, 2
[92 00 00] D <sup>4</sup>	11	19 (lost)	92 00 00	Cent. Belg. I, 10
92 06 03 D <sup>1</sup>	14	32 (last three lines)		Lips. 3 (2), f.4v-5r; <sup>32</sup> Cent. Belg. I, 8
92 09 15 D <sup>2</sup>	18	38 (lost)	92 08/09 00	Lips 3 (12), f. 7r

**Commented [k3]:** Recto or verso or both?

**Commented [JM4R3]:** This data comes from ILE. Jeanine hasn't recorded it, but looking at my copy ILE only ever records verso.

**Commented [k5]:** Recto or verso or both?

**Commented [JM6R5]:** R

**Commented [k7]:** Do not underscore words in this table.

**Commented [k8]:** Recto or verso or both?

**Commented [JM9R8]:** Again, not recorded in ILE.

As Table 2 shows, three of the five letters (4, 19 and 32) were published by Lipsius as part of his 1602 *Centuriae ad Belgas*. It could not be clearer that the humanist removed folios 2, 11 and 14 from the manuscript *in order to send them to the printer*. In one case (letter 19) Lipsius also cut the top of the next folio so that the whole document could be sent. In the other two cases (4 and 32), the final two or three lines of the original letter remain on the next page. The print version of 92 06 03 D<sup>1</sup> lacks the last line left behind on the manuscript.<sup>33</sup> These editing practices are consistent with Lipsius' approach to the some of the surviving manuscript letters. The humanist abbreviated two other letters (40 and 44) in ms. Lips 3 (2), adding a revised closing salutation in the margin, so that they would fit on a single page. As

<sup>32</sup> This is the letter Delrio mistakenly copied twice.

<sup>33</sup> Ms. Lips 3 (2) f. 14r. These lines are also to be found on the other manuscript copy of the letter (on 4v-5r) hence the successful identification.



with their published cousins, these letters could have been extracted for publication without difficulty.

Given these considerations, then, what precisely has been lost?

- Letter 3 is missing. It fell victim to the excerpction of letter 4 (on the original f. 2), although a copy has survived elsewhere (see Table 2).
- Letter 29 is absent and has not survived elsewhere. Delrio's numbering gets jumbled at this point in the manuscript, jumping from 28 to 30, both on the current f. 13v. The next folio (f. 14) was cut to enable the printing of letter 32, causing some loss to letter 30 (see above). Letter 31, however, is present and intact on f. 15v; it follows letter 33. While the order in the manuscript – 28, 30, 32, 33, 31 – is clearly wrong, their numbering, as Table 1 shows, appears to be chronological (letters 28 and 30 are undated, but letter 31 predates both 32 and 33). In other instances in ms. Lips 3 (2), the Jesuit adjusted the numbering to rectify similar copying mistakes (see *e.g.* his re-use of the number 7 on f. 4r-v, and the numbering of letters 43 and 44 on f. 18v-19r). He must have done the same here. The only place for letter 29 is on the missing f. 14 in between letters 30 and 32. Its position suggests that it was one of the undated short notes that Lipsius and Delrio exchanged during their time in Liège.
- Letter 38 is lacking. Perhaps it was intended for publication, as f. 18 has been removed. Another copy, however, is extant (see Table 2).
- Finally, letter 41 is absent and has not been preserved elsewhere. It was of some length as two folios (f. 20-21) have gone missing, although these would also have contained the postscript of letter 40 (preserved elsewhere) and the opening of letter 42. Its position in the manuscript dates it to sometime between early October and early December 1592. On 24 November, Lipsius wrote to Petrus Oranus, their mutual Liège friend, that he would shortly write to Delrio.<sup>34</sup> If this refers to Lipsius' letter of 8 December (letter 42) we might place the lost letter earlier, perhaps near the end of October.

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<sup>34</sup> ILE V, 92 11 24 H.

Leiden University's ms. Lips 3 (2) has taught us much about Lipsius' working practices as an editor. The manuscript has uniquely allowed us to ascertain the "damage" he inflicted on his own correspondence. The humanist excerpted letters directly from his surviving manuscript, rather than have them copied. Presumably these were bundled together and sent to the Plantin press for printing. Their absence also suggests that, upon publication, Lipsius did not need them back. While two letters are missing, it is unlikely that they were destroyed because of their contents – one was, in any case, only a note.

What does this analysis tell us about Lipsius and Delrio? I certainly cannot prove that Delrio created this manuscript to *encourage* his friend to publish their correspondence and publicly demonstrate his orthodoxy, but it tallies with my reading of their relationship as it developed during the 1590s. Delrio's annotations certainly demonstrate his awareness of the letters' public potentiality – the comments seem directed more at a publisher than at a friend. Lipsius' own numbering shows that, at some unknown date after 1593, he contemplated publishing a selected series of letters. Even when he moved on from this project, he did not reject the idea of publishing the letters altogether, as an initial glance of the manuscript might lead one to conclude. Taking all these knowns and unknowns together, then, confirms a deeper truth about Lipsius' letters: they were rarely, if ever, completely private – Lipsius wrote knowing that the world would sooner or later be looking in. He was not wrong.