An eloquent enigma: the dramas of Jacobus Cornelius Lumenæus à Marca (c. 1580 - c. 1628) and their contexts

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CHAPTER TWO  
‘EST ET MINORIBUS SMARAGDIS SUA GRATIA’:  
LUMMENAEUS’ DRAMATIC PRINCIPLES

Introduction

The Biblical tragedies of Jacobus Cornelius Lummenaeus à Marca were—and still are—considered static, rhetorical and, to an impressive degree, lacking dramatic action. And justifiably so. But these qualities have simultaneously brought his works awfully close to being brushed aside as insignificant with a mere stroke of the modern scholarly pen. Why? Because his tragic oeuvre has been consistently judged along the lines of a tradition to which it did not belong.

Those few scholars who have actually initiated research into the dramas of Lummenaeus have therefore unavoidably produced ramshackle results. The theatre historian Jacob Worp, for example, assumed that because of their lack of action, Lummenaeus’ plays had probably never been staged. Nonetheless, he classified them as one of the most performed types of theatre in early modern times: school drama.1

More recently James Parente, despite his invaluable pioneering work, was quick to condemn Lummenaeus’ work for its faulty plot structure, lyrical appearance and the preciousness of its tragic idiom, not to mention its supposed contribution to the paganization of Biblical tragedy. At the same time, however, Parente came close to falsifying his own scholarly conclusions when he signalled the link between sixteenth-century French tragedy and the work of Lummenaeus. Unfortunately, he failed to investigate this relationship in any detail.2

French sixteenth-century tragedy—which was labeled static, rhetorical, lyrical and devoid of action—had long been judged from a teleological perspective, and regarded as a mere unfinished precursor to French Classicists’ drama of the seventeenth century. However, as scholars of early modern drama—not only French, but also English and Dutch drama3—eventually came to realize, a drama that stands on the threshold of a new era cannot be judged or understood just by the standards that would be set in that new era, let alone by our own modern standards. In this chapter, I will

1 Worp, Geschiedenis van het drama, 226-227.
3 Smits-Veldt, Samuel Coster, 18ff. See also Potter, ‘Morality Play and “spel van sinne”’, 7.
initiate a similar turn with regard to the current views on Lummenaeus’ poetics, and propose my own answer to the following question: which literary tradition(s) did the author join in with, and why and how did he do so? To this end I will initiate a reassessment of his works.

There are many literary traditions with which the work of Lummenaeus can be compared. From the fifteenth and sixteenth century onwards, Seneca has provided the basis for several of those traditions, many of which have become mutually divergent over the course of time. Perhaps a logical place to start would be the widely famous Latin dramas of Hugo Grotius and Daniel Heinsius, written slightly earlier. But even a casual glance reveals that their work, either because of its structure or tragic subjects, can not solely have served as Lummenaeus’ main model. Any similarities between those works can probably be attributed first and foremost to the reception of the universal literary ancestor of many European tragedians, Seneca.4

Another tradition worth looking at would be vernacular Dutch drama. Sixteenth-century Dutch theatre had for a large part been dominated by rhetoricians’ drama, which was not seldom interspersed with allegorical figures and could possess a dominant moral outlook.5 As we will come to see, only Lummenaeus’ one-of-a-kind, atypical *Dives Epulo* (1613) can be partly linked to this tradition. Classically oriented Dutch drama would find its first truly decisive landmark in the *Geeraerdt van Velsen* (1613) by P.C. Hooft. This work actually initiated Seneca’s reception in Dutch drama, but, as we will come to see, found itself diverging from Lummenaeus’ path. It is therefore not likely that Hooft and his colleagues have served as Lummenaeus’ models of inspiration.

Though Worp classified Lummenaeus’ works as Latin school drama, the latter’s tragedies hardly seem to connect with that particular tradition. When we consider some of its most famous exponents – Guilelmus Gnapheus, Georgius Macropedius or Cornelius Schonaeus – then it is clear that, first of all, their plays, though often based on Biblical subjects, were usually structured and styled as classical Roman comedies. And even though there have been some Biblical tragedies written and performed in the sixteenth century – consider for instance Petrus Philicinus’ *Esther* (1563) – there still remains the fact that, even at first glance, the rhetorical and static

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4 For an overview of Heinsius as a tragedian, cf. Bloemendal, *Auriacus*, which also briefly addresses the relationship between Grotius and Heinsius (pp. 28-29), and provides many references to the most important studies on their work. Grotius’ poetry, including his tragedies, is published and discussed in a series started in 1970 (cf. Grotius, *De dichtwerken van Hugo Grotius / The poetry of Hugo Grotius*). See also Rädle, ‘Hugo Grotius als Dramatiker’, Eyffinger, *Grotius poeta*, 10-15; id., ‘Cui bono, si Agamemnon diserte loquitur?’ and Parente, *Religious drama*, passim (esp. pp. 111ff.).

5 Cf. for instance Hummelen, *De sinnekens in het rederijkersdrama*; Fleurkens, *Stichtelijke lust*.
qualities of most of Lummenaeus’ tragedies hardly, if at all, match the fairly explicit, educational goals pursued by school drama.6

Similarly, the characteristics of the increasingly popular Jesuit drama, performed in large numbers at their colleges throughout Europe, show a clear demarcation from Lummenaeus’ oeuvre. Even though the wide-spread work of the Jesuit Fathers will have contributed to Lummenaeus’ familiarity with Latin drama – even his brother, the talented orator and Jesuit Father Ludovicus à Marca, had written at least one play, a Mauritius7 –, and a closer investigation of the relationship between their dramas and Lummenaeus’ tragedies will yield numerous similarities,8 even a casual glance reveals that it does not constitute his main literary model. In general – though there are of course many variations in the huge corpus known today –, Jesuit drama is marked by an ever increasing emphasis on spectacle rather than words, on an often truly huge number of actors,9 and by a high degree of explicitly moral instruction.10

Although the traditions I just described each provide a valuable opportunity to determine and discuss the differences between these types of drama,11 this chapter, as stated above, rather aims at determining the main model of Lummenaeus’ dramatic debt. In this respect, there are several good reasons why we should here focus first and foremost on the tradition of French humanist tragedy. The most important clue is in fact provided by Lummenaeus himself. In his published works, he only mentions two recent

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6 For a concise overview of Latin school drama in The Netherlands, see Bloemendal, Spiegel van het dagelijks leven, passim; De Vroomen, Toneel op school, ch. 1.
7 Ludovicus’ Mauritius – like most Jesuit plays – was probably never printed, but – as is mentioned in his eulogy (cf. appendix three) it was apparently received with great applause and it became a celebrated play in both Jesuit Provinces.
8 Also with regard to their function in the Counter-Reformist offensive, cf. below, pp. 215-216.
9 McCabe (An Introduction to the Jesuit Theater, 32) lists some exceptional performances in Munich, involving some 700 to 1000 actors. The periochae (summaries) of Jesuit drama published by Szarota (Das Jesuitendrama im deutschen Sprachgebiet) give an excellent impression of the high number of actors usually involved.
10 For an extensive introduction to, and up-to-date bibliography of Jesuit drama in the Southern Netherlands, see Proot, Het schooltoneel van de jezuïeten, as well as the older, but still very useful Van den Boogerd, Het jezuïetendrama in de Nederlanden. I would like to especially point out the major studies on German Jesuit drama by Elida Maria Szarota (esp. the periochae-editions in the four volumes of Das Jesuitendrama im deutschen Sprachgebiet), and by Jean-Marie Valentin (e.g. Le théâtre des jésuites). McCabe also provides a good introduction to (English) Jesuit drama (An Introduction to the Jesuit Theater, esp. 11-68), as well as Wimmer (Jesuitentheater: Didaktik und Fest, esp. 12-39). De Vroomen, Toneel op school, also discusses the history and principles of Jesuit drama (ch. 2). For Jesuit drama as spectacle, see also below, p. 217.
dramatists, namely (the semi-French) George Buchanan and Robert Garnier, thus indicating that he at the very least knew of those authors and their works. Secondly, there clearly was frequent contact between the humanist authors of Ghent and the Parisian Pléiade, which is relevant even though Lummenaeus may not have been to Paris himself before he started writing tragedies (he did so thereafter, in any case). Thirdly, it has been pointed out that there was a regular, cultural border traffic between the Netherlands and (northern) France, and an important centre of education and book printing like Douai (in present-day France), was infinitely more oriented towards the south than the north. Fourthly, this border traffic specifically entailed late sixteenth, early seventeenth-century performances of plays by for instance Robert Garnier (a.o. Les Juifves), from which we can not only deduce that Lummenaeus himself might have had the opportunity to be present at one of those performances, but also the plain and simple fact that those static and highly rhetorical plays – as they were qualified – were actually publicly performed and enjoyed by many. But most importantly, the famous tragedies by authors like George Buchanan, Jean de La Taille and Robert Garnier not only treated the same Biblical subjects as Lummenaeus’ plays, but also employed fairly similar dramatic techniques.

Therefore, this chapter will focus primarily on French humanist tragedy and its relationship to Lummenaeus’ work, for it is there that the clearest answers to our questions can be found. In the following, I will first

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12 The reference to Buchanan (in the 1608 Iephte) will be discussed in detail in chapter four. Lummenaeus refers to Robert Garnier in a poem honouring – rather exaggeratedly, it seems! – the Sedecias tragedy written by his patron, Hermannus à Burgundia (de Bourgogne), on the same subject as his own Carcer Babylonius of 1610 (‘In Sedeciam Tragoediam, ab Hermanno à Burgundia Latinitate donatam’: Garnerum antevenis numeris et Apolline dextro, / et tua Musa cavo grandius ore tonat (ll. 11-12). Bourgogne’s tragedy seems not have survived, unfortunately. Lummenaeus’ poem was reprinted in the Opera omnia (pp. 231-232). For Hermann de Bourgogne, baron (from 1614: count) de Fallais, poet in Latin and French (ca. 1570 - 1626), see also Foppens, Bibliotheca Belgica, I, 473, as well as Biographie Nationale, II, 847-848 (s.v. Bourgogne (Hermann de)); Helbig, ‘Hermann de Bourgogne, Comte de Fallais’; Theux de Montjardin, Bibliographie Liégeoise, 81. Copies of his Epica (Liège: J. Ouwerx, 1624) are rare, but at least two have been preserved, in the libraries of Liège and Antwerp (Erfgoedbibliotheek Hendrik Conscience). The Antwerp library also holds a copy of his Miscellanea (Liège: J. Ouwerx, 1624).

13 Porteman and Smits-Veldt, Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen, 133.

14 Lavéant, Théâtre et culture dramatique. For a brief overview of the influence exerted by the Universities of Louvain and Douai in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, cf. Roegiers, ‘De universiteiten in de Zuidelijke Nederlanden’.

15 Lebègue, La tragédie française, 71; 99-109. For a recent, extensive overview of theatrical performances in the northern parts of France and the Southern Netherlands in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, cf. Lavéant, Théâtre et culture dramatique, 409ff. (‘Répertoire des pièces jouées dans les villes francophones des Pays-Bas méridionaux’). Robert Garnier’s tragedies were even published in Antwerp in 1592 (Porteman and Smits-Veldt, Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen, 279).
discuss the sixteenth-century tradition of French humanist drama. In doing so, I will focus primarily on matters related to style, structure and poetics, rather than on matters of content and subject. Thus, the reasoned principles behind this tradition, as well as its goals and achievements will become clear, so that next a comparison with the tragedies of Lumnænæus can be initiated. With French humanist tragedy as our repoussoir, I will then be able to shed more light on Lumnænæus’ position in the dramatic field and the apparent choices he made in actually advancing from these models. It will prove useful to briefly look as well at some more practical matters related to the performability of French drama, which I have already touched upon by mentioning the performances of Garnier’s tragedies. From there, some light may be shed on the somewhat clouded circumstances surrounding the function and practicality of Lumnænæus’ drama. After having discussed Lumnænæus’ reception of French tragedy, I will nonetheless turn briefly to the evolving tradition of Dutch vernacular drama, for which his earliest drama, the *Dives Epulo*, provides an opportunity. Departing from the stylistic differences within the corpus of Lumnænæus, as well as from the results of the comparison with French drama, this stand-alone tragedy in Lumnænæus’ tragic oeuvre will allow us to highlight the divergent literary paths chosen by our Ghent Benedictine and Dutch vernacular poets. To conclude, I will touch upon the final chord of any investigation into a literary tradition: what, if anything, constituted the contemporary literary reception of the Benedictine’s work?

**Characteristics of French humanist tragedy**

French humanist tragedy finds its first representatives in the works of the Protestant author Théodore de Bèze (*Abraham Sacrifiant*) and Étienne Jodelle (*Cléopâtre Captive*) in the early 1550s. While the former would still find himself primarily in the tradition of the medieval mystères, Jodelle’s *Cléopâtre*, performed in Paris in 1552, was the first tragedy to be firmly established on a classical basis. In the following years, the emerging humanist dramatic

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16 Thus heeding, to a certain extent, Jan Konst’s suggestion in his review of Jan Bloemendal’s dissertation. Cf. above, p. 91nt11.
17 Scholars apparently seem to use the terms French sixteenth-century tragedy, French humanist tragedy and French Renaissance tragedy rather indiscriminately for denoting the same corpus of texts. Compare for instance the titles of the studies by Charpentier, Jondorf, Griffiths or Forsyth.
18 As a disciple of George Buchanan, De Bèze would come to be considered inferior to his master. In any case, his *Abraham sacrifiant* actually marked a return to the dramatic poetics of the Middle Ages. Cf. Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 54; Lefèvre, *Senecas Tragödien*, passim; Wanke, *Die französische Literatur*, 174; Lazard, *Le théâtre en France*, 99; Charpentier, *Pour une lecture*, 11-12. Charpentier provides a concise outline of French humanist tragedy. Detailed bibliographies of French sixteenth-century tragedy have been
tradition in France produced translations of Latin or Italian plays; plays with a subject from classical antiquity; and Biblical dramas.\(^{19}\) From the start, the influence of Seneca on French drama was profound, mostly because contemporary writers in France detected a suitable topicality in the Roman’s tragedies, and because the audience in those days of political uncertainty and bloody wars – not only in the region of present-day France, but also the Netherlands and Germany – readily received the ‘spectacles macabres’ and ‘émotions fortes’.\(^{20}\) Still, French tragedy from up to the early seventeenth century – i.e. before the beginning of the era of French classicism – has often been treated by scholars more as a literary curiosity than as a theatrical document, including the works of its finest exponents: Étienne Jodelle, Jean de La Taille, Robert Garnier and Antoine de Montchrestien.\(^{21}\)

French humanist tragedy has been fairly accurately characterized as a highly rhetoric and static theatre.\(^{22}\) In this respect, its connection to the tragedies of Seneca is not surprising. Much has been written about the dramatic corpus attributed to the Roman Lucius Annaeus Seneca (c. 1 - 65 A.D.) and his reception in early modern drama.\(^{23}\) The work of Seneca – both his poetry and prose – became increasingly popular in France and the Southern Netherlands in the second half of the sixteenth century under influence either of works providing an edition of his tragedies (e.g. Martin Delrio’s \textit{Syntagma tragoediae Latinae} (1593)) or of works themselves heavily inspired by the philosophical system distilled from Seneca’s prose works and plays (e.g. Justus Lipsius’ \textit{De constantia} (1584)). The emerging tradition on Latin schools and colleges to read and perform not only Seneca but also plays based on his model, the more-widespread knowledge of Latin as compared to Greek, and Seneca’s image as an almost Christian-like moralist,

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\(^{19}\) Forsyth, \textit{Jean de la Taille}, XXIV-XXV.  
\(^{20}\) Lebègue, \textit{Études sur le théâtre français} I, 181.  
\(^{21}\) Vince, \textit{Renaissance Theatre}, 140.  
\(^{22}\) Cf. for instance the speaking title of Gillian Jondorf’s book, \textit{French Renaissance Tragedy: the Dramatic Word}, or of Emmanuel Buron’s article, ‘La Renaissance de la tragédie ou le spectacle de la parole’.  
\(^{23}\) Jan Bloemendal’s dissertation on Daniel Heinsius’ \textit{Auriacus sive Libertas saucia} (1602) provides a comprehensive overview of Seneca’s tragic style and his influence on early modern Latin drama (Bloemendal, \textit{Auriacus}, ch. 3, esp. pp. 61-64), as well as references to many major works on the subject. A proper introduction to the influence of Seneca on the various dramatic literatures in Europe can be found in Lefèvre, \textit{Der Einfluss Senecas}. Needless to say, many a dramatist’s work has been diligently combed through for its debt to Seneca, e.g. Robert Garnier’s (cf. Mouflard, \textit{Robert Garnier: Les sources}). Where applicable, I will refer to relevant publications.
favoured the Roman as the one example of classical theatre to be imitated. Many of the basic structural, as well as thematic aspects of French humanist drama that will be discussed below originally sprang from the example set by the dramas of Seneca.

Sometimes preceded by a prologue, French humanist tragedy was generally constructed as a five-act play, regularly featuring long monologues and extensive lyrical choruses. Its rhetorical and static appearance had lead Richard Griffiths to design his theory of ‘set pieces’, stylized forms serving as a framework for the display of style and language. Initially working with the dramas of Antoine de Montchrestien, Griffiths also showed that a play like Robert Garnier’s *Les Juifves* (1583) was equally composed of such ‘set pieces’. In the eyes of a modern reader, such poetics could easily appear somewhat dramatically inadequate, and thus its characteristics were, already from the era of seventeenth-century French Classicism onwards, likely to receive rather negative criticism, as we will come to see. The supposed dramatic ‘weaknesses’ ascribed to their primary model, the tragedies of Seneca, were to an even larger extent present in French humanist tragedy, so the critics judged. The most frequent criticisms – which are, in fact, the characteristics that are in need of proper interpretation – directed against French Renaissance tragedy until the second half of the twentieth century have been pointedly summed up by Thomas Zamparelli as ‘little or no action, lack of character development, faulty plot structure, overemphasis on oratory or mournful lyricism at the expense of real dramatic conflict, interminable tirades, a moralizing tone, and an appreciable thematic or ideological paucity that is due to the mouthing of commonplaces, maxims, and *sententiae* drawn from classical authors. (...) In short, narrative recapitulation, more often than not, is substituted for real action.’

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25 Concise discussions of the structural characteristics of French humanist tragedy are provided by Charpentier, *Pour une lecture*, 18-21 and Mazouer, *La tragédie française*, 206-207. More detailed studies, like that of Richard Griffiths (*The Dramatic Technique*), will be discussed and/or referred to below.

26 Griffiths, *The Dramatic Technique*, 106ff.


28 Even scholars who were admittedly aware of their modern perspective were sometimes unable to judge sixteenth-century French tragedy on its own merits. For example, Lebègue (*La tragédie française*, 44) would not refrain from chosing such a point of departure: ‘[Garnier] a écrit des pièces lugubres divisées en cinq actes, pourvues de chœurs, et où les monologues, les lamentations, la rhétorique tiennent une place que nous jugeons excessive’ (my italics, RG).

lead Zamparelli to the correct observation that French humanist tragedy offered a very particular type of esthetic experience. In French humanist tragedy, it is not the dramatic facts that are explored on stage, but rather their narration, and ultimately their effects on the main characters. Thus, it is not a theatre of action in the modern sense, but rather a theatre of words, a theatre of rhetorical action, ‘où dire n’est pas faire.’ In the words of Gustave Lanson: ‘La tragédie humaniste est un drame pathétique qui tire l’émotion non de la vue directe du fait tragique, mais de la plainte de victimes.’ However, as we will come to see, ‘tirer l’émotion’ was not a goal in itself, but rather a means to an end.

The French tragedies of the Renaissance derive their structure and lofty style primarily from Seneca’s tragic model, with a touch of Horace’s poetical precepts: the tragedians produced plays starting \textit{in medias res}, with the characteristic five-act structure separated by chorus songs, and a solemn diction that suited the dire reversal of fortune represented in their plays. The dramatists followed these models to such an extent, that their works have often been described as ‘une élégie dramatique et théâtrale’, or a ‘poème élogiaque dialogue’, as ‘mettre en scène une longue déploration’. The atmosphere of French humanist drama was \textit{sententieux}: one need only refer to the numbers produced by Charpentier, showing the relative proportion of sententious verses in the dramas of De Montchrestien to average about 25-30%.

The presentation of characters exhibited a static quality as well. There is generally no tragically progressive development visible or noticeable in the

\begin{footnotes}
30 Unfortunately, Zamparelli adds that this particular type of esthetic experience was ‘not necessarily a theatrical one’ (\textit{The Theater of Claude Billard}, 37), thus aligning himself with the earlier, erroneous approach to French humanist tragedy. This is especially ironic, since Claude Billard was one of the few dramatists to explicitly elaborate upon the functionality of long monologues. Cf. below, nt60.

31 ‘The Renaissance tragedian accepted the event as inevitable, and sought to show the effects of it upon his characters’ (Griffiths, \textit{The Dramatic Technique}, 27; 75).

32 Mazouer, \textit{Le théâtre français de la renaissance}, 206. Cf. also Forsyth, \textit{Jean de la Taille}, XXVI. Charlton, \textit{The Senecan Tradition}, 120: ‘The French Senecans lack theatrical intentions of almost every description’, and (p. 122): ‘[They] are substantially without dramatic sense.’ Griffiths states that the dramatists’ aim was the depiction of the effects of the tragic events, rather than its causes. But, he rightly argues, ‘dramatic tension in the modern sense was not the aim of Seneca; nor was it the aim of his imitators, the Renaissance dramatists’ (\textit{The Dramatic Technique}, 70-73).


34 Lazard, \textit{Le théâtre en France}, 96; Mazouer, \textit{Le théâtre français de la renaissance}, 207.

35 Horace, \textit{Ars Poetica}, 147-149, where the term is coined for describing the ideal epic.

36 Faguet, \textit{La tragédie Française}, 236.

37 West, \textit{Jean de La Taille}, 13-14.


39 Charpentier, \textit{Pour une lecture}, 55.
\end{footnotes}
presentation of the characters. Rather, this development is replaced by the representation of one emotional state or a specific reaction to the tragic events, which the sixteenth-century dramatists deemed more important for moral instruction than a character’s inner progression. 40 The Renaissance tragedian was not concerned with the internal struggle of characters, nor was he interested in exploring the depths of psychological motivation. Rather, he attempted to portray characters under the stress of a particular mood. 41 Towards the seventeenth century, with authors like Jean de La Taille and Robert Garnier, this initially somewhat rough representation of characters gradually seemed to become somewhat more fine-tuned. 42

Such qualities undeniably produced a ton hautain. This, it has been argued, contributed to an aristocratic literary reception of those works and was testimony to primarily a high level of literary ambition, even to the extent of contempt for a vulgar style. 43 But it simultaneously created ample opportunity to further the development of a literary French vernacular that could eventually rival the classical language of the ancients through the imitation of such a noble literary genre. 44

**Form and function in French humanist tragedy**

In the first half of the seventeenth century, French dramaturgy gradually developed into the new classicists’ ideal of tragedy. Dramatic action would become livelier and more complex. The number and length of monologues decreased, and the chorus disappeared almost completely. The stock characters derived from Seneca’s tragedies were no longer staged, but were instead replaced by characters with a more natural and varied appearance. 45 These developments marked the beginning of an era of retrospect criticism with regard to sixteenth-century tragedy. Some early scholars claimed that the apex of the humanist tradition, Garnier’s *Les Juifs*, merely marked a transitional phase in the development of French humanist tragedy into the drama of French Classicism of the seventeenth century. Garnier’s plays, but also the popular works of De Montchrestien, however, had still preserved many of the humanist principles: a main moral and religious idea (divine punishment), a simple structure of the tragic narrative and a well-placed but

40 Griffiths, *The Dramatic Technique*, 75.
44 Such at least was the goal set forth in Joachim du Bellay’s *La Défense et illustration de la langue française*, II.4 (1549), as mentioned by Mazouer, *Le théâtre français de la renaissance*, 196.
slow-moving dramatic action, interspersed with declamations, lamentations and chorus song. 46

But such teleological views on the progression of French dramatic principles were convincingly dismissed by later scholars like Elliot Forsyth, Richard Griffiths, Donald Stone, Gillian Jondorf, and others. While it is clear that there are elements in sixteenth-century tragedy that would later recur in a more modern garment in French Classicists’ drama, this does not mean that Garnier and the likes were mere precursors to what was to come in the seventeenth century, and by which new standards also the tragedies of the previous age should be (negatively) judged. In the words of Stone: “To repeat continually that sixteenth-century tragedy was elegiac or devoid of psychology will not tell us why this is so and I see no reason to believe a search for the why is a less necessary pursuit.” 47 Indeed, ‘French sixteenth-century writers of tragedy repeatedly demonstrate that the genre was associated with considerations quite unrelated to action, characterization or bienséances.’ 48 However, while the question of ‘why’, as addressed by later scholars, will certainly be important also for understanding Lummenaeus’ dramatic concept, it should be stressed that early scholars like Raymond Lebègue and Kosta Loukovitch have done much important work also with regard to matters concerning style and structure of French humanist drama. Their invaluable work made possible the essential readings that can presently serve as our repoussoir in determining Lummenaeus’ literary debt to French authors.

When retracing the steps of French humanist drama, it soon becomes clear that its rhetorical character stemmed primarily from the Senecan imitation the authors tried to achieve. The Roman’s dramas, interspersed with monologues and choruses, had been characterised by a highly rhetorical mode, perhaps under influence of his father’s interest in oratory. 49 Seneca had preferred a fairly static drama, in which there was ample room for a character to eloquently parade strong emotions. Connected with this Senecan imitation was the importance of rhetoric in the sixteenth-century educational system. The increasing emphasis on dramatic monologues, according to Griffiths, stemmed from the rhetorical exercise of the prosopopoeia (or impersonation), in which students had to imagine themselves completely inside a character, in order to envision and reproduce what he or

46 Loukovitch, La tragédie religieuse, 60.
47 Stone, French Humanist Tragedy, 3.
48 Stone, French Humanist Tragedy, 15.
49 Bloemendal, Auriacus, 61. In the early modern period, ten plays were customarily ascribed to Lucius Annaeus Seneca; two of those (Hercules Oetaeus and, especially, Octavia) are today usually considered pseudo-Senecan.
she might have said under given circumstances. The influence of the art of rhetoric in sixteenth-century education is also strongly underlined by Donald Stone. Madeleine Doran’s striking observation with respect to English dramatists of the sixteenth century, also holds true for their French colleagues: “They are apt to let the story, perhaps a good one in narrative form, take care of itself, and put their principal attention on writing speeches. Such an emphasis is what their training in rhetoric would have prepared them for.” It is interesting to note that in France there were among the tragedians many lawyers: their profession of course required a thorough training in rhetoric. A Renaissance audience, so Gillian Jondorf argues, would in any case be more comfortable with listening to long speeches, which might today seem dramatically awkward and impractical. Needless to say, the art of preaching ideally required a thorough familiarity with rhetoric as well, if it was to be effective. Is it a coincidence, that Lumenaeus’ oeuvre consisted mainly of tragedies, orationes and homiliae? On this point I will elaborate later.

But at the other end of the spectrum, Seneca also provided the stylistic tool of stichomythia that throughout the sixteenth century provided the humanists with equal pleasure. Combined with the likewise Senecan practice of lavishly employing sententiae or aphorisms, it proved to be a compulsory element of early modern theatre in general – with some exceptions, as we will come to see.

With such sententious stichomythia, we have arrived at the sixteenth-century dramatists’ preference for moral instruction, for which the Senecan model provided a suitable platform as well. For not only did the dramatists gratefully make use of their model’s structural characteristics; in Seneca – even though his Stoic views were not always compatible with a Christian outlook on affairs – the humanists found suitable (topical) themes illustrating the dire consequences of unrestricted passions such as forbidden love and jealousy, or of tyrannical hubris and the vices of kings. They not only found praise for Virgil’s fortunatus agricola, Ovid’s bene qui latuit bene vixit, Horace’s beatus ille qui procul negotiis, and the aurea mediocritas, but Seneca also provided the thematic aspects in which French humanists were interested: political discussions on severity, clemency, and tyranny, a chorus lamenting...

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50 Griffiths, The Dramatic Technique, 76-81. This emphasis on poetics and rhetoric does in itself not necessarily mean that this type of drama was not meant to be performed, as we have already seen, and will come to see in more detail.
51 Stone, French Humanist Tragedy, 29ff.
52 Doran, Endeavors of Art, 61-62, quoted by Stone, French Humanist Tragedy, 84.
54 Jondorf, French Renaissance Tragedy, 142.
55 Smits-Veldt, Samuel Coster, 64-69; Jondorf, French Renaissance Tragedy, 143ff; Mazouer, Le théâtre français de la renaissance, 209; Griffiths, The Dramatic Technique, passim (esp. 106-145).
the changeability and inconstancy of fortune, etc.\textsuperscript{56} The chorus – as a dramatic device renounced by the seventeenth-century successors of the French humanists – was a useful means for communicating ideas and moral values, and was used to direct the sympathy and judgment of reader or spectator.\textsuperscript{57} The moral use the dramatists could set their dramas – both Biblical and historical –, was indeed heartily welcomed in sixteenth-century France. Seneca’s dramatic model was already geared towards moral instruction, and on this basis the French dramatists continued to build their tragic ideal.\textsuperscript{58}

The humanists’ use of the Senecan model, however, was not a mere imitation. A case in point is the \textit{expositio}. As we learn from Griffiths, classical models provided Renaissance authors with five main methods of exposition, of which the monologues by one of the characters both in, as well as outside the action of the play, gradually became the most important ones.\textsuperscript{59} As an expositional technique, the monologue was a device commonly used by Seneca. French vernacular tragedy did not fail to copy this characteristic and we find early examples in Etienne Jodelle’s \textit{Cléopâtre Captive} (perf. 1552), with the ghost of Antony producing a rather lengthy monologue of 106 verses, and in André de Rivaudeau’s \textit{Aman} (publ. 1566), in which the character Mardochee pronounces an even lengthier monologue of over 225 verses. Towards the seventeenth century, a technique was developed, most notably by De Montchrestien, in which those opening monologues were used to inform the audience of virtually nothing. This signalled a tendency towards indifference with respect to the original aim of the exposition – especially since strict adherence to the unity of time would ever more require this exposition to be as complete as possible. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, the old techniques were increasingly employed for a rhetorical purpose only. The author, so it seems, relied heavily on the erudition of his audience, presuming it to already know the story.\textsuperscript{60} The rhetorical tools of

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{56} Lebègue, \textit{Tragédie religieuse}, 470-473; id., \textit{Études}, 188-189.
\item\textsuperscript{57} Jondorf, \textit{French Renaissance Tragedy}, 129.
\item\textsuperscript{58} On the level of structure and stylistics Seneca proved to be not the only model. Buchanan, for example, imitated the rhetoric of Seneca, but adopted the structure of Greek tragedy. But only few followed his example. Cf. Lebègue, \textit{Études}, 182; id., \textit{Tragédie religieuse}, 464-467; Loukovitch, \textit{La tragédie religieuse}, 51-54; 86.
\item\textsuperscript{59} Griffiths, \textit{The Dramatic Technique}, 62-64. The other methods were: (i) the use of the chorus by itself; (ii) a dialogue; (iii) a scene containing one of the protagonists and the chorus.
\item\textsuperscript{60} In the early seventeenth century, an author like Claude Billard – perhaps aware of a shifting taste in dramatic preferences – apparently felt the need to justify his taste for extremely lengthy monologues. As he stated in the preface to the 1610 edition, they were so for a reason: ‘Ils sont la naïve représentation de nos pensées, nos espérances et nos desseins, qui bien souvent nous entretiennent plus longtemps qu’une simple tirade de cent ou deux cents vers’. Claude Billard (\textit{Tragédies françaises}, 1610, ‘au lecteur’), quoted by Mazouer, \textit{Le théâtre français de la renaissance}, 203.
\end{itemize}
Senecan tragedy in a way came close to almost serving as goals in themselves. On this feature I will return below.

Already in the first half of the sixteenth century, the concept of tragedy in France – especially its potential for moral instruction – shows remarkable similarities to the views that would later become more widespread through the work of scholars like Julius Caesar Scaliger, whose *Poetics* were first published posthumously in 1561. Half a century earlier, in 1502, the celebrated humanist Jodocus Badius Ascensius (1462-1535) – who was born in Flanders, went to school in Ghent and became a bookprinter in Paris 61 – wrote a general essay on poetic theory in the introduction to his popular edition of the comedies of Terence:

‘Tragedy is some metrical literary play in which mainly the fragility of human affairs is shown. For kings and princes, who initially consider themselves truly blessed and pre-eminently fortunate, at the end of tragedies are brought into extreme misery. They move heaven and earth with their disdaining cries, and assail everything both in heaven and on earth.’62

Some forty years later, a similar view was expressed by Guillaume Bochetel, in the preface to his translation of Euripides’ *Hecuba* (1544):

‘Tragedies are first and foremost designed to show the uncertainty and fitful instability of worldly affairs to kings and lords, so they put their faith only in virtue.’63

French Calvinist dramatists, like Théodore de Bèze and Louis Des Masures, proclaimed that Biblical theatre should instruct, not please. They did not seek after personal glory, but after the education of their audience, adopting a simpler language, as it was used in preaching. They used the choruses not to expound moral *sententiae* adopted from pagan antiquity, but to preach

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63 ‘Tragedies [furent] premierement inventees pour remontrer aux roys et grands seigneurs l’incertitude et lubrique instabilité des choses temporelles, afin qu’ils n’ayent de confiance qu’en la seule vertu.’ Bochetel, trad. d’*Hecuba* (1544), dédicace, in Lawton, quoted by Forsyth (as nt62).
Christian truths. In contrast, before 1580 their Catholic colleagues had their tragedies performed mainly in colleges. So even while Protestant Biblical tragedy did not entirely dominate the scene, it was in any case still the form of religious tragedy that was most visible publicly. This, however, changed between 1580 and 1618, when Catholic activity expanded on all terrains. With Robert Garnier’s *Les Juifs* (1583), a ‘coup de maître’, Catholic Biblical theatre rose from its ranks, while the Protestant version was not only past its prime, but had in fact even been condemned by the Synod of Figeac in 1579. From the 1590s into the early seventeenth century, the Catholic tragedians also started producing martyr dramas portraying the lives of saints, in reaction to the Protestants, who had solely based their plays on the Bible and were opposed to the veneration of saints. But saints’ lives were actually excluded as tragic subjects, since the protagonists had to be neither entirely good or bad, as Jean de La Taille – following the Aristotelian precepts – had put it: ‘That a tragedy is not about lords who are thoroughly bad, and who deserve to be punished for their horrible crimes, and, similarly, not about entirely good, decent or holy people.’ Still, in fact, only few French dramatists were at all interested in the theoretical aspects of drama, but rather followed the models available. Loukovitch nonetheless urges not to forget that certain tragedians, both Catholic and Protestant, were interested more in the literary aspects of drama than in their own religious preoccupations.

In his brief treatise *De l’Art de la tragédie* (1572, as a preface to *Saül le furieux*), Jean de La Taille had made the principles of tragedy more explicit, by insisting that ‘the true and only intention of a tragedy is to move, and to

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64 Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 41.
65 Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 45.
66 Lazard, *Le théâtre en France*, 137. From the first half of the seventeenth century, more than twenty Catholic Biblical tragedies are known, from De Montchrestien’s *David and Aman* (1601) to Du Ryer’s *Saül* (1642). Cf. Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 46.
68 ‘Que le subiect aussi ne soit de Seigneurs extremement meschants, et que pour leurs crimes horribles, ils meritassent punition, n’aussi par mesme raison de ceux qui sont du tout bons, gents de bien et de saïncte vie.’ De La Taille, *De l’art de la tragédie*, 3 (Forsyth, *Jean de la Taille*, 4).
69 Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 30-32; Lebègue, *Tragédie religieuse*, 464; Buron, *Lectures de Robert Garnier*, 13-14. For example, the three Aristotelian unities of action, time and place, were hardly considered by the dramatists. Especially the unity of place finds itself often neglected. Cf. Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 86.
70 Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 48. If precisely these authors proved to be Lummeneaus’ prime model, small wonder, then, that Parente (*The Paganization of Biblical Tragedy*) claims that the Ghent tragedian subordinates religious doctrine to literary concepts. Still, however, as I attempt to show elsewhere in this thesis, this subordination is not necessarily predominant; it plays a role in a larger field of literary play and functionality (cf. also pp. 116ff.; and the conclusion to this thesis).
stimulate the affections of each and everyone to an exceptional degree’.\(^{71}\) Where previously particular attention had been paid to the formal characteristics of classical theatre, with treatises like De La Taille’s also the spiritual and esthetical function came somewhat into focus.\(^{72}\) In his view, tragedy could be conceived of as a school, providing lessons in morality.\(^{73}\) Needless to say, moral instruction proved not only to be an essential part of the dramatic genre, but it was a vital element of virtually all literature produced in those days.\(^{74}\) Not often, however, did French humanists make their moral purpose explicit. But this did not keep them from going even further than their moralizing Roman model, Seneca: in addition to the extreme example set by De Montchrestien, noted above, Garnier’s *Les Juifves* too offers significantly more ‘vers didactiques’ or *sententiae* than in Seneca’s tragedies, about one out of every eight to ten verses.\(^{75}\)

But the didactic purpose of humanist drama was not only demonstrated through the extensive use of *sententiae*. A play’s moral development and tragic ending could also indicate such a quality. Seneca, in their view, had set forth his moral intentions by some of his tragedies’ endings, e.g. the remorse of Hercules, or Medea’s vision of approaching Furies. Garnier, too, employed a similar technique, with the prediction of Nabuchodonosor’s future punishment by God.\(^{76}\) Oddly enough, Griffiths concluded that ‘the Biblical tragedy of the Renaissance cannot be said to have any religious or moral message, except in the case of those plays which were created as vehicles for religious polemic.’\(^{77}\) Initially, he even considered *sententiae* not to provide any moral weight to the plot and tragic fate, for they were regarded above all as ornament, their role a purely structural one, having relevance to form rather than content. But Griffiths later admitted that he had been too exclusive in these matters.\(^{78}\)

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\(^{71}\) ‘La vraye et seule intention d’une tragédie est d’esmouvoir et de poindre merveilleusement les affections d’un chascun’. De La Taille, *De l’art de la tragédie*, 2\(^{\text{e}}\) (Forsyth, *Jean de la Taille*, 6). In fact, it appears that early dramatists like Rivaudeau and De La Taille knew of, but had not read and/or applied Scaliger’s *Poetices libri septem* (1561). Some scholars doubt that Scaliger’s influence as a theorist was very great. Cf. Stone, *French Humanist Tragedy*, 11-12; Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 30-32.

\(^{72}\) West (ed.), *De l’art de la tragédie*, 4.

\(^{73}\) Mazouer, *Le théâtre français de la renaissance*, 204.

\(^{74}\) Zamparelli, *The Theater of Claude Billard*, 35.

\(^{75}\) Lebègue, *La tragédie française*, 47-48; id., *Études*, 187; Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 62. For the reader’s convenience, these ‘vers didactiques’ were usually put between quotation marks. Lumneneus hardly ever used *sententiae* to make a play’s moral aims explicit, as will become clear in this thesis. Cf. especially chapter three and the conclusion to this thesis.

\(^{76}\) Lebègue, *Études*, 186.

\(^{77}\) Griffiths, *The Dramatic Technique*, 30.

In view of Lumenenaes’ complex relationship to both French renaissance tragedy and, as we will yet come to see, early Dutch rhetorian’s drama, it is worth noting that this literary strategy of poetical moralising in Renaissance drama also shows signs of a direct continuation of the medieval French moralité, whose black-and-white description of the perpetual battle between good and evil remained popular well into the sixteenth century. Donald Stone reiterates the influence exerted by medieval drama on the drama of the French Renaissance. Indeed, the earliest French humanist dramas by De Bèze and Louis Des Masures attempted to combine the tradition of the medieval mystery plays and classical tragedy. Gradually, however, the medieval element lost its influence in the tragedies forged in the elite milieu of men of letters.

This type of moral instruction had apparently spilled over into the humanist tradition, and was as such even noted by Scaliger in 1561 to be the most important aspect of tragedy: tragedy should provide the ideal combination of delectare, movere and docere. While Garnier would take this dramatic development to its culmination, Jean de La Taille introduced a theatre that was aimed more at dramatic action than that of his predecessors, whose tragedies were static, full of debate, lamentations and narrative, where characters rather seemed to function as a means of supporting the word than as the true subjects of dramatic action. Meanwhile, Garnier would still promote a form of tragedy which kept a slow pace, with an exposition lasting for two acts, but working towards an emotionally effective fifth act. His style would be imitated by many during the next half a century or so, but after 1630 his dramatic concepts, as well as his language, had rapidly become old-fashioned, even though he would still exercise a considerable influence on Dutch dramaturges, Joost van den Vondel in particular.

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85 Lebègue, *La tragédie française*, 64-65. Cf. also Smit, *Van Pascha tot Noah*, I, pp. 89-93. Van Leeuwen (‘De Franse inspiratiebronnen van Joost van den Vondel’) provides a concise overview of the influence of French Renaissance and Classicist playwrights on Vondel, with many references. He especially notes the importance of French drama as Vondel’s transit model. Other (early) Dutch playwrights were probably to a lesser extent influenced by French drama, though P.C. Hooft, in his younger years, seems to have known Garnier’s tragedies. Cf. Smits-Veldt, *Het Nederlandsche Renaissancetoneel*, 40. Guilliaume van Nieuwelandt, from Antwerp, would forge his *Jeruzalemse Verwoesting* (1635) mainly as an imitation, often even a translation of Garnier’s *Les Juifs*. 
From French humanist tragedy to Lummenaeus

Scholars of early modern drama, be it French, English, or Dutch, have gradually been able to give a more reasoned analysis of sixteenth-century drama and its (contextual) functions, on its own merits rather than from a modern or seventeenth-century point of view. From these scholarly progressions we may still learn that in order to gain a good understanding of the workings of Lummenaeus’ drama, we need to gain an insight in which tradition it stands, in which literary contexts it functions. This entails not so much viewing this tradition from a teleological perspective. As I stated in the introduction to this chapter, a drama that stands on the threshold of a new era cannot be judged or understood just by the new standards that would be set in that new era, which the discussion regarding French humanist tragedy has made clear.

It is clear that French humanist tragedy was regarded by (modern) critics as overemphasizing oratory or mournful lyricism at the expense of real dramatic conflict. With Seneca and the French tragedians as his combined point of departure, Lummenaeus took this quality even further. In this respect, our attention inadvertently focuses on Parente’s criticism regarding the supposed dramatic ineffectiveness of Lummenaeus’ plays, his faulty plot structure and excessively long chorus songs, which, in Parente’s view, can only characterize tragedies that were not intended for performance. When, for the moment, ignoring the apparent negative connotations and conclusion, Parente’s observation in itself has some truth in it. Now that I have discussed the characteristics of French humanist drama and its dramatic qualities, certain similarities between the qualifications provided in early studies of French Renaissance drama and Parente’s critical observations with regard to Lummenaeus’ poetics can easily be discerned.

Having provided in the previous pages an overview of the characteristics of French humanist drama, I think we are now able by way of a structural comparison to initiate a more detailed and well-founded attempt at identifying the poetic principals that form the basis of Lummenaeus’ oeuvre.

The main ingredient: expositional monologue

Some French humanist tragedians had favoured the monologue as an expositional device, though variations clearly exist. As we have seen, Garnier accordingly developed a mode of gradual exposition that lasted for two acts, and De Montchrestien employed the expositional opening monologue for a

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The characters of their tragedies are faced with a specific situation of which they themselves are usually the cause: how they got into that situation, i.e. under which circumstances they had forced matters too far, is only partly made clear in a gradual and indirect exposition.

Lummenaeus, too, exclusively preferred the opening monologue as an expositional device. The *Carcer Babylonius* provides as its opening a terrifyingly powerful perspective on punishment for rebellion. As will be discussed elsewhere in this thesis in more detail, Nebukadnezzar’s opening monologue ostensibly deals with political rebellion, while in the eyes of the audience and of those being punished, it is in fact religious rebellion. The punisher himself, Nebukadnezzar unwittingly personifies God’s justice, and this divine justice he will continue to personify for the rest of the play. A development of the character is absent, in a presentation that is as concise as it is decisive. The initial expositional information is limited: the anger is directed against ‘disloyal Jerusalem’ (l. 1) and ‘ungrateful Sedecias’ (ll. 2-3), on which the monologue continues to build while Nebukadnezzar’s anger and impatience gradually increase. There is no true exposition of the actual story, for we only get to see one side of it, Nebukadnezzar’s. It is only with the prophet’s monologue in the third act that the religious perspective formally comes into focus, when repentance steadily gains the upper hand. The exposition, therefore, is gradual and partly postponed, resting simultaneously on the audience’s awareness of the Biblical theme, and perhaps even on Garnier’s *Les Juifves*, where Nebukadnezzar was profusely portrayed as a mere instrument in God’s hands.

This expositional technique in fact constitutes a rather complicated example of starting *in medias res*; it ideally would have required, as we have seen in the case of De Montchrestien, for both author and audience to be at the same level of learning, in order to take full advantage of a complete intertextual interaction. The similarities between Lummenaeus and French humanist tragedy are the more apparent, since Seneca usually dealt with these expositional monologues in quite another way. Note how different Seneca’s method is in for instance the *Agamemnon*, in which the ghost of Thyestes first properly introduces himself and then provides a complete exposition of the background and the situation in which the tragedy finds itself. Thus, – even though for the *personae* of the *Agamemnon* the play itself will subsequently start *in medias res*, – the audience has already been well-informed.

But there is more to Lummenaeus’ technique than just a selective imitation of available models. Through this method of exposition, Lummenaeus in fact achieves something remarkable. While the protagonists of *Carcer Babylonius* – in Lummenaeus’ model often brought on stage for one monologue only –, all portray just one emotion or reaction (Nebukadnezzar

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87 See chapter three.
and his captain Nabuzardan represent anger; Sedecias a grievous repentance), there gradually develops an emotional equilibrium between this anger and grievous repentance, which leads to a constantly professed conclusion: the affirmation of God’s justice, horrific it may be for the Jews. The shift is smoothened by the figure of the prophet, whose third act monologue marks the transition to the Jewish focus, shifting the emotional focus from anger to repentance.

A similar technique is employed in Amnon (1617). The opening monologue is pronounced by a restless Amnon, confessing his incestuous love for his half-sister Tamar. The monologue is dedicated entirely to his struggle and his attempt to suppress these sinful desires, for he is clearly very much aware of his immoral feelings. Still, however, they remain only the expression of thoughts and feelings, not deeds. The audience, nonetheless, is already supposed to know what is about to happen (not the least because Tamar, even though she is mentioned by Amnon several times, is never actually introduced by him as his half-sister). With this knowledge, and only then, the audience can fully absorb the desperate aura radiating from the monologue, which would otherwise have been less effective. And even though Amnon will not appear on stage again, with Tamar’s arrival on the scene in the second act the audience will instantly know what has happened, though she herself can, in the words of Parente, barely confess what ails her. This manner of exposition – gradual, and initially lacking crucial information for those unaware of the exact situation – is comparable to that employed in the opening monologue of David in De Montchrestien’s David. Characterized by Griffiths as a ‘lack of interest in exposition’, I would rather argue that it is first and foremost a method of exposition that effectively arouses the audience’s curiosity and stimulates the emotional participation of an educated audience in the dramatic events. The focus is not on what the characters do or have done – the rape-scene is omitted, and so is the killing of Amnon by their brother Absalom –, but rather on their emotions and reactions. It is not just incestuous love that is criticized in this play, not just anger or grief: rather, the entire spectrum of extreme emotions that causes these unfortunate series of events. Lust, it appears, is just one of these emotions, and if anything, Lummeneaus himself places most emphasis on the lessons presented by the misfortune of the high and mighty (as found in the majority of his plays), without showing the heinous deed itself: ‘Many here in the theatre have burst into tears or were struck by heartache at the play’s performance, while they were contemplating the

89 Griffiths, The Dramatic Technique, 67-68.
90 Parente (‘The Paganization of Biblical Tragedy’, 222) is quick to suggest that Lummeneaus’ Amnon criticizes the clergy’s rampant immorality. I have found no indications for such a contextual interpretation, and, as I will illustrate throughout this thesis, would rather advice restraint in this respect.
uncertain fate of kings, the insanity of Amnon and the mourning of Tamar, as if they were witnessing in a framework how her impious brother violated her in vicious incest. The Biblical theme of Amnon and Tamar offered an excellent opportunity to arouse the strongest emotions, to, in turn, stimulate contemplation.

Somewhat of an exception is formed by Saul (1621). The opening monologue of the prophet Samuel truly has the appearance of a more traditional exposition, in which he provides the background for the play: Samuel was once the leader of the Israelites, but Saul has taken his place. Under the latter’s leadership, however, things have deteriorated rapidly, and God – neglected – is preparing his vengeance on the Israelites. Samuel’s hope rests on Saul’s son, David. But the prophet himself shall not live to see David rule the Israelites, for the gates of the underworld are opening wide, and through a thick haze of sulfur and smoke Samuel disappears. Such a prophesying opening – an exception in Lumenæus’ tragedies – rather connects to Garnier’s Les Juifves than to De La Taille’s Saul. Garnier, too, opened Les Juifves with a monologue by a prophet, who also provides a rough sketch of the present situation and predicts that punishment will soon be inflicted upon the Jews. Needless to say, the technique of such a rather traditional mode of exposition can be commonly found in early modern drama, and does not necessarily derive from Garnier. De La Taille, on the other hand, surprises the audience of his Saul tragedy with a brief outburst of Saul of only six verses – an indirect exposition, as in Carcer Babylonius –, instead of the usual lengthy monologue of humanist drama and the somewhat more ‘objective’ exposition. The instance aptly demonstrates the complicated basis of the intertextual links that exist between Lumenæus and French drama, and the application of versatile models rather than mere imitation.

In combination with the chorus, as we will come to see, monologues thus form an essential part of Lumenæus’ drama. Throughout his oeuvre, the majority of acts are structured similarly, with mostly just one monologue and one chorus song per act. Each new act thus often reveals a similar expositional technique, whether it is de facto the first or, e.g., the third act. But as we have seen, the personal outlooks set forth in the monologues eventually come to be contrasted between themselves, and consequently form a delicate, emotional balance. Though static the appearance may be

91 Multis hic in orchestra exhibitum lacrymas elicuit, cordolium provocavit, considerantibus dubias Regum vices, Amnonis furias, et Thamarae luctum veluti in pergula spectantibus, quam impius frater violento incaestu oppressit (Amnon (1617), ff. A2r–vo, dedicatory letter to Dionysius Villerius). Whether or not these words indicate an actual performance, remains uncertain, for, lacking decisive evidence, they could equally well be understood as a mere theatrical metaphor for the reception of Lumenæus’ work. Cf. also Bloemendal, ‘Receptions and Impact’, 12.
when judging by the relative proportion of monologue, the plays’ internal progression reveals an unparalleled dynamic.

*The other main ingredient: chorus*

I have already mentioned the exceptional emphasis placed by Lummenaeus on the chorus. When viewing numeric evidence regarding the relative share of chorus in the first-edition of each play, the data are truly astounding. A presentation in numbers and percentages of the chorus’ share in the plays by Lummenaeus would look as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tragedy (year)</th>
<th>Total number of lines</th>
<th>Chorus lines</th>
<th>Percentage of chorus lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Iephte (1608/9)</td>
<td>1557</td>
<td>528</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carcer Babylonius (1610)</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>813.5</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dives Epulo (1613)</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>484</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bustum Sodomae (1615)</td>
<td>1134</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amnon (1617)</td>
<td>1128</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saul (1621)</td>
<td>846</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>47%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abimelechus (1622)</td>
<td>685</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>55%†</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sampson (1625)</td>
<td>678</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>45%*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>54%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These plays are not concluded by a chorus after the fifth act.
† The total number of chorus lines does not include the chorus of the fifth act, which does not constitute a single chorus song, but rather engages in dialogue with a messenger.

From these numbers we can extract an average percentage of chorus lines of well over fifty percent. And the fact that dialogues are a rarity in most of his

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92 The specific use of multiple choruses, as occasionally employed for instance by Robert Garnier, also originated from the examples set by (pseudo-)Seneca’s *Agamemnon*, *Hercules Oetaeus* and *Octavia*. Cf. Jondorf, *French Renaissance Tragedy*, 128-129. In chapter three I will discuss Lummenaeus’ use of multiple choruses, and the function of the chorus as a dramatic device, with regard to Lummenaeus’ 1610 *Carcer Babylonius*. The weight assigned to the chorus I will also address in chapter four with regard to the *Iephte*. Most of Lummenaeus’ plays also make use of an extensive chorus song to end even the fifth act (only (pseudo-)Seneca’s *Hercules Oetaeus* and *Octavia* have a chorus ending of just 14 and 11 verses respectively). The importance assigned to these chorus endings I will discuss in the above mentioned chapters as well.

93 In order not to complicate matters, I here provide only the data of the first edition of each play. Especially the early tragedies *Iephte* and *Carcer Babylonius* (or *Sedecias*), were to an enormous extent modified in the 1620’s, though they would for the most part retain their static appearance. The percentages are as follows (total (chorus), percentage): *Iephte*, 586 (156), 27% (a choral dialogue excluded; no concluding chorus); *Carcer Babylonius*, 729 (429), 59%.
tragedies easily boosts the average proportion of monologue to about thirty to forty percent.

Such an emphasis on chorus song is unequalled in French humanist drama as well as in Seneca. Even though both Seneca and e.g. Garnier were perfectly able to compose long, lyrical chorus songs – not seldom up to 100 verses; in some cases, like André de Rivaudeau’s *Aman*, many more – this emphasis as found in Lumenaeus is truly unprecedented. According to Charlton, the average proportion of chorus in Seneca is about 24%, while a French humanist dramatist like Jodelle, whose choruses seem proportionally more extensive than is customary with French humanist dramatists, offers an only slightly higher proportion of 27%.

Not only is the enormous chorus presence in Lumenaeus’ tragedies remarkable, so is the simultaneous emphasis on monologues. Only three acts – all first-acts – of Seneca’s tragedies have a somewhat special structure, in that they consist simply of a monologue followed by a chorus song: *Hercules Furens* (Juno, ll.1-125; chorus, ll.126-204); *Agamemnon* (Ghost of Thyestes, ll. 1-56; chorus, ll. 57-107); and the pseudo-Senecan *Hercules Oetaeus* (Hercules, ll. 1-103; chorus, ll. 104-172). The expository monologues are in these cases, as we can see, usually quite lengthy, as are the chorus songs that follow. No other acts in the tragedies of Seneca appear to have such a structure.

Though other Neo-Latin dramatists, like Heinsius and Grotius, followed this first-act structure rather closely, it is only rarely encountered in French tragedy. Marc-Antoine Muret’s *Caesar* (in Latin; performed 1547) provides a first act consisting of a monologue and chorus song, and also Garnier structured the first act of his influential *Les Juifs* (1583) along similar lines: the prophet pronounces a monologue of ninety lines, followed by a chorus song of the same length, cutting the first act in two parts of equal size. Indeed, a first-act structure of just a monologue and a chorus song proves quite exceptional – let alone in the other acts, where it is hardly ever used. Loukovitch’s description of François de Chantelouve’s tragedy *Pharaon* (1576/1577), the first Catholic Biblical tragedy, seemed to indicate such a structure, arguing that it is ‘une pièce oratoire et sans action. Chaque acte n’est qu’un monologue avec chœur, d’un style ampoulé’. Closer inspection of the actual text of *Pharaon*, however, reveals that the first scene of the first act is indeed a monologue, but the next four scenes consist of monologues, dialogues and even *stichomythia*. Only the sixth, and last, scene

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94 Charlton, *The Senecan Tradition*, 44.
95 Wolfe and Meijer, ‘François de Chantelouve’, 151.
96 Loukovitch, *La tragédie religieuse*, 59: ‘Sous une forme moderne, c’est un recul vers le moyen âge.’
of the first act is a chorus song of just about thirty lines. *Pharaon*’s second act, however, is indeed a monologue by Moses and a chorus sung by the Israelite people, structured along the same lines as the examples of Seneca, Muret and Garnier discussed above. But the second act is also the only one such act and thus, despite Loukovitch’s claim, the play nowhere near consists only of monologue and chorus song.

Certainly, *Pharaon* is a static play. But the critics of sixteenth-century French drama were clearly not familiar with the tragedies of Lumnenaes à Marca. The Ghent Benedictine transferred the first-act structure, common in Seneca and some early modern dramatists, to virtually the entire play: many of his tragedies contain up to four acts composed of the monologue-chorus structure discussed above. A schematic overview of the first three acts of *Saul* (1621) can serve as an illustration of this unprecedented format:

- Act I: Samuel, 73 ll. (1-73); chorus, 65 ll. (74-138);
- Act II: Saul, 72 ll. (139-210); chorus, 107 ll. (211-317);
- Act III: David, 55 ll. (318-372), chorus, 153 ll. (373-525).

A like alternation we find in the *Carcer Babylonius* (1610) and the *Sampson* (1625). The other plays show slight variations on this technique: *Abimelechus* (1622) has even four acts with the monologue-chorus alternation, *Dives Epulo* (in: *Opera omnia* (1613)) employs a similar structure for individual scenes rather than entire acts, and again others, like *Bustum Sodoma* (1615), contain two similarly structured acts and two acts with only small interferences (of one to three verses) between the monologues and the chorus songs. The *Iephte* (1608/9), it should be noted, has a different (though still somewhat comparable structure), apparently due to a fairly close imitation of Buchanan.98

To which extent the choruses are involved in the dramatic action I will discuss in the following chapters. But especially in the case of *Iephte* (1608/9) and *Carcer Babylonius* (1610), where the chorus groups are actually identified, the personal interest of the chorus’ members in the dramatic action is quite prominently underlined. The groups are identified first and foremost because its members engage individually in dialogue with the protagonist (*Iephte*) or because there are multiple choruses (*Carcer Babylonius*). But the identification also functions as an essential feature for making such

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98 Throughout this chapter, it will gradually become clear that Lumnenaes started writing his tragedies in a somewhat hybrid form (*Dives Epulo*), after which he engaged in a fairly close, but still original imitation of Buchanan (*Iephte*, cf. also chapter four), and only then found his own literary niche (*Carcer Babylonius*, etc.). Cf. also the concluding remarks to this chapter.
an involvement at all convincing. This does not mean, however, that an unidentified chorus cannot be personally involved: for instance in *Ammon* (1617), the role of the chorus is fairly similar and is characterized by long, lyrical digressions on related matters. It too reveals a highly personal involvement in the events on stage, their songs full of metaphors and allusions. These lyrical choruses and their functions, I suppose, do not benefit from any further descriptive illustration here: in order to appreciate the full impact of such inspired excursions, they must be read or heard as gloomy recitation in their entirety.

But some of Lummenaeus’ plays offer, for various reasons, an entirely different approach. Both the (unidentified) choruses of *Dives Epulo* (1613) as well as *Saul* (1621) adopt a more traditional chorus outlook in assuming a highly moralizing role. Their involvement in the actual dramatic action is therefore less substantial, and their seemingly objective position is more emphasized. Though not personally affected by the tragic scenes – in contrast to the choruses of e.g. *Iephte* and *Carcer Babylonius*, discussed in detail elsewhere in this thesis –, as mere onlookers they are still moved by the disastrous events and are thus nonetheless able to make explicit, in an emotionalizing way, the moral lessons to be drawn from the tragic display. One of the most explicit examples can be found in *Saul*:

‘Learn, you unfortunates, to submit
Your scepter to heaven; you, who can
Soar in tragic robe across the lands,

Right in your own court. And you, Lord:
Do not forget to respectfully attend to the
Sacred rituals from now on; do not - ah! -
Sacrifice in sacrilegious flames
And offend the already angry Gods.’

*Saul* (1621), I, 87-94

This passage is taken from quite early on in the play, and has been preceded only by the monologue of the prophet Samuel, discussed above. Therefore, the chorus is here rather anticipating the moral lessons to be drawn from the tragic fate of Saul, instead of just interpreting them after they have occurred. Somewhat atypical for the technique of Lummenaeus, the chorus here makes sure the tragic focus is set in advance, but in fact also continues the expositional function of Samuel’s preceding monologue. This type of chorus functionality is most likely linked to the fact that in *Saul* Lummenaeus decided not to use a final chorus at the end of the fifth act. Therefore, if he

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99 *Discite miseri, discite litium / Subdere caelo, quibus in media / Contigit aula, radere, lato / Syrmate terras; et tu Princeps / Saepe memento, posthac nullis / Ludere sacrís; noli, ah! Noli / Iterum iniussis adolere focis, / Nimiumque aegros laedere Dives.*
deemed such explicit moralizing desirable, he was quick to provide it rather early in the play. It has to be noted, however, that it is not clear who the chorus is addressing as Princps and as miser, but the passage does provide one of the rare instances in the dramas of Lummenaeus where possibly the audience is addressed in a rather explicit manner. The examples taken from Dives Epulo, given below, are also such instances — though there, too, the identity of the addressees can merely be guessed at.

The odd man in the tragic oeuvre of Lummenaeus surely is Dives Epulo. Its character, exemplified by its explicitly moralizing New Testament subject — the parable of the Rich Man (Luke 16) — and its allegorical personae (Voluptas, ‘Pleasure’; Superbia, ‘Pride’; Desperatio, ‘Desperation’; Poenitentia, ‘Penitence’; and Mors, ‘Death’) rather seem to place this play in the tradition of Dutch rhetoricians’ drama or Latin school drama, on which I will return below. Following a monologue by the allegorical character Voluptas, who proclaims that it is foolish to believe in a hellish underworld that no one has ever seen or experienced, the chorus provides a clear moralizing position towards the explicit hedonistic excesses personified by Voluptas and represented by the Rich Man:

130 ‘Ah, how deep are the mortal
Souls entangled in the base
Senses of the dark night!
Ah, be damned, Pleasure!
Full of bitterness you
135 Catch them with cheap honey!
Ah, you foolish youths!

(Dives Epulo (1613), I, 130-136)

and:

‘Ah, you ignorant youths:
You will pay with long lasting death
For the pleasures you now seek,
180 With long lasting tears
For one moment of joy.’

(Dives Epulo (1613), I, 177-181)

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100 Again in ll. 100 and 127. Cf. below, nt102.
101 Cf. Dives Epulo, 136 and 177: Iuventus, youth. The term seems to point towards a setting similar to school or Jesuit drama, but there exists no other, explicit reference to either one.
102 Credere stultum est, quod non umquam / viderit ullus, senserit ullus, (ll. 111-112). Therefore, vivite miserri, vivite, ‘live, you unfortunates, live!’ (ll. 100; and 127).
103 Heu mortalia quantum / Caecae pectora noctis / Pravis sensibus abdunt! / Heu damnosa Voluptas!
/ Quantum fellis adhamas / Parco melle redundans! / Hen, heu stulta Iuventus!
104 Heu ignara Iuventus, / Quae dum gaudia captas, / Longo funere damnas, / Longis fretibus unam / Blandi temporis horam!
Like the *Saul*, the chorus of *Dives Epulo* is extraordinarily explicit in its condemnation of the tragic events. Being less like a lyrical lamentation and less filled with metaphorical digressions – *the* trademark of Lumenæus’ chorus, as will gradually become clear throughout this thesis – the chorus is here much more employed also as the final moralising showpiece:

‘Oh all you, who fiercely
Sigh for the joys of this world,
Take note of these grave examples:

840  Abstain from luxury
And restrain your desires,
Which the wrath of angry
Gods will punish with great death.
Ah, an eternity that lasts forever!

845  He who is condemned to death and
Forced to enter the enclosed underworld,
Will never again return from there.’\(^{105}\)

(*Dives Epulo* (1613), V, 837-847)

The choruses of both *Saul* and *Dives Epulo* leave no question about the viewpoint that is supposed to be adopted by the audience: in contrast to the more biased (and: identified!) choruses of *Iephte* and *Carcer Babylonius*, where the moral functioning is much more subtle and refined, in *Saul* and *Dives Epulo* it is quite clear that the chorus, in its specific position as moral commentator, represents ethical truth.

Nonetheless, there are slight differences also between *Dives Epulo* and *Saul*. Whereas the *Dives Epulo* presents the audience with a framework in which there is only room for a black-and-white picture – the Rich Man is morally bad, the unfortunate Lazarus morally good (and thus in the end the perpetually fortunate one) – *Saul* provides a more subtle approach, in which the main character, in line with the Aristotelian view on classical theater, is neither entirely good, nor bad.\(^ {106}\) In this respect the chorus, too, has a part to play, which the two concluding verses of the third act’s chorus song make clear: *Saul optime Regum, / Saul pessime Regum*, Saul: both good and bad, making it impossible to merely praise or condemn him. The chorus cannot deny the virtues of Saul – though they are not specifically referred to or shown, but apparently taken to be common knowledge\(^ {107}\) –, but neither can

\(^{105}\) *O quisquis vehementior / Mundi gaudia deperis, / Exemplis gravioribus / A luxu catus abstine / Et compese libidines, / Quas multa Styge vindicat / Saevorum ulitio numinum. / Heu ben longa perennitas! / Qvisquis supplicij reus / Artis cogitur Inferis, / Nunquam eruperit Inferis.*

\(^{106}\) As had – coincidentally? – also been noted by Jean de La Taille in his preface to *Saul le furieux*. Cf. above, p. 102(nt68).

\(^{107}\) I.e. Griffiths’ assumption (regarding the dramas of De Montchrestien) of author and audience being at the same level of learning, cf. p. 122(nt138).
the chorus ignore the madness which has gotten a hold of their king. Saul’s fervor in striving for David’s death and his consultation of the necromancer in the fourth act form the sad illustration of his mental state. When in the fifth act a messenger announces the deaths of both Saul and his beloved son Jonathas, the chorus’ position is adopted by David, whose lamentation brings the play to an end:

‘What lusty lion preys on weak animals,
Or what swift eagle on pigeons’ chicks,
825 In such a way as my father Saul, king of kings,
And Jonathas used to trash, hunt and defeat
Enemy troops in arduous attack,
Both like Mars, with invincible standard?
For who encountered you and kept standing on the battlefield,
830 Noble Saul, avenger of your fatherland:
Has he not, lying in black dust, lauded your bronze arm,
Your rough hand, and brought back to you the
Palm of victory, a supplicant grasping your knees?
(...)
840 My brother! Oh my Jonathas! My love! Sorrow!
Ah! Whom I enjoyed more than the love of virgins,
Who is dearer to my eyes! My shining light!
My brother! Oh my Jonathas! My love! Sorrow!
May the whole of Juda resound with sad lament.¹⁰⁸

(Saul (1621), V, 823-833; 840-844)

Bewailing both Saul and Jonathas in this emotional climax, David clearly exemplifies the Aristotelian principle discussed above. The fate of Saul, whose furious madness was unforeseen by many, had resulted in not only the death of himself, but also in the death of his son, David’s best friend Jonathas. Culminating in tragic lament, the dénouement leaves no room for pointing fingers – but let us not forget that the chorus had already from the very start, in the first act, addressed the moral aspect of Saul’s tragic fate.

Such an outlook on affairs, as Saul’s, is a familiar sight in the dramas of Lumnenaecus. Both in Carcer Babylonius and Iephthe we find a similar approach concerning the protagonists’ errors: Jephthah, whatever the

verdict with regard to his vow,\(^{109}\) is in the end still primarily a father, whose love for his daughter stands beyond all doubt, while the daughter, too, remains zealously devoted to her father until the bitter end. Can the image thus conjured evoke only negative feelings? Can the image of the errant Sedecias in *Carcer Babylonius*, responsible for the rebellion and, ultimately, the demise of his people, only be that of a cruel and arrogant tyrant, when grief and repentance receive such ample emphasis, when Sedecias’ children are killed in front of his very eyes, and his desperate cries fill the stage? It is only the *Dives Epulo* that forms an exception in this and – as we will come to see – other respects. The audience’s perceptions – note: not the characterizations! – of the protagonists are not just shaped by their presentation through monologues or dialogues, but are also subtly directed by the chorus songs, either through providing a certain emotional balance by physically and emotionally involved chorus members (e.g. in *Carcer Babylonius*, cf. chapter three), or by providing the moral guidelines that are later adopted by other characters (e.g. in *Saul*). In any case, the importance of the choruses cannot be denied: with an average presence of over fifty percent in Lummenaeus’ tragedies, and such a fundamental role to play, the importance here assigned to the choral functions can thus indeed be justified. While the protagonists’ monologues are often employed along a similar line as in French humanist tragedy, i.e. to illustrate the effects of the tragic events on the characters, rather than exploring a character’s psychological development, the chorus songs prove to be a fairly constant factor throughout most of the plays.

Religion and Seneca: similar problems in similar types of drama

Before moving from text to theatre in order to determine in what way the case of French humanist tragedy might assist in assessing the problems regarding the supposed ‘inperformability’ of Lummenaeus’ plays, I would first like to take a brief look at some rather similar, intrinsic problems and their solutions in both French drama and Lummenaeus’ work. As we will come to see, this excursion, too, will prove useful for illustrating the progression within the dramatic oeuvre of Lummenaeus.

Lummenaeus’ plays make clear that he was clearly concerned with the same problems the French humanist dramatists had been faced with before him. In the French tradition, from 1560 onwards Biblical tragedy ceased to be ‘une affaire exclusivement confessionnelle’; no longer was it used just by Protestant propagandists who employed the theatre to further the cause of their religion. Rather, the humanist tragedians took a Biblical perspective as their point of departure, and exploited the rich themes of the Old Testament to illustrate the new genre of tragedy modelled on classical examples,

\(^{109}\) Cf. chapter four.
without forcibly expounding their religious views.\textsuperscript{110} In writers like Garnier, the two main currents of classically oriented and Biblically oriented drama often met.\textsuperscript{111} De La Taille is also a good case in point: though a Protestant, he overtly rejects the Protestant literary militarism, and proclaims that controversial subjects should be left to the arena for which they are best suited, i.e. preaching. In drama, they would only distract from the real subjects at hand.\textsuperscript{112} The authors from the later part of the sixteenth century, like De La Taille, Garnier and De Montchrestien, were, above all, concerned with tragedy as an art and did not allow polemic to interfere.\textsuperscript{113} But even without being polemical in matters of confession, drama based on Biblical matter pre-eminently enabled the French humanists to extend the didactic qualities of their dramas.\textsuperscript{114} In this respect, it should also be noted that the basic Aristotelian principle of credibility also favoured certain topics above others. In order for an audience to be emotionally moved by a dramatic performance, it obviously has to believe in what it is seeing on stage. For a sixteenth-century devout Christian, Loukovitch argues, it was perhaps easier to believe in the Biblical stories of Adam, Saul, David or Esther, than in the Greek legends of Achilles, Agamemnon and Medea.\textsuperscript{115}

Seneca’s philosophy, as the humanists found it in his tragedies, proved not always to be compatible with Christian thought. Indeed, with the revival of Roman theatre, classical paganism almost unavoidably surfaced once again as well. Even though a very common element in humanist literature, which hardly ever caused any distress, Loukovitch supposes that Christian drama nonetheless lost some of its purity under the influence of classical paganism.\textsuperscript{116} Any real problems that could have occurred, however, were usually timely dealt with by the tragic authors. Jodelle and Garnier, for example, were deeply aware of this problem, even while delivering a close imitation of the Roman model. Both authors, for instance, staged a Christianized God, who is omnipotent and just, and who punishes children for the sins of their fathers. Still, the Renaissance poets often referred to Fortuna, but, compared to Seneca, her presence is carefully modified. Jodelle and Garnier both made sure that the pagan goddess could be

\textsuperscript{110} Mazouer, \emph{Le théâtre français de la renaissance}, 216. Even Buchanan, as we will come to see elsewhere in this thesis (ch. four), refrains from dealing overtly with the polemical possibilities of the Jephthah-theme. Cf. also Loukovitch, \emph{La tragédie religieuse}, 52-53.

\textsuperscript{111} Forsyth, \emph{Jean de la Taille}, XXVII.

\textsuperscript{112} De La Taille, \emph{De l’art de la tragédie}, 3\textsuperscript{e}vo (Forsyth, \emph{Jean de la Taille}, 6): ‘Et si c’est un subject qui appartienne aux lettres divines, qu’il n’y ait point un tas de discours de theologie, comme choses qui derogent au vray subject, et qui seroient mieux seantes à un presche.’ Cf. Loukovitch, \emph{La tragédie religieuse}, 38.

\textsuperscript{113} Griffiths, \emph{The Dramatic Technique}, 86-91.

\textsuperscript{114} Charlton, \emph{The Senecan Tradition}, 136.

\textsuperscript{115} Loukovitch, \emph{La tragédie religieuse}, 30.

\textsuperscript{116} Loukovitch, \emph{La tragédie religieuse}, 34-36.
identified with the divine will, thus leaving intact God’s omnipotence.\textsuperscript{117} In fact, according to Donald Stone, it is the divine will that is the frightful secret of tragedy in Garnier’s \textit{Les Juifves}; it is the divine will around which the tragic aura revolves.\textsuperscript{118} Whether Lummenaeus followed the critical annotations of Senecan commentators like Martin Delrio, or in some cases perhaps merely followed the example of Garnier’s modifications of the \textit{fatum}/\textit{fortuna} passages, he too makes very subtle adjustments to the Stoic presentation of Fortuna, while remaining as close as possible to the Senecan model.\textsuperscript{119}

But sometimes the \textit{imitatio} of the Roman model also meant drastically altering the material provided. Whereas Fortuna, as we have seen, could at least still be referred to in French Renaissance tragedy, other views and references were clearly unacceptable for a Christian audience. Consider, for example, Garnier’s \textit{La Troade}, modelled after Seneca’s \textit{Troades}. In the Roman’s play, the chorus reflects on the question of whether or not the soul lives on when the body has been buried, i.e. it discusses the immortality of the soul.\textsuperscript{120} It comes to the fluently versed conclusion that there is nothing after death: \textit{post mortem nihil est ipsaque mors nihil}, ‘after death there is nothing, and death itself is nothing.’\textsuperscript{121} Garnier, however, has the chorus first pose the same question, but then emphasizes the exact opposite:\textsuperscript{122}

\begin{quote}
Thus, from our dying body  
The beautiful soul retreats  
To heaven up high,
1350 Invisible to human eyes,  
And there, safe from mortal spears,  
Conquers Fate.

The soul dwells with the Gods,
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{117} Lebègue, \textit{Études}, 190-192; Mazouer, \textit{Le théâtre français de la renaissance}, 198. While the French Pléiade consisted mostly of devout Christians, still, for most of them, ‘la croyance est une chose, et la poésie une autre’. Cf. Loukovitch, \textit{La tragédie religieuse}, 35. Griffiths (\textit{The Dramatic Technique}, 28) seems of different opinion: ‘This conception of fate, clashing as it does with the Christian idea of a loving God, must have worried these dramatists (...); but no attempt was ever made to modify it, for to do so would be to condemn the classics, and the classics could do no wrong.’ It appears Griffiths is mistaken, here.

\textsuperscript{118} Stone, \textit{French Humanist Tragedy}, 147.

\textsuperscript{119} Lummenaeus’ subtle dealings with the Stoic notion of fate I have addressed in my paper at the congress of the International Association for Neo-Latin Studies in Uppsala (2009), cf. above, p. 2nt4.

\textsuperscript{120} Seneca, \textit{Troades} 371-372: \textit{Verum est an timidos fabula decipit / umbras corporibus vivere conditis,} etc., ‘Is it true, or deceives this story fearful men: that souls live even after the bodies have been laid to rest,’ etc.

\textsuperscript{121} Seneca, \textit{Troades} 398.

In gentle quietude,
All divine,
Rejoicing about having left
The earth for the vaulted heaven,
From whence it came;’

(\textit{La Troade} (1579), III, 1347-1358)\textsuperscript{123}

As we can see, the fact that the soul sojourns with \textit{les dieux} (plural!) poses no problems for such conventional, classic imitation, but the fact that the immortality of the soul is denied does.\textsuperscript{124} Interestingly enough, Lummenaeus used the same Senecan passage for \textit{Dives Epulo}, thus underlining the already hybrid position of this peculiar play. The Rich Man voices the following thought:

‘I am rich and fortunate, and will always be so,
As long as my soul rules this juicy body of mine.
After death, there is nothing; and even death itself is nothing.

The Styx and ghosts of the underworld? Nothing.
Just a foolish fabrication of fairytales.'\textsuperscript{125}

(\textit{Dives Epulo} (1613), I, 12-16)

As we can see, in the eyes of the Rich Man the immortality of the soul is just a \textit{deliratio} of mere stories. While Garnier, in his close imitation/translation of Seneca’s \textit{Troades} decided to radically adapt the available material, Lummenaeus too recognized the problem – under influence of Garnier’s play? —, but decided to follow another course. By having the morally bad protagonist voice such a thought, the author immediately shows that this character is certainly not a devout Christian, and his salvation – though not

\textsuperscript{123} \textit{Ainsi de notre corps mourant} / \textit{La belle âme se retirant,} / \textit{Au ciel remonte,} / \textit{Invisible aux humains regards,} / \textit{Et là, tranche des mortels dards,} / \textit{La Parque dompte.} / \textit{Elle séjourne avec les dieux} / \textit{En un repos délicieux,} / \textit{Toute divine,} / \textit{Se bienheurant d’avoir quitté} / \textit{La terre pour le ciel voilé,} / \textit{Son origine;} (quoted from the edition by Charles Mazouer, \textit{Robert Garnier}, 390).

\textsuperscript{124} The pagan gods of classical antiquity commonly made their appearance in humanist’s texts: it was apparently not a problem to call upon Apollo and the Muses for inspiration – Lummenaeus himself provided ample proof in this respect. Cf. also Spies, ‘Helicon and Hills of Sand: Pagan Gods in Early Modern Dutch and European Poetry’. In fact, as Korsten argues, in Christianity the use of language alone (especially Latin!) summons classical paganism: ‘Rome is always a double Rome: capital of the Roman Empire and of the Christian community’ (\textit{Sovereignty as Inviolability}, 112; 124-125). However, denying the immortality of the soul, as voiced by Seneca, clearly carried this synthesis too far. It was, in any case, entirely at odds with Christian belief, as found e.g. in Ecc. 12:7, ‘Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it’ (KJV).

\textsuperscript{125} \textit{Sum dives et beatus, et porro hic ero,} / \textit{Dum succulentum corpus hoc animus reget,} / \textit{Post fata nihil est, fata quin etiam nihil,} / \textit{Et Styx averna, et inferi manes nihil,} / \textit{Et fabularum stulta deliratio.}
impossible – will in any case not be easy. There was no need for Lummenaeus to modify the material; he could just tweak its context and set it to another use.

From text to theatre – from author to audience

This discussion of French humanist tragedy and Lummenaeus’ plays would not be complete if matters related to performance would remain unaddressed. As we have seen, the rhetorical appearance of this type of tragedy often caused scholars to wonder whether or not these plays were actually performed. Therefore, a comparison also in this respect can perhaps shed more light on the – much doubted – practical possibilities of Lummenaeus’ own work.

Let us first review a basic question. If such ‘static’ theatre, as discussed in this chapter, would indeed only be suitable for private reading, then would that withhold a reader from reading the text theatrically? Had the author not at the very least shaped his lyrical laments as drama, with acts, scenes, personae, dialogues, etc.? This would then suggest that even the mere reading of such works entailed an attempt to envision a ‘performance’ while reading.126 In my view, this proves more important for one text than another, even to a paradoxical extent. For even though critics of early modern theatre, as we have seen, were quick to judge static drama ill-suited for performance, precisely this type of play could perhaps be more easily envisioned in a reader’s mind than a text in which the intrigue is fairly complicated, with specific effects depending on characters being present on stage or not, on a chorus being omniscient and/or always present, and on many other stage directions.127 We should not let our modern perception of what constitute the limits of dramatic performance be a substitute for the fact that, from Seneca to French humanist tragedy, these texts were performed, read, and printed. Even while in the first century AD Seneca’s plays might initially not have been intended for performance (we simply do not know), in early modern Europe his tragedies were certainly performed.128

126 Perhaps similar to the way in which Marco Prandoni attempts to envision the effects of performance while reading Vondel’s Gysbreght van Aemstel. Cf. Prandoni, Een mozaïek van stemmen, 17.

127 Even when a play was not written with performance in mind, would an author not have given thought to e.g. the location of different scenes? Lancaster E. Dabney (Claude Billard, 63) states as much in his discussion of Claude Billard’s Saül (printed 1610): ‘Since the play was probably not staged, the author, it is possible, gave no thought to the location of the scenes.’ Can a tragedy be read, let alone written, in a non-theatrical fashion? It seems to me that imaginative theatrical settings would instinctively pop up in the mind of a reading audience, even if the author provides no (explicit) stage directions.

128 For a brief overview of the discussion on Seneca’s ‘performability’, cf. Sutton, Seneca on the Stage, esp. the introduction. Worp (Geschiedenis van het drama, I, 199-202) lists several
Indeed, performances of Seneca’s tragedies were numerous, and so were the plays by, for example, Garnier. And even though French tragedy often lacked any dramatic action, a performance was not a coincidental quality. Quite the contrary: the authors, according to Forsyth, certainly intended their plays to be performed, preferably at court. Griffiths, too, is of the opinion that French tragedies of the sixteenth century were intended to be performed. From the fact that most evidence of performances of plays by Antoine de Montchrestien has come down to us only by chance and that this evidence does not seem to qualify these performances as something ‘special’, Griffiths concludes that De Montchrestien’s other plays must have been performed as well. As to the manner in which they were performed – a true performance, recitation, dialogued lecture –, Griffiths seems to favour the first.

Charlton, on the other hand, argued that the French mainly thought of plays as things to be read, for none of the French arts of poetry (or Scaliger’s, for that matter) concerned themselves with the theatrical aspect of drama. And since action is almost entirely dispensed with, stirring incident is banned, dialogue becomes monologue, sententiae are expanded to sermons, language acquires the perpetual gloss of rhetoric – French Senecan drama, according to Charlton, is drama in little but name. Does its popularity, then, just stem from its declamatory qualities? It is perhaps no coincidence that in the seventeenth century this rhetorical type of theatre gave way to a theatre less elite, and more accessible to many. Indeed, the earlier type of drama promoted by Garnier and his many imitators was found primarily in an elite milieu of men of letters, interested not in dramatic action, but literary achievement and moral and political ideas.

instances of (school)performances of Seneca’s tragedies in The Netherlands in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

129 I have already referred to the doctoral thesis of Katell Lavéant, who provides a comprehensive overview of theatrical performances in the fifteenth and sixteenth century in the Southern Netherlands. Cf. above, p. 92nt15.

130 Forsyth, Jean de la Taille, XXVI. Street (French Sacred Drama, 61) even suggests that the publishing of La Taille’s and Garnier’s work itself signals their intention to have their plays performed at the royal court. It is, however, not clear how Street arrives at this assumption. Having a play printed does, in my view, not necessarily indicate the intention to have it performed; if anything, plays were often first printed (not seldom even in a modified version) only after their initial performance. Jondorf (French Renaissance Tragedy, 132) furthermore suggests that a printed text could also have been a ‘programme-souvenir’, in which case a practical use was not really applicable. This, of course, would perhaps not apply to texts published long after a public performance, or texts that functioned at a higher level, playing a role within a cultural elite.

131 Griffiths, The Dramatic Technique, 146.

132 Griffiths, The Dramatic Technique, 146-158.

133 Charlton, The Senecan Tradition, 137.


135 Lebègue, Études, 251.
Without the safeguards of public will or traditional experience, there was nothing that would hold French drama from the extremes of academic taste.\textsuperscript{136} The poets of the French \textit{Pléiade} wrote mainly for their own circle of learned men, and the audience did not know how to appreciate a drama whose qualities it could not readily understand.\textsuperscript{137} In the words of Griffiths: ‘Audience and author were on the same level of learning.’\textsuperscript{138} This elite might even intentionally have refrained from inserting dramatic action into their plays, focused as they were on creating a drama diametrically opposed to the medieval tradition of the \textit{moralité}, which were full of spectacle.\textsuperscript{139} Street nonetheless claims that, though the plays were written for a highly cultivated audience, the ordinary unlettered people could still enjoy them as entertainment.\textsuperscript{140} This, of course, would at any rate only hold true in case of an actual public performance, as opposed to a mere printed edition which would indefinitely be more ‘elitist’.

The problem had apparently also been identified in early modern times. Jean de La Taille – who was the first to go somewhat in the direction of the modern perception of ‘performable’ tragedy in \textit{De l’Art de la tragédie} (1572) – surely considered writing tragedy a noble occupation and a true art,\textsuperscript{141} but simultaneously recognized what in his eyes appeared to be the humanists’ main misperception: to view classical theatre merely as ‘un art purement littéraire’.\textsuperscript{142} He thought the static style of contemporary tragedy to be its main weakness, which prevented the audience to be moved by the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[136] Charlton, \textit{The Senecan Tradition}, 103. Charlton also illustrates the close links (both personal and professional) that existed between all the major dramatists of the era: Buchanan, Muret, Jodelle, Rivaudeau, De La Taille, Garnier, etc.
\item[137] Loukovitch, \textit{La tragédie religieuse}, 26.
\item[138] Griffiths, \textit{The Dramatic Technique}, 83.
\item[139] Zamparelli, \textit{The Theater of Claude Billard}, 21.
\item[140] Street, \textit{French Sacred Drama}, 61. We even know that e.g. Garnier’s \textit{Les Juifves} was performed not that far from Ghent at the end of the sixteenth, beginning of the seventeenth century, in Arras and Tournai. Cf. Lebègue, \textit{La tragédie française}, 96-71. Let us also recall Jondorf’s suggestion (cf. above, p. 99) of a Renaissance audience being in any case more comfortable with listening to long speeches than we are now.
\item[141] Mazouer, \textit{Le théâtre français de la renaissance}, 201.
\item[142] West, \textit{De l’art de la tragédie}, 7. By labelling this misperception a ‘mistake’ (cf. e.g. Loukovitch, \textit{La tragédie religieuse}, 32: ‘la grande erreur dramatique’), one does not do justice to the dramatic choices and concepts of the day. Identifying a supposed sixteenth-century misperception of the ancient functions of classical tragedy is entirely different than judging those literary peculiarities from a modern (or even a seventeenth-century) point of view. In the words of Griffiths (\textit{The Dramatic Technique}, 27): ‘For too long sixteenth-century tragedy has been regarded as some kind of forerunner of the tragedy of the classical age, differing from it only in its imperfect nature. (…) The (…) lack of dramatic tension has been condemned by many critics who insist on viewing tragedy from the modern standpoint.’
\end{footnotes}
theatrical display.\textsuperscript{143} Both action and movement were indispensable for tragedy to be successful in that respect.\textsuperscript{144} What is more, in De La Taille’s view tragedy should be grand, in every respect. Therefore, tragic disaster should not befall ordinary people, and should in itself be terrible and unorthodox.\textsuperscript{145} Thus, De La Taille stood at the basis of a new form of tragedy, which would be ‘vivante et bien construite, où l’action psychologique serait au premier plan.’\textsuperscript{146} Towards the end of the sixteenth century, French dramatists gradually met the public’s wishes to a certain degree, thus making the ‘théâtre humaniste’ more accessible to a broader audience.\textsuperscript{147} But before that time, there is every indication that tragedies were enjoyed because of their moral purpose and rhetorical qualities, and not because of the development of character or plot, while discussions about performance, according to Donald Stone, at no time surrounded humanist tragedy.\textsuperscript{148} Accordingly, the humanists may not have been very concerned with \textit{vraisemblance}, quite necessary also for a convincing performance. Take, for instance, the setting, which a dramatist could easily shift in an instance,\textsuperscript{149} and which we also find in Lummenaeus’ plays, when e.g. in \textit{Iephte} the scene is effortlessly shifted from Jepthah’s house to the mountains, and back.\textsuperscript{150}

Whether or not Lummenaeus’ plays were actually performed, we do not know.\textsuperscript{151} But in view of Lummenaeus’ indebtedness to French humanist drama, one might consider accepting \textit{mutatis mutandis} these most recent views regarding performance. Lummenaeus’ tragedies, too, were often dedicated and sent to rulers of a royal or ecclesiastical court, to which he was then often subsequently invited (Albert of Austria, cardinal Federico Borromeo, cardinals Maffeo (Urban VIII) and Francesco Barberini). As I have stated elsewhere, there is no indication of Lummenaeus’ tragedies functioning in a school or college setting, despite the few instances in the \textit{Dives Epulo} (in Lummenaeus’ oeuvre a fairly isolated piece of literature) mentioned above. They have everything to qualify in similar terms as French humanist tragedy, since they were written for, to the least of our knowledge, an elite circle of men of letters. Our discussion of French humanist drama –

\textsuperscript{143} This static type of tragedy seemed more like a ‘poème élégiaque dialogué’ (West, \textit{De l’art de la tragédie}, 13-14).
\textsuperscript{144} ‘Or c’est le principal point d’une Tragedie de la sçavoir bien disposer, bien bastir et la deduire de sorte qu’elle change, transforme, manie et tourne l’esprit des escoutans deça dela’, De La Taille, \textit{De l’art de la tragédie}, 3vo (Forsyth, \textit{Jean de la Taille}, 6).
\textsuperscript{145} West (ed.), \textit{De l’art de la tragédie}, 14.
\textsuperscript{146} Forsyth, \textit{Jean de la Taille}, XXXV.
\textsuperscript{147} Loukovitch, \textit{La tragédie religieuse}, 27.
\textsuperscript{148} Stone, \textit{French Humanist Tragedy}, 156.
\textsuperscript{149} Stone, \textit{French Humanist Tragedy}, 158.
\textsuperscript{150} This is one thing Lummenaeus did not ‘copy’ from Buchanan, for the latter omitted the mountain scene entirely. Cf. chapter four.
\textsuperscript{151} Cf. also below, pp. 134-135; 216-217.
and Seneca, for that matter – in any case proves that the rhetorical qualities of this type of drama did not \textit{a priori} rule out public performance.

\textit{Some food for thought: the Dutch vernacular tradition}

The fact that Lummenaeus had chosen the French vernacular tradition as his main poetic model – and by doing so inheriting a complicated web of intertextuality –, does not mean that his work was completely cut off from other manifestations of dramatic activity. After all, many other types of theatre had been, were, or came to blossoming during his own years of literary activity. Having on the previous pages established the literary forces at work behind Lummenaeus’ tragedies, it will be interesting to briefly contrast his work with another tradition, the one by which he was literally surrounded: Dutch vernacular drama.

Indeed, as we have seen, the Ghent playwright initially tried his hand at a rather different dramatic model for \textit{Dives Epulo}, a tragedy based on the New Testament parable of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus (Luke 16). Though first – and only – printed in 1613 in the \textit{Opera omnia}, there are certain (para)textual indications that the \textit{Dives Epulo} was known in Lummenaeus’ circle before that time.\footnote{Both Worp (\textit{Geschiedenis van het drama}, 226) and Parente (‘The Paganization of Biblical Tragedy’, 222) refer to the \textit{Dives Epulo} as Lummenaeus’ first drama, but do not provide a reason for doing so.} For example, the \textit{Epulo} is already mentioned in a preliminary poem by Maxaemilianus Vrientius in the 1610 edition of \textit{Carcer Babylonius}.\footnote{\textit{Carcer Babylonius} (1610), A4v°. Vrientius’ epigram on Lummenaeus’ illness (cf. above, p. 36nt98) may also refer to the \textit{Epulo} as his earliest (extant) tragedy.} Furthermore, there are certain poetic principles which make it stand out from the rest of Lummenaeus’ tragic oeuvre, and which possibly indicate as well that the \textit{Epulo} is perhaps a fairly early play. The \textit{Epulo}, with its less precious idiom, is an easier ‘read’ than Lummenaeus’ other tragedies. With surprisingly few Biblical or classical metaphors thrown at the reader, with an explicit moral, straight-forward allegorical \textit{personae}, and a parable as its subject, the play seems to have been written with a less elite audience in mind. Still, however, the play has been written in Latin. As a consequence, the tradition of the somewhat more lighthearted, Latin school drama springs to mind, even though no such evidence has (yet) come down to us.

As had already been noted by James Parente,\footnote{Parente, ‘The Paganization of Biblical Tragedy’, 222nt33.} the \textit{Dives Epulo} accommodates many allegorical characters that appear to have been derived straight from the Dutch vernacular tradition of rhetoricians’ drama, or perhaps even Latin school drama (which sometimes found inspiration for its moral instruction in rhetorician’s drama, but for its structure and stylistics in
Roman comedy\(^{155}\)). In view of Lummenaeus’ reception of French Renaissance tragedy, it is interesting to note that the morality plays in the Dutch tradition were in fact a variation on the fifteenth and sixteenth-century French moralité, which were characterized by didactic allegory as well.\(^{156}\) But contrary to French humanist tragedy – which was still staged even in the Southern Netherlands around 1600, as noted above –, the essentially medieval moralité rapidly lost significance after 1570. Dutch rhetorician’s drama, however, was part of the cultural environment also after 1600, and in view of Lummenaeus’ close connections to some writers who were active in local Chambers,\(^{157}\) it will be worth looking briefly into the characteristics of rhetorician’s drama that made their way into the *Dives Epulo*.

The *Epulo’s* subject – the parable of the Rich Man – has a lighter touch than the Old Testament subjects that form the basis of Lummenaeus’ other plays. Its tragic idiom is less precious and, as we have seen, its moral aim is clearly emphasized.\(^{158}\) This moral instruction is effectuated by both the allegorical characters and the chorus songs. In its specific function as moraliser, the chorus, too, is placed in the tradition of earlier, sixteenth-century Dutch drama: in seventeenth-century Dutch tragedy a chorus that was placed outside the dramatic action and merely held a fairly detached moralizing position (as was also the case in Latin school drama), soon came to be regarded as old-fashioned.\(^{159}\) What was more: as Dutch drama in the late sixteenth, early seventeenth century moved from rhetorician’s drama towards the early type of Renaissance drama, didactic purposes became less explicit and geared more and more toward, for instance, rhetorical techniques like *copia verborum* and *varietas rerum*, rich illustrations drawn mostly from the Bible and classical mythology.\(^{160}\) A similar progression can

\(^{155}\) Bloemendal, *Spiegel van het dagelijks leven*, 47.

\(^{157}\) Most notably Justus de Harduijn and the Aalst Chamber of Rhetoric, cf. below.

\(^{158}\) Parente’s claim that the play was ‘clearly intended to attract financial support for the abbey’ is completely unfounded (‘The Paganization of Biblical Tragedy’, 222). Cf. above and p. 213 for a *caveat* regarding the contextualization of early modern drama, Lummenaeus’ in particular.

\(^{159}\) Van Gemert, *Tussen de bedrijven door*, 67-68.

be observed in the oeuvre of Lummenaeus if we accept the *Dives Epulo* to be an early work. It could also explain the author’s choice of subject: a rather explicit parable instead of the more ambiguous Old Testament stories he was to explore later in his career. As for its unambiguous moralizing outlook, I had already concluded that the *Dives Epulo* stands alone among its younger brethren. In any case, its position as a peculiarity in the tragic oeuvre of Lummenaeus may have contributed to the fact that the *Epulo* was the only tragedy which the author apparently deemed unfit for reprint in his 1628 collection of tragedies, *Musae lacrymantes*.\(^{161}\)

But despite this similar progression, Lummenaeus – as I have stated in the introduction to this chapter – generally seems not to have turned to Dutch tragedy for inspiration. Rather, it seems that his own renewed introduction of Latin Biblical tragedy in the Southern Netherlands moved parallel to the rising star of Dutch Renaissance tragedy in the north. Noted already by Jacob Worp, and emphasized by scholars like W.A.P. Smit and Lieven Rens, the vernacular Senecan tradition in the north reached maturity first and foremost with P.C. Hooft’s *Geeraerd van Velsen* (1613),\(^{162}\) which, with an apparition, necromancy, and final prophecy, reveals not only a strong Senecan influence, but most likely, in my view, also strong ties with French Senecan tragedians like Garnier (*Les Juifves*) and La Taille (*Saül le furieux*).\(^{163}\) Through Hooft, this combined Senecan-French tradition then found resonance in other vernacular writers of Senecan tragedy, like Guillaume van Nieuwelandt (c. 1584-1635). While Hooft’s focus lay primarily with the thematic aspects which he found in the dramas of Seneca and the French tragedians – placing less emphasis on its combined structural and functional qualities (as discussed in this chapter) –, Lummenaeus chose a literary position which he must have considered the apex of rhetorical drama as initiated by Seneca and furthered by the French. As a consequence, Lummenaeus’ Latin drama and Hooft’s vernacular drama, both initially

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\(^{161}\) The *Epulo*’s peculiar and hybrid position is already underlined by the fact that it combines a Senecan form with a rhetorician’s approach: Senecan style drama moved from the external illustration of ethical conflicts by virtues and vices (i.e. allegories) to internal conflict of a single mind. Cf. Belsey, ‘Senecan Vacillation’, 75.

\(^{162}\) Cf. Worp, *De invloed van Seneca’s treurspelen*; Smit, ‘Het Nederlandse renaissance-toneel’; Rens, ‘Het vroege Renaissance-drama’. A thorough overview has been provided by Smits-Veldt, *Samuel Coster*, 11ff. In 2001 a symposium was organized for discussing the problems and possibilities of researching Dutch Renaissance drama – from a wide variety of perspectives –, departing from Smit’s and Rens’ scholarly legacy. The acts have been published in Spies (a.o.), ‘Discussiedossier’.

\(^{163}\) Porteman and Smits-Veldt (*Een nieuw vaderland voor de muzen*, 244) signalled the influence of Garnier on Dutch tragedians like Hooft and Vondel.
working from the same tradition, soon found themselves on diverging literary paths.

Reception of Lummenaeus’ tragedies

These literary paths, however, clearly proved not to be equally popular and I would therefore like to amplify briefly on the reception of Lummenaeus’ work; that is, on those instances other than those found in the contemporary laudatory poetry by his colleagues, or in his correspondence.

Working from a French tradition that was itself to become old-fashioned already in the early seventeenth century and which was quickly to be replaced by French Classicism, the highly rhetorical drama which Lummenaeus promoted seems not to have generated many followers. In fact, as I have stated elsewhere, Lummenaeus’ work seems to have received hardly any attention except for a close circle of humanist friends and colleagues, even though he had enthusiastically been sending his work to men of influence all over Europe. Still, there are two important instances which indicate not only that his work was known outside of his own circle of men of letters, but also that the tragic model he adopted was perhaps less isolated than it might seem at first.

The first instance regards a quotation of Lummenaeus’ *Amnon* in Robert Burton’s substantial *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (first published in Oxford in 1621, under the pseudonym of Democritus Junior). Burton (1577-1639/40) was born in Leicestershire, England, and after his studies had become a fellow at Christ Church. Well known as a ready versifier in both Latin and English, he had written among other things a satirical comedy in Latin verse, *Philosophaster*. His best known work proved to be *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, providing, as the full title indicates, an insight into the kinds and causes of melancholy. In the third partition, Burton comes to speak of love-melancholy. In section 2, member 2, subsection 2, the author addresses beauty, or beauty of the face, as a cause for love-melancholy, citing several literary sources to illustrate his claim. Lummenaeus’ *Amnon* is one of those sources:

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164 Cf. chapter one, the biographical presentation.
'A modern poet\textsuperscript{a} brings in Amnon complaining of Tamar:

\begin{center}
\begin{verse}
et me fascino
Occidit ille risus et formae lepos,
Ille nitor, illa gratia, et verus decor,
Iliae aemulantes purpuram, et rosas genae\textsuperscript{b}
Oculique victaeque aureo nodo comae.
\end{verse}
\end{center}

It was thy beauty, ‘twas thy pleasing smile,
Thy grace and comeliness did me beguile;
Thy rose-like cheeks and unto purple fair,
Thy lovely eyes and golden knotted hair.

\textsuperscript{a} Iacob. Cornelius Amnon tragoed. act. I. sc. I.
\textsuperscript{b} Rosae formosarum oculis nascuntur, et hilaritas vultus elegantiae corona. Philostratus delitijs.'

Burton, whose \textit{Anatomy of Melancholy} is perhaps best described as ‘a crude assembly of quotations and [...] indeed a vast mobilization of the notions and expressions of others’,\textsuperscript{167} here cites and translates verses 4-8 of Lumenaeus’ \textit{Amnon}. The year of publication (1621) indicates that Burton must have used the 1617 edition of \textit{Amnon}, not the text printed in the 1628 \textit{Musae Lacrymantes}.\textsuperscript{168} It seems that he enjoyed Lumenaeus’ work enough to honour it with an equally enjoyable, poetic translation in his mother tongue, and, to further demonstrate his erudition, he even noted a parallel expression from Philostratus Lemnius. Interestingly, Lumenaeus’ 1617 original provides \textit{vernus} instead of Burton’s \textit{verus} (l. 6), and \textit{mundo} instead of \textit{nodo} (l. 8). The distinction between \textit{ver(n)us} is lost in Burton’s translation, but this does not go for \textit{mundo/nodo}. In fact, ‘tied in a golden knot’ even seems to fit the text somewhat better than ‘in a golden world’.

This instance says something, but not all about the distribution and fame of Lumenaeus’ work. As said, Burton clearly enjoyed demonstrating his knowledge, and one should not forget that he was a bookman first and last, owning about 2.000 volumes.\textsuperscript{169} As a scholar and book-collector, he was therefore surely not the ‘average’ reader. At any rate, we can at least conclude that Burton had had access to the text of Lumenaeus’ \textit{Amnon}, somehow or other, perhaps even fairly shortly after it had been published. The variations in the text possibly provide a clue with regard to the mode of transmission: while the \textit{nodo}-variation could be a deliberate modification by

\textsuperscript{167} Burton, \textit{The Anatomy of Melancholy}, introduction, x-xi.
\textsuperscript{168} Verse 6 (\textit{ille ... decor}) had actually not made the cut in the 1628 \textit{Musae Lacrymantes}. Both works are in any case not listed in the inventory of Burton’s library. Cf. Kiessling, \textit{The Library of Robert Burton}.
\textsuperscript{169} Burton, \textit{The Anatomy of Melancholy}, introduction, viii-x.
Burton\textsuperscript{170} and \textit{verus} just an inaccuracy, both could perhaps point to the fact that Burton did not have direct and/or permanent access to the printed edition of Lummeneaus’ \textit{Amnon}. Thus, we might be looking at a case of oral transmission, a slightly faulty memory, or both. Finally, this instance illustrates to a certain extent how through Latin a truly international audience could very well be reached.

The second instance of reception is by far more crucial and elaborate than Burton’s quotation, not the least because it may also serve to elucidate the still somewhat clouded relationship between the activities of the Chambers of Rhetoric and the humanists’ Latin tradition in the Southern Netherlands, recently discussed by Arjan van Dixhoorn.\textsuperscript{171}

A manuscript preserved in the communal archives of Aalst in Belgium (some 25 kilometers south east from Ghent) contains several plays attributed to the Aalst rhetorician Guilliam Caudron Sr. (c. 1586 - c. 1636), as well as to his son, Guilliam Caudron Jr. (1607-1692).\textsuperscript{172} As has been clearly demonstrated, the literary networks of Caudron Sr. and the Ghent Benedictine both seemed to revolve around the central figure of Erycius Puteanus.\textsuperscript{173} Still closer ties can also be discerned, though I have not (yet) been able to identify a direct connection between both authors: in 1613, Caudron Sr. had published the vernacular poetry of Lummeneaus’ close friend Justus de Harduijn.\textsuperscript{174} The above-mentioned Aalst manuscript as well contains a Dutch translation attributed to Caudron Sr. of Jacobus

\begin{itemize}
\item This slight adjustment can perhaps serve as an illustration to Holbrook Jackson’s remark: ‘It is he [i.e. Burton] not they [i.e. from whose work Burton quotes] who peeps from behind every quotation.’ Cf. Burton, \textit{The Anatomy of Melancholy}, introduction, xi.
\item Van Dixhoorn, ‘Soorten rederijkers’. The social position of the rhetoricians in the Southern Netherlands has recently been studied in great detail by Anne-Laure van Bruaene. She describes their renewed activity in the wake of the Twelve Year Truce (1609-1621), and the Archdukes’ recognition of their usefulness in the Counter-Reformist ‘multimedia’ offensive (\textit{Om beters wille}, 178-180).
\item I will here draw mainly on the studies by August Keersmaekers, \textit{De dichter Guilliam van Nieuwelandt}, 235-238, and ‘Guilliam Caudron Sr.: Nabugodonosor’, passim. The manuscripts are registered in the old communal archives of Aalst as numbers 166-170. Cf. Houtman, \textit{Inventaris van het oud archief}, 44-45.
\item For Caudron’s network, cf. Dambré, \textit{De weerlicke liefde}, 20ff. (‘Patronaat van het renaissancistisch georiënteerd driemanschap: Puteanus, Caudron en van der Linden’); Van Dixhoorn, ‘Soorten rederijkers’, 97-98. Caudron had written a poem in the vernacular in praise of David Lindanus’ \textit{De Teneraemonda libri tres} (cf. f. **2’’); Lindanus had included a poem by Lummeneaus in this work as well (p. 116). Cf. also appendix one.
\end{itemize}
Zevecotius’ Latin tragedy Rosimunda (1621). Again, Lumnennaeus and Zevecotius had been in very close contact with each other at least until the latter’s departure for the Northern Netherlands in 1623 and his conversion to Protestantism. The contacts between Caudron Sr., De Harduijn and Van Zevecote were established at a time when Lumnennaeus, too, was most active in building his literary network around the very same central figures.

Of the utmost importance in our present discussion are the untitled Aalst plays of Nabugodonosor and David, which have both (to a certain extent) been discussed and/or published by August Keersmaekers in the 1950s. Both plays have been characterized by Keersmaekers as highly rhetorical, as having been written in lofty language and – even though overtly lacking the formal structure of Senecan drama, as well as choruses – showing every sign of the Senecan mode of tragedy.

The play of Nabugodonosor, like Lumnennaeus’ Carcer Babylonius based on the Old Testament subject of Jerusalem’s fall and Sedecias’ punishment, is a highly rhetorical drama and substantially without dramatic action. Without going into further detail, it has to be noted that there are several passages – most notably in Nabugodonosor’s very similar opening monologue, and the final punishment of Sedecias – in which the attentive reader can find some minor, but striking verbal and thematic echoes of Lumnennaeus’ Carcer Babylonius.

Unfortunately, Keersmaekers has apparently not noted Lumnennaeus’ dramatic contribution to the humanist network of Puteanus. If he had, he would immediately have noticed that Caudron Sr.’s play of David is almost in its entirety a vernacular translation of Lumnennaeus’ Saul (1621). Like in Nabugodonosor, the chorus in David is absent. Instead, Caudron Sr. has inserted several tooghen or tableaux vivants, tying the scenes together and thus

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176 A transcription and brief discussion of the Nabugodonosor have been published by Keersmaekers in ‘Guilliam Caudron Sr.: Nabugodonosor’; a copy of Keersmaekers’ unpublished transcription of the play of David is kept at the Institute for the Study of Literature in the Netherlands (Renaissance department) of the University of Antwerp and has been kindly provided to me by prof. dr Hubert Meeus. Keersmaekers also discusses the play of David in De dichter Guilliam van Nieuwelandt, 235-240.

177 There has, however, been some discussion about the date of Caudron’s play, ranging from 1605 to 1622, which makes it rather difficult to correctly assess the relationship between the two dramas. Meeus (Repertorium van het ernstige drama, 44) provides an overview of relevant literature regarding this discussion.

178 Needless to say, the manuscript apparently does not mention the Latin original of Lumnennaeus. The transcript (by one P. van Hecke) is dated September 1639, but if the author can be positively identified as Caudron Sr., then the date of composition would lie prior to his death (supposedly in 1636), and maybe – but not necessarily – after the date of publication of Saul (1621). Indeed, it can not yet be entirely ruled out that Lumnennaeus’ Saul is a translation of Caudron’s play. A closer investigation that I have planned for the near future will hopefully shed more light on this issue.
smoothing the dramatic action. I cannot provide a detailed discussion of Caudron’s translation in this chapter, but I will instead provide a brief, but typical example. Below are the opening lines of Saul’s monologue in Lumenæus’ second act, and Caudron’s translation:\textsuperscript{179}

Erupit; ergo semper illudet mihi
Galeatus ille, pectore imbelli, lepus,
Oreadumque, alumnus, aut montis iugo,
Aut vallium cavernulis celans fugam?
Ergone semper fugiet, et semper sequar?
Et purpuratus ille terrae Filius
Nobis facesset nauseam, et labem Imperi
Impune molietur, et stragem dabit?
Fugiat, sequemur, et mihi montes patent,
Et illa opaca vallium, umbrarum specus;
Perrumpam et omne quicquid obstabit ruam.
Quanquam profundis sentibus sese induat,
Quanquam repostis cautibus latebras agat,
Et mille captet more vulpino dolos,
Unum, unum echinus novit; effodiam omnia
Et palpitantem beluam foras traham.

Saul (1621), 139-154

Dauid is my ontvlucht, sal desen haes gehellemt
dat ree ionck sonder hert my houden laenck bedwellemt
dit berghenvoester=kint zalt opder berghen sop’
oft in het dal altyt beuryden synen kop’
sal hy dann altyd vlien, en sal myn hert verbolghen
Dit werels poppekint ghedurigh moeten volghen
sal hy dan onghesraft verwerreyn myn ryeck
en mynen koninckstokk vertreden in het slyck
neen dat hy vryelyck gae op d’hooghe berghen dolen
oft in belommert waut, oft in de duyster holen
Jek sal hem volghen naer, doorbreken en doorslaen
al dat ick teghen my sal voelen wederstaen
al ist dat by hem kleedt met dicke doorenhaghen
ocht Jnder klypen buyek ontduyckt myn harde slaechghen
oft dat hy spelt den vos, ick salt doorgrauen al
tot dat dees bloode beest ghevanghen worden sal

Play of David, 199-214

The detailed accuracy of Caudron’s versified translation is truly astonishing, and such indeed is the quality of the entire piece. Overall, the most important differences are Caudron’s omission of the chorus, and the addition of several \textit{tooghen}. He also added an epilogue of sixteen lines by the allegory of \textit{Rechtveerdigheyt} (Justice), calling upon Israel to rejoice in the defeat of its enemies at the hands of Saul, and to praise God, as well as David’s exemplary behavior. Both additions, the \textit{tooghen} and the allegory, seem inherent to the context in which the translation apparently functioned, i.e.

\textsuperscript{179} The text of Caudron’s \textit{David} here provided is based on the copy of Keersmaekers unpublished transcription (cf. above, nt176), which I have not (yet) been able to compare with the original manuscript in Aalst.
the Chamber of Rhetoric. Even though Keersmaekers was not aware of David’s Neo-Latin twin brother, he rightly noted that the play was full of Senecan characteristics, pointing rather towards Dutch Renaissance tragedy – even despite its rhetorical character – than rhetoricians’ drama. As I have noted above, the *tooghen* seem to compensate slightly for the otherwise highly rhetorical character of Lummenaeus’ play.

This second instance of reception, in my view, shows that the dramatic model of Lummenaeus was at least thought worthy of translation in the vernacular, but its modifications do seem to point towards a process of popularizing – perhaps with a view on the intended audience – the rather static original. Whether or not the play of David has actually been performed, is not clear. Keersmaekers apparently assumes as much, since he states that it must have included both singing and dancing. The extension of such assumptions to the work of Lummenaeus is tempting, but will at this stage lead to nothing more than mere guessing.

**Concluding remarks**

Throughout this chapter a development in the dramatic principles of Lummenaeus has gradually become visible; that is, if we accept the *Dives Epulo* as an early work. Starting out with such a hybrid type of drama (which would be the only tragedy not reprinted in 1628), Lummenaeus progressed to a fairly close but original imitation of Buchanan’s *Iephthes*, and only then found his own niche in literary history, outbidding not only Seneca, but also the models provided to him by French humanist tragedy. And like those French tragedians, Lummenaeus shaped his work rather on the basis of dramatic models, than dramatic theory. Through a process of acculturation and adaptation – from Seneca to the Rhetoricians –, Lummenaeus created a unique range of dramas; still, he allowed enough

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180 Cf. the discussion of rhetoricians’ drama and Latin school drama with regard to Lummenaeus’ *Dives Epulo* (pp. 122ff.).
182 The manuscript also contains a reworked version of the play of David, apparently by Caudron Jr., which has been performed in 1682. I have not yet been able to closely inspect this reworked version, and can thus not accurately assess its relationship to the original translation by Sr. and Lummenaeus’ *Saul*. According to Keersmaekers, the reworked version has possibly been influenced by French Classicism, which, as we have already seen, would imply that it is by far less static and rhetorical. Cf. Keersmaekers, *De dichter Guilliam van Nieuwelandt*, 239.
183 Keersmaekers, *De dichter Guilliam van Nieuwelandt*, 237.
184 Cf. above, pp. 93ff.
room to clearly distinguish his work from his sources. This process will in fact show clearest in his treatment of thematic aspects, as the case studies of the following chapters will make clear.\textsuperscript{186}

As I have argued above, Lumnænaeus clearly revealed an awareness of the French tradition (Buchanan, Garnier), and rather explicitly activated this specific literary context. Still, due to an exponentially increasing complexity of intertextuality, inherent to any intertextual process that progresses not only over the course of several centuries, but also through many different genres and authors, it is not always easy to determine the exact sources of certain poetic or literary ideas. Nonetheless, it appears that the French humanists’ outbidding of Seneca’s rhetorical style comprised the most inspiring model the orator Lumnænaeus could possible have wished for. In my view, Donald Stone’s characterization of the French humanists’ relationship to their Roman model may very well hold true for Lumnænaeus’ relationship to his French predecessors: ‘These very excesses (by modern standards) explain in great measure a judgment that derives not from hyperbole but from the logic according to which what outdid Seneca surpassed Seneca.’\textsuperscript{187}

Lumnænaeus’ love for oratory is made clear by the many orationes and homiliae he delivered and published throughout his life. According to the headings of many of those preachings, they were presented at many different locations, in the church of St Peter’s abbey in Ghent, at the Jesuit’s sodalium, at the monastery or church of the Ghent Dominicans, etc. Furthermore, he was a respected participant of the school for oratory founded at the University of Louvain by Erycius Puteanus, the Palaestra Bonae Mentis.\textsuperscript{188} In the art of rhetoric, Lumnænaeus thus found a ticket to the world outside the abbey; and in French drama, he found a use for his rhetorical abilities in a more poetic garment.\textsuperscript{189} And his tragedies, in turn, provided him with a ticket to the respected international circuit of the respublica litteraria.\textsuperscript{190} The French model thus gave him the best of two worlds. But above all, writing tragedy was a noble art, subject also to an ever evolving personal taste, which led Lumnænaeus – from quite early on – to initiate a process of revision and modification. Thus, already the Iephte and

\textsuperscript{186} Cf. also the conclusion to this thesis.
\textsuperscript{187} Stone, French Humanist Tragedy, 82.
\textsuperscript{188} Cf. chapter one, pp. 29ff.
\textsuperscript{189} Cf. also the conclusion reached with respect to Chantelouve’s rhetorical tragedy Pharaon (1577): ‘Pharaon est une oeuvre rhétorique où de longs monologues permettent à l’auteur de faire montrer de son érudition et d’énoncer de belles sentences’ (Wolffie and Meijer, ‘François de Chantelouve’, 157). Part of it could perhaps indeed be as simple as that.
\textsuperscript{190} Cf. also chapter one.
the *Carcer Babylonius* were reprinted in (slightly) modified versions in his 1613 *Opera omnia*.191

The difficulties in accurately assessing the situation in the Southern Netherlands impede the initiation of a well-founded comparison between the coming-to-existence of the French model and Lummenaeus’ reception of it in his own work. As we have seen, Lummenaeus’ plays generally – *Dives* *Epulo* and *Saul* excepted – remain fairly implicit in their moral aims and in addressing the audience.192 This may be a characteristic he got from Garnier, who, according to Street, presented his material thus: ‘*Les Juifves* does not constantly remind the audience that its material has been carefully arranged by the author to make a point. Garnier exercised more skill than most in so constructing his play, but always hid its operation.’193 Street adds, however, that evidence from other humanist plays suggests that this is not the kind of drama the audience preferred, for, as a rule, it favoured a more explicit approach.194 Charlton, too, argues that the French dramatic poets from the outset were crusading against the public taste, for, as we have seen, the *Pléiade* at large suffered from its too narrow aristocracy of culture.195

We cannot be entirely sure whether or not the nature of Lummenaeus’ plays signalled a similar limitation. With regard to his dramas, we know for sure that they circulated at least within an elite circle of men of letters, who certainly would have appreciated poetic ability in any shape. The fact that his plays were written in Latin – while his French colleagues had reverted to the vernacular – would in the end certainly imply a more restricted distribution of Lummenaeus’ works, but it simultaneously indicated the novelty of this attempt to transfer the unprecedented poetic grandeur of French Senecan drama to the Neo-Latin Biblical stage. This, at least, made Lummenaeus stand out among his contemporaries. And where at the beginning of the seventeenth century Garnier’s work was quite soon faced with a decline in popularity partly because his language had become old-fashioned, this was avoided by any composition in Latin that was based on a classical ideal that until today remains a standard in judging a poet’s ability to compose in Latin. Due to the imitational nature of (poetical) Latin and the absence of native speakers – as opposed to a trend still unavoidable

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191 Merlevede (*Het Iephte-drama*) has provided a laborious synoptic edition of all the different versions of *Iephte*, including the manuscript kept in the municipal library of Arras (France).

192 Cf. also chapters three and four, as well as the conclusion to this thesis.

193 Street, *French Sacred Drama*, 89.

194 Street, *French Sacred Drama*, 90. Still, however, authors like Garnier and De Montchrestien excelled in the use of *sententiae*, a rather explicit, moralizing device. It is interesting to note that Lummenaeus, contrary to his models, hardly used this technique, since he relied on extensive, emotive illustration (*copia verborum* and *varietas rerum*) for the moralizing effect of his drama, as I have argued elsewhere in this thesis. Cf. e.g. pp. 125-126.

in any modern, ever evolving (European) language today –, the classical language itself can hardly ever attract an old fashioned feel about it. It can and has, however, eventually become obsolete in its entirety. But in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the use of Latin in the highly popular school and college drama in any case proved that the position of Lumenaeus’ plays was not *a priori* an isolated one. The few instances of reception also point in that direction.