Abstract


This thesis is an intellectual biography of the Swedish statesman Johan Skytte (1577–1645), focusing on his educational ideals and his contributions to educational reform in the early Swedish Age of Greatness. Although born a commoner, Skytte rose to be one of the most powerful men in Sweden in the first half of the seventeenth century, serving three generations of regents. As a royal preceptor and subsequently a university chancellor, Skytte appears as an early educational politician at a time when the Swedish Vasa dynasty initiated a number of far-reaching reforms, including the revival of Sweden’s only university at the time (in Uppsala). The contextual approach of the thesis shows how Skytte's educational reform agenda was shaped by nationally motivated arguments as well as by a Late Renaissance humanist heritage, celebrating education as the foundation of all prosperous civilizations.

Utilizing a largely unexplored source material written mostly in Latin, the thesis analyzes how Skytte’s educational arguments were formed already at the University of Marburg in the 1590s, where he learned to embrace the utility-orientated ideals of the French humanist Petrus Ramus (1515–1572). Moreover, the analysis shows that the expanding Swedish state administration in the early seventeenth century was in urgent need of educated civil servants, and that this basic demand favored an ideology based on education, skill and merit. It is shown that Skytte skillfully combined a Ramist and patriotic rhetoric with narratives of individual merit and rewards, conveying not least himself as an example. The thesis argues that Skytte’s rhetoric reflects the formation of a new professional category in the Swedish society, one that was distinguished from the royal courtier, the clergyman, the merchant, the warrior, and the scholar. This category is the professional civil servant whose identity was dependent on skills and education.

Keywords: Johan Skytte, history of education, Ramism, Petrus Ramus, utility, merit, humanism, Late Renaissance, Sweden, Age of Greatness, patriotism, Hesse-Kassel, the University of Marburg, Uppsala University, Charles IX, Gustav II Adolf, Vasa, Neo-Latin, dissertation, oration, rhetoric, reform, the mathematical arts, eloquence

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To the memory of my grandfather

Einar Österlind 1910–2001
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Jenny Ingemarsdotter
1. Introduction

1.1. Background

Ego, inquit, Dei praepotentis munere mortalibus concessa et donata Philosophia nominor. Nihil ab illo rerum parente, neque uberius, neque florentius, neque praestabilius vitae humanae meis divitijs dari potuit. [...] in usus vestros utilitatesque immensas convertite, virtutis denique propositam metam omnibus modis assequimini.¹

[I am, she said, a gift bestowed upon the mortals by God Almighty, and my name is Philosophy. Nothing richer, nothing more flourishing, nothing more glorious has by our Creator been introduced to human life than my treasures! [...] turn your thoughts now to the use and the immense utilities awaiting you, and then, by using all means, strive toward that virtuous goal!]

Why Study?

As suggested by the above quotation, rewards could be expected for those who put their efforts into study. This particular exclamation was part of an oration celebrating the many gifts of philosophy to humanity, formulated in the year 1600 by a twenty-three year old Swedish magister by the name of Johannes Schroderus. The young Swede had been invited to the Collegium Mauritianum to celebrate its founder, Landgraf Moritz, and the splendor of his new school for young noblemen in Hesse-Kassel. At the time, Schroderus had himself recently reached the end of an eight-year-long education at various German universities, and was about to pursue his own goals: a career at home in the service of the Swedish royal House of Vasa. During his studies abroad he had received support from a powerful member of this dynasty, Duke Charles, who at the time of Schroderus’s graduation was instating himself as the acting regent of Sweden after a tumultuous dynastic power struggle. Upon his return home, the well-educated Schroderus was in luck: he was appointed tutor of Charles’s son, Gustav

¹ Iohannis Schroderi Sveci Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani: Quae habita fuit Cassellis Mens. April. Anno 1600 ad illustriissimum, potentissimum et literatissimum Principem, Dominum Mauritium, Hassiae Landtgravium, etc. Stockhomiae ... Anno 1602, Bv-B2r.
Adolf. Schroderus now faced the task of motivating a single student to study—a prince, possibly the future head of state. A few years later, it was evident that Charles was pleased with Schroderus’s tutorship. At the age of twenty-seven, Schroderus was raised to nobility whereupon he assumed the name by which he is more commonly known: Johan Skytte (1577–1645).

The subsequent career of Johan Skytte was rewarded with titles and estates as well as prestigious missions. Skytte was elected into the Council of the Realm in 1617; he was made baron in 1624, and he was appointed governor general of the new Swedish provinces of Livonia, Ingría and Karelia in 1629. On account of his rhetorical and political skills he was throughout his career frequently sent on diplomatic legations abroad, to build alliances, conduct negotiations and generally to help instill the glory of Sweden and the Vasa dynasty at foreign courts. However, as Skytte was born the son of a commoner—his father was a successful merchant and mayor in the town of Nyköping—he could nevertheless be perceived as a homo novus, a new man in the Swedish political elite. His achievements were occasionally met with suspicion by members of the old nobility, but Skytte himself proudly enumerated his many fortunes in public speeches—fortunes that he above all attributed to his long and diligent studies. Matters related to education were by any account a factor consistently present in Johan Skytte’s career: besides his first duties as a teacher in the royal family, he was appointed chancellor of Uppsala University in 1622 (Sweden’s only university at the time). He founded the “Skyttean” professorship in eloquence and politics the same year, and he co-authored new statutes for the university in 1625-26. Rewarded also with the chancellorship of the newly founded university in Dorpat (present-day Tartu in Estonia) in 1632, Skytte appears as an early “educational politician”, engaged in the issues at the center of his academic orations and dissertations—the rewards and utility of education.

The present intellectual biography of Johan Skytte will explore educational reform in a particularly eventful time of Swedish history—the early Age of Greatness (stormaktstiden), when many of the administrative, judicial, governmental and educational institutions we take for granted today

2 The “homo novus” of Roman literature was someone who could not claim an old lineage and who did not have “many ancestral portraits in his atrium”, but nevertheless, like Cicero, did not lack pride or power; Hans Helander, Neo-Latin literature in Sweden in the period 1620-1720: Stylistics, vocabulary and characteristic ideas (Uppsala, 2004), 547. The new men in early modern Swedish history were foremost powerful secretaries utilized by the Vasa dynasty during the formation of a centralized government, especially under the rule of Erik XIV, John III and Charles IX.

3 Per Sondén, “Johan Skytte och Oxenstiernorna” in Historisk Tidskrift 1900.

4 The characterization of Skytte as Sweden’s first “educational politician” (utbildnings-politik) was suggested by Erland Sellberg, “Johan Skytte”, SBL xxxii (Stockholm, 2005), 513.
were first founded. Johan Skytte’s own education and career as a civil servant were in this context both unusual and typical. Few men in Sweden in the early seventeenth century had an educational track record like that of Skytte, with almost a decade of studies abroad at various renowned universities. His subsequent rise to power was moreover without doubt extraordinarily successful. Yet, Skytte’s ascendancy as a civil servant was not unique per se: several of his student friends, who had also managed to acquire degrees at foreign universities in the 1590s, were likewise rewarded with employment in the expanding Swedish state. The upward journey of Skytte and his friends in the early Swedish Age of Greatness may in fact be seen as part of a larger trend in Late Renaissance Europe, where rulers found themselves increasingly dependent on skilled state officials, tradesmen, military leaders, or men of other specialized occupations, to aid the administration, prosperity and defense of their various geographical and political domains of interest. New career opportunities thus appeared—based on merit and education rather than birth—as processes of state formation and the consolidation of power in European monarchies caused the administrative as well as propagandistic burdens of the Crown to increase.

Education in an Early Modern Swedish Context

When Johan Skytte was sent abroad in 1592 to acquire a university degree, there was no domestic Swedish alternative available with regard to higher education. Despite resurrection attempts, Uppsala University, founded in 1477, had remained essentially inactive and without sufficient royal support throughout the sixteenth century. The Swedish kingdom, situated in the Northern periphery of Europe and relatively unknown, did arguably not enjoy the best of educational conditions: as one historian summarily writes, it was “a poor country: sparsely populated; underdeveloped; the victim of a

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5 The Swedish “Age of Greatness” is generally defined as the period of time between Gustav II Adolf’s ascension to the throne in 1611 and Charles XII’s death in 1718. Michael Roberts has, however, placed the beginning of the Swedish “imperial experience” earlier, that is, to the early 1560s when Swedish troops arrived in the Baltic region; Michael Roberts, The Swedish Imperial Experience: 1560-1718 (Cambridge, 1979). As Sven A. Nilsson also writes, “The expansionist foreign policy that is the mark of the Swedish Age of Greatness began as early as the mid-sixteenth century”; Sven A. Nilsson, “Imperial Sweden, Nation-Building, War and Social Change” in Arne Losman, Agneta Lundström & Margareta Revera (eds.), The Age of New Sweden (Stockholm, 1988), 9. In the present study this longer time perspective will be natural, as Johan Skytte formed his arguments before 1611, and then engaged in educational reforms in the 1620s.

6 See Wolfgang Reinhard (ed.), Power Elites and State Building (Oxford, 1996), and further references below. While this study will focus on the careers of civil servants, it should be noted that “new men” appeared also in the context of military service, where career opportunities appeared as Sweden acquired a great-power status in the seventeenth century. See, for example, Ingvar Elmroth, För kung och fosterland: Studier i den svenska adelns demografi och offentliga funktioner 1600-1900 (Lund, 1981), 189-205.
rigorous climate”.7 And yet, in the first decades of the seventeenth century, a number of far-reaching administrative reforms were initiated, including educational ones.

In the 1620s, under the reign of Gustav II Adolf (1594–1632), Uppsala University was given new statutes, professorships and funds, while towns across the country were simultaneously ordered by the king to support schools or found new ones.8 Initiatives to chart and survey the resources of the Swedish realm, including its northernmost lands, had by this time moreover been set in motion. Expeditions were sent out to Lapland by Charles IX (1550–1611) in 1605-06 to investigate, among other things, the possibilities of educating the Sami people. Three decades later, with the support of Johan Skytte, the first school for Sami children was established. The effort to map and survey the realms of the kingdom resulted in the first mathematically constructed map of Sweden (1626), and a decision to educate Swedish land surveyors (1628).9 On a central administrative level several fundamental reforms were put in place in these first decades of the seventeenth century: five permanent government departments (kollegier) had been established by 1634, the judicial system was enforced by the establishment of Courts of Appeal (the first, Svea hovrätt, was established in 1614), and the Four Estates finally approved a formal Instrument of Government (regeringsform) in 1634. The centralizing trend of the growing state bureaucracy was intensified under the helm of the assiduous Lord High Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna (1583–1654), attributed as the architect of the new administrative structures of the early modern Swedish state.10

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7 Roberts, The Swedish Imperial Experience, 43.
8 The decision to reopen Uppsala University with full support and privileges had been taken already at the so-called Uppsala Assembly in 1593, a meeting at which the Swedish Church adopted the Confessio Augustana. Lectures started, but the university lacked sufficient support and funding. See also Chapter Two.
9 The geographical boundaries of Sweden were at this time quite different from their modern shapes: the vast and scarcely populated regions in the north and northeast lacked clearly defined boundaries, while the southern border to Denmark was naturally defined by a forest belt north of Skåne, Halland and Blekinge. The region to the east of the Gulf of Bothnia was an integrated part of Sweden, and by the sixteenth century it was referred to as Finland. In the west, Norway, a tributary kingdom to Denmark, cut into Sweden as a wedge formed by the regions of Jämtland and Härjedalen. Sweden’s expansion to the southeast in the Baltic region had begun following the disintegration of the old Teutonic Order in the mid-sixteenth century; by 1595 Estonia including the strategic towns of Narva and Reval was under Swedish dominion. Regarding the definition of the Swedish realm at this time, see Torbjörn Eng, Det svenska väldet: Ett konglomerat av uttrycksformer och begrepp från Vasa till Bernadotte (Uppsala, 2001). On the history of Swedish cartography, see Sven Widmalm, Mellan kartan och verkligheten: geodesi och kartläggning, 1695-1860 (Uppsala, 1990). “Sweden” will in the present study generally refer to the realms defined by these historical boundaries.
Figure 1. The Swedish Empire with provinces acquired after 1560. Also marked are Johan Skytte’s native town of Nyköping, his estates Grönsöö, Strömsrum and Duderhof (in Ingria), the town of Jönköping where Skytte was president of Götahovrätt (the second Swedish Court of Appeal), the location of Skytte’s Sami school in Lycksele, and the town of Dorpat in Livonia, where Skytte established a new university in 1632.

As suggested by historical scholarship, an important context of this surge of reform in the early Swedish Age of Greatness was the rise of Sweden as a military state, culminating with Sweden’s entrance in the Thirty Year’s War in 1630.\(^{11}\) In terms of specific educational ideals, the present study will, however, focus also on the impact of a Late Renaissance European context, and more specifically the ideas for educational reform popular at the

universities visited by Swedish students in the late sixteenth century. In continental Europe the ideals of humanism and the Reformation(s) had by this time inspired a number of new pedagogies and schools to appear, championed by Catholic, Lutheran as well as Calvinist reformers. The humanist movement in this context may in fact be described as a hotbed for educational debate and discussions revolving not least around new “methods”, which presumably would structure knowledge more efficiently, and overcome the perceived inefficiency of the old scholastic system.\footnote{In the present study the concept of humanism will refer to certain learned and pedagogical ideals of the sixteenth century, centered on a revival of the classics and Latin eloquence, and a desire to reform the scholastic pedagogy of previous centuries. To be further discussed below, (1.4).}

When exploring the meaning of “utility”, “method” and other terms frequent in sixteenth-century scholarship, it will thus be important to keep in mind that there were seldom any agreed-upon definitions of these concepts among the scholars themselves.

Ramism, Rhetoric and Reform

Johan Skytte has become known in the Swedish history of ideas for his devotion to the ideals of Ramism, which originated with the French scholar Pierre De La Ramée (1515–1572), Latinized Petrus Ramus. Petrus Ramus’s textbooks and pedagogical method had become popular in many German schools and universities by the late sixteenth century, including the University of Marburg in Hesse where Skytte graduated in 1598. As the present study will show, Skytte’s celebrations and discussions of the liberal arts exhibit a pronounced utility-orientated approach to education, which lauds Ramist-style studies aimed at practice and action and scorns “useless” academic introversion and sophistry. Even though such action-orientated ideals were congenial to the needs of many rulers, the specific Ramist pedagogical solutions had caused academic controversy across Europe. In the face of Aristotelian tradition as well as religious and philosophical uncertainty, Ramism appeared to some scholars as simplistic and mechanical, while others saw it as a wonder of intellectual clarity and a powerful tool for university reform. At the University of Marburg, Skytte learned to argue the major issues of the debates, while forming his own opinion as to the best way forward. Since past (and present) debates on the aims and utilities of education are often revealing of deeper societal changes, Skytte’s educational arguments and later initiatives provide an important key to our understanding of this turbulent time in Northern European history.

The educational focus of this thesis has, finally, been motivated by a conspicuous scarcity of such studies with regard to early modern Swedish history. The important notion of utility, inherent in the concept of \textit{nytta} in
Swedish, has undoubtedly been studied more frequently with regard to the eighteenth century when the first Swedish scientific societies were established with an outspoken utility focus, whereas the early seventeenth-century debates conducted in Latin concerning *utilitas* have received considerably less attention. This thesis will make a contribution to the study of a period filled not only with animated debates concerning education and utility (and indeed several other early modern notions such as *virtus*, *honor*, and *dignitas*—concepts that are no longer immediately associated with the rewards of education), but also with a number of structural reforms in the context of the early Swedish Age of Greatness. In the present introductory chapter, issues pertaining to the aims of the study, delimitations and theoretical as well as methodological considerations will be discussed in greater detail.

1.2. Aim of the Study and Questions

The aim of the study is twofold: to characterize the life and works of Johan Skytte, with an emphasis on his education and his later support of schools and learning in Sweden, and, in a larger context, to explore educational reform and its motivations in the early seventeenth century in Sweden. The details of Skytte’s arguments may foremost be found in his early academic texts, composed in Latin in the period 1595-1600. Following the ideals of a utility-orientated Renaissance humanism, Skytte in these texts discussed the goals as well as the preferable contents and methods of learning by combining, as will be shown, a Ramist agenda for educational reform with a patriotic rhetoric concerned with the reputation of Sweden and the obligations of the elite to support domestic learning. As a royal tutor and later university chancellor in Uppsala, Skytte continued to emphasize the importance of education for the success of the new administrative structures launched in Sweden at this time. My analysis of Skytte’s rhetoric and later reform initiatives will thus include ideological as well as philosophical perspectives, related in the first case to the proclaimed *aims* of education and in the second case to the *contents* of educational reform, that is, the actual pedagogical methods and subjects presented by Skytte to meet the declared aims.

More specifically, I will consider a set of questions related to the aim of the study: Why was education useful according to Skytte, that is, which specific benefits of schools and studying did he convey? Which specific groups or interests constituted the main receivers of his arguments, and how were the goals of education to be obtained in terms of methods as well as contents and applications? The disposition of this study will be thematic, structured around these questions (see also below, 1.9). Utilizing a largely unexplored Latin source material, the thesis will provide a contextual
approach to education and reform in early modern Swedish history, taking into account the impact of the Republic of Letters as well as the ambitions of the royal Swedish Vasa dynasty.

1.3. The Biographical Format

The intellectual biography distinguishes itself, as the historian Anthony Grafton has remarked, from the straight biography foremost by its focus on context and its attention to “the texts which formed the center of past intellectuals’ lives”. This methodological approach is indeed congenial to intellectual history at large, as one glossary of biographical terms also notes. From the perspective of the history of ideas, the format of the intellectual biography will provide a method for an in-depth exploration of the cultural movements, rhetorical practices, theories, ideas and ideologies underlying, in this case, educational reform. As the historian Thomas L. Hankins once remarked in his much-quoted article “In Defence of Biography”, “We have, in the case of an individual, his scientific, philosophical, social and political ideas wrapped up in a single package”. Of course, this is not to say that such a “package” will appear as wholly consistent and coherent. On the contrary, we should expect that an individual organizes ideas differently than the philosophy or school theory: an individual may indeed combine logically and ideologically contradictory notions, because, as has also been remarked, “life rather than logic” brought them together in the first place. My analysis of Johan Skytte’s ideas has not, however, been motivated solely or even primarily by the occurrences of such inconsistencies. Instead, I meant this effort to serve my broader aims as an historian of ideas, as outlined above, exploring the arguments of Skytte’s texts in conjunction with their relevant contexts.

Unlike the inwardly probing approach of the “existential” biographical project, however, the biography devoted to an early modern life has limited possibilities of revealing the deepest motivations or innermost convictions of

13 Anthony Grafton, Worlds made by words: Scholarship and community in the modern West, (Cambridge, 2009), 200.
14 “Analogous to intellectual history”, the intellectual biography focuses on the “education of a subject, or the social and historical context of a life”; Donald J. Winslow, Life-writing: A glossary of terms in biography, autobiography, and related forms (Honolulu, 1995).
16 Ronny Ambjörnsson, Per Ringby & Sune Åkerman (eds.), Att skriva människan: Essäer om biografin som livshistoria och vetenskaplig genre (Stockholm, 1997), 9; “En individ kan i sin personlighet förena ideologiskt eller logiskt oförenliga idéer. Det är ju inte logiken som fört dem samman, utan livet.”
17 For an excellent recent example of an intellectual and contextual biography, see James V. Skalnik, Ramus and Reform: University and Church at the End of the Renaissance (Kirkville, 2002).
its subject. While the modern biography may utilize private letters and perhaps even interviews, the early modern biography is for obvious reasons generally confined to a less extensive source material. The essentially modern understanding of man underlying the existential or psychobiographical approach may also entail assumptions that are not very applicable to the early modern learned and political world. This is not least the case with the modern dichotomy of public and private. As the historian of science Mary Terrall, author of an intellectual biography of Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis (1698–1759), has noted, even the “private” letters that were circulated among Maupertuis’s associates assumed a semi-public character, “orientated toward the outer, frequently the public, world”. A similar observation was made by the historian of ideas Gunnar Eriksson, who remarked that the “intimate personality” does not seem to have been “invented” in the seventeenth century.

In his biography of Olof Rudbeck (1630–1702), however, Eriksson also remarks that the many forms of representation on the early modern “theatre stage of the world” did not prevent colorful personalities from appearing on the stage—from powerful chancellors, warlords, kings and queens, to influential artists and professors. These personalities nevertheless acted, as Eriksson notes, foremost as representatives of various collectives, whether it was the family, the army, the church, the state, or the university, and should thus not be seen as examples of a modern style of “individualism”. When approaching the texts they left behind, it thus seems wise to consider early modern man foremost as a social creature, as Eriksson concludes, putting man’s works and actions in the forefront rather than the innermost depths of her soul: “As we consider the actions of an individual, we open up the door to the world in which this individual lived. The individual is obviously not a point, but rather a sphere with indefinite borders toward the outer world.”

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19 Mary Terrall, “Biography as Cultural History of Science”, Isis 97:2 (2006), 310; “Even where correspondence survives, letters generally do not support a psychological, or existential, interpretation of eighteenth-century lives”.
20 Gunnar Eriksson, “Att inte skilja på sak och person” in Ambjörnsson, Ringby & Åkerman (eds.), Att skriva människan, 113; “Man kan nästan få inträffet att den intima personligheten i vår mening ännu inte var uppfunden […]”.
21 Gunnar Eriksson, Rudbeck 1630-1702: Liv, lärdom, dröm i barockens Sverige (Stockholm, 2002), 15. The metaphor of the world as a stage, theatrum mundi, where actors perform their different roles, was one of the most popular metaphors of the seventeenth century; Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 422.
22 Eriksson, Rudbeck, 15.
Such a contextual rather than an existential approach confirms the close relationship of the early modern intellectual biography with intellectual history in general.

1.4. Previous Research

Johan Skytte

The available research on Johan Skytte is generally of a synoptical character. Essays and shorter studies have been written by Erland Sellberg, Gunnar Eriksson, and Tore Frängsmyr among others. While no straight biography of Skytte has been written, Tor Berg’s dissertation from 1920, Johan Skytte: Hans ungdom och verksamhet under Karl IX:s regering, provides a detailed account of Skytte’s youth and early career which is still useful in terms of specific information regarding the schools and universities Skytte attended as well as his early work as a government official. Generally speaking, three main aspects of Skytte’s life and works have been treated in various historical disciplines: his political career, his educational reforms, and his devotion to eloquence. Skytte’s interest in the mathematical arts has, however, received fairly little attention: essentially we only have E. M.

personligheten, öppnar vi dörren för hela den omvärld vari en människa verkat. En person är uppenbarligen inte en punkt utan en sfär, en sfär med obestämda gränser utåt mot världen.”


26 On account of Skytte’s long career close to the centre of power, his name often occurs in historical studies with a political or economic focus: see, for example, Ragnar Liljedahl, Svensk förvaltning i Livland 1617-1634 (Uppsala, 1933); Nils Runeby, Monarchia mixta: Maktfördelningsdebatt i Sverige under den tidigare stormaktstiden (Stockholm, 1962); and Nils Edén (ed.), Kammarkollegiets historia (Stockholm, 1941). Skytte’s political career has, however, yet to be treated in a detailed study. Accounts of Skytte’s reform initiatives as chancellor of Uppsala University may be found in Claes Annerstedt’s somewhat dated but still factually reliable history of Uppsala University; Claes Annerstedt, Upsala universitets historia I: 1477-1654 (Uppsala, 1877). Regarding Skytte’s work as chancellor of the University of Dorpat, founded in 1632, see Henrik Sandblad, “Om Dorpats universitet under dess äldsta skede 1632-1656”, Lychnos 1975-76. On Skytte’s devotion to eloquence, see Kurt Johannesson, Svensk retorik: Från medeltiden till våra dagar (Stockholm, 2005), 121-151. On Skytte’s foundation of the professorship in eloquence and politics at Uppsala University in 1622, see Barbro Lewin, Johan Skytte och de skytteanska professorerna (Uppsala, 1985).
Dahlin’s survey from 1875, *Matematik och Naturvetenskap*, which briefly describes Skytte’s early academic dissertations.²⁷

Few studies have considered how various domestic or foreign milieus, such as specific principalities, towns or courts, could have shaped Skytte’s educational ideas and initiatives. The historian David Gaunt suggested in his dissertation on the education of officials in early modern Sweden that Skytte, who introduced a system of auscultators at the Court of Appeal in Stockholm in 1627, could have been inspired by a system in Marburg where law students were encouraged to acquire practical training in the courts (*Hofgerichts*).²⁸ Arguably, Skytte’s own educational experiences were shaped by his many years at various German universities and schools.²⁹ Landgraf Moritz’s court in Hesse-Kassel represents a specific milieu of interest from the perspective of Skytte’s later educational preferences: when visiting here in the year 1600 Skytte could witness an enthusiastic princely patronage of education and scholarship, including experimental natural philosophy.³⁰ The Ramist emphasis on mathematical arts was appreciated in particular by the landgrave, who prescribed the Ramist method for his noble academy, the *Collegium Mauritianum*.

Besides the ambitious university town of Marburg and the *Collegium Mauritianum* in Kassel it can be argued that Skytte’s birthplace, the town of Nyköping, also exerted a strong influence on his perception of utility, practical applications and government. As discussed by Lennart Hedberg, Duke Charles, who had placed his county government in Nyköping, was for

²⁷ Ernst Mauritz Dahlin, *Bidrag till de matematiska vetenskapernas historia i Sverige före 1679* (Uppsala, 1875), 43-47. For a survey of Sweden’s mathematical history, which also comments on Johan Skytte, see Gunnar Eriksson, “Motiveringar för naturvetenskap: En översikt av den svenska diskussionen från 1600-talet till första världskriget”, *Lychnos* 1971-72, 121-171. See also my own Swedish translation of Johan Skytte’s master’s oration on the art of mechanics; “Mekanikens förrättlighet—Johan Skyttes markörversion 1598: Översättning med inledning och kommentar”, *Stella: Arbetsrapporter Nr 26* (Uppsala, 2005).
²⁸ David Gaunt, *Utbildning till statens tjänst: En kollektivbiografi av stormaktstidens hovrättsauskultanter* (Uppsala, 1975), 41-47.
instance personally engaged in projects related to production and trade.\footnote{Lennart Hedberg, *Företagarfursten och framväxten av den Starka staten: Hertig Karls resursexploatering i Närke 1581-1602* (Örebro, 1995). On Nyköping, see also Christer Öhman, *Nyköpings stads historia* (Nyköping, 1973), and Harald Otto Indebetou, *Nyköpings minnen* (Nyköping, 1874).} Furthermore, as will be discussed in Chapter Two, Skytte’s father was a successful merchant and mayor in Nyköping, well connected with Duke Charles’s court.

Texts authored by others than Skytte will in some cases provide important contributions to the contextual analysis. The commemoration speeches given in the honor of Johan Skytte’s daughter, Wendela Skytte (1608–1629), provide a rare example of a discussion of the education of women in early modern Sweden.\footnote{Justa Funebria [...] Wendelae Skytte. Rigae Livonum (Riga, 1630).} Johan Skytte’s protégé, Wilhelm Simonius, praised the young baronet (who had died at the age of twenty-one) not only for her virtues and humility but also for her erudition and eloquence. These two latter topics went beyond the traditional panegyric over deceased women.\footnote{Regarding the education of Wendela Skytte, see also my previously published master’s thesis at the Department of the History of Science and Ideas, Uppsala University; “Ett liv i lärdan och dygd: En studie av två äreminnen över Wendela Skytte (1608-1629)”, *Stella: Arbetsrapporter—nr 27* (2005). On the genre and social context of funeral poetry and commemorations of women, see Annika Ström, *Lachrymae Catharinae: Five collections of funeral poetry from 1628: edited with studies on the theoretical background and the social context of the genre* (Stockholm, 1994), and further references in Chapter Six. Little is known of the origins of Wilhelm Simonius: he was the son of Johannes Simonius, the first Skyttean professor, and was later appointed deputy judge at the new Court of Appeal in Dorpat; Ström, *Lachrymae Catharinae*, 254, and Runeby, *Monarchia Mixta*, 301, note 9.} Skytte’s educational plan for Wendela, as well as his tutorship of Mary-Elizabeth (1596–1618), sister of Gustav II Adolf, raises questions concerning the education of women at this time (to be discussed in Chapter Six).

The contextual approach of this thesis also merits a discussion of relevant literature and scholarship with regard to the history of education more generally, including the educational ideals of Ramism.

**Humanism and the History of Education**

The history of education in sixteenth- and early seventeenth century Europe is very much the history of the humanist movement, the Reformation(s) and of educational reform efforts in the face of changing political and social environments. While Paul O. Kristeller’s much-quoted definition of the humanist movement still provides a useful point of departure for any discussion of Renaissance humanism, the Northern Late Renaissance context of the present study clearly also requires considerations beyond Kristeller’s
Italian quattrocento perspective. For this reason, I have made use of a number of more recent studies discussing the characteristics of Northern humanism as well as the impact of the Reformation(s). Scholarly arguments at sixteenth-century Northern European universities revolving around the aims and methods of education have been excellently described by Erika Rummel, who has considered the scholastic heritage, the ideals of humanism and the resulting paradigms of the humanist-scholastic debate in the Renaissance and Reformation. As argued by Rummel, there are crucial differences to consider between, on the one hand, the age of the Reformation in Northern Europe, and, on the other hand, early Renaissance Italy—while the debates on style and method in the Italian Renaissance had been more playful on account of the weak position of theology at Italian university faculties, the humanist ideals met sharper resistance when diffused into Northern Europe where strong-positioned theologians sensed a breach of turf. The roots of the conflicts between the humanists and the scholastics, in terms of different linguistic as well as pedagogical ideals, have also been explored in several insightful articles by Charles G. Nauert, specialized in the intellectual and cultural history of Renaissance-Reformation Europe.

34 In Paul O. Kristeller’s words, (Renaissance) humanism may be described as “… the general tendency of the age to attach the greatest importance to classical studies, and to consider classical antiquity as the common standard and model by which to guide all cultural activities.”; Paul O. Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought: The Classic, Scholastic and Humanist Strains* (New York, 1961), 95.


37 Ibid., 17. Yet, this does not mean that sixteenth-century humanism in any way constituted a coherent philosophical alternative to scholasticism—as most scholars agree today, Kristeller was right to point out that humanism as a movement lacked both the capacity and the ambition to replace scholastic learning as another philosophy; Kristeller, *Renaissance Thought*, 99 f. Moreover, as Erika Rummel points out, the Reformation(s) complicated the situation, as pedagogical and methodological debates evolved into a matter of doctrine and who was best equipped to interpret God’s word. The result was a scattering of the humanist forces and a “modification and restructuring” of the scholastic model rather than a total innovation. On the other hand, as Rummel concludes, the humanist aim had indeed been “reformation rather than revolution”; Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate*, 40.

This Renaissance background is relevant to consider as many of Skytte’s arguments were framed by a humanist anti-scholastic rhetoric. In this context, Petrus Ramus’s attacks on Aristotelian logic created a rhetorical treasure chest for Ramist followers later in the century. In the present study, the ideals of Ramism will thus be of particular relevance to analyze (recent research on the philosophical heritage of Petrus Ramus will be discussed separately below). Educational debates in the sixteenth century were not, however, determined by an isolated academic rhetoric. On the contrary, as pointed out by the historian James V. Skalnik: “In an era of religious reform, political revolt, and economic dislocation, no one could escape the influence of events or the possible consequences of his public statements.”

When exploring motivations of educational reform in Sweden in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth century, I have therefore also considered relevant literature and scholarship treating the European and Swedish state-building processes, as well as the ambitions of the Vasa kings, as these factors shaped Johan Skytte’s preferences as well as his career. Historical studies devoted specifically to early modern education in Sweden are, however, scarce. In many cases specialized studies will, however, provide important insights.

The Reformation(s), finally, constitutes an integral factor in terms of educational debates in the sixteenth century. Scholarship related to the influence of Lutheranism, Calvinism and Catholic educational reform agendas is abundant. Yet, this confessional context will constitute a background rather than a central topic in the present study, as Johan Skytte’s educational

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39 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 7.
41 For a general survey, see Wilhelm Sjöstrand, Pedagogikens historia II: Sverige och de nordiska länderna till början av 1700-talet (Lund, 1965).
42 Many of these focus on the education of the nobility, or kings and queens: see, for example, Arne Losman, “Adelskap och boklig bildning” in Jakob Christensson (ed.), Signum’s svenska kulturhistoria: Renässansen (Lund, 2005); Lars Gustafsson, “Den litterate adelmannen i den äldre stormaktstidens litteratur”, Lychnos 1959, and Peter Englund, Det hotade huset: Adliga föreställningar om samhället under stormaktstiden (Stockholm, 1989), and further references in Chapters Three and Six.
agenda was not primarily motivated by theological concerns, although he remained a loyal Lutheran, skilled in the utilization of anti-papist rhetoric.43

Ramism

In terms of educational motivations, Skytte preferred to relate his arguments to Petrus Ramus’s utility-orientated ideals. Five years prior to Skytte’s birth, Petrus Ramus, the Calvinist convert, was killed in the violence of the Bartholomew night (1572). Young Swedes studying abroad at this time—some of whom Skytte would later encounter as his teachers—had learned to appreciate Ramism, but across Europe there was little concord among scholars as to the actual value of Ramus’s life-long attempts at educational reform. In modern historical scholarship the judgments have continued to diverge in terms of Ramus’s motivations for reform, the value of his reforms and the reasons for their success. Most seem to agree, however, that a certain “rebellious” streak is discernable in Petrus Ramus’s life and works—from his attacks on ancient thinkers and contemporary institutions of scholarship (most conspicuously at his own university in Paris) to his no less tenacious arguments with religious authority (Catholic as well as Calvinist).44 The tangible result of Ramus’s reforms, a series of textbooks explicating logic and the other liberal arts “by method”, nevertheless left many of his peers unimpressed and nineteenth-century historians of logic disinterested.45 Walter J. Ong, the author of what would become the twentieth-century standard work on Ramist philosophy, declared in fact already on page five of his book that the historian of medieval logic, Charles von Prantl, had “quite rightly” stated “that Ramism could in no real sense be considered an advance or even a reform in logic”.46 And yet, long after Ramus’s violent demise, Ramist method continued to spread, establishing itself in the German heartlands as well as in the British Isles and Scandinavia, eventually reaching New England in the next century.47 For some reason, as noted by

43 The impact of the Reformation on higher and lower education has been discussed in several of the previously mentioned works, for example, Rummel, The Humanist-Scholastic Debate. For a survey on the role of the universities during the Reformation, see Paul F. Grendler, “The Universities of the Renaissance and Reformation”, Renaissance Quarterly 57:1 (2004), and further references in Chapter Two.

44 On the “rebelliousness” of Ramus, see the recent biography by James V. Skalnik, Ramus and Reform: University and Church at the End of the Renaissance (Kirksville, 2002). See also Mordechai Feingold, Joseph S. Freedman & Wolfgang Rother (eds.), The Influence of Petrus Ramus: Studies in Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Philosophy and Sciences (Basel, 2001), and further references below.

45 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 2.


James V. Skalnik, “Ramist method took sixteenth-century Europe by storm”.48

Walter J. Ong, however, declared in his study Ramus: Method, and the Decay of Dialogue that Ramus’s logic attested not to “a respectable theory, but a set of mental habits” shaped by “subconscious drives” discernable in intellectual history rather than by any effort on the part of Ramus himself or his followers.49 The removal of historical agents in Ong’s explanatory scheme of Ramism may partly be seen in the context of Ong’s effort to distance himself from the “moral” explanations he perceived in Charles Waddington’s hagiographical biography of Ramus from the previous century.50 The design of Ong’s own thesis relied instead on a construction where Ramism was essentially seen as an “epiphenomenon” of something else: influenced by the communication theorist Marshall McLuhan, Ong proposed that Ramism signaled “a reorientation of the human mind” stimulated by the advent of the printing press.51

The visual mark of Ramus’s famous method—the dichotomies and diagrams exposing tree-like structures of the liberal arts—was particularly well suited to the printed page, as Ong argued. Ramism and its diagrammatic concepts “represented a drive toward thinking not only of the universe but of

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48 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 2.
49 Ong, Ramus: Method, 7 f. Along with his analysis of Ramist method and philosophy, Ong published an inventory of the editions of Ramus’s works in Ramus and Talon Inventory, revealing that between 1550 and 1650 roughly 1100 separate printings of works by Ramus or his collaborator Omar Talon (Audomarus Talaeus, c. 1510–1562) had occurred—an impressive number as Ong himself noted, which showed that early estimates of the spread of Ramism had in fact been modest; Walter J. Ong, Ramus and Talon Inventory: A short-title inventory of the published works of Peter Ramus and of Omer Talon (Cambridge, 1958). Cf. Ong, Ramus: Method, 4 f.
50 Charles Tzaunt Waddington, Ramus (Pierre De La Ramée): sa vie, ses écrits et ses opinions (Paris, 1855; facs. edn. 2001). Cf. Ong, Ramus: Method, 5, 8. There are few biographies available on Petrus Ramus; Walter J. Ong as well as James V. Skalnik acknowledges the substantial amount of biographical detail of Waddington’s biography, but as Skalnik concludes, Waddington’s historical explanations (portraying Ramus as a herald of the modern world) will not be very “satisfactory” to modern readers; Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 3. Cf. Frank Pierrepont Graves’s study on educational reform and Ramus from 1912: “[Ramus] freed the human spirit from the dungeon of Aristotle, and drew it forth from the medieval twilight. He improved all the literary and expression studies, and helped give mathematics and science a start. It seems fitting, therefore, to account Peter Ramus a leader in sixteenth-century reforms and in the progress toward modern civilization and enlightenment” in Graves, Peter Ramus and the Educational Reformation of the Sixteenth Century (New York, 1912), 218.
51 Ong, Ramus: Method, 8, 307-318.
thought itself in terms of spatial models apprehended by sight”.\textsuperscript{52} Although the approach and thesis of Walter J. Ong has been criticized of late on several crucial points, it can nevertheless be argued that a number of observations framed by Ong have been pursued in subsequent research, albeit providing different answers. As the historian Howard Hotson concluded in his study on the spread of Ramism in German principalities, Ong was, for instance, right to claim that the Ramist movement was not powered solely by “the internal dynamism of its founder’s doctrines”.\textsuperscript{53} Also Hotson acknowledges the impact of the visual expressions of Ramism, the “clear spatial organization on the page”, later pursued by post-Ramist encyclopedists like Johann Heinrich Alsted (1588–1638) and Bartholomäus Keckermann (c. 1571–1608 or 9).\textsuperscript{54} But where Ong spoke abstractly of subconscious drives released by the printing press, Hotson chose in his study to discuss the practical appeal of Ramist pedagogy to students in small German principalities; and where Ong spent a fraction of his study on biographical factors that might have affected Ramus’s passion for educational reform, James V. Skalnik took his departure in Ramus’s own school experiences.\textsuperscript{55} In both of these reappraisals, Ramism is thus synthetically discussed as a means to an end—useful learning and increased pedagogical efficiency. On a deeper level, both Hotson and Skalnik identify social and political forces powering the popularity of Ramism, rather than purely intellectual or “typographical” ones.

In these recent approaches to Ramism the intellectual history at the centre of Ong’s study clearly takes a considerably smaller part. It may, however, be a mistake to completely lose sight of the longstanding academic issues that Ramus himself constantly returned to in his works, such as the essence of method (\textit{methodus}), knowledge (\textit{scientia}) and the aims and definitions of the university disciplines (\textit{artes}). As a professor Ramus spent his career trying to find a seamless transition from the world of academia to the world of \textit{usus} (practice).\textsuperscript{56} While Ong carried out his investigation in close engagement with such intellectual and philosophical issues, recent studies have tended to share Ramus’s pledged commitment to the world outside of academia. Pedagogical developments may however arguably be driven by both social change and the internal dynamics of university traditions and classroom practices. By the sixteenth century, the teaching masters and professors of the Republic of Letters were challenged in particular by an ever increasing

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 9.
\textsuperscript{53} Hotson, \textit{Commonplace Learning}, 292.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{55} Skalnik, \textit{Ramus and Reform}, 21 f.
\textsuperscript{56} The philosophical and epistemological points of departure in Ramus’s reform agenda are clearly discernable in his first publications, \textit{Dialecticae Institutiones} (“Training in Dialectic”) and \textit{Aristotelicae Animadversiones} (“Critical Remarks on Aristotle”), both published in 1543. To be further discussed in Chapter Four.
corpus of rediscovered ancient texts, which were often internally
ccontradictive, philosophically esoteric and linguistically challenging. Walter
J. Ong thus rightly concluded that “It is only after the pedagogical build-up
of the Middle Ages that the crucial question for philosophy becomes not, Is
it true? but Is it teachable?”57

Yet the fundamental thesis proposed by Ong, which initiated a new
scholarly enterprise dedicated to the study of oral and literary cultures, may
be criticized on historical grounds.58 In a striking formulation, James V.
Skalnik has described the problem with both Waddington’s and Ong’s
studies in terms of their “Zeitgeist” approach to history:

Both postulated a revolution in the European mind, the former [i.e. Wadd-
ington] from an Age of Faith to an Age of Reason and the latter [i.e. Ong]
from an Age of Sound to an Age of Sight. In both cases Ramus was signi-
ficant primarily as a representative of a ‘spirit of the age’ which arose in the
sixteenth century and came to dominate modern Europe.59

By Skalnik’s argument, this strong emphasis on the “mind of the age”
ignores its social and political character and, in this case, specifically the
ideologically charged atmosphere of sixteenth-century France.60 Worse still,
as argued by Howard Hotson, Ong’s polemical work effectively put a halt to
any further analysis of Ramus and Ramism in the twentieth century: “Forced
to choose between the martyr venerated by Waddington and the ‘madman’
portrayed by Ong, students of Ramism for half a century steered clear of
Ramus himself altogether, leaving him—as Ong had intended—very much
‘the anonymous center of tradition.’”61

Hotson moreover points out that Ong’s thesis fails not only to explain the
objectives and motivations that Ramus might have had as an historical agent
in his own right, but also the uneven spread of Ramism, clustering in some
parts of Europe and leaving other parts untouched.62 These issues, pertaining
to the origins as well as later spread of Ramism, can not, by the argument of

57 Ong, Ramus: Method, 23.
58 For an overview of this field see, for example, Thomas J. Farrell, Walter Ong’s
Contributions to Cultural Studies (Cresskill, 2000). As suggested by Peter Sharratt, other
cultural shifts, such as the entrance into “the computer age in scholarship” could also be seen
in the light of Ramism which “exemplified the swing from essentially oral/aural culture which
the Middle Ages inherited from antiquity to the visually ordered culture of the Renaissance”; Peter Sharratt, “Ramus, Ong, and Humanistic Learning”, Oral Tradition 1987, 179.
59 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 6.
60 Ibid., 6: “Ramus was after all a man and not a mentality, and interpretations which make
him a puppet of the ‘European mind’ are not likely to gain widespread acceptance among
critical historians.” Cf. Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 10 f.: “Confronted with the vacuum
at the centre of Ong’s reconstruction of Ramus’ thought, the reader was encouraged to regard
the deep, underlying forces released by the printing press as the only possible explanation for
the extraordinary proliferation of Ramist works.”
61 Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 12.
62 Ibid., 9-12.
both of these recent reappraisals, be fully understood without also consid-\erating economic, political, social, and religious factors. The historian of ideas Erland Sellberg, who has discussed the concept of usefulness (*utilitas*) in Ramism, has also contributed to the recent reappraisal of Ramism, suggesting that Petrus Ramus is best regarded as “neither a bad logician nor a bad philosopher”, but rather as a “pedagogical trailblazer” whose foremost goal was to reform university teaching in the liberal arts.63 By Sellberg’s argument the reason for Ramus’s “enormous impact, within both the university and the wider society, was his capacity to perceive new needs and to respond to new demands”.64 Several recent studies have focused on issues beyond Ramus’s reforms of logic, analyzing, for instance, Ramus’s attempts to promote the mathematical arts and their potential use for society.65

The present study will essentially share the assumption of the recent studies on the phenomenon of Ramism that neither socio-political nor biographical factors can be disregarded or neglected if we are to gain a deeper understanding of early modern intellectual history.

1.5. Central Concepts

Many of the central concepts of Skytte’s arguments, such as utility, nature, method, practice and theory, are found in modern debates as well. An important methodological aspect of the present study will therefore be to continuously consider the specific meanings and perceptions attached to these concepts in their early modern (Latin) usage (for example, *utilitas*, *natura*, *methodus*, *usus*, *doctrina*). Due to the basic limitations of language—the only tool available to the historian—some concepts may appear as historical concepts as well as analytical categories. The specific Latin terms *doctrina* and *usus* may, for instance, be translated as theory and practice, while “theoretical” and “practical” may also be used as a pair of analytical categories in the context of Skytte’s educational ideals more generally (to be further discussed below). As we shall see, many of the central concepts that are frequent in Skytte’s rhetoric belong to either of two categories, contemporary politics or the academic world.


64 Sellberg, “Petrus Ramus”.

The political vocabulary of the early modern era has been studied by the historian of ideas Bo Lindberg, who has described the discrepancies between the prescribed political language of Latin, based on ancient models, and a contemporary reality that did not always fit the model very well. When, for instance, translating “res publica” to “state” we should thus be careful not to confuse classical, early modern and modern connotations of this concept, the aim being, in this case, to understand the function of the concept in an early seventeenth-century Swedish context. With regard to Johan Skytte’s arguments, references to “state”, “kingdom”, and suchlike will occur in a patriotic as well as utility-related rhetoric. Ways of denoting nationally motivated early modern rhetoric (nationalism, patriotism, etc.) will be further discussed below.

Regarding words from the academic realm, some will sound treacherously familiar to us. A *mechanicus* in the sixteenth century, however, could refer not only to a craftsman but also to a scholar who studied the “mechanical arts”. Exactly what this mechanical *ars*, or discipline, entailed was at the time moreover unclear, as was also the essential meaning of the concept of *ars* itself. The term *methodus* was likewise the source of much debate in the sixteenth century, taking on meanings related both to the structuring of knowledge, *scientia*, and to the teaching of the disciplines, *artes*. When translating academic terminology and jargon we should thus consider the fact that many terms in the early modern Republic of Letters were the subject of frequent debate.

Translations and interpretations of early modern academic terminology will generally require guidance beyond classical dictionaries. In many cases, Neo-Latin studies with a combined historical and linguistic approach will be necessary to consult. Skytte’s usage of political concepts will be discussed in particular in the context of motivations to study, in Chapter Three. In Chapter Four, in the context of Skytte’s views on how the ideal education was to be achieved, I will discuss the concept of method, *methodus*, while Chapter Five will explore Skytte’s notion of utility related to the mathematical arts. Since the concept of “utility” as well as the dichotomy of theory and practice can be seen as cornerstones of Skytte’s rhetoric, I will presently introduce these concepts in their Late Renaissance context.

**Theory, Practice and the Utility of Education**

The dichotomy of theory and practice can be discerned in much of the anti-scholastic humanist rhetoric of the Renaissance, and in particular in the...
educational reformer Petrus Ramus’s understanding of utility. According to Ramus and the Ramists, the emphasis in all teaching should be on usus, that is, practice, whereas doctrina, i.e. rules and precepts, should be given as little attention as possible.\textsuperscript{68} Closely related to this division was Ramus’s notion of what was natural and artificial: the former could be observed in nature or in everyday human usage, whereas the latter was typically found in the abstract and made-up sophistry of the scholastics.\textsuperscript{69} With regard to learning a subject in school, Ramus thus believed the best way to be the imitation of common usage rather than an incessant study of rules, which the students were not taught how to apply. The resulting emphasis on exercises and practice in Petrus Ramus’s pedagogy was rooted in his idea of the purpose of learning: rather than establishing truths and logical certainties, education should prepare students to apply their knowledge outside of the walls of the university. To Ramus and his later apologists, useful learning was thus associated with usus and natura, whereas theory and rules, i.e. doctrina or praecepta, always ran the risk of falling into the category of useless subtleties, although principal rules of the arts were recognized as a foundation of learning also by Ramus.

This kind of utility-orientated rhetoric—which was not unique to Petrus Ramus but was shared by many of his Northern peers—can be traced to the language and ideals of the humanists of the Italian Renaissance. These umanisti had popularly exercised and taught the “humane arts” (typically poetry, rhetoric, history and moral philosophy) in the fifteenth century to accommodate not only their own interests in the classics but also the ambitions and needs of young men seeking to enter republican politics in Florence and elsewhere.\textsuperscript{70} Several of the most influential Italian educational treatises were thus written with an eye to the improvement of character, the ability to make wise choices, and the development of clear thought and a persuasive way of communicating.\textsuperscript{71} Even though humanist educational reform expanded and changed character when crossing the Alps in the next century, this heritage is important to consider, because, as Charles G. Nauert has pointed out:

\textsuperscript{68} To be further discussed in Chapter Four.

\textsuperscript{69} This was an ideal—in practice Ramus, like his peers, drew his observations and examples mostly from books, in particular ancient literature (to be further discussed in Chapter Five).

\textsuperscript{70} The notion of “studia humanitatis” originated with Cicero and other authors in classical times. A teacher or student devoted to such subjects was described in late fifteenth-century Italian academic jargon as “umanista”, whereas the substantive “humanism” occurred for the first time in nineteenth-century Germany; Nicholas Mann, “The Origins of Humanism” in Kraye (ed.), Renaissance Humanism. Regarding the terminology and etymology of “humanism” and related terms, see also Vito R. Giustiniani, “Homo, Humanus, and the Meanings of ‘Humanism’”, Journal of the History of Ideas 46:2 (1985), 167-195.

\textsuperscript{71} Craig W. Kallendorf (ed.), Humanist Educational Treatises (Cambridge, 2002), vii-xv.
What is hard for modern people to grasp but seemed obvious to Italians of the Renaissance is that education in humanistic subjects appeared practical while education in logic and natural science, the dominant subjects in the medieval liberal-arts curriculum, seemed to breed idle debate about purely speculative issues that were totally useless for real life. What was useful was not primarily knowledge of facts about nature (even if the facts were true) but the making of wise moral choices.\textsuperscript{72}

The modern association of utility with the natural sciences was thus anathema to these Italian scholars. However, as has also been pointed out, the Italian humanists were “reformers” of a special kind: they did not particularly wish to reform universities and institutions, but contented themselves with their branch of teaching activities that flourished nevertheless.\textsuperscript{73} This changed in the sixteenth century when the humanist ideals began to infiltrate Northern universities, which were heavily centered on logic and metaphysics.\textsuperscript{74} Scholars like Rudolph Agricola (1444–1485), Lorenzo Valla (1407–1457), Juan Luis Vives (1492–1540), and Petrus Ramus, who had all been exposed to a humanist as well as scholastic heritage, found themselves increasingly frustrated with the general state of university teaching and in particular with the inconsistencies they perceived in the commonly used scholastic textbooks on logic.

Curricular reform proposals aimed at logic, the core subject of the scholastic system, initially caused strife and bitter argument at Northern universities.\textsuperscript{75} By the paradigms of the ensuing academic debates, traditionally inclined scholars saw a lack of scientific relevance in the humanist predilection for eloquent language, whereas humanists like Ramus and Vives scorned the dry and “unreal” language they perceived in scholastic logic.\textsuperscript{76} These Northern humanists thus proposed to reform logic, substituting it for an “art of discourse” (designated logic or dialectics by various authors) aimed at refining human thought and communication.\textsuperscript{77} Whether this

\textsuperscript{72} Nauert, \textit{Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe}, 15.
\textsuperscript{73} Kallendorf, \textit{Humanist Educational Treatises}, viii.
\textsuperscript{74} Rummel, \textit{The Humanist-Scholastic Debate}, 65, and Nauert, “Humanist Infiltration into the Academic World”, 808.
\textsuperscript{75} Rummel, \textit{The Humanist-Scholastic Debate}, 65.
\textsuperscript{76} Ibid., 1-18. Of course, beyond the \textit{bêtes noirs} provided by the protagonists themselves, a closer look at scholasticism and humanism will often reveal that the “humanists” and “scholastics” shared many attributes. Yet, as Rummel also argues, the recurring issues of sixteenth-century academic arguments, pertaining to the aims of education as well as methodology, merit an analysis of the patterns of the debates; ibid., 11.
\textsuperscript{77} The roots of the humanist-scholastic debate were essentially founded in incompatible ideas about the “proper use of human reason”; as noted by Nauert, “Humanism as Method, 433. Regarding the characteristics of Northern humanism, see also idem, \textit{Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe}, 95-163. The fundamental difference in humanist and scholastic perspectives on language affected already the first grammar courses: while the scholastic masters used grammar study as a means of effectively administering pre-philosophy courses to their young students, the humanist masters were interested in giving them linguistic skills that would prepare them for the study of the classics and exercises in
humanist understanding of scholasticism, and later Neo-Aristotelianism, was “correct” is of course another matter. As Hanna H. Gray once remarked in her elucidating article on the humanist “pursuit of eloquence”, what matters is rather “[…] the image of scholasticism which they built up and the ideal of eloquence which they proposed to substitute”. The idea of a reformed logic was evidently appealing to frustrated scholars and university teachers in the early sixteenth century, and as it turned out, the thought of reform was transferable also to other subjects.

By the mid-sixteenth century, the circle of subjects considered as potentially useful by Northern humanists had expanded considerably. By the argument of the Ramists, the goal of all education should in fact be its use, usus, and a kind of utility, utilitas, that would serve the community outside of the Republic of Letters. In the same way as Cicero’s oratory in previous humanist treatises had been portrayed as a model to emulate in rhetorical training, Petrus Ramus now set out to find good examples in other subjects as well—Archimedes was, for instance, conveyed by Ramus as a model mechanicus on account of his many useful mechanical inventions, while Aristotle was rehabilitated as a model dialectician, once cleansed from the “nonsense” of his scholastic followers. While setting out to revise the trivium arts of grammar, logic and rhetoric, Ramus thus soon became immersed in a larger educational reform project, eventually encompassing a revision of all the arts. Ramus turned his attention in particular to the so-called mathematical arts, which had gained increased scholarly attention by the mid-sixteenth century (to be discussed in Chapter Five).

Petrus Ramus remained, however, skeptical of the utility of pure mathematical theory, which could not obviously be applied—an attitude that would come to be at odds with contemporary astronomers like Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) and Tycho Brahe (1546–1601), who had taken an interest in the regularities of the universe and ways to mathematically describe them. To Ramus, the aim of mathematics was, as with all subjects, first and foremost its practical use, in land surveying, fortification, navigation and so on. In many cases he found support for his arguments in classical examples and epic poetry, which he made sure to include in his own mathematical textbooks. As for methods of teaching, Ramus insisted that all subjects should be taught swiftly and above all eloquently, and he made no exception for mathematics.

While many of Petrus Ramus’s peers disagreed, as we shall see, with the specifics of his method and his resulting systematization of the arts, few scholars claimed that education should not be in some manner useful. Yet,

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Ramus in this context went further than most. As Erland Sellberg has suggested, Ramus’s zeal in defining each art strictly by its use (*usus*) resulted in a philosophical and pedagogical dedication to utility (*utilitas*) that would be the mark of Ramism and the lowest common denominator for those who would later be called Ramists. As the present study will show, Johan Skytte often utilized the Ramist rhetoric to criticize his opponents, accusing them of unnecessary theorizing and in the worst case, of repeating the crime of the old scholastics—engaging in meaningless metaphysical activities that satisfied no one but themselves.

By the time of Skytte’s university studies in the 1590s, however, the most criticized and scorned scholastic handbooks in logic (used in the medieval period) had been abolished from Northern European universities. To Ramist followers, the anti-scholastic rhetoric nevertheless provided excellent material for their arguments concerning a more utility-orientated education, which could be contrasted with the shadowy, useless “sophistry” of the past. This kind of anti-scholastic rhetoric could also very well be applied to contemporary schools or professors, who—according to Ramists—in some manner did not fulfill the ideals of useful learning. The extraordinary longevity of this kind of anti-scholastic rhetoric—reaching back to fourteenth-century Italy and extending into the Cartesian disputes of the late seventeenth century—will of course make anti-scholasticism a vehicle for many shifting academic debates and issues. Johan Skytte’s confident anti-scholastic rhetoric was in some cases, as we shall see, based on unresolved issues related to key concepts of the sixteenth-century educational debates, such as method and utility, while on other occasions the rhetoric merely provided an argumentative framework for the purpose of praising the utility of certain subjects.

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79 Sellberg, “The Usefulness of Ramism”, 117 f.
80 For examples and rhetorical themes, see Helander, *Neo-Latin Literature*, 445-450. As discussed by Magnus Nyman and Anders Piltz, the rhetoric that set up utility in a victorious fight against the useless was not necessarily limited in the sixteenth-century to academic playful debates—the adjectives *nyttig* and *onyttig* (useful and useless) were frequently used during the Reformation in Sweden in times of convent dissolutions and abolishment of longstanding church traditions; Magnus Nyman, “Klosterskövlingen och nyttobegreppet”, *Signum* 1995:2, and Anders Piltz, “Sverige mellan kontemplation och nytta”, *Signum* 1993:3. Of course, as has also been suggested, one may not assume that pre-Reformation societies because of this development had particularly cherished “useless” activities—even those accused of outrageous uselessness, such as contemplative religious orders, sometimes defended themselves by referring to their utility (it could, for instance, be argued that prayer and worship conducted in the monasteries would benefit the society as a whole); Martin Berntson, *Klostren och reformationen: Upplösningen av kloster och konvent i Sverige 1523-1596* (Göteborg, 2003), 303 f.
Patriotism or Nationalism?
The utility-orientated agenda of Ramism was not the only factor shaping Johan Skytte’s engagements in educational issues. As we shall see, Skytte also frequently related utility to a patriotic rhetoric. Since the dissolution of the Kalmar Union with Denmark in 1523, the Swedish incentives to support a patriotic propaganda that could convincingly claim dignified and ancient origins of the Swedish people had only grown stronger.81 Across Europe, the sixteenth century was indeed a time not only of administrative state-building, but also of new fanciful national historiographies, which in the Swedish case would be based upon the myths of the Goths. In this context, the Catholic archbishop Johannes Magnus’s (1488–1544) Gothic epic historiography of the Swedish kings (Historia de omnibus gothorum sveonumque regibus; 1554) would be particularly influential. Johannes Magnus’s historiography, which claimed that Sweden was the cradle of civilizations and the origin of all culture, would together with his brother Olaus Magnus’s (1490–1557) cultural geography of Sweden (Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus; 1555) be an important source of “knowledge” about Sweden for more than a century.82 In particular Johannes’s Gothic historiography would, as we shall see, provide the Swedish Vasa dynasty—who were eager to assert themselves and their kingdom—with a useful source of patriotic propaganda.

There is, however, no agreed-upon concept denoting “nationally” motivated ideas and endeavors in the early modern age. The term “nationalism” has often been avoided because of its association with a modern understanding of the nation and specific political and social developments.

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81 See Kurt Johannesson, “Retorik och propaganda vid det äldre Vasahovet”, Lychnos 1969-70. On the dissolution of the Kalmar Union, see Harald Gustafsson, Gamla rikten, nya stater: Statsbildning, politisk kultur och identiteter under Kalmarunionens upplösningsskede 1512-1541 (Stockholm, 2000). Political tensions and uprisings continuously weakened and eventually broke this Nordic union with Denmark and Norway, and in 1521, in the aftermath of the “Stockholm Bloodbath”, the Swedish nobleman Gustav Eriksson (Vasa) was elected protector of the realm. Two years later, with the aid of the Hanseatic city of Lübeck, he managed to take Stockholm with his rebel forces, and on June 6, 1523, he was elected king of Sweden. The legends and folklore surrounding Gustav Vasa as the liberator and “country father” (landsfader) of Sweden are today considered as originating foremost in the skillful propaganda of the king himself and his descendants; Lars-Olof Larsson, Gustav Vasa: Landsfader eller tyrann? (Stockholm, 2005).

82 On Johannes and Olaus Magnus and the sixteenth-century (Swedish) Gothicism, see Kurt Johannesson, The Renaissance of the Goths in Sixteenth-Century Sweden (in Swedish 1982, Berkeley, 1991), and Per Stobaeus, Från biskop Brask's tid (Skellefteå, 2010). Both brothers wrote in exile from Sweden: Johannes had been appointed archbishop by King Gustav Vasa in 1523, but following Gustav Vasa’s dissociation and eventual break with the Catholic Church, he chose not to return to Sweden when visiting Poland in 1526. From Danzig and later Rome, the Magnus brothers worked for a Swedish re-Catholicization, but Johannes Magnus would in the end be the last Swedish Catholic archbishop. Despite the exiled archbishop’s critique of Gustav Vasa, his Gothic historiography was considered a valuable source of propaganda by Gustav Vasa and his sons.
that occurred mainly after the French Revolution. However, as has been argued by historians specialized in the early modern period, the “deconstruction” of the concept of nationalism has led to an unwarranted dismissal of national propaganda, arguments and ideas that are clearly present in older empirical material. How to interpret and label these early modern expressions of love of patria, often eloquently conveyed by the humanists, has been debated. When the concept of nationalism is applied to the early modern era it is usually done with various qualifications. The term patriotism is, however, not entirely uncomplicated either, as Bo Lindberg has pointed out in his studies of the early modern era: besides denoting a politically defined larger community, patria could also denote someone’s region of birth or a landscape. Yet, in the context of Gothicism and the humanist search for origins, patria was, as we shall see, generally used in the national sense.

To what extent the humanist expressions of patriotism, which were often inspired by the rhetorical models of ancient Greece and Rome, reached people outside of the elite is not entirely clear. In his article on the concept of nation in The Dictionary of the History of Ideas, the historian Gaines Post argued that such expressions “scarcely touched the people as a whole”. This elitist character of early modern patriotism has also been stressed by the historian David Bell, who has pointed out in his overview of new studies of

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83 Two influential studies which argued that the origins of nations, nationalism and national identities are to be found in the nineteenth-century are Ernest Gellner, Nations and nationalism (Oxford, 1983), and Eric Hobsbawm, Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality (Cambridge, 1990).

84 For an excellent summary of the debates, see Johanna Widenberg, Fäderneslandets antikviteter: Enoterritoriali historiabruk och integrationsträvanden i den svenska statsmaktens antikvariska verksamhet ca 1600-1720 (Uppsala, 2006), 43-51. See also Benny Jacobsson, Den sjunde världsdelen: Västgötar och Västergötland 1646–1771—en identitetshistoria (Stockholm, 2008), 38-40, and Lindberg, Den antika skevheten, 124. Peter Burke makes a similar point in idem, “The Uses of Italy” in Roy Porter & Mikulas Teich (eds.), The Renaissance in national context (Cambridge, 1992), 16.


86 Lindberg, Den antika skevheten, 142-150.

87 Gustav II Adolf wanted to evoke a love of country rather than native districts, as Lindberg points out; Lindberg, Den antika skevheten, 149. For a discussion of patriotism in the sixteenth-century, see Gustafsson, Gamla riken, nya stater.

88 Gaines Post, “nation” in Dictionary of the History of Ideas: Studies of selected pivotal ideas III (New York, 1973), 323. The New Dictionary of the History of Ideas (2005) discusses patriotism from a modern philosophical point of view, but unfortunately lacks the more extensive historical analysis of the old dictionary; Maryanne Cline Horowitz (ed.), New Dictionary of the History of Ideas (New York, 2005). This is not to say that national or regional identities did not exist—recent years have seen new studies concerning the growth of national as well as regional identities in the early modern era. See, for example, Jens Lerborg, Mellan två riken: integration, politisk kultur och förnationella identiteter på Gotland 1500-1700, (Lund 2003), and also Jacobsson, Den sjunde världsdelen, and Eng, Det svenska väldet.
the early modern French national identity that we might run into conceptual problems if we overlook the extent to which the Crown itself actively promoted the cult of the patrie: “Identifying the concept wholly with the monarchy, it stamped the word on hundreds of royal medals and subsidized numerous plays and poems on the subject. One must be wary, then, of reading invocations of la patrie as signs of incipient noble revolt and national awakening.”

We find a similar situation in Sweden in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when the Vasa court was the center of gravity for the Gothic propaganda. In times of war, the rulers, especially King Gustav II Adolf, would appeal to loyalty to the native country (fäderneslandet) by using anti-Danish or anti-Catholic propaganda to rouse the support of the Four Estates and the would-be soldiers in the countryside. It has been suggested that such strategies, which did indeed reach people outside of the elite, might be labeled “regnalism”, or “genealogic” nationalism on account of their close ties to the ruling dynasty. These terms may certainly be useful, but only as long as the elitist origins and smaller scale of the early modern, relative to modern, nationalism is kept in mind. Gaines Post was right, I believe, that nationalism in the sense of a mass movement was not born until after the French Revolution when the nations of Europe more “generally and effectively could command the patriotic call”.

When Johan Skytte appealed to feelings of loyalty to fäderneslandet, he clearly spoke of Swedes and Sweden in a context of other nationalities (for example Germans, Italians and Frenchmen). The exact geographical boundaries of Sweden varied during Skytte’s life-time, but these do not constitute the most important factor when analyzing his rhetoric—what matters is rather the image of Sweden that Skytte and his employers, the Vasa dynasty, wished to impress on others. In this study, I have chosen to discuss Skytte’s arguments in terms of patriotism in order to underline the

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90 As Bo Lindberg has noted, such affected rhetoric was not used very much in the later Swedish Age of Greatness, when the constitution had changed and the king was no longer dependent on the Four Estates to make decisions; Lindberg, Den antika skvheten, 149.
91 See Patrik Hall, Den svenskaste historien regarding “genealogic” nationalism, and Susan Reynolds, Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe 900-1300 (1984; Oxford, 1997), 250-261, who labels early medieval loyalties to the king as regnalism.
93 While nationally motivated ideas clearly existed in the early modern era, we still have to be careful, of course, not to apply modern concept of nation in the context of our sources. As Torbjörn Eng has discussed, Sweden as well as other European states of the early modern period can at this time not be regarded as “national states” in the modern sense: instead they are better characterized as conglomerate states that “embraced disparate territories that had their own legal relation to a common ruler and to the crown”; Eng, Det svenska väldet, 82-228; 440-445. Sweden’s territorial expansion began in 1561 when Livonia was attacked, but as Eng points out, a conglomerate character of Sweden’s political structure had been introduced prior to this time by Gustav Vasa’s creation of hereditary duchies for his sons.
elitist context and close relation to the humanist rhetoric of *patria*, set in Latin.

1.6. Methodological Remarks

Interpreting Early Modern Text

The rhetorical character of early modern texts merits a comment with regard to the interpretation of ideas and their context. As is well known, Latin and Greek literature provided a natural frame of reference for the humanists in their treatment of almost any subject. From an early age, students were encouraged to collect memorable sentences from the classics in their own notebooks, aptly referred to as the *florilegium* (a collection of literary flowers) which they could use in their own future compositions. This fact should not, however, lead us to believe that the flowery humanist orations and other productions constituted *nothing but* rhetoric, mechanically imitated from the ancients, or that the *contents* of the prescribed classics did not have a deeper impact beyond their functions as linguistic models. As the historian of ideas Bo Lindberg remarked in his study on Justus Lipsius’s political writings (which were permeated by advice based on classical sentences and in particular Stoic philosophy), the “backbone” of the humanist tradition was the pedagogical belief that good literature should be put to use in order to morally educate and refine human beings. The classical literature prescribed in numerous sixteenth-century school curricula was thus ultimately seen as useful not only as examples of grammatical, rhetorical or dialectical models, but also as carriers of a timeless wisdom to live by.

With regard to the relation between the humanists’ own writings and the classics, we find certain unresolved issues concerning matters of style, imitation and originality, evidenced not least by the longstanding *querelles*

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94 As Annika Ström has shown, students made use not only of such home-made *florilegia* but they also used printed collections of phrases compiled by others; Annika Ström, “*Florilegia and Progymnasmata*—Manulas Linking Theory with Practice” in Outi Merisalo & Raija Sarasti-Wilenius (eds.), *Erudition and eloquence: The use of Latin in the countries of the Baltic Sea (1500-1800): Acts of a colloquium held in Tartu 23-26 August 1999* (Helsinki, 2003), 126-142.


96 As Anthony Grafton remarks; “[…] early modern textbook writers often set out not only to inform the young, but to form them, at one and the same time”; Anthony Grafton, “Textbooks and the Disciplines” in Emidio Campi, Simone De Angelis, Anja-Silvia Goeing & Anthony T. Grafton (eds.), *Scholarly knowledge: Textbooks in early modern Europe* (Genève, 2008). As has been suggested, one should also consider that, not only did the humanists transform (classical) texts, but the texts themselves also had an impact on them; Kenneth Gouwens, “Perceiving the Past: Renaissance Humanism after the ‘Cognitive Turn’”, *The American Historical Review* 103:1 (1998), 62 f.
Nevertheless, what seems beyond doubt is that humanist writings—while entrenched in an ancient world of ideas—were generally not determined by an unimaginative imitation of classical literature or a “nostalgic dream of resurrecting a lost world”. As the historian of literature and rhetoric Kurt Johannesson has pointed out, the classics certainly provided models and examples that could be presented as a magistra vitae to an audience, but early modern writers also displayed “a free and pragmatic attitude toward the ancients, and they chose what was needed, in order to create the eloquence and poetry that the present and the future seemed to demand”.

A critical interpretation of early modern material will nevertheless require a certain familiarity with standard Roman-Greek rhetorical handbooks in order to avoid anachronistic conclusions. For instance, we still have to be cautious of building interpretations around singular tropes or examples, as illustrated by Lindberg: “[...] the fact that someone is praised for his benevolence toward his subjects does not necessarily mean that he was humane or that a certain public opinion had to be considered—instead, the explanation may be found in Quintilian’s decree that it is suitable to praise the powerful for their benevolence.” Clearly, we will need to study the entire text, as well as its context, before specific conclusions can be drawn. From...
the point of view of intellectual history it will indeed come natural to always consider the context of a certain statement, argument or idea—the contemporary (synchronic) as well as the long-term (diachronic) context.\footnote{Contextual reading is a long established interpretative method in the discipline of history of ideas and science in Sweden; see Tore Frängsmyr (ed.), \textit{History of Science in Sweden: The Growth of a Discipline}, 1932-1982, (Uppsala, 1984), and Nils Andersson & Henrik Björck (eds.), \textit{Vad är idéhistoria? Perspektiv på ämnets identitet under sextio år} (Stockholm, 1994).}

The impact also of contemporary literature is evident by the fact that sixteenth-century students studied, besides the classics, the liberal arts from an increasing number of textbooks composed by educational reformers like Philipp Melanchthon, Petrus Ramus, and numerous less famous university professors. This development was seen by some scholars as a dangerous deflection of the students’ attention from the original works themselves, but the general trend was undeniable. In the case of Skytte’s academic writings, the textbook influences are obvious. The same technique of creative copying and borrowing that was applied to the classics was also used with regard to contemporary textbooks or other literary works: in Skytte’s master’s oration, we find for instance that long sections were copied from a mathematical work by Ramus.\footnote{Petrus Ramus, \textit{Scholarum mathematicarum libri unus et triginta a Lazaro Schonero recogniti & emendati}. Francofurti, (1569) 1599.} What mattered in the production of academic texts in the early modern Republic of Letters was, however, not exact quotes and detailed references, but rather that the oration or dissertation was rhetorically balanced, that it convincingly argued its case, that it bore witness to its author’s great erudition, and preferably that it pleased the powerful men to whom it was dedicated.\footnote{On humanist literary method, see, for example, Grafton, “The New Science and the traditions of humanism” in Kraye (ed.), \textit{The Cambridge Companion to Renaissance Humanism}, 208 ff.}

With regard to Johan Skytte’s texts, the synchronic as well as the diachronic contexts will thus be equally important to consider: on the one hand the impact of contemporary literature and political circumstances, and on the other hand the longer time perspectives carrying the powerful \textit{exempla} once provided by the ancients.\footnote{A line of thought congenial to the French \textit{Annales School} which assumed that some ideas exist within very long time perspectives, \textit{longue durée}, while others are determined more by short-lived political events; Peter Burke, \textit{The French historical revolution: The Annales school}, 1929-89 (Cambridge, 1990).}
1.7. Source Material

Johan Skytte’s philosophical ideals, his Ramism and educational preferences, are available foremost in his early Latin dissertations and orations (written in the period 1595-1600). This early material constitutes a rich and detailed display of the contents of late sixteenth-century higher education as well as contemporary debates concerning the essence of “useful” education. In 1595 Skytte, at the age of eighteen, wrote a response to an attack on Petrus Ramus’s logic written two years earlier by Daniel Cramerus (1568–1637), professor of theology in Wittenberg, which is revealing of the aims of Ramist method as well as the enthusiasm by which it was defended. Skytte’s response at this time was possibly assisted or inspired by his Ramist-friendly teacher Rudolph Goclenius (1547–1628), who held private seminars in Marburg in addition to his public lectures. Skytte received his magister degree in Marburg in August 1598 under the presidium of Goclenius. His dissertation discussed from a Ramist standpoint a number of “problems from the liberal arts”. For his degree Skytte was also required to deliver an oration that would exhibit his rhetorical skills. Skytte chose to speak on the “excellence, nobility, benefits and fundaments” of the mechanical arts, a subject that he had previously studied for the Ramist Lazarus Schonerus (1543–1607) in Lemgo. After his graduation Skytte stayed in Marburg in Hesse for some time, to teach and possibly to initiate studies in the faculty of jurisprudence. Later in the fall of 1598 Skytte produced another oration, this time on a classical Ramist topic, namely the union of eloquence and erudition. In January the following

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106 Skytte, Animadversiones modestae, in primam disputationem M. Danielis Crameri, Professoris Academiae Witebergensis extraordinarii, de praecipuis Logicae Aristotelicae partibus pro Aristotele contra Ramum, in Academia Marpurgensi publice ad disputandum propositae a Iohanne Schrodero Nicopiensi Sueco (Frankfurt, 1595) [31 pages]. Abbr. Animadversiones modestae.

107 On Goclenius’s teachings in Marburg, see also Berg, Johan Skytte, 51, and below, Chapter Four.


110 In May 1600, Skytte is called [juris].Utriusque. Studiosus, but it is not known when he initiated his studies in jurisprudence; Berg, Johan Skytte, 68-70.

111 Skytte, Oratio Johannis Schroderi Skytte Sueci, Sine eloquentia ad eruditionis fastigium pervenire non posse. Recitata in celeberrima Marpurgensi Academia mense Novemb. Anno 1598. Ad Illustrissimum, Potentissimum et literatissimum Wilhelmmum Ducem Bruns-
year, Skytte, still in Marburg, delivered a patriotic oration on the “ancient origins and military valor” of the Swedish people, which was heavily influenced by Johannes Magnus’s Gothic historiography, *Historia de omnibus gothorum sveonumque regibus* (1554).\(^{112}\)

In the summer and fall of 1599 Skytte visited Sweden and his hometown of Nyköping where he got the opportunity to showcase his acquired rhetorical skills: on the occasion of the inauguration of a new headmaster at his old school in 1599, Skytte provided a historical outlook on the recent rise of eloquence, in which Petrus Ramus but also Swedish achievements were celebrated.\(^{113}\) The following year Skytte was back in Hesse, where he studied jurisprudence and participated in the activities at Landgraf Moritz’s newly established *Collegium Mauritianum*. In April Skytte delivered an oration praising the landgrave, his initiative to start a school, his Ramist curriculum and excellent teachers, and generally the value of education for the nobility.\(^{114}\) One month later, Skytte presented a short treatise titled *Flores Philosophici* (“philosophical flowers”) which discussed the definitions and purposes of a few selected arts, namely those that seem to have been especially close to his heart—arithmetic, geometry, mechanics, politics and ethics.\(^{115}\) In addition to these texts, which constitute the majority of Skytte’s writings from this time, I have studied selected parts of Rudolph Goclenius’s philosophical teachings on Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484–1558) as written
down by Skytte and published by him in 1599.116 These notes constitute a sample of some of the major Renaissance philosophical issues and debates as portrayed to the students at Marburg during the closing years of the sixteenth century.

With regard to the question of authorship, it may be noted that individual professors in the early modern era often exerted a great influence on their students’ productions. It was not uncommon that the professor himself had written the dissertations over which he presided. Following this academic tradition, Rudolph Goclenius was in all likelihood largely responsible for the contents of Skytte’s master’s dissertation, the *Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta*. Yet, at the level of Skytte’s graduate studies in Marburg, students were no doubt also expected to be able to compose the required treatises themselves and to do so with rhetorical finesse and style, a skill learned not only by listening to public lectures but also in close encounters with the professors in their private seminars. In Skytte’s case, the style and contents of his texts in several cases indicate that he himself was responsible for their composition. His master’s oration, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*, thus included references to Swedish circumstances as well as specific admonitions to Duke Charles. The fact that Skytte’s Ramist apology of 1595, *Animadversiones modestae*, was prohibited from being publicly disputed, may also be an indication of Skytte’s authorship.117 As evident by Skytte’s celebrations of Petrus Ramus and Ramist method in speeches held independently of the academic setting (for instance, later in Nyköping and in Kassel), he was thoroughly convinced of the superiority of Ramist method by the late 1590s and had moreover acquired the rhetorical skills to portray this conviction.

The sources related to Skytte’s career as an official in Sweden are partly of a different character: shorter decrees, official statements, and records from the senate of Uppsala University.118 In his public orations delivered at


117 The front page of the *Animadversiones modestae* has a note that states that the disputation was not allowed to be performed: “Non licuit hanc disputationem haberi, quia Rector et Senatus Academiae prohibuerant.” See also Berg, *Johan Skytte*, 275, note 45. The reason for this prohibition by the rector and *Senatus Academiae* is unknown, but the text contains a rather acid assault on the professor of theology Daniel Cramerus in Wittenberg. That the eclectically inclined Rudoloph Goclenius should have used such aggressive rhetoric seems rather unlikely. Stylistically, this particular dissertation also contains a high frequency of Greek words, typical perhaps of a beginner trying to showcase his erudition. Also Goclenius included Greek quotes in his Latin texts, but less frequently.

118 Material related to the early history of Uppsala University, including its new statutes of 1626, are available in reprint in Claes Annerstedt, *Uppsala universitets historia: Bihang I Handlingar 1477-1654* (Uppsala, 1877). The records of the university senate are available in Hans Sallander (ed.), *Uppsala universitet: Akademiska konsistoriets protokoll vol I: 1624-1636* (Uppsala, 1968); and idem, *vol. II: 1637-1640* (Uppsala, 1968-69). Documents related to
Uppsala University, Skytte emphasized in particular the superiority of Ramist method in all education. Skytte’s first important mission as a government official serving Charles IX was his tutorship of the young prince, Gustav Adolf. In 1604, the “Prince’s Mirror” Skytte had been asked to compose was published under the title *Een kort underwijsning uthi hwad konster och dygder een fursteligh person skall sigh öfwe och bruke* (“A short instruction concerning the arts and virtues a princely person must practice and use”). In this treatise Skytte emphasized the importance of education, linguistic skills and eloquence, not least in the context of diplomacy and international relations. Other material related to educational topics, such as late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century scholarly works and treatises composed by contemporaries of Skytte, will be presented when utilized.

1.8. Translations

Latin and Swedish quotes have been translated to English while keeping the originals in footnotes. Three longer Latin excerpts are provided in Appendix B, translated to English with the Latin retained in parallel. The longer excerpts relate some of the characteristic arguments found in the material, but also some more unusual themes including Skytte’s discussions of the history of mechanics. Unfortunately a more detailed rhetorical and linguistic analysis of Skytte’s texts falls outside the scope of this study. It may be noted, however, that Johan Skytte in his own time was known as an orator of the first rank. Besides a characteristic humanist erudition, his preserved texts reveal a sophisticated use of rhetorical techniques. For the benefit of those interested in these aspects of the source material, I will provide a few comments regarding Skytte’s language and style, as well as the editorial principles used throughout the present study.

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*the early history of Dorpat University have been reprinted in Juhan Vasar (ed.), Quellen zur Geschichte der Universität Tartu [Dorpat] (Tartu, 1932).*

*Skytte’s inauguration speech for the Skyttean professorship, Inauguralis actus, celebratus in Regia et incluta academia Ubsaliensi, cum illustris et generosus dominus, Dominus Johannes Skytte senior, Liber Baro in Duderoff […] professionem a se fundatam Iohanni Simonio a. d. 5 Decembr. Anno 1625 solemniter commendaret (Uppsala, 1626), is available in reprint in Henrik Schück, Bidrag till Uppsala universitets historia: Ur Rektors inbjudnings-skrift 1905-1918; Bd 2 (Uppsala, 1912-1918) [8 pages]. Abbr. *Inauguralis actus.* Another well-known speech by Skytte as a university chancellor is his speech to the students at Uppsala University, held in 1640, *Oratio, qua studiosam Upsaliensis academiae pubicem ad verum studiorum finem publice hortatur 19 Novemb. 1640,* transl. to Swedish in B. Rudolf Hall, *Undervisningshistoriska önskemål: räddnings-, uppteknings-, forsknings- och undervisningsuppgifter ÅSU 75* (Stockholm, 1948) [14 pages].

*Skytte, *Een kort underwijsning uthi hwad konster och dygder een fursteligh person skall sigh öfwe och bruke* (Stockholm, 1604); reprinted in B. Rudolf Hall, Reformpedagogik i Gustav Adolfs anda (Lund, 1932) [23 pages]. Abbr. *Een kort underwijsning.*
Language and Style

The morphology and syntax of Skytte’s texts generally adhere to classical principles. Characteristic themes and expressions in Skytte’s orations and dissertations often bear the mark of the classical authors, in particular Cicero.\(^{121}\) In terms of vocabulary, however, Skytte utilized words from all periods of ancient Latin, as most Neo-Latin authors did. For this reason we should, as the Neo-Latinist Hans He lander points out, speak perhaps of “ancient Latin” rather than “classical Latin” as the guiding norm of Neo-Latin authors.\(^{122}\) The important thing was to have support in the *auctores probati*, among whom Plautus and Terence were generally considered to belong.\(^{123}\) Skytte’s polemical sections are clearly influenced by both of these Roman comic playwrights. Contemporary phenomena, for example in the context of governance, warfare, trade, and the academic and ecclesiastical worlds, moreover caused early modern authors to use neologisms, that is, words not found at all in the writings of ancient authors.\(^{124}\) Certain titles were obviously challenging to express in ancient Latin—the Hessian *Landgraf* (Landgrave) Moritz, whom Johan Skytte visited as a student, was thus simply entitled *Landgravius* in Latin. A short trilingual vocabulary listing common titles and political terms in Sweden in the sixteenth-century (occurring in the material of this study) is provided in Table 1.

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\(^{121}\) Ciceronian expressions are, for instance, abundant in Skytte’s magister oration, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*, where his adversaries are being depicted as reckless madmen [*effroenati* and *furiosi*], lying in ambush [*insidiantes*]; their motivation being lust [*libido*] and their ideas leading to the end of civilization [*interitus* and *exitium*]—a rhetoric clearly influenced by Cicero’s *In Catilinam I* and *II*. Skytte’s conception of *otium* (free time) in the sense “well-spent time” reflects the discussions of Cicero’s *De Officiis I*, whereas his praise of the German support of the mathematical arts in the same oration takes support from Cicero’s well-known sentence, *honor alit artes*, quoted by Ramus in *Scholae Mathematicae*. As a student, Skytte frequently copied classical anecdotes and examples from Petrus Ramus, especially from the *Scholae mathematicae*, a textbook that was a characteristic humanist production—Ciceronian in style, rhetorically sophisticated, and with abundant references to ancient mythology.

\(^{122}\) As Helander writes, our definition of the “classical” period, viz. the period of Cicero to c. A.D. 120, was clearly of little relevance in the early modern era, when words that are regarded in our own time as pre-classical or post-classical could very well have been considered as legitimate to use—even by those striving to adhere to a pure Ciceronian style. The attitude among most Neo-Latin authors was, as argued by Helander, moderate and eclectic rather than doctrinal and rigid; Helander, *Neo-Latin Literature*, 66 f.

\(^{123}\) Ibid., 66. As discussed also by Peter Sjökvist, *The Early Latin Poetry of Sylvester Johannis Phrygius: Edited, with Introduction, Translation and Commentary* (Uppsala, 2007), 74.

\(^{124}\) On the general features of Neo-Latin vocabulary, see Helander, *Neo-Latin Literature*, 65 ff., and Ijsewijn, & Sacré, *Companion to Neo-Latin studies*, 382 ff. Ancient words could be given new meanings, or words could be coined, following classical principles. As Helander remarks, “The demand on the Latin language to be a vehicle for all contemporary ideas and all new knowledge necessarily brought about innovations on a large scale”, ibid., 65.
Table 1. **Glossary of common titles and political terms used by Skytte**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>Swedish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Princeps</td>
<td>Furstе</td>
<td>Prince</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comes</td>
<td>Greve</td>
<td>Count</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liber Baro</td>
<td>Fрихерре</td>
<td>Baron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eques Auratus</td>
<td>Rиддаре</td>
<td>Knight of an Order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landgravius</td>
<td>Lантгреве</td>
<td>Landgrave/Landgraf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalis Gubernator</td>
<td>Generalguvernёр</td>
<td>Governor General</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senator</td>
<td>Rикsråд</td>
<td>Royal Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aula</td>
<td>Hовет</td>
<td>Royal Court</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicium Aulicum</td>
<td>Hовrätt</td>
<td>Court of Appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comitium</td>
<td>Рикsdаг</td>
<td>Assembly of the Estates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordines</td>
<td>Станнына</td>
<td>The Four Estates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senatus or Curia</td>
<td>Рикsråдет</td>
<td>Council of the Realm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancelleria</td>
<td>Kанслет</td>
<td>Chancellery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camera</td>
<td>Каммаколлегиум</td>
<td>Treasury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancellarius Regni</td>
<td>Риксканслер</td>
<td>Lord High Chancellor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancellarius Academiae</td>
<td>Universитetskанслер</td>
<td>University Chancellor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Words that Skytte considered particularly special or important in some manner were generally given a capitalized first letter. This was often the case with words from the academic world or obvious Greek loanwords (exemplified in Table 2, from Skytte’s *De mechanicae artis praestantia* etc.). Contemporary or medieval phenomena were likewise capitalized in this manner (e.g. *Landgravius* and *jus Feudale*), as were also various honorary titles in specific rhetorical contexts (e.g. *Graeciae Primas* about Aristotle) and words denoting specific occupations and trades (e.g. *Ferrarii, Aurifices, Pastores, Chirurgi, Tonsores, Sartores, Olearii, Unguentarii*).

Table 2. **Examples of Greek Loanwords**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latin</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polyspaston</td>
<td>lifting device with tackles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trochlea</td>
<td>pulley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypomochlium</td>
<td>fulcrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialectica</td>
<td>dialectics, logic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machina</td>
<td>machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Machinator</td>
<td>the maker of the machine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacoma</td>
<td>counterweight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scalmum</td>
<td>rowlock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogus</td>
<td>discussion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to the stylistics of Skytte’s texts, there is much inspiration from Petrus Ramus. Skytte’s texts, early as well as later, are often polemical, characterized by a frequent use of rhetorical figures such as various kinds of metaphors, hyperboles, and catalogues (i.e. enumerations), and exclamatory...
figures of speech such as *interrogatio*, *exclamatio*, and *apostrophe*. The effect of the frequent exclamations and apostrophes is a lively dialogue, in which friends, enemies, ancient heroes, or mythological figures are addressed and drawn into the arguments. Skytte’s similes and metaphors frequently involve images of light (e.g. *solis lux*) which are contrasted with the darkness of the scholastic philosophers, dwelling in shadows and clouds (*Scholasticis umbraculis, sophisticis nebulis*, etc.). Metaphorical inspiration was also frequently drawn from ancient mythology—an adversary could, for example, be “[more blind] than Polyphemus when he had been blinded by Ulysses in his cave” (*quam Polyphemus ab Ulysses in spelunca occaeacatus*).

Skytte also utilized the rhetorical figure of *prosopopoeia* (the term was used by Quintilian), which involves a change of perspective in terms of the source of the message: the speaker, in this case Skytte, lets another person or agent speak in the first person. In his master’s oration on mechanics, Skytte lets the nation of Italy praise its many *Mechanici*, and a number of craftsmen speak of the utility of the lever and other tools, whereas he lets Philosophy explain the virtues of study in his oration delivered at the *Collegium Mauritianum*. Another conspicuous stylistic factor in Skytte’s texts is his frequent use of synonyms (e.g. *parens atque inventor, disceptat et concludit, profligare atque tollere, lapsu et errore, maximum et amplissimum, opifices artificesque, privatum ac destitutum*). Superlatives and themes of the eternal, mighty and immortal are especially frequent (e.g. *literatissime Princeps, perpetuam laudem, sempiternam gloriām, aeternis laudibus* etc.). All in all, Skytte’s frequent use of superlatives, synonyms and catalogues makes his language somewhat overloaded, a feature typical of the manneristic style cultivated in texts of this age.

**Latinized Names and Titles**

Latinizations were a common practice applied by students going abroad to acquire a higher education. One of Skytte’s student friends, Nils Chesnecopherus, deduced his Latin name from his birthplace, Ekeby, and would retain this name throughout his life.125 Johan Skytte used the name Schroderus as a student, which was probably inspired by the German word *Schroder* (tailor) which his father Bengt Nilsson had sometimes used.126 The title pages of Schroderus’s academic works often state the author as Johannes Schroderus Nicopiensis Suecus, thus also declaring that Schroderus was a Swede, from Nyköping. For the sake of simplicity, I will henceforth use one name (Johan Skytte). In the sources used we also find

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125 Tor Berg, “Nils Chesnecopherus”, *SBL* viii (Stockholm, 1929).
Latinized versions of royal names, such as Gustavus, Carolus and Johannes. In the present study these names will generally be used in their modernized (Anglo-Saxon) versions.

Titles were extremely important in the period under study, especially royal titles. The title “King of Swedes and Goths” had been in use since the twelfth century, and in the 1540s the title of Vendes (or Vandals) was added, which by its association to an old Slavic people could have been an attempt to further increase the international reputation of the king, but it could also have been a reaction to the Danish King who also used the name in his title. In running text long titles were often shortened (Skytte was often content with Svecorum et Gothorum rex). Superlatives were not spared, however: when Skytte addressed a patron or other important lord he would frequently use superlative expressions, such as “illustriissime princi-peps” (most illustrious Prince) or “literatissime Princeps” (most learned Prince).

Finally, a word on Johan Skytte’s own title, such as it was eventually formed. It is essentially a summary of his career and could be typed out as:

**JOHANNES SKYTTE SENIOR, LIB. BARONIS**

in Dudoroff / DOMINUS IN Grönsöö ET Strömsrum / EQVES AURATUS,


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127 For variations, see Helander, *Neo-Latin Literature*, 289 f.
128 On titles expressed in Neo-Latin generally, see ibid., 199-211.
129 See Helander, *Neo-Latin Literature*, 285, on Vandali, Vandalia, etc. Additions and changes in Royal Swedish titles were never officially motivated or explained, as the historian Torbjörn Eng has noted; Eng, *Det svenska väldet*, 82-228, 440-445. King John III, regent at the time of Johan Skytte’s birth, adopted the title “Sveriges, Götes och Vendes Konung, storfurste till Finland, Karelen, Solonski Pätin och Ingermanland i Ryssland och över de ester i Livland hertig”. As the historian Sverker Oredsson has remarked, this title “proclaimed an actual situation, a tradition and an ambition”; Sverker Oredsson, *Gustav II Adolf* (Stockholm, 2007), 25. John III had received Finland (which by tradition was considered as part of the Swedish kingdom) as his duchy, but the title Grand Duke was new. See also Eng, *Det svenska väldet*, 149, 441. Karelia, Solonski Pätin and Ingria were disputed lands between Sweden and Russia.
130 As Helander notes, “In the praise of Kings no one seems to restrain himself, not even the most outstanding scholars.”; idem, *Neo-Latin Literature*, 45.
131 The title *eques auratus* indicates that Skytte had received knighthood. Hans Helander notes that Andreas Bure (1571-1646) gave the following classification of the Swedish nobility in 1626: “Nobilitas in Comites, Barones, Equites auratos, communemque nobilitatem dividitur, i.e. counts, barons, knights and ordinary noblemen”; Helander, *Neo-Latin Literature*, 207. Cf. E. Cobham Brewer, *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* (s.l., 1894): “knight bachelor, called auratus because he was allowed to gild his armour—a privilege confined to knights.” In Skytte’s case the title may refer to his English knighthood bestowed upon him by King James I during the legation in 1617-18; Sondén, “Johan Skytte och Oxenstiernorna”, 120.
Skytte was made baron of Duderhof in 1624 (a district in Ingria by the Gulf of Finland); he received, as an enfeoffment, one homestead in Grönsöö in 1605, which he in the following years expanded into an estate by a number of additional land acquisitions\(^\text{132}\); in 1622, he moreover acquired the large estate of Strömsrum in the parish of Ålem\(^\text{133}\); he was senator (riksråd) as of 1617, and he was appointed governor general of Livonia, Ingria and Karelia in 1629. In 1622 he became chancellor of Uppsala University, and “chief judge” in the northern district of Finland in 1627 (Judex Provincialis).\(^\text{134}\) In 1634, Skytte was appointed president of the second court of appeal, Göta hovrätt, located in Jönköping, which meant that he was removed from the inner circle of the government. His ignoble origins, as well as his enemies among the nobility, may have contributed to his removal from power following the passing of his patron, King Gustav II Adolf, in 1632.\(^\text{135}\) Skytte thus never reached one of the five highest offices in the state (drots, marsk, amiral, kansler and skattmästare)\(^\text{136}\), even though he in the 1620s had acted as the leader of the Treasury.

Editorial Principles

The following editorial principles have been applied.\(^\text{137}\) Spelling has generally been retained, with the exception of u and v, which have been normalized according to common modern orthography. Accents (which in Neo-Latin texts were typically used to denote the long vowel in ablative endings or final vowels in adverbs) have been deleted. Abbreviations have been expanded without remark (the enclitic –q has, for instance, been expanded to –que, and the commonly used ampersand has been expanded to et). Punctuation has been moderately altered to conform to modern standards, especially in such cases where the Renaissance practice could confuse modern readers. Capital letters have, however, been retained as this practice signaled extra emphasis on the word in question (as discussed above). When needed, quotation marks have been added. Page or paragraph references refer to the original pagination or paragraphs of the published texts.

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\(^{132}\) Berg, Johan Skytte, 111 f. In the 1610s, Skytte had a manor house built at Grönsöö, in the same style as the finer noble estates at the time; Åke Nisbeth, Grönsöö (Enköping, 1995).

\(^{133}\) Strömsrum was bought by Skytte from the Crown (by frälseköp).

\(^{134}\) See Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 208, regarding title of Judex Provincialis, in Sw. “lagman”.

\(^{135}\) To be further discussed in Chapter Six.

\(^{136}\) The titles referred to the leaderships of the five state departments: the Judiciary (hovrätten), the War Council (kriegskollegiet), the Admiralty (amiralitetskollegiet), the Chancellery (kanslikollegiet) and the Treasury (kammarkollegiet). Cf. Chapter Six.

\(^{137}\) I have essentially followed the editorial principles utilized by the Neo-Latinist Peter Sjökvist. Cf. Sjökvist, The Early Latin Poetry of Sylvester Johannis Phrygius, 99 f.
1.9. Disposition

This study has a thematic disposition that is structured around a set of basic questions, as outlined above (1.2), pertaining to Johan Skytte’s portrayals of education as useful—why, for whom, and in what way, in terms of pedagogy, content and applications. Although these questions will recur throughout the study, the question why will generally proceed into the how and what. Also, the investigation will proceed from the philosophical perspectives of Skytte’s early academic writings to the later political and “practical” applications: the first chapters will thus analyze Skytte’s motivations to study as well as the best ways to organize education (according to Ramism), while the two last chapters are structured around reforms in Sweden (particularly Uppsala University). The study also has a basic chronological order, focusing initially on Skytte as a student and his early academic writings, and proceeding to applications and reform, carried out by Skytte as a civil servant and statesman.

The present introduction will be followed by the chapter “Early Life, Education and Career Vectors” which will provide a biographical outline of Skytte’s life and career, and a background concerning the state of education in Sweden as well as the popularity of Ramism. The third chapter, “Motivations: The Weeping Muses of Sweden”, is structured around the question “why useful”. It will be shown that Skytte, in his early texts composed in the period 1595-1600, conveyed three lines of arguments for the utility of education: an argument of merit, a patriotic argument, and a state utility argument. In the fourth chapter, “How to Do It: The Method of Ramism”, I will present the main academic issues that Skytte encountered at the University of Marburg, and discuss the philosophical implications of these and how they affected Skytte’s understanding of useful education. The fifth chapter, “What to Learn: Utility and the Mathematical Arts” will analyze the rhetoric and arguments of Skytte’s graduation works in Marburg with regard to the mathematical arts. The sixth chapter, “Returning Home: Opportunities and Challenges” will discuss Skytte’s early career and first missions, such as his role as a preceptor in the royal family, and his duties in the Treasury, investigating how Skytte at this time utilized his education and skills to establish himself in the Swedish power elite. The seventh chapter, “Studied for Action: Education and Reform”, will discuss the educational reforms undertaken and initiated by Skytte, focusing especially on Uppsala University. The study will be completed with Chapter Eight, “Concluding Remarks”.
2. Early Life, Education and Career Vectors

The present chapter will discuss Johan Skytte’s origins, his early life, education and career vectors. A background will also be provided in terms of the state of education in Sweden and Europe in the late sixteenth century, and of the Swedish domestic political context, specifically the power struggles within the Vasa dynasty at this time. It will be shown how Skytte’s action-orientated educational ideals were shaped by a combination of factors in his early life, from his origins in the prosperous merchant town of Nyköping, to his encounters with the philosophical ideals of Ramism at the University of Marburg, and his visits to the noble academy Collegium Mauritianum in Kassel where Landgraf Moritz (1572–1632) “der Gelehrte” (the Learned) encouraged a well-rounded education designed for the demands of civil life.

2.1. Origins and Education

Johan Skytte was born in 1577 in Nyköping, a prosperous trading town situated by the coast about one hundred kilometers south of Stockholm (cf. Figure 1). As the capital of the duchy of Södermanland and Närke, governed by Duke Charles, the town also formed an important political centre. Johan Skytte’s father, Bengt Nilsson, was a merchant who imported fine textiles from England and the Hanseatic towns, and exported hides and iron. Bengt Nilsson served as mayor several times, and as one of the more successful citizens of Nyköping he built himself a prominent town house. His wife, Anna Andersdotter, was the daughter of one of the leading senior merchants of Nyköping, Anders Persson, who had also served as a mayor and moreover been a member of the king’s high court in the 1560s. Skytte was thus born into a family constellation that had successfully utilized the growing opportunities of the prosperous town.

During Skytte’s childhood years, Duke Charles’s older brother John III (1537–1592) was the king of Sweden, but Charles ruled his duchy in an...
almost sovereign manner, even to the extent of taxation to the king’s dismay.¹⁴⁰ The prosperity of Nyköping as a merchant town was encouraged by the duke, who conducted a policy of active trade and established several manufactories, such as a textile manufactory, an arms factory, several blast furnaces and a small glassworks.¹⁴¹ Like his father Gustav Vasa, Duke Charles took a personal interest in practical and technical matters.¹⁴² The town of Nyköping thus constituted an important commercial and political centre with merchants, craftsmen, fishermen, soldiers, foreign tradesmen, noblemen and duchy administrators crowding the streets.¹⁴³ As a mayor and wealthy tradesman, Bengt Nilsson was in a position to interrelate directly with the duke, whose court was an important consumer of Nilsson’s fine imported textiles.¹⁴⁴ More importantly, with regard to the young Johan Skytte, Duke Charles would later support his education abroad.

The career paths of the sons of Bengt Nilsson were decided at an early stage. Johan Skytte’s brother Lars was enrolled in the town school to follow in the footsteps of his father and become a merchant, while a more substantial education was planned for Johan with the prospect of employment in Duke Charles’s duchy chancellery.¹⁴⁵ As a boy Skytte was thus enrolled in Nyköping’s Latin school, which applied the Swedish school regulation of 1571 and had an essentially humanist profile with a focus on Latin and Christianity.¹⁴⁶ By Skytte’s own account it was at this school that he had first been introduced to “good letters and humanist learning”.¹⁴⁷ Although lower education in Sweden had been neglected for an extended

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¹⁴⁰ Christer Öhman, Nyköpings stads historia (Nyköping, 1973), 178 f., and Lennart Hedberg, Karl IX: Företagarfursten och enväldshärskaren (Stockholm, 2009), 33-37, 79-81. In his testament, Gustav Vasa had bequeathed his sons duchies that would give them a foundation for a life worthy of a prince and prevent dissensions and uprisings. The younger sons were to support their older brother on the throne, but Gustav Vasa’s clause on unity in the realm on the one hand and independence of the duchies on the other invited conflicting interpretations between the brothers.

¹⁴¹ Regarding the entrepreneurial activities launched or supported by Duke Charles in his duchy, see Öhman, Nyköpings stads historia, 191-199, and Hedberg, Företagarfursten och framväxten av den starka staten, 81-86.

¹⁴² Hence Hedberg’s characterization of Duke Charles as the “entrepreneurial prince” (företagarfursten).

¹⁴³ Harald Otto Indebetou, Nyköpings minnen (Nyköping, 1874), 51-61. See also Ericson, “Johan Skytte: en lärare åt furstar”, 94.

¹⁴⁴ Berg, Johan Skytte, 12.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 13.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 14. In his commemoration of Skytte’s life, the Uppsala scholar Laurentius Stigzelius (1598–1676), professor of logic and theology, later described how Skytte received his first education at home by his parents, and how he as a little boy (filiolus) was transferred to public education (publicae institutioni); Rector Academiae Upsaliensis Laurentius Stigzelius SS. Theol. Professor ordin. Omnibus Academiae Civibus S.D. 24 Junii 1645 (Uppsala, 1645).

¹⁴⁷ Skytte, Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas, A2v: “…in qua bonis literis sum instructus, et ad humanitatem informatus, ex cujus uberrimis scientiae, variaeque eruditionis fontibus rivulos aliquando meos collocupletavi, nudaes meae tenuitati vires petij, ariditati rorem hausi, opem et auxilium deprompsi.”
period of time in the sixteenth century (as will be further discussed below), there are reasons to believe that the school in Nyköping met a relatively high standard: at the time of Skytte’s school start in the mid-1580s, the school master Olaus Martini (1557–1609) had recently finished his university studies at the renowned universities of Rostock, Wittenberg and Frankfurt, where he had acquired a solid humanist learning, including a familiarity with Ramism.\textsuperscript{148} The specific contents of Martini’s teaching in Nyköping are difficult to reconstruct, but according to Skytte’s own account Olaus Martini had made the school “trilingual”, that is, he had taught Greek and Hebrew besides Latin, and he had also introduced the works of Petrus Ramus.\textsuperscript{149} Also by Skytte’s account, we learn that the son of a nobleman attended the school, Johannes Hane (1571-1624), whom Skytte would later meet again during his university studies in Leipzig and Köln.\textsuperscript{150} Since it was not customary for the nobility to send their sons to public schools, this is an indication that the school in Nyköping enjoyed a good reputation.

At the age of thirteen, Skytte left Nyköping to continue his education at John III’s college in Stockholm, the \textit{Collegium Regium Stockholmense}.\textsuperscript{151} Little is known about Skytte’s time in Stockholm except for the information he supplied himself in a speech given almost fifty years later when he commemorated his teachers Ericus Skinnerus, Petrus Kenicius, and Nicolaus Olai Bothniensis, who, according to Skytte, had revived the “Socratic philosophy” (meaning Ramism) and graciously replaced the “uselessness” of the old scholastic traditions.\textsuperscript{152} Following King John III’s demise in 1592, the

\textsuperscript{148} Stefan Östergren, “Olaus Martini”, \textit{SBL} xxviii (Stockholm, 1992-93). In Rostock, Martini studied for the celebrated professor David Chytraeus (1530–1600), who was favorable, albeit not exclusively, to Ramism. Regarding the influence of Chytraeus on Swedish students at this time, see Sjöstrand, “Till Ramismens historia i Sverige”, and Otfried Czaika, \textit{David Chytraeus und die Universität Rostock zum Schwedischen Reich} (Helsinki, 2002). Olaus Martini was later elected archbishop (July 1600, confirmed May 1601). Skytte’s appreciation of his first teacher is indicated by the fact that he paid for Martini’s gravestone in Uppsala Cathedral; Östergren, “Olaus Martini”.

\textsuperscript{149} Skytte, \textit{Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas}, B4r. Note that Tor Berg’s reconstruction of Martini’s school plan is based on a later proposition from an ecclesiastical meeting in Uppsala in 1595 and on the new school regulation of 1611; Berg, \textit{Johan Skytte}, 32.

\textsuperscript{150} Also known as Johan Jöranssson Rosenhane; for biographical details, see Magnus Mörner & Lars-Olof Skoglund, “Schering Rosenhane”, \textit{SBL} xxx (Stockholm, 1998-2000). Skytte expressed his appreciation of Hane and their shared school experiences in his master’s oration, \textit{De mechanicae artis praestantia}, Br-Bv.

\textsuperscript{151} This gymnasium, founded by John III in 1576 was described by Professor Laurentius Stigzelius as the “domicile of learning” in Sweden at the time (\textit{in Suecia literarum domicilium}; \textit{Rector Academiae Upsaliensis Laurentius Stigzelius} (1645). The school was in fact the only seat of domestic higher education at this time as Uppsala University was still in practice dormant.

Collegium in Stockholm was closed. Being left with no domestic academic alternative, Skytte entered the University of Frankfurt in 1592, as Johannes Benedicti Schraderus. Skytte’s activities in Frankfurt are unknown, but he appears again in the records in Wittenberg in 1593 and the same year in Leipzig, where his noble friend from the school in Nyköping, Johannes Hane, was staying. It was not until September 1594 that Skytte enrolled at the University of Marburg, where he would remain for a more extended period of time.

Figure 2. Marburg. Sebastian Münster, Cosmographia, 1544.

Founded in 1527 by Landgraf Philip I of Hesse (1504–1567), known as der Grossmütige (Magnanimous), the University of Marburg was the oldest protestant university, with statutes outlined by Philipp Melanchthon (1497–

the Collegium Regium Stockholmense had studied in Ramist schools in Westphalia; Sjöstrand, Till ramismens historia i Sverige, 204. Ericus Skinnerus, whom Skytte especially praised for his eloquence, was later appointed chancellor of the re-opened Uppsala University (1593); Nicolaus Olai Bothniensis, who had studied in Rostock for David Chytraeus, was appointed professor of theology in Uppsala; Petrus Kenicius had studied in Wittenberg and would later teach the New Testament and Greek at the revived Uppsala University; Annerstedt, Upsala universitets historia I, 73-75. The Ramists liked to emphasise the “freedom to philosophize”, and thus preferred to label their own philosophy “Socratic”, as will be further discussed in Chapter Four.

153 For the details of Skytte’s extensive travels at this time, see Berg, Johan Skytte, 43-47.
In Marburg Skytte acquired a well-rounded education with regard not only to the liberal arts but also to current debates revolving around issues such as the utility of education and classification of the liberal arts. In his academic dedications, Skytte spoke warmly of his Marburg teachers, of whom several were sympathetically inclined toward the Ramist agenda in terms of promoting eloquence, the mathematical arts, and the application of “method” in all subjects. Skytte graduated in 1598 with a dissertation presided over by Rudolph Goclenius, the well-respected Marburg professor who was famous for his almost encyclopedic knowledge. Prior to his graduation, Skytte had followed the example of his Swedish compatriot Nils Chesnecopherus and studied the mathematical arts at the gymnasium in Lemgo for the Ramist Lazarus Schonerus, who had recently translated and edited the ancient Greek text known as Mechanical Works. Based on Schonerus’s teachings, Skytte thus devoted his master’s oration of 1598 to the subject of mechanics, setting out to prove that this subject deserved to be included in the circle of liberal arts at all universities (see Chapter Five).

Following Skytte’s ascension to magister at the University of Marburg on August 11, 1598, a collection of celebratory Latin epigrams and poems dedicated to Skytte was published, written by his teachers and fellow students. In addition to the traditional praise of academic accomplishments, one lengthy poem also commented on Skytte’s Northern origins. An early example of the climate and character theme, the poem described Sweden as “covered by snow” with all warmth “chained” inside, yielding harsh conditions which all Swedes had to endure or overcome. Judging by the twists of the poem, the author (a German student) conveyed a certain amount of ambivalence toward these Swedish conditions: “What, you ask, can this useless Cold do?” He concluded nevertheless that the cold had not stopped Skytte: “Who would deny your genius this warmth? / Hardly you, Sweden, covered by snow! / The snow was nothing but tinder for your

154 Friedrich, Die Gelehrtenschulen in Marburg, Kassel und Korbach, 1-20. By the late sixteenth century the university enjoyed a solid reputation on account of its respected scholars. Both of Duke Charles’s spouses, Maria of the Palatinate (1561–89) and Christina of Holstein-Gottorp (1573–1625), were related to Landgraf Moritz of Hesse-Kassel, one of the current protectors of the university, which may have further influenced Swedish students (supported by Charles) to travel to Hesse; Berg, Johan Skytte, 48.

155 On Ramist method, see below, The Attractions of Ramism, and Chapter Four.

156 Skytte, Problematia ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta. In 1599 Skytte moreover published Goclenius’s philosophical lectures on Julius Caesar Scaliger, declaring in his foreword a great admiration for Goclenius’s skills in “philosophizing”; Skytte, Analyses.

157 Believed at the time to have been written by Aristotle. On Schöner/Schonerus, who produced several popular editions of Ramus’s mathematical writings, see ADB, xxxii, 295, and Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 29. The teachings of Schonerus in Lemgo will be further discussed in Chapter Five.

158 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia (to be discussed in Chapter Five).

ferocious fire!” The conclusion of the poem—an encouragement for Uppsala University “thirsting for learned men” to open its arms and embrace Skytte—could have been inspired by Skytte himself, who in his master’s oration had spoken of the “weeping Muses” at home, pleading with Duke Charles to improve the conditions at the university in Uppsala.

As we shall see, however, the notion of Sweden as a harsh, cold country that was generally anathema to scholarly activities was sharply rejected by Skytte on a different occasion. Patriotic themes were in fact not uncommon in the Republic of Letters of the sixteenth century, notwithstanding its “cosmopolitan” and Latin-speaking character (as will be further discussed in Chapter Three, Skytte delivered a bombastically patriotic oration in Marburg in 1599 when he proposed to prove the “ancient origins and military valor” of the Swedish people). Clearly, young Swedes studying abroad at this time were aware of their performances on the “theatre stage of the world”, where they acted as representatives of Sweden and their patrons. Among scholars they naturally wished to refute conceptions of Sweden as an unsophisticated kingdom—a task that was not entirely uncomplicated, as the Swedish king Gustav Vasa had hardly become known as a patron of the arts.

The rhetoric of Skytte’s student orations illustrates the important function of eloquence in university education at the time, not least in Marburg where the Ramist proposition that philosophy and eloquence must never be separated was generally accepted. Two months after his graduation Skytte delivered an oration discussing this characteristic topic, concluding that “nobody who

160 *Carmina gratulatoria*, A4: “Huic quis ingenio neget calorem? / Tune Suecia, quae nivis repleta? / Non sed fomes erat feri caloris.” *Carmina gratulatoria*, A4. The theme was repeated throughout the poem; “Si vincus calor est catena, et intus / Si fervet, quid aget, rogas, ineptum Frigus?” The poetic answer in this context was (somewhat illogically) that the cold (Frigus) in fact had stimulated the heat of Skytte’s genius, and that Skytte thus ultimately had overcome the harsh circumstances of his fatherland: “Suece, Suecia, quam nives inundant / Quae frigus pariunt iners, calorem / Quod mentis vorat, haec tui calorem / Auxit ingenii.” In translation: “You Swede, Sweden, covered by masses of snow / producing inert cold / devouring the heat of the mind, this [country] has increased the heat of your genius”. The congratulant was the student Eberhard (Mittelmüller) Mesomylius, (1570–1630) from Wetter, subsequently a Lutheran theologian. Regarding the theme of climate and character as discussed later by Rousseau and in relation to Sweden, see Carl Frängsmyr, *Klimat och karaktär: Naturen och människan i sent svenskt 1700-tal* (Stockholm, 2000).

161 Skytte, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*. See Chapter Three on Skytte’s patriotic rhetoric.

162 Skytte, *Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas*.

163 Skytte, *Oratio […] de svecorum gothorumque vetustate*. Skytte’s first oration in Marburg, which has not been preserved, also seems to have been on a patriotic theme, *Oratio de primis Scandiae inhabitatoribus quam habuit et edidit Marpurgi 1592*; Sellberg, “Johan Skytte”, 513.

164 Cf. the writings of Skytte’s friend Nils Chesnecopherus, also a student at the University of Marburg and later secretary in Duke Charles’s chancellery; Tor Berg, “Nils Chesnecopherus”, *SBL* viii (Stockholm, 1929), 426-439. See also below, Chapter Three, on Chesnecopherus.
was not eloquent could be learned". In the summer of 1599, Skytte visited Sweden and his hometown of Nyköping where he delivered an oration drawing on familiar topics from Marburg (celebrating eloquence and the liberal arts) at his old school on the occasion of the appointment of a new headmaster. Later that fall Skytte returned once more to Marburg where he continued his studies in jurisprudence. Skytte was at this time also invited to deliver an oration at the Collegium Mauritiamum, a gymnasium accommodating primarily noble students, founded in 1599 by Landgraf Moritz in Kassel. The landgrave, grandson of Philip I “the Magnanimous”, had himself been educated at the University of Marburg, and now devoted himself to scholarship and experimental natural philosophy, employing teachers from the University of Marburg at his new school where the Ramist educational program was enthusiastically embraced.

Skytte concluded his long foreign educational experience with a roundabout trip to Paris, England and Scotland, accompanying three barons from Austria. The company were granted audiences with learned men along the way, and hoped also to see the famously learned Queen Elizabeth I (1533–1603) during their stay in London (whether this hope was fulfilled is uncertain). In Scotland they did, however, meet with James I (1566-1625), king of Scotland at the time, who invited them to participate in the royal hunt before the company left for Denmark by boat. In Copenhagen the company

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165 Skytte, *Oratio sine eloquentia*. Skytte’s oration, held in November 1598, coincided with the professor of poetry Hermann Kirchnerus’s (1562-1620) private sessions in eloquence. As suggested by Tor Berg, it is not unlikely that Skytte had an assistant role in these private sessions. On Kirchnerus, honored by the Holy Roman emperor Rudolf II (1552–1612) for his Latin poetry with the title P.C.C. (*Poeta Caesareus Coronata*), see Jacob N. Beam, “Hermann Kirchner’s Coriolanus”, *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 33:2 (1918), 269-301.

166 Skytte, *Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas*. As Tor Berg notes, Skytte was at this time appointed to take care of the Latin material in the chancellery, but he does not seem to have begun any work at this time, before his return to Marburg; Berg, *Johan Skytte*, 75-78.

167 Berg, *Johan Skytte*, 75-78.

168 Skytte, *Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani*.

169 As will be further discussed in Chapter Three, Moritz supported a well-rounded education, ranging from classical and modern languages, poetry, theater, music and painting to jurisprudence, natural philosophy, mathematics and alchemy; Borggrefe, Lüpkes, Ottomeyer (eds.), *Moritz der Gelehrte*, 70.

170 Sellberg, “Johan Skytte”. See also Berg, *Johan Skytte*, 68-70, 82-84. An anecdote of uncertain origin relates how Skytte, when visiting Paris, reproached the professors at the Sorbonne University for their past mistreatment of Petrus Ramus, whereupon he was attacked and almost removed from the podium. Johannes Bureus’s wedding poem of 1606 has frequently been stated as the source of this story, which, however, is not correct: Bureus only states that Skytte visited Paris; Johannes Bureus, *Bröllopsgäfvia*, (Stockholm, 1606). The Skyttean professor Johannes Freinshemius (1608-1660) on the other hand did mention a tumultuous visit by Skytte at the Sorbonne; *Freinshemii Orationes* (Frankfurt, 1662), unfortunately providing no further details.

171 Sellberg, “Johan Skytte”, 504

172 Berg, *Johan Skytte*, 84.
parted ways, and Skytte headed back home. Late in 1601 he was once again in Stockholm. He brought home not only a set of skills but also a firm belief in the benefits of Ramism.

2.2. Educational Ideals and Political Realities

The Attractions of Ramism

At the University of Marburg Johan Skytte learned to apply an exceedingly anti-scholastic rhetoric which he would utilize also in his later position as university chancellor in Uppsala. In many cases this kind of rhetoric contrasted useful studies with the useless sophistry practiced by dogmatic scholars who were unable to think beyond their books: “O, how zealously pious they are, these worshippers of Aristotle’s dogma!”, as Skytte exclaimed in his magister oration of 1598. On this occasion he went on to complain about idle people who cherished their “logical nonsense” and “vain fantasies” to such a degree that they were aggrieved if someone “tried to investigate it all” and put it “into the service and use of human rationality”.

Underlying this utility-orientated rhetoric was, however, more than playful academic polemics—Skytte’s rhetoric originated in the ideological and philosophical system of thought that had been presented by the controversial French scholar Petrus Ramus earlier in the century.

Ramus first proclaimed his conviction that education should ultimately serve interests of utility and use beyond classrooms and scholarship at the University of Paris in the early 1540s. At this time he presented a utility-orientated and outrageously anti-Aristotelian reform agenda, which did not prevent him from being appointed Professor Regius in 1551. Ramus’s strategy for reaching the goals of education, his famous method that Skytte would learn to embrace at the University of Marburg later in the century (to be further discussed in Chapter Four), was designed not primarily to find scientific truths or to confirm any particular religious system, but rather as a student-orientated tool for the organization and presentation of complex subject matters.

In short, Ramus demanded that any subject matter should be defined and organised according to certain principles—Ramus’s “three laws” of method—stating that the arts must first of all be ordered correctly, from general things to particular things, secondly that all concepts which had been ordered in such a manner were true, that is, consistent and correct, and

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173 Skytte, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*, D2v; “O quam sunt religiosi dogmatum Aristotelis cultores! Nugas nescio quas logicas hominumque otiosorum de ponte asinorum, de circularibus syllogismis deliramenta tanti faciunt, ut sibi vitam acerbam putent, si quis in ea diligentius inquirat, si quis ea ad humanae prudentiae fructum revocare velit!”.  
thirdly, that the arts were organised in such a way that only those things which belonged to the art would be included in it (to avoid redundancy). 175 True to his pedagogical zeal, Ramus visualised his methodological ordering of the arts by diagrams which showed how various disciplines could be divided and partitioned in tree-like structures, branching out across the pages. Easily recognisable in Ramist textbooks, these tree-diagrams of the arts would become immensely popular (see Figure 7). The exceedingly logical approach of Ramus’s method was clearly different from the traditional approach of reading the classics book by book, discussing concepts in the order as they appeared.

Petrus Ramus was, of course, neither the first nor the only educational reformer to discuss method or first principles in the liberal arts. Many scholars were frustrated at this time with the difficulty of teaching the vast Aristotelian corpus to mere boys, who were not necessarily planning for an academic career. Academic debates over method at this time were, however, complex, since the meaning of the concept of “method” itself was often undefined and involved a variety of connotations. Many scholars perceived “method” as more than a pedagogical tool. Ramus himself declared that the arts, if ordered by his three laws, reflected the true order of nature, which made his method universal and “singular”. 176 Claims like these were not uncontroversial, but inspired great enthusiasm among Ramus’s followers. 177 Ramus’s critics, on the other hand, liked to point out that Ramus was philosophically unoriginal, borrowing from others, best labelled an usurarius, using the works of others and strutting about in “borrowed finery”. 178 Some scholars also feared that Ramus’s method would turn students away from the reading of the original works (to be further discussed in Chapter Four).

175 Ibid., 43-48.
176 As will be further discussed in Chapter Four, sixteenth-century discussions of method generally involved pedagogical as well as epistemological aspects pertaining to the challenges of learning and teaching as well as the striving to establish a “true” model of the structure of knowledge. The terminology used in this context (methodus, ordo, ratio, etc.) did not, however, involve the word “pedagogy”—the Neo-Latin term paedagogium usually referred to a place of instruction, often a preparatory school for university studies; Friedrich, Die Gelehrtenschulen, 14, 33 ff.
177 As remarked by Lawrence Stone in the context of educational reform in early modern England: “The transmission of a classical and Aristotelian education to a large, secular, socially heterogeneous and unspecialized student body was made possible by a massive drive to translate the ancient authors and by a revolution in the teaching, though hardly in the basic content, of rhetoric and logic. The Ramist onslaught on Aristotelian methodology was praised by its early protagonists in England, Roland MacIlmaine and Abraham Fraunce, specifically because of its novel potentialities for popular instruction”; Stone, “The Educational Revolution”, 79 f. For a discussion of the actual impact of Ramism in English schools and universities, see Mordechai Feingold, “English Ramism: A Reinterpretation” in idem, The Influence of Petrus Ramus, 127-176.
178 Sellberg, “Petrus Ramus”.

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As Howard Hotson as well as Erland Sellberg has recently underlined, what eventually unfolded from Ramus’s reform agenda was, however, not a bad philosophical system, but a pedagogical tradition, which distinguished itself in several respects from its humanist roots. By Hotson’s argument, one of the most striking features of Ramus’s pedagogical enterprise of efficiency in all education was his ambition “[…] to teach a wider range of subjects in a shorter time even than the humanist pedagogues most commonly associated with him”. Ramus’s method was ultimately a means to this end. Whereas, for example, Johannes Sturm’s (1507–1589) academy in Strasbourg devoted ten years to a narrow curriculum overwhelmingly dedicated to Latin, Greek and Christianity, and the educational theorist Juan Luis Vives, another pedagogue whom Ramus admired, proposed eight years of Latin and Greek plus another ten years devoted to the remaining arts course before entering a third stage of professional training (when students were in their late twenties), Ramus believed that it would be possible to teach all of the seven liberal arts in seven years, rendering graduates at the age of fifteen.

This call for a faster and more action-orientated curriculum that focused on eloquence and other skills relevant to the world of flesh and blood, appealed in particular to those rulers who did not have the power to influence or support a large university, but saw the value of an efficient yet well-rounded education that could satisfy the needs of their principality. The territorial fragmentation characterising especially the German lands made the Ramist approach of pedagogical efficiency appealing, as small imperial counties and Hanseatic cities generally had limited means to support prestigious universities while still demanding educated lawyers, preachers, administrators and other officials. The method of Ramism was particularly embraced by Landgraf Moritz at his noble academy *Collegium Mauritianum* in Hesse-Kassel, visited by Skytte in 1600. It was in fact not uncommon at this time in Northern Europe that well-educated princes with abundant resources supported individual scholars or schools and took a

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181 Ibid. Why was Ramus in such a hurry? As suggested by both Howard Hotson and James V. Skalnik, Ramus was motivated by both his origins and school experiences. Born in Picardy to a noble but practically destitute family, who did not have the financial means to support his education, Ramus had very nearly not finished his own studies in Paris—by his own account he had to interrupt his education twice and leave Paris due to the lack of money. It was only by working as a domestic servant during the day that he was eventually able to finish his degree; Skalnik, *Ramus and Reform*, 21. Later, as regius professor, Ramus attempted to reform not only the liberal arts but also the regius professorships in an attempt to “keep them open to the most able and accomplished rather than merely the best connected”; Hotson, *Commonplace Learning*, 41. As a token of his own success he adopted the motto “Labor omnia vincit”, “Hard work conquers all”.
182 A central argument in particularly Hotson, *Commonplace Learning*.
183 Hotson, *Commonplace Learning*, 89.
personal interest in the forms, contents and aims of education. Landgraf Moritz liked to invite promising students from the University of Marburg to his Collegium, which he hoped would ultimately procure diplomats serving his principality. To the individual student such princely initiatives opened up career paths beyond the confines of university and church.

Not surprisingly, Ramism thus appealed not only to rulers but also to students, who recognized a meritocratic element in Ramus’s educational ideals. By James V. Skalnik’s argument, what Ramus had developed was “not an idea but an ideology”, shaped by Ramus’s own experiences as a struggling student of small resources in Paris, but also by a historical situation in early to mid-sixteenth-century France that was characterized by increasing social mobility and growing demands for education. To Ramus it was essential to remove those barriers which he perceived as artificial and prevent new ones from appearing. Academically, humanist learning had by the mid-sixteenth century established itself in Paris and other prestigious centres of learning in Europe, but from the perspective of high humanism the Ramist method had produced little more than an unsubtle and oversimplified system of the arts and sciences. Ramus’s method did not manage to establish itself at his alma mater, the University of Paris, where it completely lost momentum after his death in 1572. As discussed by Howard Hotson, Ramism was in the end established not in the great and traditional centres of European civilisation, such as France, England or Spain, but in its margins: in the politically fragmented North-Western Germany, Scotland, Scandinavia, Transylvania in the east and at colleges in New England in the New World in the next century. Here, the Ramist textbooks became popular for their clarity of presentation and efficient manner of pedagogically transforming often complex materials.

While Ramism was first rejected at the University of Marburg (in the 1570s), Ramist textbooks were accepted and even embraced by the teachers

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186 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 7 ff. As concluded by Skalnik, Ramus’s rise from poverty was not a unique example of social mobility in France in the first half of the sixteenth century, a time of “abundant opportunity for even the most humble to improve their lot.”; ibid., 14. Hundreds of new colleges had been established in France between 1530 and 1550 to which increasing numbers of young men were flocking in the hope not of becoming scholars “but in gaining skills necessary for success in the world outside the academy”; ibid., 35.
187 Ibid., 157. Yet, already in Ramus’s life-time, social fluidity and opportunity were giving way to new rigidly hierarchical social structures as France witnessed civil war, economic decline and a political development consolidating into the ancien régime. Ramus’s meritocratic ideals had all but lost their relevance in French society as the century drew to a close; ibid.,19, 157.
188 Ibid., 2.
189 Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 36-37.
Johan Skytte encountered when studying here in the late 1590s. As we have seen, Skytte had studied for Ramist teachers also in Sweden, at his first school in his hometown of Nyköping, and at the *Collegium Regium Stockholmense* in Stockholm. Debates concerning pedagogical methods and textbooks had not, however, been frequent in the sixteenth century in Sweden, as King Gustav Vasa, regent from 1523 to 1560, had turned his attention to other matters than schools and learning. This Swedish political background must be kept in mind in the context of Skytte’s frequent appeals as a student to his patrons and employers to support schools and learning.

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*Figure 3. Petrus Ramus (1515-1572).*

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Sjöstrand, *Till ramismens historia i Sverige*, 204.
The State of Education: Sweden’s “Iron Years”

The reign of Gustav Vasa represents a watershed in Swedish history in terms of state-building and consolidation of royal power. In 1544 the law of hereditary succession to the throne was adopted in the Succession Pact (Arvföreningen) whereas the Council of the Realm (riksrådet) remained an assembly of high representatives of the nobility that would advise the king (and, from the noble perspective, preferably exercise a certain amount of real power). The Four Estates (the clergy, the nobility, the burghers, and the peasants) could moreover be assembled whenever the king deemed it necessary or advantageous, in towns that suited the occasion.\(^{191}\) The development of the state administration meanwhile depended on the aid of loyal civil servants, skilled in the arts of eloquence, politics and administration.\(^{192}\) This category of skilled “secretaries” was utilized by Gustav Vasa as well as his three sons, Erik, John and Charles, who would rule the kingdom as monarchs in successive periods in the following decades.\(^{193}\)

Gustav Vasa’s three sons differed noticeably in leadership, interests and even religious inclination, but they clearly shared one ambition—to secure their position and an international recognition of the rights of the House of Vasa to the Swedish throne (except for the rights of the new Polish family line at the close of the sixteenth century, as we shall see). In this context the loyal secretary, bound to his employer in a strong patron-client relationship, was a crucial figure—typically well-educated, of common origins and thus independent of the powerful noble families. The lengthy education of the secretary, as well as other categories of useful civil servants, situated at lower levels in the state administration, remained, however, throughout the sixteenth-century in Sweden an unresolved question in terms of domestic solutions.

Sweden’s only university at the time, Uppsala University, founded in 1477, had not fared well during the Reformation, which was rigorously put into effect by King Gustav Vasa.\(^{194}\) Following the ascension of Gustav Vasa to the throne in 1523, Uppsala University was in effect closed down. Through a number of successive steps, starting in 1527, Vasa consolidated his power as well as the finances of the state by transferring resources from the Church and circumscribing its independence.\(^{195}\) The Reformation process

\(^{191}\) The composition of the Swedish “parliament” was, in a European context, unusual as peasants were represented and constituted one of the Four Estates; Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 206.


\(^{193}\) Erik XIV, regent 1560-68, died in imprisonment in Örbyhus slott in 1577. John III ruled from 1568 until his death in 1592. His son Sigismund was king of Poland 1587-1632.


in Sweden was thus clearly enforced from above, evolving through royal actions and initiatives in several steps during the course of the middle-decades of the sixteenth century. Among the general population Lutheranism did not gain full acceptance until the end of the century. The financial foundation for learning and higher culture was thus in severe disarray. As one historian has remarked, an era of cultural “iron years” now ensued. Yet Gustav Vasa was himself aware of the school problems and educational decline, and repeatedly formulated exhortations to the public to send their children to school and pay their tithes (supporting the local clergyman). To alleviate the immediate lack of educated officials, he recruited men from abroad and gave financial support to Swedish students who were sent to German academies.

In continental Europe, the number of university foundations had meanwhile steadily increased—by the end of the century eighteen new universities and many other kinds of higher level schools (gymnasiums, academies, illustrious schools etc), had been established (Catholic, Lutheran as well as Calvinist). The matter of who was best equipped to interpret God’s word was in this era of growing religious unrest intimately related to the schooling of new generations of defenders of the true faith, but educational activities were, as we have seen, initiated also for other reasons than confessionalization. New schools were established by city councils, patrons, parliaments, princes and kings, who saw a need for skilled state officials, tradesmen, military leaders, and men of other specialized occupations. In England the quantitative expansion of education (in terms of literacy among the general population as well as university students) between 1560 and 1640 has been described in terms of an “educational revolution”, stimulated

196 Åke Andrén, Sveriges kyrkohistoria 3: Reformationstitid (Stockholm, 1999), and Nyman, Förlorarnas historia, 72-83.
197 Lindroth, Uppsala universitet, 22.
198 Wilhelm Sjöstrand, Pedagogikens historia II (Lund, 1965), 85-87.
199 Willem Frijhoff, “Patterns” in de Ridder-Symoens (ed.), A History of the University in Europe, 73. New religious orders were often diligent in the founding of schools: the Society of Jesus, for instance, founded its first school open for external students in 1548: by 1599, there were 245 such schools run by Jesuits across Europe, a number which had increased to 444 in 1626; Grendler, “The Universities of the Renaissance and Reformation”, 24. On Jesuit education, see also Oskar Garstein, Rome and the counter-reformation in Scandinavia: Jesuit educational strategy 1553-1622 (Leiden, 1992).
200 de Ridder-Symoens, “Training and Professionalization” in Reinhard (ed.), Power Elites and State Building, 149-172. These macro-level considerations do not, of course, preclude the existence of a more subtle range of personal interests with regard to learning and education: cf. the case of the emperor Rudolf II in Prague or the three generations of landgraves in Hesse (Philipp der Grossmütige, Wilhelm der Weise and Moritz der Gelehrte) who acted as patrons of learning and the arts, and enforced the ideal of the well-educated and cultivated aristocrat; Anthony Grafton, “Humanism and Science in Rudolphine Prague: Kepler in Context” in Defenders of the Text: Traditions of scholarship in an age of science, 1450-1800 (Harvard, 1991), and Borggrefe, Lüpkes, Ottomeyer (eds.), Moritz der Gelehrte.
by the demand for lay administrators and professional men.201 Across Europe, higher education had acquired a civic value that it had previously lacked.202

The lack of higher education in Sweden was noticed abroad. A Swedish student in Germany wrote to Gustav Vasa about the matter, letting his king know that it was considered odd that the Swedish ruler neglected to support a university in his own kingdom.203 Philipp Melanchthon himself suggested in a letter to Gustav Vasa that a Swedish university would be glorious to God and honorable for the king. The matter was growing into a national scandal, especially considering the situation in Denmark, where the university in Copenhagen flourished under the protection of Christian III (1503–1559). As the historian Lars-Olof Larsson has pointed out, it was not an inevitability that the Reformation process would affect Uppsala University in such a disastrous way—elsewhere the humanist spirit embraced by Melanchthon thrived in new dynamic educational programs supported by princes in the realms of northern Europe. The Swedish situation was rather caused by the pragmatic agenda of Gustav Vasa, as Larsson argues—securing the crown, organising the taxation system, and preventing new riots and rebellions.204

Another larger context may be adduced, however: as Wilhelm Sjöstrand once noted, the Reformation(s) on the continent was subsequent to humanism and the Renaissance, that is, cultural movements which through the appreciation of ancient culture and literature had given schools and education meanings beyond the needs of the Church.205 The circumstances in Sweden were different: at the time of Gustav Vasa’s Reformation, the Renaissance ideals had generally not had any significant influence on domestic culture or education. Thus, because education had no intrinsic value that could carry it through the difficult transition, schools were, by Sjöstrand’s argument, at greater risk during the religious transition. Yet, as these historians have noted, Gustav Vasa was not unaware of the cultural developments in continental Europe. He knew that his own education was

202 As noted by de Ridder-Symoens, in the Middle Ages degrees had rarely been a requirement for a career in ecclesiastical or public service, whereas an increasing number of graduates now saw them as gateways to their future livelihood; de Ridder-Symoens, “Training and Professionalization”, 160. The nobility still constituted a special case—they often spent some time at universities as part of their training and preparation for public life, but they rarely attained official degrees.
203 Lindroth, Uppsala universitet, 21 f.
204 Larsson, Gustav Vasa, 328 f. With the aid of professional German bureaucrats the king was deeply engaged in efforts to increase the efficiency of the state administration. Throughout the country the interests of the Crown were administered by bailiffs (fogdar) or prominent noblemen who administered royal fiefs; ibid., 213-222.
205 Sjöstrand, Pedagogikens historia II, 83-85.
not up to the humanist standards, and he took measures that his sons would receive the best education available.

Recommended by both Luther and Melanchthon, a nobleman by the name of Georg Norman (d. 1552 or 53) was initially appointed to educate the oldest princes, Erik and John. recommen206 The educational program presented by Norman was strongly influenced by Erasmus’ book on princely education, *Institutio principis christianii*, and the princes thus received a thorough education in Latin, rhetoric, poetry and history, and they were trained in the noble skills necessary for court life. At the funeral of his father in 1560, Erik, the heir to the throne, marked a new era of sophistication by orchestrating a grand ceremony modelled on the funeral of Charles V (1500–1558) in Brussels a few years earlier.207 His own coronation in the summer of 1561 was likewise a carefully planned event: Erik had informed himself of the highest fashions at the courts of Europe and no expenses were spared. The prominent foreign guests were to witness that Sweden was a culturally sophisticated country, at home among the finest of nations.208

Noble families meanwhile found ways to give their sons a proper education, through private instruction and educational trips abroad. The classical world, as it had been revived by Italian as well as French and German humanists, was also finding its way to the northernmost realms of Europe. To learn to embrace the humanist ideals celebrated by Erasmus (c. 1466–1536), as well as the court life laid out by Baldassare Castiglione (1478–1529), was moreover becoming a matter of necessity to the ambitious young nobleman. Diplomatic, linguistic and rhetorical skills were in greater demand than before, while the clerical path to powerful positions in the king’s council had become less relevant.210 During the successive reigns of Erik XIV (1533–1577), John III and Charles IX—who like their father did not hesitate to employ educated commoners or foreigners—the Swedish nobility became more watchful of their privileges. Powerful secretaries in the royal administrations were often mistrusted by the old noble families.211

Politically and financially the Swedish kingdom inherited by Erik XIV had by the 1560s become reasonably stable. In 1566, Erik XIV initiated a new start for Uppsala University and appointed five Swedish professors educated in Germany.212 After the dethronement of Erik in 1568, his brother

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207 Ibid., 29.
208 Ibid., 21-29.
211 Norrhem, *Uppkomlingarna*, 32.
212 Lindroth, *Svensk läromedshistoria I*, 223. The Danish university in Copenhagen had also been closed down during the first years of Reformation but had reopened already in the 1530s on the initiative of Christian III (1503–1559); Lindroth, *Uppsala universitet*, 22.
John III, the new king, initially continued to support the university and he also founded a college in Stockholm in 1576, the previously mentioned **Collegium Regium Stockholmensae**, a school similar to the German gymnasiums in its form (which Johan Skytte briefly entered in the early 1590s).213 Due to John’s interest in the teachings of the Catholic Church, his generosity towards the Lutheran professors in Uppsala gradually decreased. When the professors protested against his new missal of 1576 (known as the *Red Book*), they were removed from their duties, and when the plague came to Uppsala, the university was again deserted.214 The Catholic teachers at the *collegium* in Stockholm were replaced by Lutherans as John III, after a tumultuous turn of events in 1583-84, surrendered his Catholic ambitions with the school.215

Lower education in Sweden had likewise suffered an unquestionable decline during the middle decades of the sixteenth century, which, as noted above, has caused historians to characterise Gustav Vasa’s reign in gloomy terms from the perspective of learning and education.216 Yet the reasons, phases and implications of the decline may be nuanced: as Wilhelm Sjöstrand argued, the changing economic conditions mostly affected the bishops and higher priesthood, but did not affect the lower priesthood in such a way that the entire school system could have been affected.217 Instead one has to consider that popular dissatisfaction with the new decrees in religious cult and tradition was likely to lessen interest in the schools that would impose the new order. The deserted schools were thus, by Sjöstrand’s argument, more a result of the reluctance among people to send their children to school than a changed financial situation. The decline was also limited in time: thirty years after Gustav Vasa’s measures against the Church, the school system seems to have recuperated.218

In 1571 a new school plan was adopted in Sweden, based on Melanchthon’s Saxon school plan of 1528 and the Palatinate school plan of 1554.219 Latin and Christianity constituted the foundation of the schools, while other subjects like rhetoric, dialectics, Greek and Hebrew were optional. The Swedish school plan was thus basically a modest version of the

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213 The teachers at the collegium in Stockholm continued their work at Uppsala University in the 1590s; Berg, *Johan Skytte*, 35-42.
216 Sten Lindroth stated that a whole nation tried to renounce itself: “En hel nation försökte göra sig urarva”; Lindroth, *Svensk lärdomshistoria I*, 206 f. Lindroth here referred to more than an educational decline: during Gustav Vasa’s Reformation monasteries were emptied of their libraries and churches of their Catholic ornaments. Medieval psalm books were used “as wadding in canons”.
217 Sjöstrand, *Pedagogikens historia II*, 87-93.
218 Ibid., 97.
219 Ibid., 97 f. Philipp Melanchthon’s educational plan for the elementary grades, first applied in Saxony in 1528, was widely copied throughout Germany.
Melanchthonian compromise of humanism and Christianity, with a rather strong emphasis on the ecclesiastic needs. New plans to reopen Uppsala University with full support and privileges were formed at the Uppsala Assembly in 1593, and later the same year the decision was confirmed by Duke Charles and the Council of the Realm.\textsuperscript{220} Several of the trustworthy Lutheran teachers from the recently closed collegium in Stockholm were at this time transferred to Uppsala.\textsuperscript{221} By this time, Skytte had already been sent abroad to acquire his higher education. As a student in Marburg, Skytte practiced his skills in eloquence, and learned how to defend not only Ramism, but also his native country, when accused of barbarism and backwardness (to be further discussed in Chapter Three).

2.3. On the Theatre Stage of the World

In 1601, after almost a decade of education abroad, Skytte returned home to Sweden. At that time a complex struggle for power was being played out between two principal actors on the “theatre stage of the world”: Skytte’s patron, Duke Charles, and King Sigismund of Poland.\textsuperscript{222} John III’s son, the catholic King Sigismund of Poland, who had been crowned king of Sweden in 1594, was at this time officially in power. In reality, however, Sigismund’s right to the Swedish throne was being challenged by John III’s brother, Duke Charles, who accused Sigismund of breaking his royal oaths and trying to re-Catholicize Sweden.\textsuperscript{223} When Skytte graduated in Marburg in 1598 the outcome of this struggle for power was undecided. It is, however, clear which side he had chosen: like his friend Nils Chesne-

\textsuperscript{220} Lindroth, \textit{Uppsala universitet}, 28 f.
\textsuperscript{221} Ibid., 30 f. Cf. Annerstedt, \textit{Uppsala universitets historia}, 76 f., 82 ff.
\textsuperscript{222} Sven Ulric Palme, “Karl IX”, \textit{SBL} xx (Stockholm, 1973-75), 635-637 (and further references below). On the metaphor of the world as a stage, \textit{theatrum mundi}, Helander, \textit{Neo-Latin Literature}, 422, and previous remarks.
\textsuperscript{223} Regarding these events, see especially Ingun Montgomery, \textit{Värjostånd och lärostånd. Religion och politik i meningsutbytet mellan kungamakt och prästerskap i Sverige 1593-1608} (Uppsala, 1972). The sources of the conflict between Duke Charles and Sigismund were brewing already around the time of Skytte’s birth: in 1576 King John III, who was favourably inclined to Catholicism and the idea of uniting the divided Church, introduced a new Romanist liturgy, the so-called Red Book, which was reluctantly confirmed the following year by the Lutheran clergy (the \textit{Liturgia Suecanae Ecclesiae}; Andrén, \textit{Sveriges kyrkohistoria}, 175-185. Moreover, John married the Polish princess Catherine Jagellon (Katarina Jagellonica) who was a devote Catholic. Their son Sigismund, the heir to the Swedish throne, was raised a Catholic. At the time of his father’s death in 1592, Sigismund was already king of Poland and was now expected to ascend the Swedish throne as well. The Reformation process in Sweden, however, had at this time settled enough for the clergy to be wary of any threat of re-Catholicization. Duke Charles at this point summoned a church assembly (Uppsala Assembly, 1593), where the liturgy of John III was rejected and the \textit{Confessio Augustana} was adopted as the foundation of the Swedish church. Lutheranism was now in practice the only accepted religion in the Swedish kingdom. Regarding \textit{Uppsala möte}, see Andrén, \textit{Sveriges kyrkohistoria} 3, 212-223, and Montgomery, \textit{Värjostånd och lärostånd}, 83-100.
copherus he had been granted financial support by Duke Charles in 1596. In his student orations, Skytte in fact never mentions Sigismund (for instance, when speaking of the needs of Uppsala University in his 1598 master’s oration, it is instead Duke Charles he addresses). In one respect these political circumstances were favorable to young and ambitious Swedish students—their knowledge and skills in eloquence, politics and law were in high demand in the ensuing propaganda war between Charles and Sigismund. Duke Charles, who had alienated much of the Swedish nobility, moreover needed professional aid in the organization of his government and chancellery.

The dynastic Swedish-Polish conflict was fueled by religious tensions, conveyed by Duke Charles as a threat of re-Catholicization. At the so-called Uppsala Assembly, summoned by Duke Charles in 1593, the clergy supported a reopening of Uppsala University, which was intended to become a Lutheran educational institution beyond the reach of Sigismund. The nobleman Nils Gyllenstierna (1526–1601), who opened the meeting, referred to unfortunate developments in France and the Netherlands and stressed the importance of unity in church matters—otherwise no peace could be achieved in worldly matters either. It was thus decided that anyone who did not accept the Confessio Augustana would not be allowed to minister or teach in Sweden, and all “obvious papists” would be expelled from the country. This was clearly an attempt to remove any uncertainty as to the religious status of Sweden. King Sigismund was forced to confirm the decisions of the meeting in order to be coronated in February 1594. He left for Poland in the summer with an unclear situation regarding the rule of Sweden in his absence. A triangle drama now ensued between Duke Charles, the Council of the Realm and King Sigismund. An understanding between the duke and the Council led to the appointment of Charles as head of the Council and protector of the realm (rådets förman och riksans föreståndare) which Sigismund did not accept. Tension between all parties escalated the following year when the duke took the challenging step of circumventing Sigismund as well as the Council by summoning the Estates at Söderköping, which confirmed his position as acting regent in the absence of the king.

The conflict from now on escalated step by step. When Charles in 1597 high-handedly summoned the Estates at Arboga, the members of the Council chose not to appear. The break between Charles and Sigismund was definitive as Charles used military forces to attack castles held by Sigismund’s

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224 Berg, Johan Skytte, 57.
225 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia. See also below, Chapter Three.
226 There were indeed also strategic reasons for regents to place commoners, loyal only to the king, at central positions in the state administrations; Palme, “Karl IX”, 639.
227 Andrén, Sveriges kyrkohistoria 3, 214 f.
228 Ibid., 216.
governors. Sigismund brought armed forces to Sweden in 1598 but was eventually defeated by Charles in the Battle of Stångebro. Sigismund was officially dethroned in 1599 and from now on Charles was effectively the regent of Sweden: he was recognized as king the following year at the assembly of the Estates in Linköping, but he did not use the title until 1603 (the coronation did not take place until 1607 when he became Charles IX). Charles from now on reinforced his efforts to secure and justify his position. Most appalling to the Swedish high nobility had been the execution in 1600 of four noblemen who had sided with Sigismund (an event that became known as the Linköping Bloodbath). In 1604 a new Succession Pact was nevertheless adopted by the assembly of the Estates in Norrköping, which declared that Charles’s descendents were heirs to the throne.

The explanation and defense of the complex chain of events leading up to the change of regents on the Swedish throne demanded rhetorical skill and diplomatic finesse as Charles sought international recognition for himself as well as his son, Gustav Adolf, the new heir to the throne, born in 1594. As we shall see, Johan Skytte was utilized as a legate on several occasions, and in 1602 he was also appointed tutor of Gustav Adolf, whose education needed to prepare him for harsh political realities where his right to the throne would surely be questioned. The aggressive anti-Catholic propaganda emanating from Sweden in the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth centuries was thus not surprisingly directed against “papist” Poland rather than Rome. King Sigismund was portrayed as the archetype of a tyrant and a threat to the evangelical faith. Because Sigismund never gave up his claims to the Swedish throne, the legitimacy issue would remain an integral factor in the ensuing Swedish-Polish conflicts.

The domestic political uncertainty resulted in a number of high-profile missions in Skytte’s early career, where his major task was to defend the actions of his patron Charles IX. Skytte thus appeared before the Estates in

230 Ibid., 399.
231 At this time, John III’s son, Duke John of Östergötland, who was closest to the throne according to the Succession Pact of 1544, agreed to relinquish his claims to the throne.
232 Poland was, however, at the time less religiously homogeneous than the Swedish propaganda would convey, with Roman Catholics, Protestants, Eastern Orthodox, Jews, and Muslims living within its boundaries. As the Catholic counter-Reformation gained momentum in Poland toward the end of the sixteenth century, however, the recent advances of the Reformation were gradually cancelled out.
233 The dark image of Sigismund has affected traditional Swedish historiography concerning the Polish king and the religious conflicts of the late sixteenth century. More recent biographers of Sigismund have however questioned whether Sigismund really had any plans to re-Catholicize Sweden; see Larsson, Arvet efter Gustav Vasa, 363, and Stefan Östergren, Sigismund: En biografi över den svensk-polske monarken (Angelholm, 2005), 204. Ingun Montgomery argues that the religious arguments of Duke Charles were integral in the Swedish struggle for dominum maris and the efforts to win the Baltic provinces. The religious affinity of the Baltic provinces with Sweden was thus emphasized in the official rhetoric, while the relations to Poland and Russia were depreciated; Montgomery, Värjostånd och lärostånd, 231 f.
1603 and at the coronation of Charles in 1607, where he presented rhetorically sophisticated apologies of his patron. In 1610 Skytte participated in a legation sent by Charles IX to the Netherlands and England, where similar arguments defending the Swedish king against Sigismund and the Poles were presented in the hope of not only strengthening the reputation of the Swedish king, but also of building beneficial alliances. On this journey, Skytte’s major task was to explain and defend the recent political domestic turmoil in Sweden, and to ensure that the King of England, James I, would support Sweden in the Swedish-Polish conflict.

In his appearances before James I, Skytte made full use of his education and practice in eloquence, using all his rhetorical skills to denigrate the actions of King Sigismund. Exactly as Cicero had accused Catiline of secret meetings in the night and plans of dividing Italy, Skytte thus spoke of Sigismund’s betrayal in terms of nightly gatherings in Uppsala, where the papal legate Germanico di Malaspina had summoned a “wicked and crazy pack of Jesuits” who planned to divide Sweden’s episcopates among them, advising King Sigismund to deny the Swedish people their right to practice their religion. The breaking of oaths was a recurring accusation against Sigismund. For James I, Skytte described Sweden as a ship at sea, lost without its captain, claiming that the Swedish people had entrusted the Swedish ship to King Sigismund only on the condition that Duke Charles would assist the captain and make sure that the ship would be safe and happily reach its port “if the captain was discouraged because of incompetence and negligence, and others failed their duties”. As this was precisely what had happened, according to Skytte, Duke Charles had done nothing wrong to take the helm.

Counterattacks aimed at Charles IX were subsequently produced from Sigismund’s chancellery in Warsaw, and they were occasionally also directed at Skytte personally. Allegations were at one point published by a

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234 Berg, Johan Skytte, 92 f., 117-133, 148-156. Skytte’s oration before the Estates in 1603 was subsequently translated to German and printed in two editions in 1608 and 1609 (Oratio, darinnen ausführlich erklärert und dargethan wird [...]). The rhetoric of Skytte’s political speeches at this time has also been discussed by Johannesson, Svensk retorik, 124-128.

235 Published in 1618 as Orationes tres; habitae ad Sereniss. Magnae Britanniae Regem.


238 Skytte, Orationes Tres, C2r-v; “Etenim Regi Sigismundo Sueciam veluti navem ita concrediderat populus Suecicus, ut ei in administratione socium adjunxerit Clementissimum nostrum Principem, qui navarcho inertia culpave deterrito, reliquisque adiutoribus officium suum facere negligentibus, salvam tamen praestaret navem, ne paucorum languere debilitata submergeretur, sed in portum salva incolumisque perduceretur.”

239 In these counter-attacks Charles IX was depicted as a cruel usurper, greedy for power; Hedberg, Karl IX, 328 f.; Larson, Arvet efter Vasa, 446.
party close to Sigismund which claimed that Skytte’s father was in fact not Bengt Nilsson but Duke Charles himself.\textsuperscript{240} Such a claim needed not necessarily cause an outrage at the time—it was indeed not uncommon for rulers to entertain mistresses and support the resulting offspring. Yet, one has to remember that Johan Skytte’s mother was a married woman, which would have put the alleged affair in a different light since adultery was a crime. Considering the source of the rumor, however, the allegations directed at Skytte, had little credibility: as historians have previously pointed out, a perfectly sufficient explanation to the speedy pace of Skytte’s career was his good fortune of having been born in one of the leading families in Nyköping that was well connected with the duchy chancellery.\textsuperscript{241} The elevation of skilful secretaries in possession of useful but scarcely available skills was also, as will be further discussed in Chapter Three, an often used recourse among Swedish regents in the early modern era. Skytte himself did not officially comment on the matter. As we shall see, throughout his life he would attribute his fortunes entirely to his education and skills.

Skytte maintained the trust of Duke Charles during these tumultuous year: in 1602 he received a prestigious assignment—the tutoring of Charles’s son, Gustav Adolf, possibly the new heir to the throne. He was subsequently asked to tutor also Gustav Adolf’s siblings Mary-Elizabeth (1596–1618) and Charles-Philip (1601–22) and their cousin John, Duke of Östergötland (1589–1618).\textsuperscript{242} Skytte’s education in jurisprudence, which he had acquired during his last months in Marburg, was meanwhile also utilized in a revision of the town law (\textit{stadslagen}), which had been requested by the Estate of burgthers in 1602.\textsuperscript{243} Raised to nobility in 1604, Skytte was in the first decade

\textsuperscript{240} The claim was presented in the anonymous pamphlet \textit{Hertig Karls slaktarebänk} (published 1617) which has been traced to the nobleman Jöran Knutsson Posse (1556–1616) and Gregorius Borastus (c. 1580s–1656). In the conflict between Charles and Sigismund, both had sided with Sigismund. At the trial in Linköping in 1600, Posse was pardoned by Charles, and after three years of imprisonment he left for Poland; Stefan Östergren, “Jöran Knutsson Posse”, \textit{SBL} xxix (Stockholm, 1995-97). Borastus, a scholar from Norrköping, moreover wrote a propaganda piece in his own name in 1618 where the allegations concerning Skytte’s progenitor were repeated; Gregorius Borastus, \textit{Calumniae orationis maledicae quam adversus Sigismundum III Poloniae, et Sveciae verum, ac legitimum regem [...] pro Caroli Sudermanniæ ducis perduellione; legatus eius Ioannes Skytte, ad Magnæ Britanniæ regem habuit, anno 1610. In lucem vero primum edidit 1620} (Friburgi Brisgoiae, 1620). This work also constituted a counter-attack on Johan Skytte’s anti-Polish orations delivered before King James I in 1610 (the \textit{Orationes Tres}).


\textsuperscript{242} Skytte’s tasks as a preceptor in the royal family, shall be further discussed in Chapter Six.

\textsuperscript{243} Sellberg, “Johan Skytte”; Skytte’s comment, which was influenced by his teacher in Marburg, Hermann Vultejus, is available in reprint in E. Wolff (ed.), \textit{Riksrådet Johan Skyttes kommentar till stadslagen med inledning och anmärkningar} (Göteborg, 1905). While Skytte’s work was based on the old law, the many preserved copies of his text bear witness, as Tor Berg suggested, that it was in fact also used by the mayors and city councils for whom it was intended; Berg, \textit{Johan Skytte}, 143 f.
of the new century also involved in a revision of the national law initiated by Charles IX, which however in the end was rejected by the Church.244

Following the death of Charles IX in 1611, Skytte continued to serve under his former pupil, now King Gustav II Adolf. Even though he was of common origins, Skytte was elected into the Council of the Realm in 1617 and given the title of baron (*friherre*) in 1624. He was also—reluctantly—for more than fifteen years deeply involved with the work in the Treasury, which made him an influential administrator of the finances of the Swedish state, as will be further discussed in Chapter Six. Skytte’s active role in the modernization of the state administration at this time also provided him plenty of opportunities to ponder various uses of education, as we shall see.

2.4. Conclusions

Although Petrus Ramus’s textbooks and student-orientated method of teaching had failed to establish itself at the University of Paris, it appealed to patrons and students in less prestigious educational institutions. Skytte encountered Ramist textbooks already at his Latin school in his hometown of Nyköping, and as he went on to study at John III’s gymnasium in Stockholm, and subsequently at the University of Marburg in Hesse, he became thoroughly familiarized not only with the general ideals of humanism, but also with current debates on Ramism, “method” and the utility of education. Skytte’s understanding of the purpose of studying was, however, affected also by several non-academic contexts, related to his origins and the political situation in Sweden at the time, that have been discussed in this chapter.

In the 1590s, Swedish students had to consider a complex struggle for power between Duke Charles on one hand, and King Sigismund of Poland (who had inherited the Swedish throne), on the other. When celebrating the utility of education in eloquent orations, possibly in search for a patron, each student had to consider this uncertain domestic situation. Skytte was a native of Nyköping, the residence town of Duke Charles’s duchy, and he had moreover received financial support from the duke during his studies. Upon Skytte’s return home, his eloquence and rhetorical skills were soon utilized by Duke Charles in the escalating propaganda war with Sigismund. To Skytte, the utility of eloquence, often emphasized by Ramists, quickly became a political reality.

The utility-orientated ideals of Ramism were congenial also to Skytte’s burgher background: his father was a successful merchant and mayor in Nyköping. Duke Charles was personally interested in various technical and practical projects that would further increase the prosperity of his duchy. The

Ramist emphasis on the importance of a well-rounded and practically orientated education, where eloquence as well as the mathematical arts held a prominent place, stood, however, in stark contrast to the state of education in Sweden at this time. Sweden’s only university at the time, in Uppsala, had not fared well during Gustav Vasa’s Reformation, and was still dormant at the time of Skytte’s journey abroad to acquire a higher education. Even though a decision was taken in 1593 to reinstate the university, the situation for higher education in Sweden remained uncertain due to the unresolved political and religious conflicts.

These were the general contexts affecting Johan Skytte’s own education and his early career. The manner in which Skytte combined his early philosophical and political insights will be the topic of the next chapter.
3. Motivations: The Weeping Muses of Sweden

This chapter will be devoted to Johan Skytte’s arguments for the utility, benefits and necessity of higher education for a prosperous kingdom and its civil servants. Rhetorically Skytte’s early orations and dissertations convey a characteristic humanist attitude towards eloquence and the liberal arts, enthusiastic of their manifold gifts to humanity while also reflecting many contemporary political issues. When Skytte delivered these orations at the turn of the sixteenth century, he was set on a career in the service of Duke Charles, who at the time aspired to the Swedish throne. With regard to the state of education in Sweden during this time, the situation was, as previously outlined, uncertain. Not only was Uppsala University (officially reinstated 1593) still without sufficient funding and professorships, but the conflict between Duke Charles and Sigismund was developing into civil war. Duke Charles’s need for skilled officials in Stockholm—for administration purposes as well as propaganda tasks—was at this time urgent but not easily fulfilled. Many of the noble families hesitated: after all, Sigismund was still the crowned king of Sweden. Johan Skytte had, however, several reasons to stay loyal to Duke Charles: he had, as outlined in the previous chapter, grown up in a family with close ties to Charles’s duchy court in Nyköping, and when studying in Marburg Skytte had noticed how several of his student friends had gained employments and high positions in Duke Charles’s administration upon their return home.

While Skytte’s motivations to study or support such activities utilized a well-established humanist and Ramist rhetoric concerning education, they were also crafted to fit the intended receiver of the orations and the specific occasions. As will be shown in the present chapter, Skytte’s arguments may therefore be analyzed as recommended strategies for different beneficiaries of education—the student, the native country (patria), and the state or the “common good”.
3.1. Education and Merit

The Education of Commoners

Johan Skytte’s early orations and dissertations, written when he was a student himself, are filled with examples of successful commoners, rewarded by kings and princes for their many useful skills. Historically, the elevation of commoners could of course depend on several factors—personal qualifications but also loyalty and strong patron-client relationships, as indicated in Hofmann’s *Lexicon Universale* from 1698, where “novi homines” are referred to as men from lowly origins who had been elevated to the highest positions on account of “their own merit or the benevolence of a Prince”.

By Skytte’s argument, the benevolence of a prince followed, as we shall see, *as a result* of merit.

The notion of a professional civil servant, rewarded by his merits, was confidently expressed by Skytte already in 1599 when he visited his old school in his hometown of Nyköping to participate in the inauguration of a new head master. Presumably turning to the students in the audience, Skytte posed a rhetorical question: “Not one of you […] is so ignorant that you do not notice the many who rise to the highest honors and offices in the state, which they never would have reached had they not with the utmost diligence devoted themselves to studying?”

This statement was undoubtedly also directed to his patron, Duke Charles—Skytte’s formulation may in fact be interpreted as a way of saying that he had himself studied diligently, and now hoped to be rewarded by “honors and offices in the state”. This particular oration, where Skytte proposed to discuss the greatness of the liberal arts, was 24 pages long and was printed in 1604, which was the year Skytte was raised to nobility. By this time, the oration, of course, further underlined the rewards of education as well as the success of Skytte’s own eloquence and skills.

In 1599 Johan Skytte was on the way to becoming a *homo novus* himself, having received support from Duke Charles during his studies in Germany and a position in the chancellery upon his return home. Skytte’s elevation

245 Johann Jacob Hofmann, *Lexicon Universale* vols. 1-4. (Leiden, 1698): “[…] qui ex humili loco ad summa evecti, merito suo vel Principum favore”. New men perceived as too ambitious often received less than generous appraisals from their contemporaries as well as later historians: one of the most controversial secretaries in the Vasa era was Jöran Persson who served under Erik XIV and who has generally been described as malicious and greedy for power and personal influence. A more nuanced analysis has recently been attempted by Larsson, *Arvet efter Gustav Vasa*, 48 f., 149 f.

246 Skytte, *Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas*, B2v: “Nemo denique vestrum tam ignarus, qui non animadvertat multos ad summos in republica dignitatum honores conscendere, ad quos nunquam pervenissent, nisi diligentius studio hisce disciplinis incubuisisset?” Among the categories of high officials and town representatives acknowledged by Skytte in the opening of his speech, he had also mentioned a group of “selected youth” (*lectissima juvenum corona*); ibid., A2.
was not unique in the early seventeenth century in Sweden. Several of his student friends of similar backgrounds also reached high positions in the state. Peder Nilsson (–1611), a legate and propaganda writer in the service of Duke Charles, was mentioned already in Skytte’s master’s oration (1598) as someone who had been “raised to the highest positions in the state on account of his political skills and talents”. In a typical hyperbole in the same oration Skytte predicted that Nils Chesnecopherus, subsequently put in charge of the chancellery, would “preserve our country through the immense spaces of eternity” (patrīam nostram immensis aliquando aeternitatis spaciis propagabit). The origins and early careers of these three Swedish students thus exhibit many similarities: upon their return home from Marburg and other German universities where they had studied in the 1590s, they were all taken into the service of Duke Charles to perform a wide range of tasks of an administrative as well as a diplomatic character. Since both Skytte and Chesnecopherus had already on a visit to Sweden in 1596 been given landed property by Duke Charles in exchange for their later services, and since Peder Nilsson had begun his work in Stockholm already in 1595, the optimism of Skytte’s graduation works was clearly based on more than rhetorical speculations.

A recurring example of Skytte’s orations at this time concerns the industrious student or scholar, achieving glory and high positions on account of his diligence and loyalty. The theme is not least conspicuous in Skytte’s aforementioned speech in Nyköping in 1599, where he praised not only the “majesty of the liberal arts and dignity of eloquence”, as the official title of his oration declared, but also all those who chose to devote themselves to the acquisition of learning:

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247 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, B2r; “quem jam fortuna ipsa propter praeclaram in rebus politicis laudem ingeniique sempiternalum gloriæ ad summum dignitatum gradus conscendere voluit”. Peder Nilsson was born in Vadstena as the son of a secretary in Duke Charles’s chancellery, and he studied in Rostock, Helmstedt and Köln until he arrived in Marburg in 1595 where he joined Chesnecopherus and Skytte (at the time Schroderus). Nilsson spent only a short time in Marburg, and began his work in Duke Charles’s chancellery later in 1595. He is assumed to be the author of an account written in German and translated to Latin of the events that took place in 1598 when Sigismund’s troops were defeated at the Battle of Stångebro. Nilsson was eventually posted in Reval in 1610, where he died one year later. His father, the secretary Nils Jönsson, was raised to nobility in 1605, when he took the name Jacobsköld; SBL xx (Stockholm, 1973-75), 64.

248 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, B2r. Chesnecopherus’s father was a vicar but on his mother’s side several successful secretaries had been supported and employed by Gustav Vasa and subsequently Duke Charles. Chesnecopherus received his master’s degree in Marburg in 1593 with the disputation Isagoge optica, and was employed as a mathematician by Landgraf Moritz in Hesse-Kassel in 1595; in 1599 he was appointed professor of mathematics in Marburg, and in 1600 he defended a thesis in law, thus becoming juris doctor. The following year Chesnecopherus began his work in the chancellery of Duke Charles, where he led the work from 1602. After the assembly of the Estates in Nyköping in 1611, Chesnecopherus lost his position in the chancellery and would instead act as advisor to the queen dowager; Berg, “Nils Chesnecopherus”, 426-439.

249 Berg, Johan Skytte, 57, 82.
Behold all these excellent and great men, worthy of all praise, who in contempt of all difficulties and obstacles learn so many and so splendid disciplines, and who, through so many benefits, want to bring happiness to their friends, liveliness and vigour to the state and ornament their dear native country with the eternal remembrance, fame, honor and immortality of their name!250

Skytte in this case combined the incentives of honor and utility with references to state and patria as well as the eternal memory, sempiterna memoria, that would be bestowed on those who served these higher goals. Following his praise of the liberal arts, Skytte also mentioned by name several scholars who had achieved such glory—or who would be granted it, as Skytte declared with particular reference to his own first teacher, Olaus Martini, now the town vicar.251 As Skytte explained, the initiatives of Olaus Martini to improve the school had been noticed by the “Illustrious Prince and the whole circle of Muses”, and as a teacher Olaus had been greatly appreciated by parents, families and friends. His name would therefore be remembered forever: “[Y]ou may consider yourself truly fortunate, you who will transfer your excellent name to posterity!”252 This theme of “immortal glory” was indeed a common topic in ancient and humanist literature, in particular with regard to heroes, kings and nobility, but Skytte repeatedly related such honors to scholarly achievements as well.253

After his graduation, Skytte was invited to the Collegium Mauritiamum in Hesse-Kassel to present a model oration to the students (April, 1600). The learned Landgraf Moritz was at this time recruiting professors and talented students from the University of Marburg to teach and deliver orations at his new school in Kassel. Skytte was relatively well-connected to the landgrave’s court and his new school, both through his friendship with Nils Chesnecopherus, who had been appointed “court mathematician” by Moritz in 1595, and through his Marburg teacher Johannes Hartmannus (1568–1631), who was teaching at the Collegium Mauritiamum, as well. In the audience on the day of his performance was Landgraf Moritz himself, the young Landgraf Philipp of Darmstadt, students and teachers. On this occasion Skytte celebrated, however, not only the landgrave and his

250 Skytte, Oratio ... in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas, B2v; “O egregios etiam, praeclaros et omni laude cumulandos eos omnes, qui contemptis et superatis omnibus molestiis, omnibus difficultatibus tantas et tam praeclaras artes addiscere, qui tantis et tam amplis commodis, amicos suos beare, Rempublished exhillare, et patriam charissimam cum sempiterna nominis sui memoria, laude, gloria et immortalitate condecorare volunt!”
251 Ibid., B4r.
252 Ibid.; “Illustrissimus et clementissimus noster Princeps Scholae nutricius, studium et industrium tuam, et universa Musarum corona praedicatur, ipsi parietes annunciarunt, discipulorum tuorum parentes, cognati, affines, amici, beneficium hoc, quod in illos collocasti, in se collatum esse judicarunt. Quare gaude tam excellenti bono et te vere beatum credito, qui tam praeclararum nominis tui famam ad posteros transmiseris.”
253 On the topic of “immortal glory”, see Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 420 f., 478 ff.
initiative to found a school, but also its “splendid” teachers. Some of these professors were relatively young and rising, like the mathematician Hartmannus who was frequently summoned from Marburg to the landgrave’s castle, while others were more established scholars, such as Georg Schönfeldt (1559–1628) who had been appointed professor of theology at the Collegium by Moritz in 1599. Skytte described Schönfeldt as “famous all over Europe” and declared that “his proficiency and talent”, had helped him acquire such a great reputation that the illustrious Prince Moritz had been eager to recruit him to his group of professors. Hartmannus was praised by Skytte for his accomplishment of delivering students back to the University of Marburg “more beautifully equipped”, and for his own brilliant intellect: “Magnificent, magnificent, and almost divine, are the jewels of your intellect, which you so willingly share with this noble auditorium!” Such recurring praise of scholars should not be underestimated in terms of the prestigious rewards of education: to the young boys in the audiences in Kassel and previously in Nyköping, Skytte’s panegyric rhetoric conveyed prospects of honor and possibly even an immortal name, as well as the acquisition of “high positions” to those diligent in their studies.

The honorific yet fundamentally skill-based educational ideal underlying Skytte’s examples was philosophically congenial with the utility-orientated Ramist agenda, popular in Hesse and other German principalities at the time of Skytte’s studies. We can, however, in this context ask whether Skytte’s meritocratic ideals also included groups of a lower social standing beyond the sons of secretaries and well-established burghers. One Ramist idea of a meritocratic and even egalitarian flavor concerned the education of craftsmen. In his treatment of the mathematical arts Ramus had discussed the importance of the “mechanical arts” and craftsmanship, and in this context he had especially praised the city of Nuremberg for supporting a professorship in mathematics and for providing education also for craftsmen.

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254 Skytte, Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani, A3v. The college was not, however, exclusively dedicated to the nobility: while the “Schola aulica” was reserved for the nobility, the “Collegium publicum” was open to the lower Estates (this part was joined to the University of Marburg in 1605); Borggrefe, Lüpkes, Ottomeyer (eds.), Moritz der Gelehrte, 70.; Berg, Johan Skytte, 79 f. On the curriculum and pedagogy of the Collegium Mauritianum, see also below, Chapter Four.

255 Borggrefe, Lüpkes, Ottomeyer (eds.), Moritz der Gelehrte, 61 f., 363 f.

256 Skytte, Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani, A4r; “Sanctum illum et venerandum Theologicae facultatis virum Schönfeldium intuemini, qui ob rerum Theologicarum cognitionem infinitis in orbe Europaeo innotuit, qui virtutis et ingenii sui fama tantum apud Principes viros sibi conciliavit authoritatem, ut a nostro etiam Principe in Professorum numerum sit cooptatus, ad praepotentis Dei jussa exponendum, ad res caelestes in hoc literarum domicilio explicantum.”

257 Ibíd., A4v; “Magna, magna sunt, ac paene divina ingenii tui ornamenta, quibus nobilissimam hanc auditorium coronam paratissime cumulas, quibus bonarum artium studiosos in Hassiae principum Academia Marpurgensi ante hac beatiiores reddisti.”

258 On Skytte’s oration at the Collegium Mauritianum, see also below, The Education of Noblemen.
and others “ignorant in Latin and Greek”. In Skytte’s master’s oration devoted to the subject of mechanics, Ramus’s arguments and examples were repeated—Nuremberg helped “poor craftsmen who by no fault of their own had fallen into despair”, and the city had not let their mathematical professorship cease to exist after the great mathematician Regiomontanus (1436–1476) passed away, but instead had worked hard to find someone else who could turn uneducated “mechanici” and craftsmen into prominent men (nobiles). Skytte also added an example of such a case: Joost Bürgi (1552–1632), whom he claimed to have met personally, had been a “crude and uneducated craftsman” but had been turned into “a remarkable scholar in astronomy and especially mechanics” with the support of Landgraf Wilhelm IV (1532–1592), Moritz’s father.

Figure 4. Landgraf Moritz of Hesse-Kassel (1572–1632).

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259 Ramus, Scholae mathematicae, 62: “Stipendium dare de publico mathematum professori non ei solum qui doctis et eruditis praelegat, sed ei quoque qui vernacula lingua Latine Graeceque ignaros opificesque erudiat [...]” 260 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, D2r-D2v; “Quin potius summo studio elaboravit, ne unquam deficeret, qui Mechanicos opificesque rudes, sine literis, nobiles efficeret”. 261 Ibid., D3r. Joost Bürgi was first employed as a watchmaker at the court of Landgraf Wilhelm IV of Hesse-Kassel, where he also developed astronomical instruments. Rumour of his unusual skills reached Rudolf II in Prague who employed him from 1603 as an imperial watchmaker. Bürgi also worked as an assistant for Johannes Kepler.
Of course, one must be cautious about drawing too far-reaching conclusions with regard to such Ramist arguments of educating craftsmen: the promotion of the benefits of various crafts was at this time partly inspired by recent discoveries of ancient mathematical works discussing “mechanical” applications and inventions, as will be further discussed below (Chapter Five). A reasonable conclusion may be that while Ramus’s rhetoric hardly amounted to a radical manifest for the conversion of craftsmen into noblemen, his rhetoric was nevertheless part of an ambitious reform agenda addressing fundamental educational challenges at the time, not least in terms of accessibility for a broader cadre of students. At least to non-noble students like Skytte, who were themselves dependent on the generosity of patrons, such thoughts could not have been alien. The relevance of education, in terms of personal opportunities as well as “eternal glory” and benefits to the state, was however not limited to commoners in Skytte’s rhetoric—also young noblemen needed to be reminded of the glory of philosophy.

The Education of Noblemen

Whether the practical and more traditional chivalrous skills, revolving around the art of warfare, or book learning and linguistic skills should be emphasized with regard to the education of noblemen was a matter of debate during the Renaissance and depended on the author’s perception of the role of the nobility. Concurrently with the expansion of state bureaucracies and new demands on the ruling elites of Europe, a well-rounded higher education was increasingly seen as indispensable for the young nobleman. While it may seem odd that a commoner like Skytte should have discussed the education of the nobility in his student orations, there were good reasons for him to do so. Educated noblemen could of course be seen as competitors, but from the perspective of a young student, they were also likely to be seen as prospective patrons and employers. When praising the wisdom of those noblemen from whom he had received support—or hoped to receive support—Skytte moreover contributed to the establishment of the image of the diligent student and the professional civil servant in spe, receiving

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262 On Ramist method, see also Chapter Four.
263 The subject left many traces in the academic material of the time. See especially Lars Gustafsson, “Den litterate adelsmannen i den äldre stormaktstidens litteratur”, Lychnos 1959. Often a unified ideal was proposed, which involved a certain degree of book learning combined with military skills. Cf. the classical topos sapientia et fortitudo and the Homeric virtues of prudence and valor, which became a repeated ideal for the nobility in the sixteenth-century: peaceful virtues could be joined with warrior virtues—both the pen and the sword could lead to honour and elevation. On this theme, see Ernst R. Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, (1948; London, 1979), 178.
264 As discussed by MacHardy, “Cultural Capital, Family Strategies and Noble Identity in Early Modern Habsburg Austria”. See also Kinneving, Aristocracy, Antiquity, and History, 77-82, and Englund, Det hotade huset, 153-182.
support from kings and the most wise and honorable members of the nobility. The praise of educated noblemen, interested in the well-being of scholars and students (like Skytte himself), moreover worked reciprocally—by associating the noble estate with the scholarly trade of education and learning, the scholar simultaneously bestowed a bit of illustrious dignity on himself and the Republic of Letters.

In his academic writings, Johan Skytte thus on several occasions depicted the studious nobleman as highly praiseworthy. When dedicating his master’s oration of 1598, *De mechanicae artis praestantia* (32 pages), to the Swedish nobleman Johannes Hane (Johan Jöransson Rosenhane), whom he had met already as a schoolboy in Nyköping, Skytte got the opportunity to praise the virtues of a successful nobleman: Hane, who had been enticed by the “sweetness” of philosophy, would, Skytte predicted, “promote and praise” such studies at home, inspiring other noblemen to follow his example. As Skytte moreover noted, he had himself always been shown the greatest kindness and support (*humanitas et benevolentia*) by Hane, even after his noble friend had returned home, where he had reached the “highest positions in the state”.

The example of the studious and successful nobleman also appeared in other texts from Skytte’s student years. When speaking at Landgraf Moritz’s new illustrious gymnasion, the *Collegium Mauritianum*, in April 1600, Skytte had a special opportunity to develop the theme of the importance of education for the young and noble as well. To begin with, Skytte addressed the “most learned” (*literatissime*) landgrave, and declared that he understood that nothing could bring more glory to his own name than “to deliver a speech in your presence and before your eyes, and before all the prominent men of your court.” He went on to explain the purpose of his oration,
declaring that he could have chosen to speak on any number of subjects but that his only intention was to “praise this illustrious school, which had been built at the expense of a most learned Prince”.\textsuperscript{268} The school was built, as Skytte pointed out, not in any obscure insignificant place (\textit{non in loco obscurro}), far away from human concerns, but “close to the most magnificent castle, and indeed within the castle grounds”.\textsuperscript{269} Addressing the students in his audience at the \textit{Collegium Mauritianum}, Skytte argued that inherited virtues (\textit{virtutis indoles}) must be cultivated, and he implored the students to listen to the teachers whom Landgraf Moritz had graciously provided:

The power of your talents is indeed great, great and divine; the dignity of your families is excellent, and your predisposition for virtue is splendid. But this divine harvest of talents, this dignity of the old family, this generous profusion of virtues, all this you will make even more perfect if you gracefully embrace these leaders in life and teachers of manners, who have been provided for you by the generosity and good will of the illustrious Prince Moritz.\textsuperscript{270}

Education was thus, by Skytte’s argument, a means to the fulfillment of heritage. Birth alone was not enough.\textsuperscript{271} To further underline this message, Skytte rhetorically asked, “what greater dignity, finer honor and more illustrious glory” could be bestowed upon the youth than the “great qualities and many virtues” inherent in philosophy: “Think about all the useful applications and the immense benefits, and then strive to achieve the goals set by virtue!”\textsuperscript{272} As will be further discussed in Chapter Four, in the context of humanist method and pedagogy, one of the primary goals at the \textit{Collegium Mauritianum} set by Landgraf Moritz was that the students should acquire skills in language and eloquence. Such skills—which by a modern
terminology might be labeled “communication” and “diplomacy”—were potentially not only glorious to the student, but also highly useful to a prince ruling a small principality with many neighbors. Several of the students and teachers at the Collegium Mauritianum were also later in one way or another utilized by Moritz in his foreign diplomatic affairs.273

Not surprisingly, Skytte’s prime example of the successful union of philosophy, eloquence and virtue was Landgraf Moritz himself. Toward the end of his oration, Skytte described an ideal prince, who from his early youth refrained from all temptations and promised instead to devote himself to “studies in the good arts and literature” (bonarum artium et literarum studiis).274 Such a prince learned many languages; he communicated the fruits of his learning to others; when he assumed power, he guaranteed justice and peace; and he made sure that “institutions were established for all virtues and arts”.275 Skytte concluded that anyone, even in Sweden and Finland or in “even more remote parts of the world”, who would listen to such an enumeration of great qualities and deeds would immediately recognize that his speech had once been dedicated to Landgraf Moritz.276 The boys listening in Skytte’s audience were undoubtedly expected to note that even a prince needed to study in order to achieve such virtues.

The notion of “inherited” qualities in need of cultivation was also present in Skytte’s master’s dissertation of 1598 “Problems from the beautiful and wonderful fountains of the liberal arts” (37 pages) where the opening paragraphs were devoted to the subject: Skytte argued that students with a fine lineage should be more concerned with how to cultivate their inherited qualities, which were not subject to the “changes of time” (temporum vicissitudini), than with measuring and estimating the value of their (material) heritage. They would be better off thinking about those qualities they had inherited which could not be destroyed—qualities which could be applied to serve the utility and dignity of human life.277 The idea that virtues could be inherited in this manner was, as the historian Peter Englund has discussed, not foreign to aristocratic thinking: the power of ancestry was not

273 As discussed in Graf, “The Collegium Mauritianum in Hesse-Kassel and the Making of Calvinist Diplomacy”.
274 Skytte, Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani, C3v.
275 Ibid., C4r; “[…] si omnium virtutum doctrinarumque officinas erigendas curarit”.
276 Ibid.; “Si haec in extremis Sueciae, aut Finlandiae, aut etiam remotionis alicuius provinciae finibus dicerem, pro certo tamen haberem perspectum iri ab omnibus, te, Mauriti, clementissime Domine, eum esse, quem mea jamdudum notaret ac designaret oratio.”
277 Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumptra, §1-2; “Quod quidem illis hominibus plerunque accidere solet, qui omnem divitiarum modum, magnificis quidem possessionibus, sed temporum vicissitudini obnoxii, metiuntur et aestimant. Quanto igitur in literarum studio descantantibus a majoribus suis possessiones relictae sunt excellentiore, utpote quae nec eripi, nec surripi possunt unquam, neque naufragio, neque incendio amitti, nec tempestatum, nec temporum permutatone mutari: tanto majoribus vigiliis, majoribusque studiis iis entendum providendumque est, ne fuligine quadam aspergantur, sed excolantur, ad humanae vitae usum atque dignitatem conserventur.”
only based on the good examples of the older generation which would inspire new deeds and virtuous behavior, but also on the belief that good qualities were actually passed on from older generations to younger. Skytte’s point was, of course, that those good seeds also needed some sort of cultivation to be fulfilled.

In line with this thought, Skytte declared at the Collegium Mauritianum that “the most learned” Landgraf Moritz accepted students into his school in order for them to “earn their heritage by studying diligently”. In terms of the sensitive “birth versus virtue” debate, Skytte thus used a middle way that stressed the importance of education while not entirely passing over heritage. Evidently, Moritz was pleased with Skytte’s visit at his Collegium: attached to Skytte’s printed oration was a poetic declaration by Moritz that praised his guest as “the Cicero and Archimedes of Sweden”. The prestige of education and learning was in this way bestowed not only on the glorious school, its patron and its students, but also on the young orator praising them.

3.2. Education and *Patria*

The young Johan Skytte and his student friends can be characterized in many respects as cosmopolitans: as was customary at the time, they adopted Latinized names and conducted their studies in pronounced international environments, devoting themselves to Ciceronian eloquence and the liberal arts. Occasionally, however, they would also deliver eloquent and patriotic orations claiming the superiority of their native country. Such expressions of patriotism originated partly in domestic sources, but were also, as we shall see, shaped by a humanist culture cherishing Roman ideals related to notions of homeland and *patria*. As an increasingly skilled orator, Johan Skytte often utilized, as we shall see, notions of patriotism and prestige when he sought to persuade his patrons at home of the benefits of schools and higher education. His rhetoric was, broadly speaking, dependent on both the impulses of humanism, which had “modernized” the Swedish use of rhetoric and eloquent speech in foreign relations in the sixteenth century, and the Gothic tradition which in the context of continental discussions of cultural and

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278 Englund, *Det hotade huset*, 110.
279 Skytte, *Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani*, B2v-B3r; “Si quem illustrissimus noster Princeps admisserit, ut in hisce sedibus eruditionis et artium liberalium patrimoniam diligentsi studio consequi possit…”.
280 Attached to Skytte’s *Oratio de splendore*: “Svecorum merito est tua laus, Schrodere, tuorum: Quorum tu es verus Tullus, Archimedes.”
281 The theme of patriotism and cosmopolitism in the Republic of Letters has recently been treated by Mathias Persson with regard to the eighteenth century; Mathias Persson, *Det nära främmande: Svensk lärdom och politik i en tysk tidning 1753-1792* (Uppsala, 2009).
national “origins” presented an attractive idea to the royal house of Vasa. In the sixteenth century, humanist eloquence and the themes of Gothicism were fruitfully combined. These contexts will be briefly discussed before we consider the specific arguments of Skytte’s texts.

Patriotism in a Humanist Context

Geographical boundaries were in many respects irrelevant to the increasingly dominant humanist culture of the late sixteenth century, which was linked by the lingua franca of Latin and by common scholarly and pedagogical interests. In their devotion to eloquence and the ancient heritage, humanists shared a collective self-consciousness that could transcend even sharp religious barriers, as in the case of Justus Lipsius who fostered his academic career at both Protestant and Catholic universities. It thus seems somewhat paradoxical that the same scholars who were concerned with the re-establishment of the ancient sources would be among the most active forerunners in the rediscovery and study of their own national literature and history. But, as Walter Rüegg has remarked, the difficulty arises only if humanism is defined as nothing more than an imitation of antiquity: “The dialogic approach to Antiquity is perfectly compatible with national collective self-consciousness.” In other words, the humanist motto of ad fontes was also easily, and increasingly, applied to domestic traditions, or to classical texts referring to Northern peoples, in an effort to define kingdoms and states not only by a Roman heritage but also by each other.

Taking a “national” view of Renaissance Europe is, however, usually done with some reservations in order to avoid anachronistic associations with modern notions of “nationalism” (as discussed in Chapter One). However, studies of the early modern age have presented plentiful evidence of national awareness in early modern Europe, related to processes of state formation, religious reformation and historical scholarship. Scholars

282 On the “modernisation” of rhetoric utilised by the House of Vasa, see Johannesson, “Retorik och propaganda vid det äldre Vasahovet”.
283 In fact even earlier, if we take into account the performance of the Swedish archbishop Nicolaus Ragvaldi at the Council of Basel in 1434.
284 Nauert, Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe, 192.
286 The literature in this area is rich: for references see e.g. Anthony Grafton, Joseph Scaliger: A study in the history of classical scholarship (Oxford, 1983); Roy Porter & Mikulas Teich (eds.), The Renaissance in national context (Cambridge, 1992), 6-20, and Donald R. Kelley, Faces of History: From Herodotus to Herder (New Haven, 1998), 174-187. On the understanding of patria in the German principalities within the framework of the empire, see especially Robert von Friedenburg, “The making of patriots”, Journal of Modern History 77:4 (2005), 881-916. English patriotism gained momentum from the break from Rome and the idea of “the elect nation”, while French as well as German humanists studied Tacitus’ Germania and debated the origins and relationships of the Franks, Germans and Gauls; Rüegg, A
devoted themselves to the creation of new national historiographies, the standing of their native language and literature, or investigations of domestic legal traditions. Neither did the international language of Latin prevent such investigations or expressions of national sentiments. The educated elite of Europe shared the Latin classics as a source of inspiration, which in some cases expressed strong sentiments on patria in terms of duty, virtue, love and longing. Supported by princes and other patrons, the humanists of the Renaissance generously applied the classical patriotic rhetoric when they cherished the old Roman call for the citizen to love and defend his patria. Some, like Thomas More, the author of the first great English Renaissance prose works History of King Richard III and Utopia, were critical of the unconditional patriotism, and Erasmus ridiculed it as yet another kind of “self-love” in The Praise of Folly, but the attractions of patriotism would prove stronger. As we shall see, when Johan Skytte at the turn of the century encouraged his Swedish countrymen to do patriotic deeds, praising the example of the Romans for their willingness to endure hardships and even to sacrifice their lives for the good of their fatherland, he used a classical and well-established mode of thought that was understood in the four corners of Europe.

The Beginning of a Swedish Patriotic Agenda

King Gustav Vasa and his sons were well aware of the importance of reputation and style in international contexts. During the course of the second half of the sixteenth century, artists from the Netherlands were employed to produce state portraits, and several new castles and mansions were built, commissioned not least by John III (who would, in fact, be accused by later historiographers of having ruined the Swedish economy with his expensive architectural adventures). Specially commissioned

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287 On the concept of patria in early modern scholarship, see Lindberg, Den antika svevheten, 142-150. For classical references, see especially Ronald Knowles, “The ‘All-Attoning Name’: The Word ‘Patriot’ in Seventeenth-Century England”, The Modern Language Review 96:3 (2001), 624-643. Cicero, for instance, discussed man’s love of patria and his obligations in De finibus, claiming that duty towards the common good of the patria should override self-interest even to the point of self-sacrifice (De finibus, III: 64). Ovid lamented his exile in Epistulae ex Ponto and Virgil’s Aeneid revolved around a lost patria, Troy, and the founding of a new one, Latium.

288 In the case of England, Thomas More was less influential than Sir Thomas Elyot who in his Book Named the Governor (1531) expressed a decisive preference, not for the greater body of Christendom, but for his “natural country”; David Starkey, “England” in The Renaissance in National Context, 154-156.

propaganda from Stockholm directed at the foreign courts of Europe was intended to improve the cultural image of Sweden.\textsuperscript{290} To the self-aware Vasa-court, new historiographies concerning the Swedish kingdom and in particular the legends of the Goths would play an increasingly important role. The exiled Swedish archbishop Johannes Magnus’s scholarly undertaking, the \textit{Historia de omnibus gothorum sveonumque regibus} (first printed in 1554), which portrayed an ancient and glorious history of the Swedish kings reaching back to Magog, grandson of Noah, was written in an accomplished humanist style with a clear anti-Danish twist.\textsuperscript{291}

As for the Swedish royal princes, they were thus immersed in a “Gothic” as well as humanist Renaissance, narrating a glorious past congenial to a rising nation.\textsuperscript{292} Gustav Vasa’s sons all used the Gothic tradition in international relations. Sometimes the purpose was to instill fear in the eyes of the opponent, as a group of Polish ambassadors learned in 1582 on a visit to King John III when he reminded them in a burst of fury of his proud descent, and sometimes it was to invoke goodwill, as was the case when Erik XIV sent copies of Johannes Magnus’s history to Queen Elizabeth at the time of his marriage proposal.\textsuperscript{293} Poetry, paintings and propaganda were produced to impress the receiving courts and show that the Swedish king shared the education, style and taste of continental princes.\textsuperscript{294}

\textsuperscript{290} The texts were often composed by “imported” humanists, such as Henricus Mollerus, a German humanist and poet employed by Gustav Vasa, who in 1555 presented an eloquent defence of the Swedish King’s noble birth and ascension to power (both controversial issues); Johannesson, “Retorik och propaganda vid det äldre Vasahovet”, 24.

\textsuperscript{291} Kurt Johannesson, “Med historien som vapen” in Christensson (ed.), \textit{Signums svenska kulturhistoria}, 80-82, and idem, \textit{The Renaissance of the Goths}, 73 ff., 106-120. The legend of the Goths did not, however, originate with the epic historiography of Johannes Magnus, but ultimately in ancient sources. To Swedish historians, in particular Jordanes’ \textit{Getica}, which stated that the Goths had emigrated from an island named Scandza, constituted an important source, whereas Tacitus’ \textit{Germania} was central to German and French historians; ibid., 76 (on Jordanes). Johannes Magnus was not the first to argue that the Swedes were descendents of the Goths: the Swedish archbishop Nicolaus Ragnvaldi had presented the idea to an international audience when he spoke at the Council of Basel in 1434; ibid., 85. Like other historically interested humanists of his time, Johannes Magnus saw history foremost as \textit{magistra vitae}, a teacher for new generations, presenting virtuous as well as deterrent examples from past ages; Johannesson, \textit{The Renaissance of the Goths}, 84. Regarding the use of history as exempla, see also Helander, \textit{Neo-Latin Literature}, 482-487. As Helander points out, the aims of historiography were clearly conceived of in a way that is different from ours: “Its purpose, according to ancient tradition, was mainly two-fold: (1) To perpetuate the glory of heroes and great nations; (2) To be a useful edifying collection of virtues and vices.”

\textsuperscript{292} For examples of efforts in the seventeenth-century to merge the Gothic and classical traditions in arts and poetry, see Kurt Johannesson, \textit{I polstjärnans tecken: Studier i svensk barock} (Uppsala, 1968), 261 f.

\textsuperscript{293} Johan Nordström, \textit{De yverbornes ô} (Stockholm, 1934), 66. There also existed a Polish version of the Gothic myth, which was based on a belief that the Goths originated from a Slavic branch of the Sarmatians, an ancient people from the eastern European plains; Östergren, \textit{Sigismund}, 218 f.

\textsuperscript{294} Peter Gillgren, \textit{Vasarenässansen: Konst och identitet i 1500-talets Sverige} (Stockholm, 2009). See also Lindberg, \textit{Den antika skevheten}, 134-136, on the importance of prestige. In
funeral of King Gustav Vasa, as well as the subsequent coronation feast, both organized by Erik XIV, may also be considered as efforts to confirm and elevate the grandeur and righteousness of the Vasa court. The well-educated second-generation Vasa were clearly aware of the importance of matters related to their international reputation, and they were also arguably more susceptible than their father had been in terms of the greater benefits of education.

Johan Skytte’s accounts of the glory of domestic learning and education were as we shall see, often written with an eye to the royal House of Vasa. The patriotic rhetoric of his early orations operated with two time perspectives: the recent past (the fifteenth- and sixteenth centuries), and the ancient past (the age of “Gothic conquests”). Both perspectives were influenced by the new historical consciousness of Renaissance humanism, which, besides a more philological approach to sources, also exhibited an outspoken progressive outlook that was scornful of the “barbarism” of previous centuries. Like humanists in other Northern countries, Skytte was not hesitant to point out the role of his own country in these recent scholarly achievements. Yet he also spoke of the “weeping Muses” of Sweden, distressed by the poor state of the arts in Sweden and at Uppsala University. Both approaches involved the use of stories and exempla from a glorious past in order to project a glorious future. As will be shown, the Gothic historiography of Johannes Magnus, which was meant to prove the dignity of Sweden through its ancient origins, was a useful line of argument, albeit not without complications due to the crude, rather than civilized, nature of the Gothic people.

Skytte on the Accomplishments of Swedes

The topic of Sweden as a worthy cultural nation is perhaps most conspicuous in Skytte’s oration delivered in Nyköping in October 1599, where he praised the town’s school, its teachers, and the liberal arts in general. Present in the audience were the town clergymen, the council, the mayor, prominent townspeople, students, and the ten-year-old Duke of Östergötland, John. The present context it is important to keep in mind that the ascent to power of the house of Vasa was frequently questioned; Gustav Vasa was for instance accused by the German historian Johannes Sleidanus in 1555 of being a simple rebel who had seized power in questionable circumstances. The propagandistic counter-attack on this occasion was written by Henricus Mollerus; Johannesson, “Retorik och propaganda vid det äldre Vasahovet”, 24 ff. On the historical outlook of Renaissance thinkers, see Kelley, Faces of History, 130 ff. Skytte, Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas. The oration was dedicated not to Skytte’s benefactor, Duke Charles, but to the young Duke John of Östergötland, son of the late King John III and thus formally the next successor in line to the throne after the recent dethronement of King Sigismund. The actual power was, however, at this time in the hands of Duke Charles; as “hereditary prince” he had been appointed acting ruler of Sweden earlier in 1599. Duke Charles was, however, careful to point
Skytte began his oration by relating two characteristic ideas of the humanist tradition, which we have already encountered: immortal glory and the use of historical exempla. As Skytte now declared, he had noticed that excellent men “directed all their thoughts, plans and actions toward the honor and well-being of their country” where they had been born and raised, and he went on to encourage his audience to remember the old Romans who, to the “eternal glory of their name”, had endured trials and hardships for their country, and who in doing so had even met their death “unabashed and willing”. Skytte soon added however that his intention was not to admire foreigners (externos) to such a degree that he would forget his countrymen (domesticos). On the contrary: “Innumerable Swedes have driven superstition and tyranny to the infernal regions of the damned, blessed their country with sound learning and true religion, and strengthened it by spreading the good arts and sciences in a number of ways”.

Following a discussion of the many benefits of each of the liberal arts, Skytte emphasized their usefulness not only for private persons but also in the public sphere, and he reminded his audience of the glory and honor that would befall the hardworking scholar as well as his country. In particular, Skytte admonished the new headmaster Johannes Olai Kempe to encourage the flourishing youth to strive for wisdom and diligence and to comfort the “saddened Muses”. This theme of the unhappy Muses, which was also present in Skytte’s master’s oration, was not uncommon in humanist

out the rights of the young Duke John. This delicate dynastic situation had to be considered by Skytte. In his speech he chose to treat Duke John as a possible future king. Speaking eloquently and dedicating orations in an appropriate way was at this time, it should be remembered, potentially a matter not only of rhetoric but also of life and death—as the result of the final dethronement of Sigismund, scholars suspected of collaborations with the Poles or of leanings toward Catholicism would be harassed in Sweden for decades into the seventeenth century. As rumours thrived in the tense aftermath of the switch of regents on the Swedish throne, John of Östergötland was himself suspected of collaboration with the Poles long after he had renounced all claims to the throne; Lindberg, “Hertig Johan av Östergötland”.

298 Skytte, *Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas*, A2r; “...in more, inquam, praeclarissimorum hominum positum esse animadverto, ut universas suas cogitationes, universa consilia, universas actiones ad patriae, in qua sunt nati et educati, dignitatem referant, ut pro ejus salute opprobria, exilia, mortem denique ipsam saepissime sustineant. Intuemini in veteres illos Romanos, qui cum nominis sui sempiterna gloria, multa pro patriae commodis pertulerunt, multas difficultatuum molestias forti animo subierunt et mortem omnium acerbissimam paratissemque lubentissimeque adierunt.”

299 Ibid., A2r; “Quod si te ad Suecos nostros converteris, deprehendes profecto infinitos, qui patriam, abolitis et ad orcum damnatis superstitionis commentis, sanae veraeque religionis cultu bearunt, vel eandem turpi valdeque foeda tyrannide oppressam liberarunt, inque pristinae libertatis statum reducerunt, vel denique bonas artes, bonasque disciplinas propagando, ejusdem emolumenta modis infinitis amplificarunt.”

300 Ibid., B2v.

301 Ibid., B3r; “Perge tuis monitionibus consiliaque saluberrimis studiosiae juventutis florem ad ingenij hanc atque industriae contentionem excitare, afflictas Musas consolari.” On the identity of this headmaster, only mentioned only as Kempe in Skytte’s oration, see Berg, *Johan Skytte*, 76, n. 5, who argues that it can only be a certain Johannes Olai Kempe who had previously been a teacher in Örebro.
rhetoric, as will be further discussed below (The Weeping Muses of Sweden). In Nyköping, Skytte’s ensuing focus was clearly national and contemporary: as he set out to praise eloquence, or more specifically its return to schools and scholarship, he stated that he did not plan to dwell on the ancients—he would in fact omit those “trite old tales of old” and “the shadows and dust of ancient times”. The audience was invited to ponder the present, or, in Skytte’s words, “our own very bright century”, which had luckily escaped the barbaric learning and manners of old times:

Not one of you can be unaware of the great barbarism that invaded Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Sweden and England [...] which left the more humane disciplines lying if not dead then almost destroyed for horrific spans of time. The arts were expounded as far as possible, but because of the monstrous and uncultivated way of speaking, they seemed to be completely without must and marrow.

To enlist Sweden in the company of Italy, France, Spain, Germany and England was clearly a way of including the Swedish nation in this narrative of the rebirth of eloquence. Although Skytte did not use such terms as “renewal” or “rebirth”, his rhetoric was filled with images of darkness and light, where the splendor and clarity of his own age were contrasted with the shadows and darkness of previous centuries. The light had come from south of the Alps, with Italian scholars who in an admirable manner (mirum in modum) had stimulated all studies that were surrounded by “thick fog”.

The new standards of learning had then moved north from Italy with the efforts of dedicated scholars. Skytte spoke especially of the Germans, who had been inspired to build schools in their homelands where the arts were taught in a more “refined and concise manner”, thus paving the way for

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302 Ibid., B3v; “Non vos ad antiquitatis obsoleta, et ad umbras ac figmenta veterum [...] reducam, sed ad clarissima hujus nostri seculi temporae humanissime invitoabo.” Rhetorically, the theme of actually surpassing the ancients was not new in the panegyric genre. It was in fact, as Helander has pointed out, as old as the ancient literature itself, which praised heroes that had excelled all the deeds of their myth and history; Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 538.

303 Skytte, Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas, B3v; “Nemini vestrum obscurum esse potest, quanta [...] barbaries Italiam, Galliam, Hispaniam, Germaniam, Sueciam, Angliam invaserit, ita quidem, ut humaniores disciplinae, si non internmortua, attamen monstrosis terminis paene oppressae jacuerint. Artes quidem utcunque proponebantur, sed proper monstrosum et incultum illud dicendi genus, suum quasi nucleum et succum penitus amississe videbantur.”

304 The metaphorical language of darkness and light was a traditional humanist theme. Cf. Petrarch, “when the dark clouds are lifted, [posterity] may enjoy / once more the radiance the ancients knew”, quoted in Kelley, Faces of History, 131.

305 Skytte, Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas, B3v; “Ponite hic vobis ante oculos praecipuarum nationum homines. Contemplamini imprimis Italos [...] qui doctrinarum studia crassisimis circumsepta nubibus, mirum in modum acuerunt.” In Skytte’s catalog of Italian scholars we find Angelo Politiano (1454–1494), Daniello Barbaro (1513–1570), and Marc-Antoine de Muret (1526–1585), who was actually French but earned his reputation at the University of Rome.
Rudolph Agricola and “others equipped with the finest ornaments of genius and virtue” (after Agricola came Erasmus of Rotterdam and Philipp Melanchthon, Skytte added, and they took “the same path”).

Turning to Swedish achievements, Skytte strongly rejected the notion that Swedes should be less inclined or suited to learned studies due to the immense cold of the area. He enumerated several churchmen and professors (the legate Hemming Gadh and the archbishops Johannes Magnus, Olaus Petri and his brother Laurentius Petri, Olaus Petri Medelpadius, Eric Jacobi and Eric Schepperus) whom he declared had “successfully used the instrument of eloquence to cleanse many things and to light anew the torch of the humanist arts”. As previously noted, Skytte especially praised his old teacher Olaus Martini, now the town vicar of Nyköping, who had taught Latin, Greek and Hebrew at the school. By Skytte’s account, Olaus had “single-handedly” lifted the school from an “incredible barbarism”, made it “trilingual”, and moreover introduced Petrus Ramus’s “divine works”.

Skytte also reminded his audience of Swedish achievements in his accounts of the successful use of eloquence in diplomatic legations: through his participation at the Council of Basel in 1434, Nicolaus Ragvaldi had shown “that Swedes were hardly lacking in intellect and talent when it came to eloquence”. Skytte also mentioned Hemming Gadh (c. 1450–1520), a

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306 Ibid., B4r; “[...] tantumque brevi temporis decursu perfecerunt, ut Scholae illorum, tanquam novum Mercurium e coelo dimissum, nactae, coeperint eleganiore oratione uti, artesque et nitidiores et breviores conscripserint. Ex quorum numero fuit Rodolphus Agricola, alique summis et ingenij et virtutum ornamentis praediti viri. Agricolam secuti sunt Erasmus Roterodamus, Philippus Melanchthon, qui omnes eandem viam ingressi sunt.”

307 Ibid., B4r; “Ingratissimus vero omnium, quos haec terra sustinet, non immerito judicarer, si hujus rei considerationem ad Suecos nostros non converti; qui falsa ob nimiam regionis frigiditatem inepti et frigidi ad literarum studia judicantur.” Cf. above Chapter Two, on the theme of the harsh, cold and wintry Sweden in the congratulatory poetry published upon Skytte’s graduation in 1598; Carmina gratulatoria.

308 Ibid., B4r; “[...] qui eloquentiae suae instrumentum ad multarum rerum repurgationem, novamque literarum facem accendendum, salutariter adhibuerunt.” Hemming Gadh (1450–1520) was a scholar and legate who spent more than twenty years abroad, mostly in Rome. Olaus (1493–1552) and Laurentius Petri (1499–1573) were leading men in Gustav Vasa’s Reformation: the former was the author of a translation of the New Testament to Swedish (1526), and his younger brother Laurentius was the first Lutheran archbishop. Olaus Petri Medelpadius (~1598) was an orthodox Lutheran who had composed an anti-Catholic historiography of the Popes in 1578; Eric Jacobi [Skinnerus] (~1597) and Eric Schepperus [Skepperus] (1555–1620) taught Greek and Latin at John III’s College in Stockholm.

309 Ibid., B4r; “Quod Schola haec ex incredibili quadem barbarie emerserit, tuum est beneficium: Quod magna cum gloria in eandem divina Rami monumenta sint introducta, tuum est beneficium!”

310 Ibid., Cv; “… ut Suecis nostris ingenium et naturam ad capessenda oratoria studia haud deesse, plenissime comprobaverit.”
Swedish legate in Rome in the late fifteenth century, who, by Skytte’s account, knew how to act with dignity and how to speak eloquently:\textsuperscript{311}

Another example is Hemming Gadh, the bishop of Linköping, who was a legate in Rome for thirty years in the service of his country. He was a man in possession of such great confidence and such eloquence, that when he, in the presence of the Pope and the cardinals, called the Danes, the most vicious enemy of our people at the time, ‘crazy dogs’, everyone’s eyes and thoughts were directed at him on account of his great eloquence. He widely surpassed the legates of many nations.\textsuperscript{312}

While Gadh’s name-calling to a modern ear may not particularly give an impression of rhetorical sophistication, it should be remembered that such rhetoric was not foreign to the humanist tradition, which had developed a propensity for deriding anything from scholastic learning to national enemies. Inspiration was readily available in the finest classical sources: sarcastic Roman and Greek plays, patriotic historiographies, and not least Cicero’s much quoted insults directed at Catiline.\textsuperscript{313} In the present example, Skytte clearly praised not only Gadh’s eloquence but also his patriotism.\textsuperscript{314}

Skytte concluded his oration by turning to the leading men and citizens of Nyköping (\textit{Consules, Senatores et cives}), expressing his gratitude toward them for having built, founded and supported their school.\textsuperscript{315} As promised, Skytte had not dwelled on the ancients but rather on contemporary philosophers and humanists. This historical approach was not unusual at the time: already in the mid-sixteenth century scholars had become more conscious of their own originality and of the progress made during their own time in comparison with that of classical antiquity.\textsuperscript{316}

\textsuperscript{311} Gadh received a doctoral degree in Rome in canonical law in the mid-1490s. He was thus one of few Swedes at the time to be in close contact with the culture of the Italian Renaissance.

\textsuperscript{312} Skytte, \textit{Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas}, C2r; “Exemplo quoque sit Hemmingus Gaddus, Antistes Lincopensis, qui pro patria triginta annos legationis munere Romae perfunctus est. Vir tantae confidentiae, tantae eloquentiae, ut cum DANOS infensissimos, id aetatis nostrae gentis hostes, in consessu summi Pontificis reliquorumque Cardinalum rabiosos canes appellantset, eloquentiae suae suae gloria omnium oculos et animos in se converterit, et multarum nationum legatos longissime superaverit.”

\textsuperscript{313} On early modern national stereotypes, see Helander, \textit{Neo-Latin Literature}, 345-359.

\textsuperscript{314} Yet Skytte’s inclusion of Hemming Gadh in this context may seem surprising, considering that Gadh later “defected” to the Danes: after the death of the regent, Sten Sture, Gadh switched sides and pledged allegiance to the Danish King Christian II (who in 1520 nevertheless ordered Gadh’s execution). The historian Sten Carlsson observed, however, that the “treason” of Gadh was more of an issue in later historiography—Gadh’s reputation in the sixteenth-century was not at all damaged by his “defection”; Sten Carlsson, “Hemming Gadh”, \textit{SBL xvi} (Stockholm, 1964-66). Neither was Skytte’s humanist scheme of patriotism and eloquence disturbed by such political \textit{Realpolitik}. It also did not matter that Johannes Magnus was an exiled Catholic bishop—these men had above all contributed to the new age of eloquence and national historiography, thus bestowing glory and dignity upon Sweden.

\textsuperscript{315} Skytte, \textit{Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas}, C4r.

Skytte clearly used a rhetoric characterized by patriotic self-confidence: in the humanist narrative of the recent salvation of eloquence and learning, Swedes too had contributed to the new glorious era and therefore also Sweden deserved to be ranked among the most accomplished countries.

Figure 5. *Nova Europae descriptio*. Map of Europe by the Dutch cartographer Jodocus Hondius (1563–1612).

The Gothic Heritage
The inclusion of Sweden in the context of a new glorious age of eloquence was, in a manner of speaking, an attempt to add cultural sophistication to the traditional “Gothic” accounts of military conquests.317 According to this tradition, Sweden was the cradle of all civilizations, and the Swedes were the descendants of the Goths who had once conquered Rome and many other peoples that had crossed their path. Skytte’s oration “on the ancient origins and military valor of the Swedes and Goths”, delivered in Marburg in January 1599, essentially repeated this narrative while also refuting certain

317 On the double theme in Gothic historiography of military valor on the one hand and cultural greatness on the other, see Widenberg, *Fädereslandets antikviteter*, 160-167, and Lars Gustafsson, *Virtus politica: Politisk etik och nationellt svärmeri i den tidigare stormaktstidens litteratur* (Uppsala, 1956), 218 f.
claims brought forward by German writers that the Goths in fact originated from Germany. Skytte responded by relating the essence of Johannes Magnus’s historiography to his audience in Marburg, thus proclaiming that the Swedes were “the oldest people of all”, stemming from an age before the Trojan wars—in fact from Magog, grandson of Noah, as Skytte proclaimed. The purpose of the oration could not have eluded his listeners: in his opening statement, Skytte declared that he would be the “most ungrateful of all for whom the sun shines” if he did not try to “strengthen the glory” of his native country. To refute the German claims, Skytte enlisted a number of ancient and medieval sources as well as contemporary historians, ranging from Moses to the professor of theology David Chytraeus (1530–1600) in Rostock.

Competition between German and Swedish scholars in this historiographical context was not uncommon. Spanish, French, Polish, English, Danish and other historians also partook vigorously in the quest for an ancient and glorious pedigree. Not least the “archenemies” Denmark and Sweden frequently fought over the same national symbols. In the Swedish translation of Skytte’s Gothic oration (1604) an “anti-Danish” section was in fact included which does not exist in the Latin original. The additional Swedish paragraphs in particular warned the Danes of attacking Sweden, or they would experience “the Swenskes grufwelighge Macht”. In relation to

318 Skytte, Oratio [...] de svecorum gothorumque vetustate. The oration probably was delivered as part of Skytte’s teaching activities, but the choice of topic was hardly coincidental. Cf. Berg, Johan Skytte, 72 f. The speech was translated to Swedish and published five years later under the title Een Oration Om the Swenskes och Göthers första ursprung och mandom j Krijgh. Note that the word “goter” was identified in Sweden with the regions Västra and Östra Götaland, as well as Gotland; Jacobsson, Den sjunde världsdelen, 459-466. It was assumed that the ancient sources speaking about the Goths referred to the Swedish ancestors. The name “Sueones” however also occurred in the sources (e.g. in Tacitus’ Germania). To avoid excluding any part of the historiographical traditions, Swedish historians and antiquarians continuously used both names (Sueci et Gothi). On the uses of these two denominations, see Widenberg, Fäderenslands et antikviter, 106-112
319 Skytte, Oratio [...] de svecorum gothorumque vetustate, A2v, A3v.
320 Ibid., A2r: “Omnium, quos hic Sol adspicit, negligentissimus essem, AUDITORES, si PATRIAEm meae suavissimae dignitatem omnibus modis non augerem...”.
321 Skytte especially objected to the claim that the Swedes had originated from the German king Svevus; ibid., A3v, as did his countryman Nils Chesnecopherus (in a letter to Skytte affixed to the De mechanicae artis praestantia; E2v). Like many other names in the much debated lists of ancient monarchs circulating at the time, Svevus was clearly an etiological name, that is, invented to explain the name of a region; Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 401.
322 These nationalistic myths generally utilised the same archetypical stories, namely the accounts of Noah’s descendents after the Flood and the fates of the Heroes of Troy; Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 398-401.
324 Skytte, Een Oration Om the Swenskes och Göthers första ursprung, B2r. This anti-Danish inclusion has previously been noted and discussed by Marianne Wifstrand Schiebe, Annius von Viterbo und die schwedische Historiographie des 16. und 17. Jahrhunderts (Uppsala, 1992), 29-32.
questions of national pride and origins, however, there was a problem that all Northern European historians shared: the glory of aggressive warfare was not necessarily compatible with the more solemn glory of philosophy and book learning. Skytte admitted that Latin and Greek authors had in fact described the Scythians (that is, the Swedish ancestors) in terms of “coarse rabble”.325 Remarking that the topic of his oration was not the manners (mores) of the Swedish ancestors, but rather their ancient origins (de generis vetustate), Skytte initially did not refute these ancient characterizations, declaring that anyone keen on such accusations might just as well accuse Noah, the progenitor himself.326 Without going into further detail, Skytte thus dismissed the whole issue, exhorting the imagined accuser to simply cease with his attempts to utilize such “shadows” to “defile, corrupt and stain the bright light of our present most splendid time”.327

Skytte’s ambivalence with regard to the “barbaric issue” is not surprising. Swedish historiographers rarely addressed the moral and cultural aspects of a war-ridden and violent past, with the exception of Olaus Petri who in his chronicles of Swedish history written in the 1540s (En Swensk Cröneka) had not only deemed the whole Gothic tradition as untrustworthy but also questioned whether “assaults and wrongdoing” (öffuerwold och orätt) should in any case be considered honorable.328 By Olaus Petri’s argument, there was nothing glorious about ancestors who liked to “skin, burn, kill and ravage” and who left also culture and “the books of learned men” in a state of devastation.329 This frank assessment was obviously not viable in the context of patriotic orations delivered by ambitious Swedish students with an eye to prospective patrons in the late sixteenth century. While Skytte did not deny that some Greek and Roman authors had described his Swedish ancestors as wild and barbaric, he refuted the notion that the Goths were unlawful and illiterate. To support his argument, he claimed that the scholar

325 Skytte, *Oratio […] de svecorum gothorumque vetustate*, A3v; “Ignominiosum esse dicit, populum nostrum ex Scytharum illa impurissima colluvie originem suam ducere”. With regard to the Scythian denomination, Skytte remarked that the world had come to know the Goths by many names (e.g. Scythians, Thracians, Cimmerians, Germans and so forth), but these peoples were all descendants of the Goths—their various names had arisen because the Goths during their conquests had assumed the name of the defeated people; ibid., C4r.
326 Ibid., A4 r.
327 Ibid., A4 r.; “Desine igitur Scythiae gentis barbariem nobis obijcere, desine clarissimam nostrae aeratisi lucem tenebris illis defaedare, corrumpere, contaminare.”
328 Olaus Petri, *En swensk cröneka*; republished in Jöran Sahlgren (ed.), *En swensk cröneka* (Uppsala, 1917). The quote from ibid., 9 f. The patriotism of Johannes Magnus’s *Historia de omnibus gothorum svenorumque regibus* would in the end prove more influential in Swedish official self-consciousness than the scepticism of Olaus Petri whose chronicles remained unpublished for the next two and a half centuries; Nordström, *De Yverbornes ö*, 64 f.
329 Petri, *En swensk cröneka*, 9 f: “Man legger jw föghö äro ther in ther med, at man faar med öfüwerwold och orätt, i annars land som oss intit ondt giorod haffua, skinnar och brenner, dräper och förheriar, them som gerna ville sittia med fridh. […] undanthagandes then skada the giorth haffua i thet Latinska tungomållett, och Lärda mendz böker, ther en obotelig skadha war, ther så mång Lärd Man nw öfüwer klaghar.”
Olaus Magnus (Johannes Magnus’s renowned brother) had found a parchment with runic characters in the Italian city of Perugia that was clearly a Gothic law book hidden away for centuries. 330 This book, Skytte argued, had been brought to Italy by the Goths when they first invaded and conquered the Romans, and if anyone were to compare this law with the law used in Sweden today, he would indeed find a match. 331 The best evidence of the ancient Gothic judicial tradition was therefore not to be found in “statements made by prominent men”, as Skytte declared, but in the Swedish law book itself—the oldest in the world. 332

The rhetorical strategy Skytte chose with regard to the “barbaric issue” thus resembles the self-assertive approach of the German humanist Conrad Celtis, who in 1492 had implored his students to “take away that infamy of the Germans among the Greek, Latin and Hebrew writers, who ascribe to us drunkenness, barbarism, cruelty, and whatever is bestial and foolish” 333 or that of Petrus Ramus who even managed to reverse the entire argument by claiming that Gaul had in fact been the teacher of the ancient world, transmitting grammar, rhetoric, logic, physics and theology to Greece and Rome, thus making Gaul the leader in all the arts of civilization. 334 As Donald R. Kelley has pointed out, the pattern of historical thought north of the Alps was thus marked not only by the traditional quarrel of “ancient” and “modern”, but also by the rivalry of Roman and “barbarian”. 335

The study of domestic legal traditions, which Skytte referred to, was only in its early stages in Sweden at the time of his speech (unlike France where it had grown into a popular discipline). Yet, Skytte’s interest in the mysterious runic book is indicative of a special facet of the awakening historical consciousness in Sweden at the time: the collecting and inventorying of antiquities and old materials. 336 One of the founders of the Swedish antiquarian research, Johannes Bureus (1568–1652), would devote his life to the exploration of rune stones and in practice serve as chief custodian of

330 Skytte, Oratio [...] de svecorum gothorumque vetustate, C2v. Olaus Magnus (1490-1557) was the author of a cultural geography describing Swedish wildlife and cultural traditions; Historia de gentibus septentrionalibus, (1555). His famous map of Scandinavia, the Carta Marina, was printed in Venice in 1539.
331 Ibid., C2v.
332 Ibid., C3r.
333 Conrad Celtis, “Oration delivered publically in the University of Ingolstadt”, transl. in Kenneth R. Bartlett & Margaret McGlynn (eds.), Humanism and the Northern Renaissance, (Toronto, 2000), 76 f. Celtis, however, admitted that learning had been neglected by his countrymen, and encouraged them to do better.
334 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 152.
national monuments in the first decades of the seventeenth century. In his oration, Skytte also mentioned Bureus’s recent explorations of runes. Skytte claimed that these runic carvings, made “by women left behind in times of war”, established the Longobardians as descendants of the Goths. The sons spoken of in the runic writings had fallen in the Longobardian War, but the ultimate victory had ensured that the Longobardians had become integrated with the Goths and their legal tradition. By now we recognise this theme as a familiar instance of a greater story, that of the great Gothic exodus: victorious conquests and successful assimilation of the defeated peoples. But in this case Skytte also attempted to show that the Longobardian law originated in Sweden.

The argument of the runes and medieval law books may be seen as pillars of Skytte’s “anti-barbaric” argument, but it should be noted that these issues only amounted to a small part of the oration as a whole. Skytte’s objective in Marburg in 1599 had above all been to speak of the ancient origins of the Swedish people, and the oration revolved around battles and conquests more than learning. As many other Northern orators before him, however, Skytte could not refrain in this context from discussing the less flattering, classical perceptions of barbarism: did these Northern peoples really amount to anything more than crude and uncivilized rabble? As we have seen, he not only rejected such notions, as other humanists had done, but he also implied pre-eminence of his forefathers in matters of letters. Skytte concluded his oration by stating that anyone who denied or begrudged the illustrious origins of Sweden should be repelled procul, Latin for “very far away”—arguably a somewhat bold statement considering the German audience and the fact that Skytte in his speech had accused German writers of doing exactly that.

Despite the violent character of the Goths—or perhaps because of it—the Gothic history could also be utilized in the context of rousing support for schools and learning. In his master’s oration of 1598, Skytte in one passage encouraged Duke Charles to strengthen Uppsala University, proclaiming that he was convinced that the duke would not endure the shame of having the Swedish people, who had “once conquered Italy, Asia and almost all of Spain”, appear “inferior with regard to the glory of book learning”. Thus,

337 Widenberg, *Fäderneslandets antikviteter*, 20 f.
339 Skytte, *Oratio [...] de svecorum gothorumque vetustate*, D2r.
340 Skytte, *Oratio [...] de svecorum gothorumque vetustate*, D2v: “Repellite procul eos, quibis nihil gratius esse videtur, quam hanc vitam, hanc aeternitatem, hanc posteritatis memoriam domesticis meis Suecis et Gothis denegare.”
341 Skytte, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*, B2r: “Is mihi crede non patietur praeclassissimae et omnium, quae unquam fuerunt, antiquissimae Suecorum Gothorumque genti hanc maculam inuri, hoc dedecus imponi, ut cum antehac Italianam, Asiam et Hispaniam fere universam
even if the Gothic tradition in itself was a somewhat dubious source for examples of cultural sophistication, by drawing on the established narrative of a glorious military past it could nevertheless provide an argument based on the expectation of an equivalent glory in other areas as well. The great potential for Northern humanists thus lay in the double-sided aspect of their historiography (weak in philosophical glory, strong in military valor), which they could use to induce either shame or pride—concluding in any case that their patrons and kings should support the liberal arts.

The Weeping Muses of Sweden

Compared to his “Gothic” oration, Skytte’s master’s oration, De mechanicae artis praestantia, presented a bleaker picture of Sweden. This oration contained specific admonitions to various influential persons holding high positions in the Swedish administration (who could thus presumably influence Duke Charles, the acting regent) to support higher education in the kingdom. Skytte turned especially to his student patron and friend from Nyköping, the nobleman Johannes Hane who now worked in Duke Charles’s chancellery, and beseeched him to advise Duke Charles to invite professors of all disciplines to the university in Uppsala. This admonition was in all likelihood also intended for Duke Charles himself: Skytte suggested that such a charitable deed would inspire the professors to bestow the duke’s memory with “eternal praise”. In one long exclamation, Skytte also enumerated all the disciplines that he wished could be taught in Uppsala, “our most splendid and noble home of virtue and wisdom”. If this vision were to come true the university would forever “thrive by all kinds of excellence”, and all countries would, Skytte concluded, recognize “the honorable wisdom in Uppsala”.

Skytte encouraged his friends (not only Johannes Hane but also Nils Chesnecopherus and Peder Nilsson) to join their forces and influence the duke in order to realize the envisioned goals. The Muses in Sweden had been badly treated for a long time, Skytte declared, and he turned once again to

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innumerabili Gothorum et Longobardorum exercitu e finibus suis egresso, debellarit, laudeque bellica semper superior aut par omnibus nationibus extiterit, jam vero tam abjecta sit, literarumque gloria multo inferior habeatur.”

342 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, Bv.
343 Ibid., Bv; “[...] qui sempiterna praeclarissimi hujus beneficii laude memoriam ipsius exornare valeat.”
344 Ibid., Bv; “[…] nostram celsissimam nobilissimamque virtutis et sapientiae sedem”. For a full quote of Skytte’s enumeration, see below, Chapter Five.
345 Ibid., B2r; “Fieret profecto, ut omnes annos omnis generis nobilitate floreret, ut omnes nationes maximam ejus sapientiae gloriarunt […]”. Johannes Hane was in fact in a position to influence Duke Charles; he was at the time one of few Swedish noblemen with such an extensive university education (see also below Chapter Two).
his friend Hane. The poor Muses were crying out for help, but Hane could help them by extending his hand:

Please continue, my dear Hane, to awaken other noble men by your example and by your encouragement to cultivate their talent and diligence, and to comfort the afflicted Muses, who saddened and with extended hands beg everyone for help; please continue to rescue the oppressed Muses from danger, and extend to them, who are humbly asking you for help, a hand that is not only beneficial but also a bearer of glory.346

As the Neo-Latinist Hans Helander has observed, the question about the relation between the Muses and Sweden in early modern literature was delicate and two-sided: according to one recurring theme the Muses shunned Sweden on account of the cold climate and bad manners of men, but another theme claimed that, on the contrary, Sweden had in fact become the favorite abode of the Muses.347 In the present context we have encountered the theme of the distressed Muses in Uppsala, but, as we have seen, Skytte also strongly rejected the thought of Sweden as an unsuitable country for learning when depicting Sweden as part of the recent rise of eloquence. The references to the shunned Muses on the one hand, and to the fortunate Muses on the other, could both serve as a means to convince a patron to be generous towards arts and learning: in the first case in order to avoid shame, and in the second case in order to fulfill the promise of past achievements. Skytte implied that Uppsala could be an excellent home for the Muses, and that this would be clear to everyone—if only the necessary measures were taken by Duke Charles. To support his exhortations, Skytte mentioned several learned rulers abroad who had generously supported the arts.348

Skttte concluded his master’s oration in Marburg with a characteristic patriotic appeal, praying to God that “our King and Duke would be inspired to study the liberal arts, that Sweden and the liberal arts would be granted peace, and that the great and ancient Northern Kingdoms would day by day be strengthened through the love of the arts”.349 In such solemn contexts, the different themes of the Muses served a clear purpose with regard to their intended recipients: Swedish patrons and rulers were to be convinced that

346 Ibid., B2r; “Perge, mi Haane, tuo exemplo tuaque coahortatione et alios nobiles viros ad ingenii hanc atque industriam contentionem excitare, afflctas Musas consolari, quae jam moerentes utraque manu auxiliurn omnium implorant; perge oppressas liberare periculos, supplicibus non solum salutarem, sed etiam gloriosam dexteram porrigere.”
347 Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 412-416.
348 For example, Charles IV and Rudolf II, as well as the Hessian landgravies; Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, D3r.
349 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, D3r; “Te igitur, caelestis sancte Deus, sempiterni beatissimique luminis princeps atque auctor appellos, ut Regem et principem nostrum ad artium liberalium studia ac desiderium incites, Sueciae tuae pacem pacisque alumnis liberalibus artibus sempternam largiari, utque earum amore quotidiem magis ac magis amplissima et antiquissima septentrionalium regna accendantur.”
education was valuable and desirable, and they, as well as a foreign audience, were to think that the future of the Swedish kingdom held no limits in terms of distinguished scholarly achievements.

3.3. Education and State Utility

When discussing the patriotic argument we saw how Skytte foremost utilized the prestigious aspects of education to entice Swedish rulers to support schools and learning. With regard to the demands of the everyday governance and administration of the realm, the actual skills resulting from education were also relevant to discuss. In the present chapter, we will take a closer look at Skytte’s early rhetoric concerning the demands of state administration and government, including his usage of the concept of “state”, or res publica.

The Concept of “Res Publica”

The Latin term res publica is traditionally translated as “state”. There is however a distortion to consider between not only the ancient political language and the sixteenth-century concepts, but also between those concepts and modern definitions of “state”.

An initial observation should be that, although there were early modern concepts referring to the administration and government of common resources, the political terminology was often fluid. As the historian of ideas Bo Lindberg has noted, the Latin words seu and vel, meaning “or”, were often used to juxtapose different political terms, which, besides being a common stylistic technique, may have been a reflection of an existing conceptual uncertainty.

Res publica could thus variously refer to the common realm, the administration of common resources, government, the form of government (that is, constitution), or more generally the common good. It did not involve a well-defined concept such as the later definition of state as “government, people and territory” developed in the late eighteenth century. As Lindberg concludes, res publica often appears as a neutral description of that which was common and that which constituted it, but the term could also denote the more normative, positive notion of “common good”.

The modern constitutional meaning of “republic” as opposed to monarchy was alien to the Romans; it was developed in the Early Renaissance Italian

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350 See Lindberg, Den antika skevheten, 56-64, for a discussion and overview of the usage of the term res publica in Latin texts in Sweden in the early modern era.

351 Lindberg, Den antika skevheten, 58.

352 The German translation Gemeinwohl and the English translation commonwealth reflects this; Lindberg, Den antika skevheten, 59, 63.
city-states and was also present in Sweden of the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{353} Johan Skytte thus spoke of kingdoms, principalities and \textit{res publicae}, and, as was commonly done, he also enumerated rulers and imperators with abstract forms of government, thus enlisting \textit{res publicae} alongside kings and princes.\textsuperscript{354} More frequently, however, Skytte used \textit{res publica} in the general sense of the common, or the common good, which needed to be administered and governed. However, since common interests and communities existed on various levels, \textit{res publica} did not necessarily represent the state level. When Skytte visited his hometown of Nyköping in 1599, he addressed the leaders and citizens of the town as members of the \textit{res publica} of Nyköping.\textsuperscript{355} In this case \textit{res publica} denoted the town community of Nyköping. At the other end of the scale we find the abstract concept of the “learned republic”: Skytte on one occasion praised a number of renowned scholars for their fame and achievements in the \textit{res publica literaria}.\textsuperscript{356}

In terms of the Swedish state, Lindberg has distinguished between two slightly different meanings in the early modern era, one pertaining to the abstract notion of a common entity in need of administration, and the other to the government, or ruling body, of this entity.\textsuperscript{357} This last meaning is evident from the contemporary Swedish translation of \textit{res publica} as “regementet”: in Skytte’s oration on the valor of the Gothic people, he spoke of the \textit{Gothorum respublica}, which in 1604 was translated as “Regemente”.\textsuperscript{358} The governmental notion inherent in “regementet” was also, as we shall see, a frequent term in Skytte’s instruction for Prince Gustav Adolf (published in Swedish, 1604).\textsuperscript{359} The more abstract understanding of \textit{res publica} as an administrative entity that could provide opportunities for the ambitious student was also present in the oratory of Skytte and his contemporaries. It appears in the rhetorical question Skytte posed when speaking in Nyköping in 1599 on the usefulness of studies in ethics and politics: “Not one of you is so simple-minded that you would deny that the

\textsuperscript{353} Lindberg, \textit{Den antika skevheten}, 64.
\textsuperscript{354} Examples of this use of \textit{res publica} can be found in Skytte’s inauguration speech of 1625, \textit{Inauguralis actus}. The Netherlands, for instance, was a republic in the “modern” sense, that is, without a regent; Lindberg, \textit{Den antika skevheten}, 61.
\textsuperscript{355} Skytte, \textit{Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas}, C4r; “Ad vos denique Consules, Senatores et cives inclytae Nycopiensis Reipublicae me converto.”
\textsuperscript{356} Skytte, \textit{Inauguralis actus}, 4: “Deum immortalem, quot et quanti hi fuerunt in republica literaria viri!” Quoted from the reprint in Schück, \textit{Bidrag till Uppsala universitets historia}.
\textsuperscript{357} Lindberg, \textit{Den antika skevheten}, 59.
\textsuperscript{358} Skytte, \textit{Oratio [...] de svecorum gothorumque vetustate}, B3v; “[M]ortuo Auge ad Amalum filium regni Gothici majestas est devoluta, qui tanta diligientia Gothorum Rempub[licam] sibi concreditam gubernasse dicitur, ut suae aetatis succrescentes principes omnes fere superari”, the last part of which in the Swedish translation from 1604 became: ”Om honom [King Amale] sägs: Thet han medh stoor flijt och omsorgh hafwer site ombetrodde fall och Regemente så förestådt, at han alle andre Förster, som j hans tijdh lefvd, hafwer widt öfwergådt.”
\textsuperscript{359} Skytte, \textit{Een kort underrwijsning}, 40.
study of Ethics and Politics is most beneficial to those active in the state (in republica versantibus), are you?

As has been suggested in early modern historical scholarship, state administrations during the sixteenth century, originally intended as a support to the king’s rule, became increasingly disengaged from the royal court. While the king and his council of noblemen still constituted the centre of power, they were relying on the growing structures of the state, in terms of its administrative, diplomatic and judicial institutions. In Sweden, government and state were, if not disengaged from each other, clearly taking on more distinct roles in the first decades of the seventeenth century. In the following I will discuss Skytte’s state utility argument in terms of first a “common good” perspective pertaining to administrative and practical skills, and thereafter in terms of the governmental (executive) perspective of the ruler.

The Utility of Eloquence and Mathematics

The academic treatises of the young Johan Skytte clearly revolved around a positive agenda of promoting the utility of the liberal arts in the state, or more generally, for the common good. In his most far-reaching claims, Skytte would speak of a liberal art as diffused in "all human life" (per universam vitam), as he did when discussing mathematics in his master’s dissertation in 1598. In his speech in Nyköping in 1599, Skytte expressed the “extraordinary” benefits of the liberal arts for the common good:

How extraordinary and great the benefits of the liberal arts, how very useful! They are like a great and completely golden fleece, like a protector that is

360 Skytte, Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas, B2v; “Nemo vestrum tam durus est, qui neget Ethices et Politices studium in republica versantibus maxime prodesse?” The Swedish word “stat” (status in Latin) was seldom used at the time, at least not in the contexts outlined here (as far as I know, Johan Skytte did not use it). SAOB quotes Axel Oxenstierna as one of the first users of “stat” (1625). Bo Lindberg notes that in the 1620s the word “stat” became a fashionable albeit vague political word usually referring to the condition (state) of the country. Over time there was a linguistic shift from the “state of” the country, government, finances etc, to those things in themselves; Lindberg, Den antika skevheten, 48, 79-87.

361 Regarding state-building processes and relations between ruler and central institutions in the early modern era, and in particular the disengagement between royal courts and the administration, see, for example, Pere Molas Ribaalta, “The Impact of Central Institutions” in Reinhard (ed.), Power Elites and State Building, 19; “On the whole, the development of the state was the consequence of the expansion of monocratic power. The chief instruments of this expansion were new central institutions created to serve the prince, but which quite often became detached from his person and attached themselves to some transpersonal concept of the commonwealth”.

362 See Edén, Den svenska centralregeringens utveckling, and Sven A. Nilsson, “1634 års regeringsform i det svenska statsystemet” in Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift 1984:5. The Swedish context will also be further discussed in Chapter Six.

363 Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium […] fontibus desumpta, C2v.
greater than any praise, and they not only affect and raise the private life of men, but even promote, strengthen and preserve the common good! 364

What was beneficial for the common man was beneficial for the common good, *publica felicitas*. This theme of the liberal arts and their utility could also effectively be combined with a patriotic rhetoric, as we have seen above. 365 By relating learning and the arts to the common good, Skytte of course repeated a common humanist and classical theme where philosophy was depicted as inseparable from the foundation of civilizations, societies, and states, which all depended on the human capacities of speech and reason. 366 In particular eloquence was in this tradition readily associated with state utility, following Ciceronian ideals of an active public life.

Skytte returned to this theme of the importance of eloquence in the state and in public life in practically all of his orations and other academic treatises. An eloquent manner of speaking and discoursing was, as he declared in Nyköping, vital not only in legations but in any kind of “public meetings called by princes or peoples”. 367 The great utility of eloquence was evident especially by its capacity to influence people, and as Skytte rhetorically asked his Nyköping audience: “[…] what could appear as finer than this: to be able to direct crowds by one’s speech, to win their souls, influence their will, and to bring them to wherever one pleases and from anywhere?” 368 In several cases, Skytte illustrated the diplomatic use of eloquence by stories of embarrassing incidents in which high officials had failed to respond correctly in Latin at a crucial moment during legations abroad, thus damaging the reputation of the country they represented. In his Nyköping speech, Skytte for instance related the story of an embarrassing incident at the Burgundian court, when “a silly barber”, uneducated in politics as well as eloquence, had appeared as a legate. 369 As Skytte explained, normally the French were known to send respected and educated men (*viros graves et doctos*) on important missions, but the performance of this man was so disastrous that it proved that a successful legation depended not on ostentatious display and arrogance (*pompa et fastu*), or on jewelry and

364 Skytte, *Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas*, B2v; “O eximios et magnificos artium liberalium fructus, o insignes utilitates, o amplissima et aera plane vellera, omnique praedicatione majora praesidia, quae non privatam tantummodo hominum vitam afficiunt et erigunt, sed ipsam etiam publicam felicitatem promovent, augent, conservant!”
365 Ibid., A2r.
367 Skytte, *Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas*, C2r; “[…] publicis principum populorumque congressibus”.
368 Ibid., A3r; “Quid per Deum immortalem præstabilius esse videtur, quam posse hominum coetus dicendo tenere, mentes allicere, voluntatem impellere, quo velis et unde velis deducere?”
369 Ibid., C2r.
fine clothing, but rather on “sophisticated eloquence, good language and sound judgment”370.

It was equally important, as Skytte emphasized, that the host of legations could perform as well as his guests. To illustrate this point, Skytte in the same oration adduced a combination of the good and the deterrent example that revolved around the comitia once summoned by the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (1459–1519) and to which many legates came, representing many princes and rulers. These legates were all skilled and eloquent, Skytte explained, and their orations were filled with “authoritative words and wise thoughts” (gravibus verbis sapientissimis sententiis).371 When the emperor urged someone “in his own big crowd of German princes” to respond in an equally eloquent manner, not one nobleman felt that he could meet the high standard of Latin set by the foreign legates:

It is told that the Emperor was so upset that he exclaimed that this was a reason to grieve, and that it was very unworthy of the German Empire that no one in the noble crowd could be found who could defend and praise the worthiness, beauty and greatness of the Empire with an oration in Latin. This accusation affected the old elector of Pfalz so much that he, when he returned home in the autumn of his life, began to study both Latin literature and eloquence, just like Cato once had done. In a short time he managed to finish a considerable part of this study.372

The moral of this story was presumably not primarily that it was never too late to study, but that it was better to learn languages at an early age to avoid the shame in the first place.373 Narratives like these on the importance of eloquence were in all likelihood well understood at the Swedish royal court, which was aware of matters of international reputation.

In addition to expounding the linguistic arts, Skytte devoted much effort in his student dissertations to explaining and defending the utility of the mathematical arts and their resulting skills, a theme that will be further

370 Ibid., C2r; “Galli vero licet hoc nomine a multis celebrentur, quod legationis amplissimo muneris gravibus praebentur, sed non est conscientiae, ne quis gravibus veris sapientissimis sententiis acclamaret, atque adeo Germanico imperio dignum, neminem in augustissimo illo consensu reperiri, qui imperij dignitatem, decus ac majestatem oratione Latina tueri et amplificare possit. Qua objurgatione senior Elector Palatinus ita commotus est, ut domum reversus in senectute instar Catonis tum Latinis literis, tum eloquentiae se tradiderit, brevique temporis spacio magnam illius studij partem absolverit.”

371 Ibid., C2r-C2v; “Quod tam moleste habuisse Caesarem dicitur, ut dolendum hoc esse exclaimavit, atque adeo Germanico imperio indignum, neminem in augustissimo illo consensu reperiri, qui imperij dignitatem, decus ac majestatem oratione Latina tueri et amplificare possit. Qua objurgatione senior Elector Palatinus ita commotus est, ut domum reversus in senectute instar Catonis tum Latinis literis, tum eloquentiae se tradiderit, brevique temporis spacio magnam illius studij partem absolverit.”

372 Ibid., C2r-C2v; “Quod tam moleste habuisse Caesarem dicitur, ut dolendum hoc esse exclaimavit, atque adeo Germanico imperio indignum, neminem in augustissimo illo consensu reperiri, qui imperij dignitatem, decus ac majestatem oratione Latina tueri et amplificare possit. Qua objurgatione senior Elector Palatinus ita commotus est, ut domum reversus in senectute instar Catonis tum Latinis literis, tum eloquentiae se tradiderit, brevique temporis spacio magnam illius studij partem absolverit.”

373 The story was repeated by Skytte in his educational treatise for Gustav Adolf in 1602; Een kort underwijsnig. See also Chapter Six.
discussed in Chapter Five. In the present context, we can note that Skytte attempted to prove the utility of mathematics in all kinds of areas relevant to the state and common good: he thus stated in his master’s dissertation that it was “almost not possible to express” how useful arithmetic was in human life (in hominum vita utilitates), in trading, the state’s finances, taxation, judicial problems, the resolving of controversies and military matters. In a characteristic rhetorical manner Skytte concluded his enumeration with a question: who would not agree that “each and everyone should acquire this mathematical skill at any cost, seeing that the effort to calculate correctly is rewarded in so many ways, useful to all?” Skytte moreover vehemently argued that both arithmetic and geometry were crucial to study before engaging in studies in politics and ethics, which may seem surprising to a modern reader. This particular argument goes back to Jean Bodin (1530–1596) who had attempted to apply mathematics in his political theories, or more specifically the “harmonic mean” (sometimes referred to as the harmonic proportion), which involved the mathematical combination of the geometric and the arithmetic mean known since antiquity. Bodin essentially claimed that the harmonic mean constituted a way of creating “fair distributions” in terms of distribution of power in the state. When Skytte discussed the usefulness of arithmetic in Nyköping in 1599, he also referred to Bodin’s theory, which he claimed had given generous proof of the harmonic proportion as a way of determining “the best constitution”. It is, however, doubtful that Skytte’s mention of applications of mathematical proportions in the state was grounded in an interest in constitutional theory. His argument was rather presented from the vantage point of the practical utility of mathematics in general in public life.

374 Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta, Cv.
375 Ibid., “Bene igitur numerandi finem cum tam multiplici fructu tamque populari cumulatum videamus, quis Arithmeticanon colendam, non expetendam, non sibi cujusvis mercedis pretio comparandam esse judicet?”
376 Ibid., C2r.
377 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 157.
378 Ibid. Bodin was favorably inclined to voting but argued that votes needed to be distributed wisely by giving more weight to the votes of “good men”, as a way of constructing an aristocratic government. Petrus Ramus had also discussed this kind of mathematical application to politics. Although Bodin and Ramus had in fact for some time lived in close geographical proximity to each other in Paris, it is not clear, as Skalnik notes, whether and how there were influences between the two with regard to political applications of the harmonic mean; ibid., 157.
379 Skytte, Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas, Br; “Et quid potest esse dulcis Harmonicae proportionis regula? Quam optimum civitatis genus constitueure, testis est in sua Repub[lica] Bodinus locupletissimus.” As Skytte moreover had noted in his master’s dissertation, Aristotle had stated in his Ethics that justice is built upon the knowledge of “right proportions”, and Bodin in his sixth book on The State had argued that a state needs the “harmonic proportions of justice to achieve wholeness and perfection”; Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta, C2r.
380 Skytte’s friend Nils Chesneopherus discussed, however, the theory of proportions in greater detail in his dissertation Rosarium mathematicum (Marburg, 1600), where the har-
According to Skytte, knowledge of mathematical proportions was, for instance, especially useful whenever a certain distribution of things was requested or an argument needed to be settled: “Arithmetic will teach the judge [...] how he should accomplish his task in the right manner with regard to disputes of inheritance or other cases of distribution.” Skytte concluded that those who did not think that mathematics was a necessary prerequisite for studies in politics and ethics were gravely mistaken, since those subjects were “daily calling out” for its support.

As we have seen by the above examples, it is often difficult to make a clear distinction between the state and the common good in Skytte’s rhetoric enumerating practical applications useful in the state as well as in “all human life”. Interestingly, one obvious use for mathematics—aiding the work in the Treasury—was not elaborated by Skytte at this time. As shall be seen, however, Skytte would not forget this particular use of mathematics in his position as university chancellor.

The Education of the Head of State

The goal of education for a future ruler was in a fundamental sense the same as that for a future civil servant—useful skills and sound judgment in matters of state and public life. Yet the education of the head of state occupied a special place in early modern educational treatises. The regent was not only seen as a personal guarantor for the safety and well-being of the state, but also as a model to emulate—his virtues and morals would bring success to the state, while his shortcomings could cause destruction. Skytte’s early orations on the benefits of education were, as we have already seen, filled with examples of wise, eloquent and well-educated rulers. A prime example in this context is Landgraf Moritz, whom Skytte praised not only for his initiative to found an illustrious gymnasium, but also for his diligent studies in many fields in his youth, his wisdom, and his sophisticated eloquence.

monic mean was described as a means for a ruler to successfully “order” people and citizens of the state. Chesnecopherus provided numerical examples of the distribution of votes between the ruler, the nobility and the commoners, where votes were to be distributed according to the harmonic proportion.

381 Skytte, *Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas*, Br; “Arithmetica judicem [...] varias ... litium causas decidentem docet, quomodo in controversiis Ericiscundae familieae, in communi dividundo, munere suo recte perfungi possit.”

382 Skytte, *Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta*, C2r. The subjects of the remaining mathematical arts, i.e. optics, music, mechanics, astronomy and geography, were also frequently praised by Skytte, who discussed the importance of practical applications in various areas of life. These more technological aspects of the mathematical arts will be treated separately (Chapter Five).


384 The argument went back to classical sources, in particular Horace and Cicero; see Sjökvist, *The Early Latin Poetry of Sylvester Johannis Phrygius*, 328 f.
Even Moritz’s ancestors were suitably praised by Skytte when speaking at the *Collegium Mauritianum*: Philip I of Hesse had used his eloquent speech to inspire his troops, and Wilhelm IV had been such an excellent mathematician and architect that he had personally supervised a number of building projects in the city.\(^{385}\)

Such models of studious rulers were, of course, especially suitable to adduce when speaking before young, future rulers. When addressing the ten-year-old Duke John of Östergötland in 1599 in Nyköping, Skytte related in particular the example of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV (1316–1378) as a model to emulate. According to Skytte, the emperor had frequently visited the university in Prague and “with great interest listened to disputations and lectures”, and he had debated important issues with teachers, doctors and professors with such eagerness that he had even exceeded his breakfast study time: “[…] and when his servants and courtiers suggested that his breakfast was over, he told them that this philosophical breakfast pleased him more than the other one with an exuberance of magnificent meals”.\(^{386}\) This attitude of the emperor had been “wildly praised, lauded and recommended” by Bohemian historiographers, according to Skytte.\(^{387}\)

The prince was not only obligated to educate himself, however. He also needed to make sure that he was surrounded by educated officials and civil servants. He would otherwise run the risk of public embarrassment, as Skytte implied when relating a story of how the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I’s officials had once failed to respond in Latin at a meeting with foreign guests. This was an example that “all Princes in Europe ought to study”, Skytte concluded.\(^{388}\)

However, successful government in the early modern era was not only associated with concrete skills, such as the ability to speak well, but also with the ability to make sound judgments. Humanist educators and authors of Prince’s Mirrors, eager to instill the value of studying, could in this context also turn to the ancient literary masterworks, which provided a range of subtle effects originating from philosophy and reading. As Skytte discussed when speaking before Landgraf Moritz and the young noble

\(^{385}\) Skytte, *Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritian*, C2v–C3r.

\(^{386}\) Skytte, *Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas*, C3r; “De Carolo quarto Romanorum Imperatore legitur, quod is non solum Academiæ Scholæ precedentem saepus inuisit, sed disputantes, declamantes magna cum voluptate audietur, et cum ejusdem Scholæ Magistriæ, Doctoribuz ac Professoribus de rebus gravissimis contulerit; imo vero ministris et purpuratis suis prandii horam praeterisse significabitur, sibi potius prandium hoc philosophicum, quam alterum illud admirandis pomparum ferculis refertum complacere.”

\(^{387}\) Ibid., C3r; “Quod ipsius factum Bohemicae gentis scriptores vehementer extollunt, praedicant, commendant.”

\(^{388}\) Skytte, *Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas*, C2r; “…et omnibus orbis Europæi principibus observando”.

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students at the *Collegium Mauritianum*, philosophy constituted a source of virtues, solace, strength and guidance in life. Using a common rhetorical trope (*prosopopoeia*), Skytte let Philosophy speak for herself and express her ability to encourage, help and aid men in innumerable ways:

I [*Philosophia*] provide the pure and beautiful riches of speech to all who eagerly want to convey the sensations of their soul, I polish reason itself, I give the ability to count and measure! I am the best medicine for the soul in distress, I repress unbridled passions, I reject false hope, I extrude unwarranted fear, I mitigate severe agony! I expel mad conceptions that have been inhaled between the breasts of the wet-nurse and the kisses of the parents, and instead I insinuate other ideas which are in accordance with the greatness and nobility of humanity, I strengthen what is good through solid traditions, I increase wisdom itself through the extensive knowledge of facts, and I deliver in a very efficient way countless other things to all humankind!

This rhetorical figure—elaborating philosophy as a source of all good in human life—is particular reminiscent of Cicero’s praise of philosophy in *Tusculanae Disputationes*, but Skytte could have easily crafted his formulations from any number of Renaissance sources treating the same subject in a Ciceronian manner. Like the ancient philosophers, the humanists considered the cultivation of virtues a fundamental aspect of the education of the elite—without *virtus* there would be no *honor*. The goals of their education would be attained, as a number of humanist educational treatises suggested, by an action-orientated reading that would grant young men wisdom to act and live by—*prudentia*—preparing them to take up leadership roles in the civic life. Philosophers and political advisors at this time did

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389 Skytte, *Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani*, Bv; “Ego omnibus animi sui sensa cum alijis communicare gestientibus, orationis cum purae, tum ornatae divitas suppedito, Rationem ipsam mirifice perpolio, numerandi et metiendi doctrinam tribuo: Ego sum praestantissima aegrae mentis medicina, quae cupiditates effraenatas coërceo, spes vanas aufero, formidines inanes depello, mitigo acerbissimos dolores, avello pravas opiniones, inter ipsa nutricis ubera, inter oscula parentum haustas, insinuo alias hominum amplitudini et nobilitati valde consentaneas, bonitatem rectis moribus augeo, sapientiam ipsum multiplici rerum cognitione amplifico, infinitaque alia hominum generi promptissime exhibeo.”

390 The above quotation is particularly reminiscent of Cicero’s praise of philosophy in *Tusculane Disputationes*, 5.5: “O vitae philosophia dux, o virtutis indagatrix expultrixque vitiorum!”, and of Philosophy’s speech in Boethius’ *De Consolatione Philosophiae*.

391 The exact nature of the relation between virtue and honor was not clear in the literature that humanists consulted, but as Andreas Kinneging notes, “[…] often the reader encounters the idea that nature has made men ‘enthusiastic seekers after honor’, and that it is from this spring that virtue is born”; Kinneging, *Aristocracy, Antiquity, and History*, 149.

392 On the classical term “prudentia” for which no good modern equivalent translation exists, see Kinneging, *Aristocracy, Antiquity, and History*, 187. The term was generally related to “practical knowledge”, but while the modern term *prudence* has a connotation of “hard-hearted Real-Politik”, Kinnegang points out that Cicero discussed *prudentia* in terms of an “*ars vivendi*, and ‘the knowledge of things to be sought for and things to be avoided’, i.e. virtues and vices”. Because Cicero provided the model for humanist educators, this classical aspect of *prudentia* should not be forgotten.
thus not distinguish between the private and the public man, or perhaps more to the point, between personal and professional “identities.”  

On the contrary, as is evident from the numerous humanist Prince’s Mirrors of the sixteenth century, it was often taken for granted that the most virtuous governors would also produce the most virtuous governments. The humanist approach to education thus assumed that poetry and philosophy were “useful” in a way that can be difficult to fully assess from a modern frame of reference where education and virtue, or “character building”, are separated.

Many similarities exist of course between the administrative and ruling aspects of Skytte’s state utility argument: both perspectives assumed that skills provided by the liberal arts were useful and indeed necessary for the prospering of the realm and the common good. No exceptions were made for the regent, who needed to rule wisely, defend the honor of his kingdom by his eloquence and sophistication, and present a virtuous example to his own subjects. The model for this type of regent was conveyed by Skytte from several examples of historical as well as contemporary rulers, who in various ways had utilized knowledge and skills, whether it was the construction of houses and bridges or the ability to inspire armies and people by their eloquent speech. When Skytte a few years after his return home to Sweden in 1602 was given the task of tutoring Duke Charles’s son, Gustav Adolf, he got the opportunity to elaborate on the characteristics of an ideal ruler, but also on the many dangers that lured at the court and in political life, and for which humanist literature also contained much advice, as will be further discussed in Chapter Six.

3.4. Conclusions

In this chapter Johan Skytte’s arguments for the utility of education have been analyzed from the perspective of different “beneficiaries” of education that are present in Skytte’s rhetoric: students from common as well as noble backgrounds; the native country (patria) and the state. There were several factors that favored meritocratic arguments in Skytte’s early oratory. The political circumstances in Sweden in the late sixteenth century made it possible for commoners to make remarkable careers. As was the case in several other Northern European countries, the Swedish administration lacked educated officials in the chancellery, but the king did not necessarily trust that the nobility had enough skill or loyalty. Johan Skytte thus spoke of

393 Kinneging, Aristocracy, Antiquity, and History, 155-158.
394 Skinner, The Foundation of Modern Political Thought I, 242. For examples, see Pier Paolo Vergerio’s The Character and Studies Befitting a Free-Born Youth, Leonardo Bruni’s The Study of Literature, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini’s The Education of Boys, which all became very influential and popular in the Renaissance era; available in Kallendorf (ed.), Humanist Educational Treatises.
the rewards of education and referred to the examples of his friends who, on
the conclusion of their studies abroad, had received high positions at home.
The philosophy and pedagogy of Ramism were moreover congenial to
meritocratic ideals: Petrus Ramus had come to believe in an educational
system that was accessible even for students of small means and that would
prepare them for positions in public life. This perspective of utility and merit
cause Ramus to encourage the education of craftsmen, a rhetoric that Johan
Skytte repeated in his student orations.

The meritocratic argument could however also be applied in the context
of education for the nobility. The topic was elaborated by Skytte on his visit
to Landgraf Moritz’s new college for young nobility in 1600, where he
argued that inherited virtues must be cultivated in order to fulfill the promise
of a fine heritage (central to Skytte’s argument about the importance of
education for noblemen was the metaphor of the uncultivated “seed”).

Skytte presented education as a means to this end of fulfilled virtues, thus
partaking in a continental and Swedish effort to make education part of the
noble identity. The meritocratic elements of the argument appear as a result
of Skytte’s assumption that skills, rather than birth, should be the decisive
factor in any man’s career, whether of noble or common origins.

Skytte’s patriotic argument appears in domestic as well as international
contexts. By portraying his native country as sophisticated, dignified and
ancient, Skytte claimed a place also for Swedes among the ranks of famous
Italian, French and German philosophers and scholars. His rhetoric called
upon those in power at home to enable the liberal arts to flourish, just as
other rulers had done elsewhere. Such princes had received respect and glory
on account of their generous patronage of the arts and sciences. When Skytte
asked his audience in Nyköping in 1599 to remember the useless sophistic
learning that had dominated England, France, Spain and Germany “not so
long ago”, he not only called attention to the philosophical splendor of his
own age, but also suggested that the new clarity, which had dispersed the
“thick fog” of previous ages, had set new and higher standards for Sweden,
too. While including Sweden in this humanist narrative of revived
philosophy and culture, Skytte’s rejections of “misconceptions” of Sweden
(that is, its coldness and barbaric past) at the same time portrays him as a
humanist standing in the European periphery—a periphery that had moved
north from the days of Conrad Celtis. In the same way as French and
German scholars once had measured their cultural standing by the Italian
example, Johan Skytte now related Sweden to recent achievements in France
and Germany, and to scholars like Erasmus, Rudolph Agricola, Petrus
Ramus and Philipp Melanchthon, as well as patrons like Landgraf Moritz

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395 Skytte, Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritianii.
396 Skytte, Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas.
and his learned forefathers. The Swedish *patria* deserved at least as much—this was the message conveyed to Duke Charles.

Skytte also discussed the utility of education from an administrative and governmental perspective. Using a terminology characteristically vague with regard to the state, the ruling of the state and the common good, Skytte argued that education was crucial for state officials as well as the regent. Eloquence and mathematics were conveyed as especially vital skills, impossible to disregard in many spheres of political and official life, such as finances, taxation, judicial problems and legations. Success or failure in the state was ultimately dependent on the virtues of its ruler—which in Skytte’s humanist understanding were shaped and cultivated above all by education.

Skytte’s many examples of successful students, scholars, princes and patrons, who had devoted themselves to the liberal arts, clearly left a conclusion to be drawn by students and princes alike. The key was education. Exactly *how* the liberal arts should be taught, applied and turned into utility will be the subject of the next chapter.
4. How to Do It: The Method of Ramism

4.1. The Question of Method

In the previous chapter the benefits of education, as conveyed in Johan Skytte’s early academic orations and dissertations, were discussed. This chapter will be devoted to ideas of how the desired goals of utility were to be achieved. I will discuss in particular the concept of “method”, which in the sixteenth century carried pedagogical as well as epistemological connotations. The concept was not least central to the reform agenda formulated by Petrus Ramus, which was designed to provide a shorter yet more well-rounded and pedagogically more efficient education.\textsuperscript{397}

Following an initial survey of the essential paradigms of sixteenth-century discussions of method (and in particular Ramist method), I will discuss Skytte’s philosophical training in Marburg and his defense of Ramism. As will be shown, the Ramist method was not only designed to be a practical tool for teachers in the class-room situation, but it also addressed a number of problems related to the challenges faced by students hoping to become professional civil servants in the expanding state administrations across Europe. How should one order and organise a complex subject matter or find the right conclusions of a lengthy text? What was the function of eloquence and correct language? How did one determine which concepts were true and false? Many of these questions originated with one challenge which Ramus had started out with: how could Aristotle’s logic, which consumed years of each student’s education, be reorganised and reduced according to some logical order which would be evident and natural to everyone? Ramus’ answer to this question would, as we shall see, induce enthusiasm as well as bewilderment in the Republic of Letters.

“…no word is more popular in our lectures these days”\textsuperscript{397}

Scholastic learning and education had, since the days of Petrarch, been under attack for having confused and misrepresented the ancient works. Yet the humanist re-examination of the ancients, along with new and improved translations, did not clear all confusion. In many cases, still deeper levels of

\textsuperscript{397} Unless otherwise stated, the English translations of Petrus Ramus’s Latin texts are my own.
discord were instead revealed by humanist scholars as they carefully scrutinized the texts left behind by the great ancient philosophers.\(^\text{398}\) The ensuing search in the sixteenth century for an improved instruction in logic and better ways of organising and absorbing the accumulating amounts of knowledge stimulated heated intellectual debates centered on “method”—a concept which in itself was found in a number of contradictory definitions inherited from Aristotle, Galen and others.\(^\text{399}\) As Timothy J. Reiss has remarked, this “internal loss of older certainties” was accompanied by a sense of “external breaches” related to a number of debilitating developments in the European sixteenth century—in addition to the loss of theological and political security following the Reformation(s), scholars were confronted with geographical discoveries of worlds previously completely unknown: “[…] humans apparently existed such as the Scripture, the Divine word itself, had no place for; histories and times existed such as were wholly foreign to the closures of medieval eschatology; the very geography of the world was not as had been thought.”\(^\text{400}\) Notwithstanding these “breaches” in the medieval system of thought, Aristotelian logic still formed the basis of undergraduate teaching, which inspired a number of reform attempts.\(^\text{401}\) Having reappraised logic, some scholars, as we shall see, moved on to the whole circle of liberal arts, in terms of their organisation, contents, methods and aims.

Traditionally, neither the mathematical arts in their broad Renaissance meaning (including, for example, optics, mechanics and geography), nor the humane arts (focused on classical literature and poetry), had enjoyed a very strong position in the scholastic curriculum. By the sixteenth century, however, both sets of subjects were increasingly seen as useful in various strands of ordinary life, from trade, navigation and warfare to diplomacy and politics.\(^\text{402}\) In this more encyclopedic approach to the arts, more than one educational reformer chose to present his own version of “method”.\(^\text{403}\) Although the concept of method today is often associated with the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century, it is evident that the agitation over this term had deep roots in the previous century. As Walter J. Ong remarked, sixteenth-century scholars had shown a “frantic interest in the whole question of

\(^{399}\) As discussed by Lisa Jardine, the different contexts of ancient discussions were seldom differentiated by early modern dialecticians (e.g. Euclidean axiomatic method, Aristotelian and Galenic demonstrative methods, and discussions of methods ‘for laying out available material for clarity’, based on Aristotle as well as Cicero and Quintilian). As a result, dialectical method was often regarded simultaneously as a presentation technique and as an arbiter of truth, which, as Jardine points out, caused “considerable confusion”; Lisa Jardine, *Francis Bacon: Discovery and the Art of Discourse* (London, 1974), 17-58; esp. 28 f.
\(^{400}\) Timothy J. Reiss, *Knowledge, discovery and imagination in early modern Europe: The rise of aesthetic rationalism* (Cambridge, 1997), 79.
\(^{401}\) For examples of humanist reforms of logic, see Rummel, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate*.
\(^{402}\) See also below Chapter Five, regarding the promotion of the mathematical arts at this time.
\(^{403}\) On early modern concepts of method, see especially Neal W. Gilbert, *Renaissance Concepts of Method* (New York, 1960), to be further quoted below.
method which marks the two generations and more preceding Descartes”.

The constant references to the concept even left some scholars fatigued, as expressed by the classical philologist Adrien Turnèbe in 1600:

Method—no word is more popular in our lectures these days, none more often heard, none gives off a more delightful ring than that term. Everything else, if you use it often enough, will end by nauseating your readers. This is the only thing that never makes them sick. If you leave it out, they think the feast you set before them is disgustingly seasoned and poorly prepared. If you use it often, they will believe that anything you give them is the ambrosial and nectared food of the gods.

Turnèbe was skeptical of the intrinsic importance of the whole matter and did not wish to add to the subject, remarking that Petrus Ramus had it “thrashed out to the last grain”. Yet the interest in method prevailed. The modern notion of method as a scientifically ordered way of reaching new knowledge is, however, as already indicated, different in several fundamental respects from the common sixteenth-century uses of the term. As Neal W. Gilbert once pointed out, in the sixteenth century “method” was not primarily thought of as a means of separating truth from falsehood, or of discovering new theories, but rather as a way to efficiently order and present a discipline or art (ars).

The growing humanist discontent with the lack of order perceived not only in logic but also in the increasingly large body of discovered classical texts prompted a flood of treatises on how to bring a certain art, or the whole range of liberal arts, into order “by a certain method” that would facilitate the mastery of the art(s) and thus more promptly guide students through the artes in a reasonable amount of time.

The quest for a better and more coherent structure for the university disciplines was thus from the beginning closely related to the demands of teaching and more specifically the production of textbooks, explicating the

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405 Quoted by Ong, ibid., 228, from Adrien Turnèbe, *De methodo libellus* (Paris, 1600).
406 Ibid., 229.
407 Gilbert, *Renaissance Concepts of Method*, 66. The etymological understanding of method at the time was in fact, as Gilbert points out, held to be a “short form of art”, but there were no well-defined concepts: “words like via, ratio, ordo, modus and finally, methodus were neutral names used both for the content of a discipline and for any manner of investigating or teaching it”; ibid., 69. As Lisa Jardine has noted, it was commonly claimed that dialectical method simply mirrored man’s natural reason—which meant that dialectic method was not only a “universal vehicle for teaching” but also a means of classifying natural phenomena; Jardine, *Francis Bacon*, 28.
408 Gilbert, *Renaissance Concepts of Method*, 69. This emphasis on speed and efficiency was, as Gilbert points out, crucial to the Renaissance notion of method in a way that it had not been before: to medieval students and scholars, the idea that method could provide a shortcut to learning was never a primary concern, as it would be in “the more time-conscious age of the Renaissance”; ibid., 66.
subject material “by method”. While the textbook was not “invented” in the Renaissance—the isagogical tradition after all originated with Porphyry’s *Isagoge* (“Introduction”)—the Renaissance saw an unprecedented rise in the number of methodological expositions of various topics, ranging from new or reformed expositions of scholarly disciplines, typically named *Isagoge, Elementa, Institutiones*, and suchlike, to instructions in cooking, breeding horses, training princes, and behaving as a gentleman, set in the vernacular as well as in Latin. Throughout a schoolboy’s education, or in Anthony Grafton’s words his “magical mystery tour through texts written over a period of some 2000 years”, he would thus typically encounter a mix of literature, ranging “in locales from Athens and Alexandria to Baghdad, Paris and Oxford.” Also Philipp Melanchthon, the “Preceptor of Germany”, stressed that the purpose of each art needed to be given greater consideration in schools. His thoughts on how to achieve a more “methodical” instruction resulted in a production of small, accessible compendia in each school subject. Such compendia became immensely popular among students, as would also later the Ramist textbooks.

The fates of these textbooks were not determined by pedagogical concerns alone; their success also rested on political interests related to processes of state-building and religious reform, processes that created a demand for well-educated officials ready to support the ambitions of their prince and his creed (as also discussed above, Chapter Two). As Neal W. Gilbert put it, some scholars eventually feared that the flood of textbooks from the printing presses of Europe would facilitate a trend toward superficial education: “Melanchthon’s little compendia […] set a dangerous precedent. When Petrus Ramus put out an even more elementary and perfunctory set of textbooks on the liberal arts, some realization of the Pandora’s box that had been opened began to dawn upon startled schoolchildren.”

409 As Anthony Grafton has remarked in the context of textbook traditions in early modern Europe, recent scholarship in a number of fields, including the history of science, has lately shown an increased interest in textbooks in their own right and not merely as the last stage of scientific discovery, which, as Grafton also notes, is an approach that applies naturally to the early modern period: “In the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries, after all, the urban grammar school, the German Protestant gymnasium and the Jesuit college, all of which did so much to form the elites of early modern Europe, took shape; new colleges and universities popped up across Europe, from Ferrara to Leiden; the curricula of old and new universities fused humanistic with scholastic methods in radically novel ways […];” Anthony Grafton, “Textbooks and the Disciplines” in Emidio Campi, Simone De Angelis, Anja-Silvia Goeing & Anthony T. Grafton (eds.), *Scholarly knowledge: Textbooks in early modern Europe* (Genève, 2008).


411 Grafton, “Textbooks and the Disciplines”, 15.

What was even worse, from the perspective of high humanism, was Ramus’s claim that his books in fact not only summarized or abridged the works of the ancients but also actually supplanted them.

Petrus Ramus’s “Golden Method”

“Method is the arrangement of many good arguments”, Ramus declared in his first treatment of method as such, published pseudonymously in 1546 under the authorship of his friend Omer Talon. At the time, Ramus was banned from teaching on account of his publications of three years earlier—the “Training in Dialectic” (Dialecticae Institutiones), which was Ramus’s first attempt to treat logic by method, and the “Critical Remarks on Aristotle” (Aristotelicae Animadversiones), which comprised a vicious critique of Aristotelian logic. Aristotle’s greatest fault, according to Ramus, was his lack of proper method, which had resulted in an esoteric and confused exposition of philosophy, still reigning at the University of Paris. Although university leadership did not appreciate the unrestrained rhetoric of Ramus’s anti-Aristotelian arguments, his time as an academic outcast proved relatively short. He was freed from all restrictions in 1547, thanks to the intervention of his powerful patron Charles of Guise, and following the ascension of King Henry II to the throne he was named royal professor of philosophy and eloquence in 1551. From this position Ramus could continue to recast the liberal arts by method, striving not only to set in place proper arrangements of the arts, but also to prove the superiority of his own method to accomplish this goal.

Throughout his academic career, Ramus frequently altered and refined his method, but its general outlines stayed in accordance with his first presentations. In essence, Ramus’s “arrangement of many good arguments”, or dispositio of an art, constituted a process of ordering things from the

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413 Ibid., 73.
414 Quoted from Ong, Ramus: Method, 245. As Ong notes, this rare edition entitled “Three Commentaries on Dialectic Published under the Authorship of Omer Talon” (Dialectici commentarii tres authore Audomaro Talaeo editi) was a revision of Ramus’s “Training in Dialectic”.
415 Available in facsimile in Dialecticae institutiones: Aristotelicae animadversiones. Faksimile-Neudruck der Ausgaben Paris 1543, mit einer Einleitung von Wilhelm Risse (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1964). Perceiving an attempt on Ramus’s part to “upset the whole curriculum”, university leadership managed to procure a royal decree condemning both books in 1543; Ong, Ramus: Method, 23. As Walter J. Ong remarked, “Aristotle was an ‘authority’ largely in the sense that he was at the centre of the accepted curriculum, so that Ramus’ savage and sweeping attack on Aristotle and Aristotelians in both these 1543 works was a denunciation by a single teacher of the curriculum followed by the rest of the faculty”; ibid., 23.
416 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 43.
417 Ibid., 42.
general to the particular, or in Ramus’s own words: “The method of teaching, therefore, is the arrangement of various things brought down from universal and general principles to the underlying singular parts, by which arrangement the whole matter can be more easily taught and apprehended.” As evident by this quotation, Ramus thus treated method both as a means of “setting up” an art and as a means of efficiently teaching it. In both cases, Ramus emphasized the importance of properly defining the art, which was directly linked to its purpose in life: logic was thus “the art of discoursing well” (ars bene disserendi), geometry the art of “measuring well”, arithmetic the art of “counting well”, and so on. These basic definitions were then branched out into fork diagrams, proceeding from general to specific examples. Grammar, “the art of speaking well”, was thus divided in two, etymology and syntax, and with further divisions a tree-like structure of the entire art of grammar was created.

The resulting visual diagram was not in itself Ramus’s own invention, but as the historian of science Paula Findlen has remarked “[…] he certainly popularized it as a crucial tool for scholarly life by mid-century. It was a simple but powerful means to suggest new connections among different parts of knowledge, reordering the traditional hierarchy of disciplines to make way for new subjects.” In addition to this general ordering of an art, which Ramus called the law of wisdom, lex sapientiae, Ramist method comprised two other “laws”: the law of truth, lex veritatis, which required that all rules should be true, that is, consistent and correct, and the law of justice, lex justitiae, which demanded that only those things that belonged to the art should be included in it (to avoid redundancy). This set of rules (or laws) originated in fact from one particular section of Aristotle’s logic, but

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419 Quoted by Ong, *Ramus: Method*, 245.
420 From a pedagogical point of view, however, Ramus realized that students were often more familiar with particular parts rather than the most abstract level; he therefore also spoke of a “method of prudence”, where one would start with the particular and proceed toward the general. Ramus eventually refrained from speaking of a “second” method, as he emphasised that there could only be one method to order the arts. He spoke instead of a second use of method; Skalnik, *Ramus and Reform*, 45.
421 Instead of speaking about the art of discoursing “well” (bene) Ramus could have chosen to speak about discoursing correctly (recte) as earlier scholastics had done, but as Walter J. Ong has pointed out, Ramus preferred bene as it signaled an education for life rather than technical correctness; in accordance with the humanist ideals he cherished, Ramus thus “understood bene to mean ‘in a practical fashion’ or ‘effectively’”; Ong, *Ramus: Method*, 179.
422 As described also in Sellberg, “Petrus Ramus”.
423 Paula Findlen, “Building the House of Knowledge: The structures of thought in late Renaissance Europe” in Tore Frängsmyr (ed.), *The Structure of Knowledge: Classifications of Science and Learning since the Renaissance* (Berkeley, 1998), 17. The Ramist bifurcating tables of the disciplines have also been seen as an early precursor to later encyclopaedic enterprises and ensuing efforts to structure knowledge and the sciences by various epistemological schemes. See Robert Darnton, “Epistemological Angst: From encyclopaedism to advertising” in ibid., 53-75, and Hotson, *Commonplace Learning*, 169-294.
Ramus chose to apply the rules as a means of ordering all the arts.\textsuperscript{425} In essence, they comprised Ramus’s “singular method”—singular because Ramus believed that there could be only “one method to establish an art” according to its natural order.\textsuperscript{426}

Philosophically, Ramus’s methodological undertaking may, as Donald R. Kelley has suggested, be seen as an example of a rather common endeavour in Western intellectual history to “transcend” the particular disciplines and their languages by means of some “unified method or metalanguage”.\textsuperscript{427} Ramus however entertained more than a philosophical incentive to engage with method in the arts—perhaps more fundamentally, Ramus was interested in the pedagogical challenge of teaching the arts. Inspired by the pioneering humanist dialectic of Rudolph Agricola and his own teacher Johannes Sturm, Ramus set out to find a better system of philosophical instruction than the one he had experienced at the University of Paris.\textsuperscript{428} The impulse for a new pedagogical direction, more utility-orientated and less focused on learning

\textsuperscript{425} Aristotle’s discussion of these laws appears in the Posterior Analytics (book 1, chapter 4). As Skalnik remarks, Ramus typically “saw Aristotle’s lack of clarity as an opportunity rather than a difficulty. It allowed him to read his own definitions into Aristotle’s words, thereby claiming classical authority without sacrificing his own notions.”; ibid., 43.

\textsuperscript{426} For the details of Ramus’s reasoning in this context, see his reworked extract from his Critical Remarks published in 1557 where he set out to compare various ancient applications of method, explaining why there could be only one proper method; “That There is But One Method of Establishing a Science” transl. in Leonard A. Kennedy (ed.), Renaissance Philosophy: New Translations (The Hague, 1973), 109-155.


\textsuperscript{428} The vantage point of almost all humanist reform in logic in the sixteenth century was the new approach to the subject that had been provided by Juan Vives, Lorenzo Valla and later Rudolph Agricola, whose textbook De dialectica inventione libri tres, finished in Germany in 1479, appeared in forty-three editions published between 1515 and 1543; Ong, Ramus: Method, 93, 96. As noted by Ong, Agricola’s reformed dialectic exhibited a pedagogical concern that distinguished it from prior similar expositions: “Agricola and his followers demanded of their dialectic that it be congenial to real needs and to the humanists’ pupil-oriented teaching as against the universities’ teacher-oriented teaching. The truth or scientific soundness of the dialectic was a secondary consideration. Not that Agricola and his followers thought of their dialectic as false or scientifically unsound; they wanted it to be true and scientifically acceptable, but first and foremost they wanted it accomodated to what they felt was real ‘life’ and to the real pedagogical situation.”; ibid., 97. To Johannes Sturm, who had been educated in the humanist spirit of the Brethren of the Common Life at Liège, the primary task of teaching was, as Barbara Sher Tinsley writes, to “inform and educate the tongue”, and as rector of the gymnasium in Strasbourg he emphasised the importance of Latin eloquence, achieved by “imitation of models, disputations, declamations, directed conversations and generally a thorough knowledge of classical literature”; Barbara Sher Tinsley, “Johann Sturm’s Method for Humanistic Pedagogy”, Sixteenth Century Journal 20:1 (1989), 29. Evidently, Ramus was particularly enthusiastic over Sturm, whom he praised for having “excited in the university an incredible ardor for the art [of logic] whose utility he revealed”. Quoted in Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 31 f., n. 72. In 1529-36, Sturm visited Paris, where he introduced Agricola’s logic.
“rules” without applications, is perhaps, in Ramus’s case, most evident in his account of his own first classroom experiences in his home village:

[Imagine] a magister who teaches a boy in grammar by eagerly asking him to repeat rules correctly from his memory without ever showing him the use of these rules. This was how my teacher in my hometown did: What is the genus of *musa* (he said)? *Feminine*. Tell me by which rule! Because nouns ending in *vocalis primae* must be feminine. Which declination? *The first*. By which rule? [...] I learned nothing else from him, and I did not hear one word of Cicero or Virgil, but I am still grateful because he truthfully admitted that he did not know much, and he encouraged me to do better. 429

In his anti-Aristotelian attacks, Ramus repeatedly criticized the lack of relevant *practice* in the traditional teaching of the arts, asking what good it would do “to train gladiators in other things than they would perform in the arena, or to have actors practise other things at home than they would perform on stage.”430 To have boys learn how to “compose poetry, write a letter or deliver a speech in a different manner than they would have to do later, in real circumstances”, was in Ramus’s opinion pointless, and with regard to Aristotle’s dialectics, as it was commonly taught, Ramus even questioned why it was used at all in schools: “Why, if the pupils don’t know in what way to use it after they have set foot outside the thresholds of the school?”431

In his own teaching and reform efforts, Ramus continued the Agricolan approach of uniting philosophy and eloquence while also emphasising the need to eliminate any unnecessary theory, which would only create artificial gaps between the arts and their use in life. He differentiated in this context between three “books” of nature, theory and practice (*natura, doctrina, exercitatio*) and offered an explanation regarding the relation between these three aspects of the arts, which in fact left a very small part for “theory”:

The first of these [*i.e. natura*] has been imprinted in our souls by eternal signs of God. The second [*i.e. doctrina*] a diligent observer creates through imitating little signs, after the pattern of these eternal signs. Hands and tongues take care of the third [*i.e. exercitatio*] as much as they want. In conclusion,

429 Petrus Ramus, *Petri Rami Veromandui Aristotelicae Animadversiones* (Paris, 1543), 22v-23r; “[...] si magister aliquis puerum in grammatica sic exerceret ut praeceptionum omnium memoriam ab eo solicite exigeret, nullum monstraret usum praeceptionum: quemadmodum me quondam vici mei magister, musa (dicebat) cuius generis? foemini. Dic per quam regulam, Vocalis primae sit foemina. Quotae declinationis? primae: dic per quam regulam [...] Praeterea nihil ab eo didici: Ciceronis, Virgilii nullum verbum audivi, sed illi gratiam habeo, quod simpliciter se non multa scire fateretur, et me hortaretur ad meliora.”

430 Ibid., 22v; “[...] in ludo gladiatores alia docentur, quam sint in arena praestaturi? an aliis in rebus histrionibus domi exercentur, quam sint in scena acturi?”

431 Ibid.; “an aliter (ut ad propinquiora veniam) pueri carmen condere, epistolam scribere, orationem recitare instituuntur, quam sint in rebus seris postea facturi? Cur Aristotelei habent in schola dialecticam: qua, si pedem e limine extulerunt, nesciant quibus in rebus sunt usuri? verum quaeam est ista dialectica scholastica?”
the first (which is of greatest dignity) and third parts (of second greatest dignity) of dialectics are within us: we are born with the first, and the third depends on our will. Only the second part, \textit{i.e. doctrina} for which a very small part is left, is acquired from the outside, by teachers.\footnote{Ramus, \textit{Dialecticae Institutiones}, 5; “Hi sunt tres libri ad omnis disciplinæ fructum, laudem necessarij: quorum primum aeternis characteribus in animis nostris Deus optimus, maximus imprinit, secundum naturæ diligens observator imitatis notulis ad aeternarum illarum notarum exemplar effingit: tertiaque (cuius dignitas maxima est) tertiaque (cuius secunda laus est) sunt in nobis: altera insita, tertia voluntaria. Secunda (cui perpaululum loci reliquum est) sola extrinsecus a magistris assumenda est.”}

Ramus’s demoting of “unnecessary” theory or doctrine resulted in a dialectic the size of about one tenth of Aristotle’s.\footnote{Skalnik, \textit{Ramus and Reform}, 46. Ramus moreover suggested in 1551 that the length of education could possibly be shortened by as much as five years; Sellberg, \textit{Filosofin och nyttan}, 100.} Yet Ramus himself never described his method in terms of abridgements or simplified versions of the proper curriculum, but rather as a reflection of the “natural” order of things.\footnote{Skalnik, \textit{Ramus and Reform}, 48 f.} His belief that man was endowed with a God-given ability to reason made him argue that true logic, as well as the foundation of any other art, was founded in man’s natural practice.\footnote{Ramus, \textit{Dialecticae Institutiones}, 6r: “Naturalis autem dialectica, id est, ingenium, ratio, mens, imago parentis omnium rerum Dei, lux denique beatae illius, et aeternæ lucis aemula, hominis propria est, cum eoque nascitur.”} The relationship between the arts and what they represented often remained vague however in the early modern era.\footnote{This “vagueness” with regard to the order of the arts and the order of nature is for instance evident in the encyclopedic author Bartholomäus Keckerman’s statement from 1612 that “Method is the soul and form of disciplines and without them there is coherence neither in things nor in the human understanding of things [my italics]”; quoted and discussed by Kelley, “The Problem of Knowledge and the Concept of Discipline”, 16. Cf. Lisa Jardine’s study on Francis Bacon, who, as Jardine concludes, thought it crucial to distinguish between on the one hand “investigatory procedures which reveal new knowledge” (discovery), and methods of “selecting and arranging existing information for purposes of communication and instruction” on the other; Jardine, \textit{Francis Bacon}, 2 f. Bacon considered Ramist method as clearly belonging to the second category; ibid., 171. See also below, Chapter Five on Ramus and Bacon in the context of the mathematical arts.} While Ramus attempted to differentiate between nature, theory and practice, his answer with regard to each fundamental aspect of the arts amounted, as James V. Skalnik has observed, in essence to one and the same thing, namely practice:

To the questions of how the arts originated, how they should be taught, and what end they served, Ramus offered a simple answer, the same for all three questions. The answer in every case was practical use. The precepts of an art had their foundation in man’s natural abilities and practices; the art was best taught by practical application as opposed to rote memorization of abstract principles and the goal of the art was practical use in the real world.\footnote{Skalnik, \textit{Ramus and Reform}, 47 f.}
The Ramist focus on practice and application appealed to many groups in early modern Europe—rulers or princes in small principalities who did not have the means to support prestigious universities, students who appreciated an education suitable for their ambitions of entering a civil service career, and generally families who could not afford, or were not interested in (as in the case of the nobility) long drawn-out university educations where the greater part of the body of Aristotelian writings was obligatory. This ideological rather than philosophical context of Ramus’s method may be seen in the light of Ramus’s own experiences at the University of Paris, where he as a poor student had personally experienced the challenges of a lengthy university education to those who lacked sufficient financial support. Separating ideological aims and philosophical contents is therefore hardly feasible in Ramus’s writings.

Ramus’s textbooks soon caused controversy. At one time a threat to the scholastic pedagogy of the University of Paris, “Ramism” eventually also became a thorn in the side for the humanist pedagogy that had given rise to Ramism in the first place, as Howard Hotson has recently argued. Ramus’s textbooks and relentless application of method, which spread throughout the liberal arts, presented a worrisome development especially to those scholars who saw no substitution for ancient wisdom in its original mode. The most famous “warning” was issued in 1595 by Lipsius who stated that “No one can be great who thinks Ramus is great”. Lipsius’s objection was not of a philosophical kind (like Ramus, he was an eclectic), but his loyalty to ancient texts as such made him blame Ramus for having opened up a dangerous path in higher education—students were now increasingly using textbooks not as preparation for studying the ancient writers, but as the fundament of their entire education.

Ramus was, however, not the only scholar interested in pedagogical efficiency and a more speedy approach to learning at the time. As we have seen, similar ideas had already been presented by Agricola, Melanchthon and Sturm. In Ramus’s case, the assessments of the value of his reforms, seem, however, to have been diverging from the start—according to Ramus’s critics his method had resulted in little more than a crude and mechanical simplification of the arts, while his followers spoke of the “golden method”. As suggested by Howard Hotson, a particularly contro-

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438 Ibid., 9, 35.
439 As discussed also in Chapter Two.
441 Ibid., 56 f., 64.
442 Ibid., 56 f.
443 Nils Chesnecopherus declared in the title of his dissertation at the University of Marburg (1593) that the subjects of optics and land surveying would be introduced by the “golden method of Petrus Ramus”: *Isagoge optica cum disceptatione geometrica de universae geometrie magisterio, hoc est geodesia rectarum per radium, & alis quaestionibus philosophicis, juxta auream P. Rami methodum concinnata* (Marburg, 1593).
versial element of Ramism may be traced to Ramus’s emphasis on “one method”, which came to represent an alternative and challenging approach to the liberal arts: perceived as “systems of definitions and divisions”, the subjects to be taught were in the Ramist scheme organised less by authors than by principles of method, which made Ramism seem “independent of any authority, classical or modern, and formally superior to any works which did not consistently apply such principles.” Ramus himself frequently emphasized his independence of authority by celebrating the ideal of “philosophizing freely”, libertas philosophandi.

To those accusing Ramus of being a skeptic (a potentially dangerous allegation which could imply atheism), Ramus responded that he would rather be a “philosopher than a slave of a philosopher”, and that it was worse to uncritically adopt the opinions of others than to use reason to understand the natural order. To Ramus—whose scholarship was of course often more entrenched in Aristotelian philosophy than Ramus himself necessarily made it out to be, as later scholars have pointed out—Socrates was the model of philosophizing, and in line with this anti-authoritarian stance Ramus’s followers preferred to label their method “Socratic” rather than Ramist. Of course, Ramus’s ideal of freedom to philosophise presented challenges to his followers who consequently needed to curb their enthusiasm for Ramus if they wanted to avoid accusations of being philosophical slaves themselves.

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444 Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 50. As Hotson argues, this methodological focus evolved in the seventeenth century into various encyclopedic projects: “By the generation of Alsted […] it became a point of pedagogical principle that studies were to begin from recent, post-Ramist ‘systematic’ textbooks and only later to proceed (if at all) to the best ‘unsystematic’ authors, whether ancient or modern. That this pedagogy is often characterized as ‘humanist’ suggests something of the historian’s terminological poverty in dealing with this period of central European intellectual history.”; ibid., 88 f.

445 On the Ramist ideal of libertas philosophandi, see Sellberg, “Petrus Ramus”. Already in his Remarks on Aristotle (1543), Ramus expressed the value of using one’s reason independent of authority, critical of the scholars whom he accused of having subordinated their own reason to blind faith in a single authority. Aristotle himself had wanted men to seek the truth, free from authority, as Ramus argued: “We should rightly separate reason from authority: we shall see the truth, which Aristotle confused, obscured and destroyed, although he wanted truth to be estimated more than all men. This was his defense when criticizing his teachers Socrates and Plato. Let us then follow the advice Aristotle gave, and let the truth be our only authority; let us reject that which is false, let us condemn the useless without fear, let us follow the truth and investigate that which is useful.”; Ramus, Aristotelicae Animadversiones, 21r; “Recte inquam itaque ingenium separamus ab autoritate: veritatem spectemus, quam etsi turbavit, obscuravit, depravavit Aristoteles, hominibus tamen omnibus antepoli voluit: hac enim defensione utitur in reprehendendis preceptoribus Socrate et Platone. Utamur igitur Aristotelis consilio, et unicum veritatem (ut iubet) habeamus pro omni autoritate: falsa libere repudiemus, inutilia sine metu damnemus, vera sequamur, utilia probemus.”

446 Sellberg, “Petrus Ramus”.

447 Ibid.
4.2. Ramism in Marburg and Kassel

The Ramist series of “handy” textbooks was, as has recently been suggested, especially well-suited to the territorially fragmented area of Germany craving educational alternatives to full-fledged universities.\(^{448}\) However, in the case of Marburg, where Skytte graduated in 1598, the situation was not uncomplicated with regard to school politics: Philip the Magnanimous had divided his principality among his four sons, leaving the university in Marburg to be jointly administrated by all four Hessian landgraves in the hope of upholding the unity between church and school.\(^{449}\) As this unity was to be ensured by the Melanchthonian balance between *pietas* and *eloquentia* in the schools of Hesse, the introduction of competing pedagogical approaches, such as Ramism, was potentially a sensitive matter. When Landgraf Wilhelm IV of Hesse-Kassel, who was convinced that “students could learn and comprehend more [from Ramist textbooks] in three months than from ordinary compendia in two or more years”, first tried to introduce Ramism in the Marburg Paedagogium in 1575-77 by supporting the Ramist paedagogiarch Lazarus Schonerus, he met strong opposition from the professors.\(^{450}\) While his opponents did not deny the speed or efficiency of Ramism, they complained that the Ramist textbooks lacked pious examples, and that Schonerus had focused too much on profane Greek and Roman classics at the expense of Christian sources.\(^{451}\)

Schonerus was forced away from the Marburg Paedagogium, but he continued his Ramist teaching activities at the gymnasiums of Korbach, Herborn and eventually Lemgo in the principality of Lippe north of Hesse, where Skytte would become his student in 1596-97.\(^{452}\) With regard to Marburg, after the *Ramismusstreit* of the late 1570s the Melanchthonian curriculum was officially upheld at the Paedagogium, while a number of eclectically inclined and Ramist-friendly professors at the university had by the 1590s obtained professorships and teaching positions. Several of them were engaged in the editing (or emending) of Ramist works, or in the application of Ramist method to disciplines previously not treated by


\(^{450}\) The quote from Hotson, *Commonplace Learning*, 84. On Schonerus’s failed attempts to introduce Ramism in Marburg, see also Friedrich, *Gelehrtenschulen*, 62-75. Wilhelm IV, “der Weise”, had himself received his education at the famous gymnasium in Strasbourg, where Johannes Sturm was rector at the time. His son Moritz received a thorough education following a Ramist pedagogy; Borggrefe, Lüpkes, Ottomeyer (eds.), *Moritz der Gelehrte*, 14. The Marburg Paedagogium essentially functioned as a preparatory stage before entrance to the university.

\(^{451}\) Ramism also met with opposition in Lutheran Korbach at this time on the grounds that it lacked religious content; Hotson, *Commonplace Learning*, 109.

\(^{452}\) On Schonerus, see also Hotson, *Commonplace Learning*, 29-31, 74. Beyond his duties as rector, Schonerus produced in the 1590s the most popular editions of Ramus’s mathematical writings. Skytte’s studies for Schonerus in Lemgo will be further discussed in Chapter Five.
Ramus. Rudolph Goclenius, who was one of the most productive and respected professors in Marburg at this time and who presided over Skytte’s graduation works, may in fact be regarded as a supervisor in the 1590s and early 1600s of an expanding Ramist enterprise, involving numerous student dissertations as well as posthumous imprints of Ramist works edited by more senior members of the Marburg academia. Skytte’s own dissertation of 1598 presented a characteristic survey of “problems from the delightful and beautiful springs of the liberal arts”, which included demonstrations of how Ramus’s method had determined the limits and aims of various disciplines. Skytte dedicated his dissertation to his Ramist teachers Johannes Hartmannus and Herman Vultejus; he praised the mathematics professor Hartmannus for his work in optics, or more precisely his effort to “save from eternal oblivion” four books on optics written by Petrus Ramus and Friedrich Risner, and he commended the jurisprudence professor Vultejus for his efforts to always apply the “laws of Logic” (that is, Ramist method), “common to all subjects” in all of his writings.

453 Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 116-121. Because the systematic principles of Ramist method were applicable to any art, the followers of Ramus could, as Howard Hotson remarked, simply continue the methodological mission Ramus had initiated: Ramus himself had seen as his task to apply logical method to the whole circle of the arts, and as long as all arts had not been explicated by method this project remained unfinished. To Ramus’s followers, the application of the Ramist “singular method” to new subjects moreover presented an opportunity to not only vindicate Ramus’s claims, but also to showcase their own learning and ingenuity. The application of method thus spread to an ever widening circle of arts via Ramist tables and dissertations through foremost the expansive German gymnaisums in the late sixteenth century, and it marked the beginning, as Hotson has also argued, of later encyclopedic enterprises carried out in the next century by pedagogues and philosophers such as Johann Heinrich Alsted, Bartholomäus Keckermann and John Amos Comenius, who were all influenced by the systematic approach of Ramism; ibid., 47. On Comenius in a Swedish context, see also Chapter Seven.

454 Ibid., 131. Nicknamed the “Plato of Marburg”, Goclenius was posthumously estimated to have tutored over 600 students to their degrees. His eclectic scholarly interests resulted in a philosophical lexicon, Lexicon Philosophicum, first published in 1613; ADB, ix, 308-312; Schnitz, Die Naturwissenschaften an der Philipps-Universität Marburg, 15 f.

455 Skytte, Problematex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta. To be further discussed below. A similar encyclopedic approach to the arts was undertaken by Skytte’s student friend from Nyköping, Jonas Petrejus, in his dissertation published under the title “Encyclopaedia of the True and Socratic Philosophy”, and as previously noted, Nils Chesnecopherus had graduated in 1593 on the application of Ramist method to optics and land surveying (Goclenius presided over both of these dissertations); Jonas Petrejus, Ἐγκυκλοπαδεία sinceriortis et Socraticae philosophiae (Marburg, 1600) and Nils Chesnecopherus, Isagoge optica (Marburg, 1593). Regarding Petrejus’s dissertation, see Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 125, note 111. Petrejus was appointed rector at the school in Örebro in 1603; Berg, Johan Skytte, 117.

456 Skytte, Problematex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta, A2r-A2v; “[...] quod Logicas leges omnium disciplinarum communes in scriptis tuis religiose observes”. The books on optics Skytte referred to had once been commissioned by Petrus Ramus from his German student Friedrich Risner (Friedericus Risner,–1580). Through Landgraf Moritz’s support to Hartmannus they eventually reappeared in 1606; Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 116, 207 f.; Moran, The Alchemical World of the German Court, 52. Hermann Vultejus had in
As previously noted, Skytte did not immediately return to Sweden after his graduation. In the spring of 1599, he published his notes from Goclenius’s lectures on Julius Caesar Scaliger’s famous critique of Girolamo Cardano’s *De Subtilitate*. The longstanding debate between Scaliger and Cardano involved practically all major philosophical issues of the sixteenth century, whether they were related to natural philosophy, metaphysics or logic. Skytte’s lecture notes thus comprise not only a number of philosophical and methodological issues that had been frequently debated throughout the sixteenth century; they also confirm, as we shall see, the impression that Goclenius was philosophically an eclectic, who attempted in his works to “reconcile as many as possible of the opinions collected on a given topic”, and who evidently did not refrain in his lectures from discussing complex metaphysical and methodological issues that were occasionally critical of Ramus. Skytte spoke in his preface about Goclenius’s “admirable and almost divine skill in philosophical investigations”, and added that he was delighted to be able to provide Goclenius’s notes for “the benefits of the studying youth”.

The Ramist educational agenda was also firmly established at the court of Landgraf Moritz in Kassel, patron of the University of Marburg and many of its teachers. The landgrave had himself studied Ramus’s works since the age of twelve and was convinced of the efficiency of Ramist method. At the school he had recently opened in Kassel he intended to provide a well-rounded education that included modern languages (French and Italian), law, history, geography and mathematics, all presented by method. The academic ambition of Moritz’s school was high; under the supervision of teachers from the University of Marburg, the students were to perform Latin orations and disputations on a daily basis, as Skytte delightedly noted on his visit to the *Collegium Mauritianum* in 1600. In his oration celebrating

1592 published an explication by Ramist method of Justinian I’s Roman law; *Jurisprudentiae Romanae a Justiniano compositae libri II*; Berg, Johan Skytte, 279.
457 Skytte, *Analyses in exercitationes aliquot Julii Caesaris Scaligeri, de subtilitate, quas ex dictantis ore exceptas Philosophiae studiosis exhibet et communicat M. Johannes Schroderus Suecus* [119 pages].
458 On this famous Renaissance debate, see I. MacLean, “The Interpretation of natural signs: Cardano’s *De subtilitate* versus Scaliger’s *Exercitationes*” in Brian Vickers (ed.), *Occult and scientific mentalities in the Renaissance* (Cambridge, 1984).
460 Skytte, *Analyses*, 3: “Nec silebitur admirabilis illa et incredibilis, ac pene divina in disputando solertia. [...] Quod licet a divino Goclenii acumen sit profectum, laetor tamen vehementer, me illud ad studiosae juventutis utilitatem adjungere, inque publicum emittere potuisse”.
461 Borggrefe; Lüpkes; Ottomeyer (eds.), *Moritz der Gelehrte*, 15.
462 Ibid., 70.
463 Skytte, *Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritianum*, B3v. This combined pragmatic and intellectual enterprise of Ramism, ambitiously practiced in Kassel, was also evident in Landgraf Moritz’s own works, such as the *Philosophia Practica Mauritiana*, where the subjects of ethics, economics and politics were treated by method (this particular work,
Landgraf Moritz and his school, Skytte, as we shall see, lauded in particular the fact that “method” was applied and encouraged by the “most learned” landgrave.

Precisely this systematic Ramist treatment of the arts could also be criticized, however, on the grounds that it was too square and “mechanical”. Skytte mentioned that Professor Vultejus had been attacked for his attempt to apply logical method to his work in jurisprudence. As we shall see, Skytte also devoted an entire treatise to defending Ramus’s applications of the three laws of method against the theologian Daniel Cramerus. The fact that Skytte’s first “Ramist” publication in 1595 (against Cramerus) thus was an apology, as was also his last dejected speech on Ramism in Uppsala in 1640 (to be discussed in Chapter Seven), seems from this perspective of controversy less a coincidence than a pattern. When defending Ramist method, Skytte was frequently also defining the arts— their origins, their “arrangements”, and the best means of teaching them. In the following we shall see how Skytte utilized, or was exposed to, Ramist arguments in several much-debated educational contexts—the importance of eloquence, the differentiation between good and bad linguistic practices, the importance of order and truth in the arts, the ideal of philosophising freely, and the practical classroom applications of method.

4.3. Skytte’s Defence of Ramist Method

On the Importance of Eloquence and Good Practices

As we have seen, Ramus considered “practice” (usus) as the origin, means, and aim of his method, but since his method was based on verbal logic, practice in this humanist scheme typically boiled down to speech and language. Communication, not discovery, was thus at the core of Ramist method, which is also evident in many of Skytte’s early orations. On his visit to Nyköping in 1599, when delivering an oration on the benefits of eloquence and the liberal arts at his old school, Skytte commended Petrus Ramus’s own eloquence in particular, portraying it as the foundation of his success:

intended for the education of a young landgrave, was edited by Rudolph Goclenius, but only the part on ethics was published in 1604); Borggrefe; Lüpkes; Ottomeyer (eds.), Moritz der Gelehrte, 29 f.

464 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 2.
465 Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta, A2v, and Skytte, Animadversiones modestae.
466 When Ramus turned his interest to the mathematical arts (to be further discussed in Chapter Five), he began to explore the relation between logic and mathematics, but his concept of method remained a tool for communication and presentation rather than a means of investigating the underlying laws of nature.
I wish to mention the well-known Petrus Ramus again, since he, on account of his extraordinary eloquence, has remarkably cleansed essentially all the arts. It is told that you, Petrus Ramus, achieved such success with your admirable eloquence, that you even won over your enemies with your delightful speech! Equipped with your weapon of eloquence, you bravely put the knife to the throat of that pack of Aristotelians, who are degenerate and who are actually utterly ignorant of the true sense of Aristotle’s teaching! If I were to ask you, Prince of Philosophy, by what means you achieved this revolution, fought so many battles against all universities and gymnasiums in the world, and erected an eternal memorial of victory, as it were, in all right-thinking minds, then you would, I think, award eloquence the first prize in this entire struggle!467

At the University of Marburg Skytte presented in the fall of 1598 an oration devoted in Ramist style entirely to the importance of eloquence, and in particular on the necessity of uniting eloquence and philosophy. Already the title of Skytte’s oration claimed that “without eloquence”, no one could reach “the highest crests of erudition” (Oratio [...] sine eloquentia ad eruditionis fastigium pervenire non posse).468 This uniting of philosophy and eloquence was indeed a common humanist theme, but it had also formed an important point of departure for Petrus Ramus’s educational reforms. Skytte delivered his oration on this theme in Marburg after his graduation, which meant that it was probably performed as a model oration for younger students to reflect upon and emulate.

Skytte initially emphasised that all the arts essentially emanated from two sources, reason and language (ratio et oratio), which were harmoniously joined.469 Comparing the crudeness and ignorance of those who had lived “before Orpheus, Linus and Amphion” with the advanced civilizations and cultures of later generations, Skytte declared that the element lacking in those earliest times of humanity was obviously speech and eloquence—without the means of communicating their thoughts to others, the first human beings could engage neither in the arts nor in the tasks of civilization.470 However, as is evident from Skytte’s subsequent reasoning, it was not just any kind of speech that could make cultures and arts flourish. The

467 Skytte, Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas, B4v; “Petrum illum Ramum rursum nomino, qui cum eloquentissimus esset, artes fere omnes mirifice repurgavit. Tu Petre Rame tam admirabili eloquentiae laude floruisse diceris, ut inimicos etiam tuos suavissima orationis voce tibi conciliaveris. Tu Aristotelicorum familiam illam degenererem et nihil minus, quam Aristotelis sensum intelligentem, eloquentiae tuae armis fortiter jugulasti. Hic ego si ex te Philosophorum princeps quaeram, qua ratione tantas strages confeceris, tanta praelia contra omnes universi orbis terrarum Academias, literarumque omnium Gymnasia sustinueris, et quasi tropaeum quoddam aeternum in omnium recta sententium animis erexeris, eloquentiae, orator, primas, in omni hoc tuo certamine tribues.”

468 Skytte, Oratio [...] sine eloquentia ad eruditionis fastigium pervenire non posse.

469 Skytte, Oratio sine eloquentia, A2v.

470 Ibid., A3r-A3v. The three ancient (mythological) heroes, most likely included by Skytte for reasons of ornamentation, are all known as great musicians rather than orators in Greek mythology—further on in his oration, however, Skytte also listed (historical) ancient orators.
linguistic “filth and squalor” of the Scotists and Thomists had at one time, as Skytte explained, spread like an “infectious disease” to Italy, France, Spain, Sweden and Denmark, clouding the brilliance of the arts, and it was only through the efforts of scholars like Philipp Melanchthon and Petrus Ramus that the light of eloquence had once again returned to the arts.\textsuperscript{471} Skytte further strengthened his case by praising the brilliance of the Roman and Greek orators (\textit{lumen oratorum}), as well as his own teacher, the professor Hermann Kirchnerus, whose eloquence Skytte compared to that of Cicero and Demosthenes.\textsuperscript{472} As is clear from Skytte’s arguments in this oration, some linguistic practices were apparently truer than others. Whereas the Romans had built an empire with their eloquence, the Scotists and Thomists had almost managed to ruin European civilization. This simple historical division created, as we shall see, a philosophical tension in terms of the relation between “good” and “bad” practices.

To Skytte and other students in the Late Renaissance, the existence of good and bad linguistic practices was, on the one hand, quite familiar because from their earliest school years they had been imbued with the pre-eminence of first and foremost Ciceronian eloquence. On the other hand, the notion of varying qualities in human practices raised certain questions. How should one, for instance, determine which precepts or practices were truer or higher ranked than others in the event that the ancient sources did not provide a clear answer? Ramus himself had once quoted Horace’s statement that \textit{people} are the arbiters of speech, concluding that words must be defined by the “common and natural usage of speech” (\textit{populi et naturalis sermonis consuetudine}).\textsuperscript{473} Ramus contrasted this “natural” language with the obscure and artificial language of scholastic logic that “deterred the youth” from studying logic—a critique frequently repeated by Skytte.\textsuperscript{474}

Acknowledging however that “people” in fact did not speak Ciceronian Latin either, Ramus attempted to translate his works to the vernacular, and he also produced a grammar of the French language where he emphasised

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\textsuperscript{471} Skytte, \textit{Oratio sine eloquentia}, A4r-A4v. Cf. above, Chapter Three, on this theme of the resurrection of eloquence, which Skytte repeated in greater detail in his oration in Nyköping 1599 (\textit{Oratio [...] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas}).

\textsuperscript{472} Skytte, \textit{Oratio sine eloquentia}, B4r.

\textsuperscript{473} Ramus, \textit{Aristotelicae Animadversiones}, 10v. Cf. Horace, \textit{Ars poetica}, 2.38: “Multa renascentur quae iam cecidere cadentque quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, si volet usus, quem penes arbitrium est et ius et norma loquendi”.

\textsuperscript{474} Ramus, \textit{Aristotelicae Animadversiones}, 6v. As Charles Nauert observed, humanists were generally not interested in logical metalanguages: “For the humanist reformers, the proper goal of arts education was not winning academic disputations but the acquisition of skills useful in the discourses of everyday living.”; Nauert, “Humanist Infiltration into the Academic World”, 808. As previously noted, humanists engaging in the reform of logic had objected foremost to the scholastic language not because it was unclassical but because it was \textit{unreal}: “people did not speak like that”; Pierre Albert Duhamel, “The Logic and Rhetoric of Peter Ramus”, \textit{Modern Philology} 46:3 (1949), 167.
\end{small}
the importance of examples and true usage. The bulk of his production nevertheless remained set in Latin, explicating the liberal arts by the eloquence of ancient literature rather than contemporary practice or “common usage”. A never resolved riddle from the point of view of pure Ramist theory was thus, as Walter J. Ong observed, why Cicero and other educated authors were preferred for imitation and citation.

Skytte’s teacher, Goclenius, discussed the issue in the lecture notes that Skytte chose to publish in the spring of 1599. True to his eclectic style, Goclenius discussed the opinions of several philosophers and attempted to conciliate their arguments. The question was, as Goclenius explained, whether the arts were really based on “practice” (usus), or if, on the contrary, one should rather consider practice as based on the arts. As Goclenius noted, Julius Scaliger had in this matter declared that the uncertain and transient nature of common usage made usus a poor arbiter of the arts. However, according to Goclenius one could nevertheless claim that usus functioned as a “master” of the disciplines, insofar as practice sometimes revealed inconsistencies or errors in the arts (usus fallaces artium institutiones refutat). Yet also the theologian Theodor Beza had been critical of the manner in which Ramus had considered usus a model for the disciplines, and had even discussed the issue in a letter to Ramus (as noted by Goclenius).

Goclenius now pointed out that Ramus, in his book on grammar, had in fact explained that rules should be written by singling out only the “correct and laudable practices”. Thus, by usus Ramus had not meant abusum, that is, the “bad practices” heard among uneducated people, but rather the good speech of the educated, as used by the ancients. When Beza spoke of usus he had however referred to the corrupted speech of the uneducated, and not the language accepted by the ancients. A conciliato (reconciliation) between Beza and Ramus could thus be reached, because both, as Goclenius concluded, had differentiated between good and bad practices. Ramus had never intended the arts to be based on abusum, but only on good practices.

475 On Ramus’s publications in French, see Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 51-56.
476 Ong, Ramus: Method, 177. As Ong suggested, there were “indications” that Ramus intended the speech of the uneducated to be used “as a point of departure for ‘deducing’ the art of dialectic rather than for direct imitation”.
477 Skytte, Analyses.
478 Ibid., 20.
479 Ibid., 20.
480 Ibid., 21.
481 This notion of good practices, suitable for imitation by the less talented, is also evident in a metaphor Ramus once offered regarding the distribution of reason among human beings: “[…] just as light is distributed among all stars, reason exists in all men, but just as some stars shine brighter and stronger than others, there are some men who are more excellent than others with regard to their intelligence, and more excellent by their nature”; Ramus, Dialecticæ Institutiones, 6: “[…] et quemadmodum stellae luminis, sic homines rationis omnes sunt participes: sed ut illic aliae sunt aliiis clariores radiis, et illustriores: sic inter homines alij sunt ingenio praestantiores aliis, excellentioresque natura.”
Of course, this conclusion did not particularly provide any detailed advice concerning how to determine what constituted good practice. Goclenius did not, in this context, further adduce Ramus’s laws of method, perhaps because the discussion revolved more around the epistemological foundations preceding method. It is noteworthy, though, that usus in this connection was evidently conveyed as a central concept. Regardless of the metaphysical conclusions, Skytte was thus at this time exposed to academic discussions on the nature of the link between theory and practice. From an academic perspective the basic assumption that eloquence and reason constituted the foundation of civilizations was, of course, uncontroversial. To Ramists, this notion constituted, however, only a starting point—the precepts of each art also needed to be defined and grounded in real practices, if they were to be useful as a preparation for real life activities. Explaining these links between “art” and “action” would be crucial, as we shall see, in all of Skytte’s endeavours to defend Ramism.

On Order and Truth in the Arts

To Ramists, method involved a universal means not only to speak well, but also to think well—an ability which was ultimately a preparation for the challenges outside of classrooms. As we shall see, Skytte was opposed to the idea that a subject like logic was merely intended as an intellectual training for its own sake. Also logic represented a skill to be used and applied—the skill of discoursing well. The challenges inherent in the actual application of Ramus’s laws of method—in particular the first “law of truth” (lex veritatis)—was illustrated on several occasions by Skytte, and sometimes inadvertently so, when he set out to defend the soundness of Ramus’s laws as tools for establishing the true order and purpose of the arts.

Before Skytte arrived in Marburg he had briefly stayed in Wittenberg where it is not unlikely that he had a chance to listen to the professor of theology, Daniel Cramerus, a well-respected and metaphysically inclined theologian.482 Cramerus, together with his student Holger Rosenkrantz (1574–1642) from Denmark, had published an attack on Ramism in 1593, which was highly critical of the manner in which Ramus had applied his laws of method.483 Two years later Skytte formulated a lengthy response (31 pages) defending Ramus and his method while accusing Cramerus of a

482 Berg, Johan Skytte, 51 f.
483 On the Danish nobleman Holger Rosenkrantz, later known as “the Learned” (den Lærde), see Danneskiold-Samsøe, Muses and Patrons, 100 f. While Cramerus apparently had objected to Ramus on a number of philosophical points, he was not opposed to the textbook trend, or the idea of applying method in the arts. Cramerus was in fact the first German author to write a textbook on metaphysics, Isagoge in metaphysicam Aristotelis, published in 1593; Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 128.
number of misconceptions and false conclusions. Many disparate philosophical issues are discernable in Skytte’s whirlwind of arguments, related to questions concerning the proper order, definitions and arrangements of the arts. Because the pedagogical challenge of teaching the large and often obscure Aristotelian philosophical corpus had not disappeared by the 1590s, a natural point of departure in such discussions on the best order, or dispositio, of the arts was still the crucial subject of logic.

As Skytte claimed, Cramerus had denied the problem of the “superfluity” in Aristotle’s logic, even though the problems were so obvious that Skytte proposed to appeal directly to the Aristotelians themselves in the academies across Europe: “They pass over entire chapters, and other sections they scurry through, so to speak, as they are filled with confused and useless syllogisms.” Any reader “equipped with some judgment and intelligence” could see, by Skytte’s argument, that the section of Topics, for instance, could be reduced considerably. How logic (as well as other arts) should be reduced and ordered—according to Ramist method—constituted a main topic of Skytte’s lengthy treatise. Skytte initially, however, set out to defend the status of logic as a proper art (ars) as opposed to an instrument for other arts or as a mere training tool for the intellect, a point that Ramus had considered important to make as he explored logical method.

By Ramus’s argument logic was, in its own right, ultimately aimed for utility and was not merely an instrument of other arts. Skytte acknowledged that logical precepts and rules certainly had value as a means of training the mind and intellect, but he denied that logic was only a tool for philosophy (instrumentum Philosophiae) and thus not a proper art in itself. Cramerus had, however, according to Skytte, claimed that logic could not be considered an ars, since the true goal of the arts was related to production (“productive”; ποιητικός) or creation (“creative”; γενετικός), and logic did not produce anything. Following a Ramist line of reasoning, which assumed that all arts were ultimately defined by their productive aims, Skytte simply denied that there was any contradiction between instrumental and productive aims: although being instrumental, also logic revolved around “production”

484 Skytte, Animadversiones modestae. Skytte’s “modest critique” contained 123 rather sharply formulated paragraphs (the paragraph references of my quotes follow the original). Whether Skytte wrote this response independently or on the initiative of one of his teachers, such as Rudolph Goclenius, is not known. Cf. above, Chapter One, on the question of authorship.

485 Skytte, Animadversiones modestae, §12: “In opera hoc multa esse superflua, quod negas Cramere, tam evidens est, ut ad iudicium ipsorum Aristoteliorum in omnibus Academiis totius orbis Europaei provocem. Hi enim quaedam capita vel prorsus intacta, inexplicataque praetereunt, vel brevissimo, quod aiunt, saltu percurrunt, ut aculeatis spinis referta et inutila.”

486 Ibid., §12: “Et doctrinam Topicam de comparatione accidentium, definitione, proprio, docte, et perspicue ad pauciora contrahi posses, quis interpretem et lectorum, qui iudicio et ingenio aliquo est praeditus, non videat?”

487 Like Galen and the Stoics, Ramus considered all arts as systems of rules; Sellberg, Filosofin och nyttan, 42.
and “creation” and must therefore be considered a proper *ars*. By Ramus’s definition, logic produced the ability to think or discourse well, which of course constituted no small contribution in the Ramist conception of the circle of arts.

In the following, Skytte set out to defend the way Ramus had deducted and applied his three laws of method. Ramus’s first methodological law dictated, as we have seen, that all precepts belonging to an art needed to be “true”—an assumption that Cramerus apparently had discussed from a metaphysically critical perspective. Also in this context, the Ramist habit of interlocking theory and practice, art and nature, are evident in Skytte’s arguments. Because Ramus had stated that the arts were a reflection of nature, true precepts were assumed to reflect a true state in nature. However, as Skytte conceded, certain irregularities could occur in the arts as well as in nature: thus, humans are generally born either male or female, but occasionally “a hermaphrodite” (*hermaphroditus seu androgynus*) is born; others are born with six fingers although most are born with five. What constituted a true concept in this case?

Irregularities moreover existed, as Skytte noted, in the arts: in particular the art of grammar was full of rules with exceptions. Another area was the “pragmatic disciplines”, such as politics, where conclusions in most cases were not absolute since they were derived from hypotheses depending on shifting conditions in time and space. How could such precepts be labeled “true”? In the case of grammar Skytte referred to Ramus who had simply stated that in this case the rules and exceptions together constituted the truth.

Aristotle had moreover stated that there were two kinds of rules, those that were always true and always yielded the same result, such as mathematics, and those that “almost” always yielded the same result due to natural variations, defects or other similar causes. When Ramus had spoken of true precepts he had obviously, by Skytte’s argument, referred to this wider category of precepts. Skytte thus concluded that Cramerus had been wrong to think that all rules in an art could not be true.

488 Ibid., §§13-14; “Organi logici essentiam et naturam non tantum in praeeptis, sed etiam in qualitatem mente acquisita seu habitu intellectuali consistere non nego. Sed praeeptas facio materiam eius, Artem, quae est habitus intellectus, genus. Addo non valere Consecutionem: Dialectica est instrumentum Philosophiae. Ergo non est ars. Haec enim non sunt opposita, sed diversa, cum quaedam artes sint Instrumentales. Sane artis finis verus est habitus intellectus. Sed praeeptis etiam habere quinque digitos, hominem esse aut marem aut feminem, cum quidam nascentur sedigit et hermaphroditu seu androgynu.”

489 Ibid., §96; “[...] hominem habere quinque digitos, hominem esse aut marem aut foeminam, cum quidam nascentur sedigit et hermaphroditu seu androgynu.”

490 Ibid., §101; “In disciplinis pragmaticis pleraeque conclusiones non sunt necessariae absoluatae, sed ex hypothesi, et quae ratione temporis aut loci instantiam quandam habere possunt. Exempli causa: in politica nihil fere potent praecipi in universum, quod non possit se alter habere conditionis gratia [...].”

491 Ibid., §103.
The idea that practice should inform theory, and not the other way around, was a deeply entrenched idea in Ramist thought. On an ideological level, it meant that schools should be guided by the needs of society, and not act isolated from the practices which had established the arts in the first place (as will be further discussed below with regard to the *Collegium Mauritianum*). Skytte’s remaining explication of the philosophical soundness of Ramus’s other laws and principles in his 1595 apology essentially amounted to the same purpose—to prove that Ramus’s method had been correctly applied and was grounded in the best ancient authorities, including Aristotle himself. Several of these arguments would recur in later dissertations.

In his master’s dissertation of 1598, Skytte in particular emphasized that Ramus had applied his methodological laws with the utmost reverence for Aristotle—if anyone was a law-abiding citizen in the republic of logic, it was Ramus, Skytte declared.492 This was a common defense among philosophers in the sixteenth century—the accused had only returned to the true principles and original intentions of Aristotle and thus deserved to be regarded as a true Aristotelian. To those accusing Ramus of not having achieved the same sharpness, gravity and wisdom as the ancients, Skytte responded that it could be shown that there was “almost nothing” that Ramus had not deduced from the oldest philosophers (foremost Aristotle).493 Clearly, a reverence for the ancients constituted a common theme also in Ramist rhetoric. On the other hand, Skytte frequently emphasized Petrus Ramus’s anti-authoritarian ideal of “philosophizing freely”, which assumed that the best precepts of many authors should be utilized—collected and ordered, of course, by method.

**Philosophizing Freely**

In his graduate thesis, *Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta*, (37 pages), presided over by Goclenius, Skytte set out to explain the manner in which Ramus had ordered and defined the arts. Choosing grammar as an example, Skytte explained how Ramus had outlined this discipline by bringing to light only such things that had been “tried and studied by many respected experts” and nothing that had only been copied from “a single grammarian’s simple opinion”.494 The grammar of Petrus Ramus was therefore “full of laudable merits”.495 To illustrate what Ramus had meant by a true and legitimate order, Skytte drew a comparison with the

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492 Skytte, *Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta*, A4v: “Qualem se Aristoteleum exhibet? Talem se civitatis logicae civem re ipsa profitetur, ut legem propositam summo studio foveat et prosequatur, ut omnia ejus jussa promptissime exsequatur.”

493 Ibid., Bv.

494 Ibid., A4v: “[...] quod denique nihil fere ex nuda opinione aliquus Grammatici translatum, sed e praestantibus authoribus probatum, observatum in publicam lucem protulit, hujus beneficium fuit.”

495 Ibid., Bv: “Quare jam tandem vere dicere atque concludeere possimus, P. Rami Grammaticam esse omni laude cumulatat”.

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disposition of living things, where the head comes first, then the shoulders and the other parts of the body, until the whole structure and composition of the body were completed. The disposition of the body thus served as both proof and illustration of Ramus’s method:

This is the way we can imagine that P. Ramus’s grammar was written, so that it resembles this living body, so skillfully and elegantly shaped. The definition of an art thus takes the first place, which is the head, and then follows a subdivision in two segments, which are the shoulders, and then follows all the other ramifications of the parts, corresponding to the other limbs of the body, and in this manner the whole system of grammar is concluded. This is the light of method; this is the clarity which he has achieved in etymology as well as syntax with the utmost splendor. These are the levers by which we establish and build the beauty of the arts, and by which Petrus Ramus founded and built the beautiful structure of the grammatical art.496

This metaphor was essentially an illustration of Ramus’s third law (lex sapientiae) which dictated that all precepts should be organised by letting general theorems precede more particular ones. When establishing an art, one also needed to avoid redundancy and find the natural delimitations of each subject. As an illustration of this second Ramist “law of justice” (lex justitiae), Skytte proposed to discuss a dispute on the art of rhetoric which Cicero had related in the first book of De Oratore, a dispute between authorities which gave Skytte an opportunity to showcase the Ramist virtue of “philosophizing freely”.

The protagonists had been no other than Cicero himself and his brother Quintus, but Skytte declared that he was not affected by the authority (authoritates) of either: “I deny and vehemently object that the skill of an orator has been explained or been described correctly by either one of them!”497 While Cicero claimed that a skilled orator must be knowledgeable in “all important things and in all arts”, his brother suggested that a reasonable level of prudence (mediocris tantum prudentia) and practice in

496 Ibid., Br-Bv: “[In omni animante bene conformato illa membrorum et totius corporis dispositio maxime laudatur, ubi primum locum obtinet caput, succedunt humeri, hos reliqua corporis membra, pectus, venter, pedes excipiunt, donec absolvatur universi corporis pages et structura:] Sic cogitemus et omnino persuadeamus P. Rami Grammaticam conscriptam esse, ut huic animali affiabre et eleganter nato sit quam simillima. Etenim primo loco collocatur artis definitio, quae caput est, succedit huic distributio in duo segmenta, quae humeros exhibet, sequuntur deinde specierum et partium omnium distributiones excellentes ac praestantias, quae reliqua animantis membra repraesentant: et ita tandem universum Grammaticae systema terminatur et conclusitur. Haec est methodi illa lux, haec claritas, quam cum in Etymologia, tum in Syntaxi maxima laude consecutus est. Hi sunt vectes, quibus artium formam molimur et struimus, quibus artis Grammaticae formam P. Ramus molitus est et construxit.”

497 Ibid., B2r: “Nego, imo vehementer perneco Oratoris facultatem ab utroque esse recte definitam et explicatam [...]”.

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the courts was sufficient. The authority of two such respected men was
humbling, as Skytte admitted, but the solution lay in the “clear light of
distinction between the arts”.

Since Ramus had defined rhetoric by the elements of style and delivery
(rhetoricum and eloquium), Skytte argued that the skill of an orator should only
be judged by these skills. Someone who had learned how to present a
certain issue in a splendid way should thus be called an “orator” or “retor”,
S throat argued, just as someone who had learned how to measure things and
conduct calculations should be called a geometer (since the art of geometry
was “to measure well”, bene metiri). Skytte thus concluded that Cicero had
been wrong: a speaker who was more knowledgeable should not be regarded
a better speaker but a more erudite man. He also believed that Quinctus
had been wrong to ascribe the practice of rhetoric foremost to civil cases in
the courts: “Eloquence is common to all questions that need to be ventilated
in an elegant manner: the skills of the orator thus have to do with all things
generally where the rules of eloquence are applied using tropes and
figures.” In essence, Skytte’s conclusion summarises Ramus’s notion of
the relation between the theoretical disciplines and practice: the theory of
elocution, that is, rhetoric, needed only to be taught in the discipline of
rhetoric (and not, as had been done previously, also in logic), while the
practice of rhetoric, that is, eloquence, should be applied in any situation
where it could be of use.

The only insurance for keeping order in the disciplines (artes) was the
three laws of Petrus Ramus—this was the underlying proposition of Skytte’s
entire master’s dissertation. To have the contents of the arts properly ordered
in this manner was above all beneficial to the students: “It is almost incred-
able how much the distinction of the arts brings to each discipline, especially
since nothing can promote the commodity of the students more than a
coherent structuring of the precepts, and nothing can obstruct these more
than disorder in the arts and confusion and chaos in the theorems”. The
underlying pedagogical motivation of Ramus was here clearly expressed by
S throat. More than a philosophical tool, method constituted an aid for
students who from an early age were demanded to consume large amounts of
texts, in Latin, Greek and sometimes Hebrew.

498 Ibid., B2r: “[...] ex clarissima artium et artificum distinctionis luce.”
499 Ibid., B2v.
500 Ibid., B2v.
501 Ibid., B3r.
502 Ibid., B3r; “At eloquentia communis est omnium quaestionum civilium ornate dicendarum,
id est facultas Oratoris circa res omnes communiter versatur, quibus orandi et perploendi
una et communis doctrina eloquentiae in Tropis et figuris adhibetur.”
503 Ibid., B2r; “Artium distinctio quantum afferat momenti ad omnem liberalem disciplinam
incredibile dictu viudetur, praeertim cum nihil magis discentium commoda sublevare, quam
distincta praecipientorum collocatio, nihil magis eadem remorari possit, quam tumultuaria et
confusa theorematum atque artium farrago.”
Skytte in this context depicted Ramus essentially as a hero, saving students from chaos and confusion: “the splendid glory of all philosophers”, Petrus Ramus, had wanted “everything taught in the arts to be founded in true, homogeneous and correct theorems”. The fact that not all professors appreciated Ramus’s method was depicted as an outrage by Skytte. When Ramus had sought approval for his three laws, he had been met with hostility by “certain philosophers, hardly necessary to name”, as Skytte remarked, who had contended that “scientific exactitude would be thrown overboard, that sacred would be mixed with profane, and that something most disgraceful would be imputed to Aristotle’s thought”. Skytte’s response to such criticism was a balance act between the defence of Ramus on the one hand, and the ideal of “freedom to philosophize” on the other, an ideal which he foremost accused Ramus’s adversaries of not following:

Oh, Petrus Ramus, if this were true, how sad and miserable are you then! Oh, vain and empty laws! For these you suffered exile, disgrace and finally death! But even though you and other men equipped with the finest qualities of reason and virtue have already refuted these shameful slanderers, we shall no longer let these unfortunate laws, cast about in rough sea, suffer, but instead bring them home into the harbour of philosophy, and we shall save them from the violent storm of their attackers. But with kind of men are we discussing? Those who philosophize freely? Hardly.

Arguments of authority were obviously no proof from the point of view of the Ramist ideal of freedom of philosophizing. Skytte himself stated that “if a Christian was put against a Pagan (ethnicus), or Ramists against Aristotelians”, then one authority was only beaten with the help of another. Declaring that philosophy “despises human authority and only embraces reason and causes, without taking heed to persons”, Skytte suggested that he

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504 Ibid., B3r-B3v; “Petrus Ramus egregium philosophorum decus omnia, quae in artibus docentur vult veris, homogeneis, propriis praeceptis ac monitionibus instituit.”
505 Ibid.; “Verum enimvero huic tam laudabili ejus instituto, et non solum omnibus votis optando, sed omnium gentium linguis prae dicabili et gloriando, huic, inquam, tam praeclarae ejus voluntati quorundam philosophorum (quos jam non est necesse a me nominari) natio vehementer obsistit, ut putet hac ratione artium certitudinem everti, sacra profanis commisceri, Aristotelis menti impudentissime aliquid affingi.”
506 Ibid., B3v; “O te P. Rame, si haec vera sunt, miserum atque infelicem! o vanas et inanes leges, pro quibus exilium, opprobria, mortem denique ipsam pertulisti? Sed quamvis horum flagitosae importunitati P. ipse Ramus et alii viri, summis ornamentis ingenii virtutisque praeediti, responderint, nos tamen miserar illas leges et tam variis fluctibus agitatas, diutius vexari non permettemus, sed in philosophiae portum perducemus, sed ab hac irrisionum tempestate severe ulciscemur. At quibus cum hominibus nobis res est? num cum libere philosophantibus? minime vero.”
507 Ibid., B4r; “Christianum igitur si ethnic, Ramaeos si Aristoteleis opposuero, nonne authoritatem authorize oppressero?”
only wanted to consider the issue itself and solid reasoning when proving the correctness of Ramus’s laws.508

In the following, he rhetorically asked whether not all would agree that false propositions should be expelled from the arts, and whether it was not wrong to mix subjects and “teach geometry in optics, both of these subjects in law, and everything in astronomy”.509 As Skytte argued, such an approach would only result in sophisms and “hateful tautologies” (odiosa Tautologia), as the same things would be unnecessarily repeated.510 Skytte’s concluding argument, directed at an imagined Aristotelian who “muttered” that it was difficult to strictly apply Ramus’s method when teaching the arts, was nevertheless based entirely on the authority of Ramus: “In order for you to obey these laws of method, think about Petrus Ramus’s grammar, rhetoric, logic, arithmetic, geometry and optics, and you will cease to fight this learned and experienced man on these subjects where you have shown such ignorance—however impudent you are, he would shake your confidence, and however skilled you would be in quibbling sophisms, he would throw you down and silence you!”511 Such polemical conclusions were of course not unusual in academic exercises and disputations—regardless of anti-authoritarian ideals.

As discussed at the outset of this chapter, the Ramist recommendation of selecting precepts from different authors, and assembling them anew by method, naturally encouraged a certain philosophical eclecticism, which spread via Ramus’s textbooks to lower level schools and gymnasiums as well. This eclectic approach may, as Howard Hotson has observed, be contrasted with the education at more prestigious centres of learning at this time: “While the philosophical instruction received by more mature students in greater universities returned in precisely these years to word-by-word commentaries on the text of Aristotle, mere boys in these humbler gymnasias and academies were being trained in philosophical judgement and discrimination.”512 The manner in which this kind of education, as recommended by Ramist method, was practically implemented at a new gymnasium may be illustrated by Landgraf Moritz’s own school in Kassel, the Collegium Mauritianum.

508 Ibid.; “Sed cum philosophicae magnificentiae gravitas hominum authoritates despiciat, rationes tantum et causas amplectatur, sepositis personis rem ipsam per se aestimemus, firmisque rationibus ad omnium artium materiam adhibendas esse demonstrum.”
509 Ibid.; “[…] an Geometriam doceri in Optica, utramque in jurisprudentia, has omnes in Astronomia concedant? non opinor, sed artes distincte tradendas esse judicabunt.”
510 Ibid., B4v-Cr; “Ut igitur hisce legibus obtemperes, pone tibi ante oculos Petri Rami Grammaticam, Rhetoricam, Logicam, Arithmetica, Geometriam, Opticam et desines de iis artibus, quas ignoras, cum magistro erudito et exercitato certare: te enim subito quamvis impudentem, tamen conturbaret: quamvis in aculeatis sophismatis egregie versatum, tamen supplantaret et perverteret.”
511 Ibid., Commonplace Learning, 107.
On Methods of Teaching

When Skytte visited Landgraf Moritz’s gymnasium in Hesse-Kassel, the Collegium Mauritianum, in April 1600 he praised not only the landgrave, the professors and the noble students, but also the “plan” (ratio) and “order” (ordo) applied at the school. A substantial part of the oration was in fact devoted to this topic, which Skytte proposed to compare with the “Pseudo-Aristotelian” method shrouded in “eternal shadows and lies”. Skytte’s ensuing exposition of method included a description of the “way of philosophizing” (Philosophandi ratio) at the school, as well as the different stages through which a student would pass—from his first enrollment in the school to his graduation—and the contents of his education and the manner in which they were taught. In essence, Skytte’s speech at the Collegium Mauritianum thus provides an insight not only into the theoretical principles of Ramist method but also into their practical implementation.

To begin with, Skytte explained how a boy who had been accepted by the landgrave to the school was first placed in the lower stage where he would learn grammar. He would thereafter move on “from the practice field of grammar to the arena of rhetoric and logic” where he would acquire from “same works” an even richer cultivation of his talent. The students’ goal was, as Skytte declared, to transform “the sound rules and valuable theorems into their inherent practice and immense usefulness”. The remark regarding practice from the same texts may seem like a violation of the Ramist law of justice, which demanded a strict separation of all subjects, but Skytte in this context was merely alluding to the Ramist pedagogical ideal of practice from real examples—grammar as well as logic should be studied from the real language of poets and historians rather than by artificial examples and syllogisms constructed by the scholastics.

513 Skytte, Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani, B2v. The juxtaposed terms of his formulation were typical: “… id est, qua ratioe literarum studia, quo ordine doceantur, quanto cum fervore tractentur” (my italics).
514 Ibid., B2v; “date mihi hanc veniam, si et de pseudoAristotelicorum quorundam docendi ratione, quae huic plane adversatur, quaque perpetuis tenebris et commentis involuta conspicitur, non minus libere quam vere dicam.”
515 Ibid. Note the difference between the expressions “Philosophandi ratio” and “ordo et methodus”, as applied by Skytte: the former may be translated as “way of philosophising” and could refer to e.g. attitudes toward authority, while the latter referred to the arrangement of the liberal arts and by Ramist implication also the teaching of them. If Skytte wanted to speak specifically about ways of teaching he also used “docendi ratio”, that is, “method of teaching”.
516 See also Appendix B for a Latin excerpt (with an English translation) from Skytte’s oration at the Collegium Mauritium.
517 Skytte, Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani, B2v-B3r, and Appendix B.
518 Ibid.
519 When the arts were ordered and systematized they needed, however, according to Ramist method to be kept separate in order to avoid repeating theorems in several disciplines.
Already these statements of practice and usefulness attest to an adherence to Ramist method, although in this context Skytte labeled the method “Mauritian” in honor of Landgraf Moritz. Skytte lauded in particular the element of frequent exercises at the *Collegium Mauritianum*, conducted in both Latin and Greek, and that orations and declamations were delivered “by the aid of scripts as well as from memory”.\(^{520}\) With regard to the manner of “philosophizing” at the school, Skytte emphasised that truth was the only yardstick used at the landgrave’s school: the *dogmata* of the ancients were certainly “cherished and considered in all ways”, but if something seemed “false, meaningless or useless”, if something had been confused by the ancients in an ignorant or unwise manner, this was tried against the “sharp measuring stick of truth”, weighed in the “excellent balance of reason”, and pondered in the light of “combined doctrines”.\(^{521}\) Philosophy was never presented or taught “without the apparatus of elegant speech, without the light of tropes and the ornament of rhetorical figures, or without pleasant gestures and an appropriate performance”.\(^{522}\) If, however, philosophy and eloquence were separated, all kinds of diseases would be born and nurtured in the arts, as Skytte declared.

The audience at the *Collegium Mauritianum* was thereafter presented with a characteristic Ramist attack on the methods of the “Pseudo-Aristotelians”, which contained a number of anti-scholastic themes. Skytte thus first of all remarked on the deplorable practice of using a different (artificial) language in logic than in the other arts. A boy who had been taught by pseudo-Aristotelian methods would, as Skytte stated, switch his pure and beautiful language when conducting studies in logic and begin to produce barbarisms and solecisms.\(^{523}\) Skytte moreover complained that the Pseudo-Aristotelians did not study logic in the works of orators, historians or poets, but instead devoted themselves to “those odd questions, like the *pons asinorum* and circular syllogisms”.\(^{524}\) Because the Pseudo-Aristotelians had not applied proper method, they had their arts “written down in such a way that they are filled to the brim with contradictions, trifles and sophistic mists”, and in their way of philosophizing they followed a tradition that made them condemn “a

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\(^{520}\) Ibid., B3r-B3v. In addition to the liberal arts discussed by Skytte, Landgraf Moritz’s noble students were also trained in music and various chivalrous arts, like fencing, riding, and weaponry; Borggreve, Lüpkes, Ottomeyer (eds.), *Moritz der Gelehrte*, 72 f.

\(^{521}\) Ibid., B3r-B3v.

\(^{522}\) Ibid., B3v: “Philosophia denique ipsa non sine elegantiori sermonis apparatu, non sine troporum luminibus, figurarum ornamentis, non sine decente gestu et actionis decore explicatur, docetur.” See also Appendix B.

\(^{523}\) Ibid., B3v.

\(^{524}\) Ibid., B4r: “Neque vero Logicae sapientiae vim in oratoribus, in historicis, in poetis excutiunt, sed ad nescio quas quaestiones de ponte asinorum, de circularibus syllogismis enodandas eam traducunt.” The *pons asinorum* was an infamous medieval mnemonic scheme to help the student find the right syllogistic middle term; Sellberg, *Filosofin och nyttan*, 52 f.
more free way of investigation". They neglected exercises in eloquence, and they made their students practice excessively in a few disciplines, which made the students ignorant or contemptuous of other subjects. Skytte lamented in particular the Pseudo-Aristotelians’ ignorance of the mathematical arts (as will be further discussed in Chapter Five). In essence, as Skytte concluded, the Pseudo-Aristotelians devoted themselves to “disputations of no relevance to humankind, revolving around sophisms which are clearly useless”.

Rhetorically, Skytte’s anonymous “Pseudo-Aristotelians” were obviously used as a placeholder for a catalogue of undesirable teaching methods that stood in contrast to the commendable and desirable Ramist pedagogical methods and goals. In reality, however, the issue of “barbaric” language was by the late sixteenth century hardly a source of controversy anymore, after a century or more of humanist campaigns advocating eloquence and classical language. Probably equally uncontroversial was the notion that logic was best studied from “orators, historians or poets” (an idea championed already by Lorenzo Valla and Rudolph Agricola, and by the mid-sixteenth century an established feature of “humanist logic”, as previously discussed). Skytte’s recurring discussions of order versus confusion in the arts may, however, be seen in the context of a number of still prevailing pedagogical challenges related to the teaching of a large text corpus in a limited amount of time, which arguably constituted a demanding task to most teachers even with an increased usage of textbooks. Skytte’s related accusation concerning the “excessive” training in only a few disciplines was no doubt expressed in the context of the Ramist ideal of a well-rounded education where each discipline was defined by its aim in life outside the school walls.

Skytte concluded his exposition on teaching methods at the Collegium Mauritianum by asking who would not reach the conclusion that much honor would befall Moritz’s school on account of its excellent manner of conducting studies.

4.4. Conclusions

Method was an intensely debated concept among scholars in the sixteenth century. The many simultaneous uses of the word added to the confusion—“method” could by one and the same author be regarded as a presentation technique as well as an arbiter of truth. Petrus Ramus claimed that his “singular method” guaranteed that the arts only contained true precepts,

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525 Ibid.
526 As quoted in Appendix B.
527 Ibid., Cr; “Quis non existimabit multum dignitatis, multumque splendoris ex tam eximia studiorum tractatione Scholae huic illustriissimae accedere?".
formulated by the best authors and arranged according to their natural order. He promised that if the arts were ordered according to his three laws of method, they would contain nothing unnecessary, redundant or erroneous. Such far-reaching methodological claims were appealing to many but also raised questions, as Skytte would learn during his studies abroad. How did one, for instance, determine which precepts were true, and what constituted good and bad practices?

Rhetorically, the issue of method could be approached as much by what it was not, as by what it was. Skytte’s catalogues of Pseudo-Aristotelian “barbarisms” in his student orations and dissertations provided a distorting mirror of the good qualities of Ramist method. Whether Skytte’s vituperative arguments were prompted by issues in the late sixteenth century German academic environment, or if they merely constituted a rhetorical echo of a long subsided humanist-scholastic debate, is less obvious. A point to consider, however, is that Ramism, far from being established at “all schools and universities”, as Skytte claimed, was often rejected on the grounds that it was simplistic. At the Ramist-friendly University of Marburg Skytte learned to eloquently explain and defend the principles of Ramus’s method, in terms of theoretical principles as well as teaching practices and pedagogy. In some cases, his arguments were directed at contemporary scholars, and not merely fictious “Pseudo-Aristotelians”.

Skytte’s Ramist rhetoric also revolved around the historical role and importance of Petrus Ramus himself. Notwithstanding the anti-authoritarian Ramist ideal of “philosophizing freely”, independent of individual authorities, Skytte frequently described how the French philosopher, by his method, had once and for all dispersed the scholastic barbarisms of previous centuries and thus saved the liberal arts from confusion and chaos. Without method, the studying of the liberal arts would, according to Skytte, be confusing and ultimately a waste of time. As evident by Skytte’s defence of method, its purpose was above all a kind of pedagogical efficiency which would minimize the time spent studying theories and precepts, guiding instead the student to practical exercises and to useful applications outside of the world of academia.

The Ramist educational reform agenda was popular among rulers who recognized the need for well-educated officials and civil servants in their administrations, but did not necessarily have the means or patience to support lengthy university educations at prestigious seats of learning. In the principality of Hesse-Kassel, Landgraf Moritz had as a boy himself received an education steeped in Ramist ideals, which later inspired the design of his own noble school, the *Collegium Mauritianum*. When visiting the *Collegium Mauritianum* in 1600, Skytte commended Landgraf Moritz’s educational initiatives, and not least his application of Ramist method, which Skytte, to honor the landgrave, referred to as the *Mauritian* method.
The ideals of efficiency, practice and utility, which Skytte learned to commend during his education, were deeply congenial to the needs of students—like Skytte himself—who hoped to make a career in the state based on their merits and skills. Through the action-orientated ideals and rhetoric of Ramism, such students were encouraged to think of the demands as well as opportunities awaiting them beyond the schools they attended. When studying Ramist method, they in essence received an ideological as well as philosophical foundation, which taught them not only that theory originated in practice, but also that practice in general was preferable to theory.
5. What to Learn: Utility and the Mathematical Arts

5.1. Towards a Renaissance of the Mathematical Arts

As we have seen, ultimately the aim of method was to provide a faster, more efficient education. Yet if the contents of this education did not prove “useful”, the education would be meaningless by the Ramist approach. Petrus Ramus’s reform efforts originated with the trivium arts of grammar, rhetoric and logic, with the professed aim of making them instruments for improved skills in eloquence and discourse, useful to civil servants and others active in the world outside of academia. The same fundamental driving forces of utility and application lay behind Ramus’s methodological recasting of the remaining arts curriculum, where mathematics naturally followed suit as part of the quadrivium, traditionally understood as arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music.\(^{528}\) Rather than discussing the quadrivium as such, Ramus treated the wider set of subjects known as the “mathematical arts” (mathematicae artes), which at the time generally also included optics, geography, architecture and mechanics—subjects that had experienced a renaissance in the sixteenth century.\(^{529}\)

By mid-century the humanist enterprise of salvaging ancient works had resulted in several new translations and editions of mathematical works virtually unknown until then, such as the Pseudo-Aristotelian Mechanical Problems (at the time believed to have been written by Aristotle), Vitruvius’ De Architectura, and the major works by Archimedes.\(^{530}\) Several of these

\(^{528}\) Petrus Ramus’s turning to the mathematical arts was denoted by Walter J. Ong as his third phase of reform, following his exploration of rhetoric and logical method; Ong, Ramus: Method, 32.

\(^{529}\) On the increased attention to the mathematical arts in the sixteenth century, see Roy Porter, “The Scientific Revolution and Universities” in Rüegg (ed.), A History of the University in Europe, 531-562, Maurice Crosland (ed.), The Emergence of Science in Western Europe (New York, 1975), and Peter Dear, Revolutionizing the Sciences: European Knowledge and its Ambitions, 1500-1700 (Basingstoke, 2001), 33 ff, who speaks of a “scientific renaissance” in the sixteenth century.

\(^{530}\) The Pseudo-Aristotelian Mechanical Problems (the earliest known theoretical treatment of mechanical principles), as well as parts of Archimedes’ works, was known in the early medieval era, but they were never widely diffused; the first printed edition of Archimedes, with Greek and Latin text, appeared in 1544; important editions of the Mechanical Problems were published in 1547 and 1565; Stillman Drake & I.E. Drabkin, Mechanics in Sixteenth-Century Italy (London, 1969), 391 f. As the historian of science Per Dahl has underlined, the
works would also directly or indirectly have a substantial impact on Johan Skytte’s education in the closing years of the sixteenth century. At the University of Marburg, the wider set of mathematical arts was given relatively generous attention: in his graduation works of 1598, Skytte celebrated in particular his teachers who had promoted and taught the mathematical arts beyond the basic requirements of arithmetic and geometry.\footnote{To be further quoted below. On the standing of the mathematical arts at the University of Marburg at this time, see especially Rudolf Schmitz (ed.), \textit{Die Naturwissenschaften an der Philipps-Universität Marburg 1527-1977} (Marburg, 1978).}

In the present chapter, I will progress from the “why” and “how” of education to the “what”, that is, the recommended contents of learning as suggested in Skytte’s graduation texts. In this context I will focus on the mathematical arts (rather than the \textit{trivium} arts) not only because they constituted an important focus of Skytte’s final semesters in Marburg, but also because Skytte’s apologetic presentations of the history and purpose of these subjects (following Ramus) reveal that Northern sixteenth-century scholars and their students did \textit{not} necessarily take the utility of the mathematical arts for granted. While ancient mathematical works had certainly gained increased attention at this time (reaching a cult of genius in the case of Archimedes), there also existed more problematic sources in the important Greek-Roman well of classics. These sources accused the mathematical arts of being ignoble and base because of their affiliation with common trades and crafts—and certainly the utility-orientated humanist Petrus Ramus did not consider these accusations harmless. Concerned about the lack of mathematical chairs in France and elsewhere, Ramus vividly refuted such conceptions in his polemical and apologetic treatment of the history of the mathematical arts, the \textit{Scholae Mathematicae} (1569), a work that formed the blueprint for Skytte’s rhetoric three decades later in Marburg.\footnote{Ramus, \textit{Scholae Mathematicae}. On Ramus and the mathematical arts, see especially Robert Goulding, “Method and Mathematics: Peter Ramus’s Histories of the Sciences”, \textit{Journal of the History of Ideas} 67:1 (2006), 63-85; idem, “Histories of Science in Early Modern Europe: Introduction”, \textit{Journal of the History of Ideas} 67:1 (2006), 33-40; idem, \textit{Defending Hypatia}; Timothy J. Reiss, “From Trivium to Quadrivium: Ramus, Method and Mathematical Technology” in Neil Rhodes & Jonathan Sawday (eds.), \textit{The Renaissance Computer: Knowledge Technology in the First Age of Print}, (London, 2000); Henry Heller, \textit{Labour, science and technology in France 1500-1620} (Cambridge, 1996), Nicholas Jardine, \textit{The Birth of History}, and Skalnik, \textit{Ramus and Reform}, 56.} Skytte’s concerns revolved, however, around the lack of mathematical chairs in Sweden.
My analysis will focus on Skytte’s *promotion* of the mathematical arts and his expectations of them, rather than on the contents or development *per se* of particular disciplines. This attention to Skytte’s early discussions of the mathematical arts is also motivated by subsequent developments at Uppsala University—Skytte’s ascension to the university chancellorship and his establishment of new professorships in the mathematical arts. These new professorships, to be discussed in Chapter Seven, clearly arose in a Ramist context, modeled on a classification scheme of the mathematical arts suggested by Skytte’s teacher Lazarus Schonerus in Lemgo.

### 5.2. Petrus Ramus’s Critique of the Ancients

Ancient literature provided a natural point of departure for scholars of the Renaissance regardless of topic. In the case of the mathematical arts, however, the classics raised certain difficulties. On the one hand, Platonic and Pythagorean traditions stated that mathematics (as in arithmetic and geometry) was constitutive of the fundamental harmonies of the universe, which in the sixteenth century granted mathematics a certain standing as a discipline valid in its own right. On the other hand, in terms of the wider set of mathematical arts, Plato had emphasized that philosophers should only engage in pure mathematics and leave applied mathematics to businessmen and soldiers. Aristotle had expressed himself in a similar spirit when he stated in his *Metaphysics* that of the two origins of scientific activities, namely needs and pleasure, the latter was always valued higher as it had not been forced by demands of necessity. Neither were the Ramist and Roman

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533 On the general issues and debates of the “scientific revolution”, see J.L. Heilbron, “Coming to Terms with the Scientific Revolution” [The Hans Rausing Lecture 2005] (Uppsala, 2006), Tore Frängsmyr, “Revolution or Evolution: How to Describe Changes in Scientific Thinking” in William R. Shea (ed.), *Revolutions in Science: Their Meaning and Relevance* (Canton, 1988), and Roy Porter, “The Scientific Revolution and Universities” in de Ridder-Symoens (ed.), *A History of the University in Europe*, 531-562. In particular Porter’s discussion of changes “from within” universities will be relevant in the present context of educational reform agendas. Note also that sixteenth-century humanist endeavours in the mathematical arts, which would later be scorned by e.g. Francis Bacon and Descartes, have been reevaluated by recent historical scholarship: as Anthony Grafton writes, the scholars of the sixteenth century did not only translate and edit ancient texts but they also analyzed them and produced results which in the end affected the disciplines they had set out to study; Grafton, *Defenders of the Text*, Donald R. Kelley, “Introduction” in idem (ed.), *History and the Disciplines*, 4f. A similar point has been made by Sven Dupré, in his study on the developments of sixteenth-century optics; Sven Dupré, *Galileo, the Telescope, and the Science of Optics in the Sixteenth Century: A Case Study of Instrumental Practice in Art and Science* (Gent, 2002), 17 f.


536 Ibid., 310 f.
conceptions of utility and the arts entirely in accord: to Cicero and the educated Romans, *utilitas* was associated with action and doings that benefited the state and the greater community, but on the other hand it was precisely because *utilitas* was associated in this manner with the unfree common man that it was not considered a suitable primary incentive for the free and noble.537 The noble should instead transcend the useful and strive for the honorable, which was “not immediately linked to the economic, to the material, to narrow self-interest”.

To Ramus, however, there needed not be such a hierarchical arrangement between utility and honor, and certainly not between “pure” and “applied” mathematics.539 In his own history of the mathematical arts, Ramus was in particular horrified at Archimedes, the great *Mechanicus*, who allegedly had been skeptical of writing about his inventions because he held in contempt every art originating in the demands of necessity: “If only Archimedes had realized that the purpose of the arts is use, not contemplation!”540 Ramus, who had defined each art by its particular use, saw no reason to treat the mathematical or mechanical arts (traditionally associated with craftsmen) any different than the liberal arts: just as he had founded grammar, logic and rhetoric on the usage of poets, orators, and philosophers, he believed that the mathematical arts should be founded on the usage of geographers, surveyors, navigators, craftsmen, architects and painters.541 Moreover, he argued that mathematics should also be taught to craftsmen and common people, as this discipline constituted an important foundation and base for many crafts and trades.542 This had been done in Germany, as Ramus explained, and it had lead to a flourishing mining industry and the invention of many new war machines.543

The mathematical arts were however rarely shown honor and esteem, according to Ramus, and the reasons for this were to be found in the strange traditions set by ancient authorities. As Ramus remarked, Plato had been sadly misguided by his own love of philosophy when he forbade his

538 Ibid., 186.
539 Jardine, *The Birth of History*, 234. Whether ancient society *in general* held manual labour and crafts in contempt is of course another matter—as has been pointed out, there are in fact indications of the opposite; Gille, *The History of Techniques*, 313-315. What matters here is that the “elitist” statements of certain ancient philosophers—which seemed to contradict the contents of the revived ancient technological literature—often provided a critical starting point for humanist arguments in favor of crafts and practical applications of mathematics.
543 The city of Nuremberg was in particular commended by Ramus for supporting the mathematical arts with both stipends and a professorship. Ramus in this context quoted Cicero’s famous dictum, “Honor alit artes” (Tusc., 1.1.4); Ramus, *Scholae Mathematicae*, 62.
disciples to teach the mechanical arts to the public.\footnote{Ramus, \emph{Scholae Mathematicae}, 17 f.} It would however be absurd, as Ramus argued, to think that any honor could be taken away from philosophy if it was more widely spread—on the contrary, philosophy would only be enhanced (\emph{amplificatus}) on account of its many uses.\footnote{Ibid., 18.} Neither was the art of geometry “contaminated” by mechanical works; on the contrary, it would be decorated and made even more honorable if its principles were put to use. Ramus concluded that since all arts originated in practice, it was only natural that they were also “completed” in the same manner, that is, in practice.\footnote{\textit{Neque enim Geometria, ut verissime Pappus in mechanica disseruit, mechanicis operibus contaminatur, sed ornatur et honoratur, perfectaque tum mathematica esset et absoluta, quando perfectum et absolutum usum, id est, finem propter quem est inventa, consecuta esset, et tum philosophi tanti boni authores et doctores justius observaventur et coleruntur."} While Ramus did not reject theoretical mathematics, he believed that its many applications had been lost since the time of Plato: “After all, we want to have \emph{both} in the school of philosophy—both mathematics and mathematical use.”\footnote{Ibid.; “Utrumque enim in philosophiae schola volumus, et mathemata et mathematicum usum.” Note that \emph{mathemata} is here used in the meaning of “pure” mathematics: the Greek \emph{mathêma} \footnote{Skytte also occasionally used the Greek loanword \emph{mathesis} (with a similar original meaning as \emph{mathêma}), used from the sixth century A.D. in the meaning of mathematics; Lewis \& Short, s.v. \emph{mathesis}.} originally meant “knowledge” or teaching” (Plato however also spoke of the \textit{tria mathêmata}, which specifically were arithmetic, geometry and astronomy). The student of \emph{mathêma} was called \emph{mathêmakos}; Ragnar Solvang, \emph{Matematisk etymologi med historiske kommentarer} (Oslo, 2002), 21. Skytte also occasionally used the Greek loanword \emph{mathesis} (with a similar original meaning as \emph{mathêma}), used from the sixth century A.D. in the meaning of mathematics; Lewis \& Short, s.v. \emph{mathesis}.} Throughout his academic career, Ramus attempted to promote the mathematical arts in several ways—as an editor, translator, textbook author, collector of manuscripts and debater.\footnote{Skalnik, \emph{Ramus and Reform}, 57-59.} As James V. Skalnik has suggested, Ramus’s efforts in \emph{publicizing} mathematics and the mathematical arts were perhaps the most significant feature of his career as a mathematician; besides authoring textbooks he put his disciples to work at the college under his supervision in Paris, producing translations of the compiled mathematical manuscripts.\footnote{Skalnik, \emph{Ramus and Reform}, 57.} Guided by his belief that mathematical education (as indeed all education) should not be burdened by “unnecessary” theory and precepts, which deflected the student from the true goal of the arts, that is, practice.
and applications, Ramus, in his own textbooks dismissed large chunks of Euclidean mathematics for being filled with demonstrations and proofs, which in Ramus’s opinion were merely distracting.\textsuperscript{550} Underlying this approach to mathematics was also Ramus’s assumption that the arts—if properly arranged according to their natural order—essentially mirrored the simplicity of nature, which made them uncomplicated and congenial to the mind and in no need of complex “proofs”.\textsuperscript{551} Thus, while Ramus on a principal level promoted a link between scholarship and practical human endeavors, his pedagogical ideals as well as his epistemology demanded a minimum of theory as such. This essentially skill-based approach to mathematics did not render Ramus a reputation as a mathematical scholar by his peers, but his textbooks were used in schools for more than a century.\textsuperscript{552}

Ramus’s last work on mathematics and the mathematical arts, the \textit{Scholae Mathematicae} published in 1569, included, as already noted, an extensive historical survey, devoted not only to the contemporary utility of the mathematical arts but also to their ancient pedigree. As the historian Robert Goulding has argued, Ramus’s “turn to history” was all but forced upon him by his own theory of knowledge: “If human beings have, in a sense, the structure of the arts built into their minds, how did it come about that many are unaware of this structure, that there is dissent over the nature of the arts, that (in short) we need the arts to recover our natural skills?”\textsuperscript{553} With regard to the art of discoursing, that is logic, the answer was evident to Ramus: the followers of Aristotle had lost faith in their natural abilities and succumbed to a slavish indoctrination with one authority. Ramus’s understanding of the history of mathematics differed however to begin with from this history of degradation, as Goulding points out: in his early works, Ramus saw in mathematics the purest expression of the natural dialectical order of the world, which was essentially ahistorical and incorruptible. Inspired by the Platonic notion of reminiscence, Ramus described how mathematics had slowly revealed itself throughout history, a process that was not yet complete.\textsuperscript{554} This idea of a constant growth was, however, abandoned by Ramus as he engaged deeper in mathematical studies, discovering that

\textsuperscript{550} Goulding, “Peter Ramus’s Histories of the Sciences”, 70 f., and idem, \textit{Defending Hypatia: Ramus, Savile, and the Renaissance rediscovery of mathematical history} (New York, 2010), 27 f.

\textsuperscript{551} Ibid., 71. Ramus was not alone in his scepticism toward too much mathematical proofs. Doubtful of the value of Archimedes’ demonstrations, Gerolamo Cardano argued in 1550 that “[…] the rewards are not proportional to the effort, because no one, from Archimedes to the present day, has been able to demonstrate what utility derives from these contemplations”;

\textsuperscript{552} Goulding, “Peter Ramus’s Histories of the Sciences”, 77.

\textsuperscript{553} Ibid., 68.

\textsuperscript{554} Ibid., 72.
mathematics was not always simple: “Quite against his expectations, mathematics—the goal and paragon of his natural, logical method—turned out to be difficult. This defeat marks a crisis in Ramus’s thought. He had invested great intellectual capital into identifying (at some level) natural dialectic with mathematics—which now, it seemed, was not a natural, immediately graspable science at all.”\(^{555}\) As suggested by Goulding, Ramus reacted to this experience in two ways: by rewriting history and by writing his own mathematical textbooks.

Ramus’s new history of mathematics became analogous to his history of dialectics, complete with villains and a process of degradation. In the case of mathematics it was, by Ramus’s revised narrative, Euclid and Plato who were responsible for the corruption of the art: the former had, like Aristotle, failed to order and arrange his mathematical truths, and the latter had turned mathematics into an esoteric exercise of contemplation sealed off from the world of action and doing. As Robert Goulding has pointed out, with this revised history, all Ramus’s histories of the arts shared the same central theme—a pristine *scientia* in a golden age, when men used an unblemished reason, spoke with a natural elegance and utilized mathematics effortlessly, was disturbed by the arrogance and incompetence of one author and his followers, whereupon a process of corruption was initiated.\(^{556}\)

With regard to natural philosophy, Ramus concluded that “true physics” must be founded in mathematical reasoning.\(^{557}\) As suggested by Goulding, Ramus was led to this position partly by Philipp Melanchthon’s examples, but also by his own excursions into mathematical history and its central ancient figures, Plato, Euclid, Aristotle, and Pythagoras.\(^{558}\) Yet, Ramus’s own attempt to reform natural philosophy proved unsatisfactory in terms of alternatives to the standard university textbook, Aristotle’s *Physics*, which

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555 Ibid., 68.
556 Ibid., and idem, *Defending Hypatia*, 19-33. While Ramus’s description of this primal state of wisdom is in many ways reminiscent of the ancient notion of a *philosophia perennis* that had gradually vanished over time (a popular notion also in the early modern era), it should be noted that Ramus’s history of the arts differs on a few fundamental points: whereas the classical notion spoke of a few wise men (e.g. Orpheus, Hermes Trismegistus, Moses, Pythagoras and Plato), Ramus believed that this pristine wisdom was practiced by all men, and whereas practice and nature brought men in the classical version further away from the divine plan, this was precisely what brought them closer to it in Ramus’s version. Ramus moreover constructed his history with certain conspicuous agents—instead of the slow albeit inevitable and relentless succession of ages, pushing men helplessly further away from divine insight, Ramus populated his histories with villains and heroes, actively destroying or saving the pristine natural wisdom. Regarding the theme of *philosophia perennis*, see Helander, *Neo-Latin Literature*, 425-429
557 Goulding, *Defending Hypatia*, 62.
558 Ibid., 70. On Ramus’s praise of Pythagoras, see ibid., 68-72. As Goulding notes with regard to Melanchthon, “The lure of Platonism was always strong, even for an Aristotelian like Philip Melanchthon. In a widely-read encomium of mathematics first published in 1536, the reformer began and ended his praises of the art with the famous sign over the door of Plato’s Academy: ‘let no one enter who is untrained in geometry’”; ibid., 14.
Ramus criticized for its superfluous logical arguments.559 While suggesting that it was mathematics that constituted the language of nature, Ramus remained skeptical of “hypotheses” that were said to describe the regularities of the world. This paradox in Ramus’s thought may be explained by his conviction that mathematics should foremost be directed toward practical use in the world—not metaphysical speculation.560 With regard to physics, Ramus thus ultimately recommended students to extract concrete natural phenomena from Aristotle’s Meteora or De Anima, for example, and to study Euclid’s mathematically based optics and music.561

As we shall see in the present chapter, Ramus’s discussions of the utility and function of mathematics—especially in the so called mixed mathematical arts such as optics and mechanics (which were more easily related to practical applications than the vague subject of physics)—undoubtedly stimulated discussions revolving around theory, practice and the foundation as well as aims of the mathematical arts in university teaching and scholarship. In the process of publicizing and defining the mathematical arts, the Ramist historical narratives served a clear purpose—to justify the study of a group of subjects that did not possess an established standing in the university arts course.562 Generations of students engaging in dissertations regarding mechanics, optics or any other mathematical art were thus provided with a handy frame of reference that could be used to explain or defend the mathematical arts.

559 Ibid., 62.
560 Ibid., 71. As recently concluded also by Sachiko Kusukawa, Ramus had “set out to defend mathematics as the theoretical basis of natural philosophy as well as a practical tool for mechanics, astronomy, and trade.” (my italics); Sachiko Kusukawa, “Petrus Ramus (1515-1572): Method and Reform” in Paul Richard Blum (ed.), Philosophers of the Renaissance (Washington, 2010), 165.
561 Goulding, Defending Hypatia, 62. Ramus never produced his own textbooks in natural philosophy. Agricultural and other natural historical maxims could, as Ramus suggested, simply be taught from Virgil and Pliny the Elder; Kusukawa, “Petrus Ramus”, 165. On Ramus’s skepticism of hypotheses in astronomy, see below, 5.4.
562 Beyond the polemical function of such narratives, they contributed, as suggested by Robert Goulding, to a process of defining, distinguishing and understanding the disciplines in question: “Authors did not just use their histories to persuade others. They themselves relied on historical narratives in order to think about their discipline, define its parts, distinguish among its acceptable and unacceptable forms and prescribe its content and method of teaching. By placing their discipline into a historical context shared by other, more mainstream humanistic arts, moreover, they could draw upon the large, narrative structures which Renaissance humanists had adapted to understand human intellectual and cultural development, origins, progress and decline”; Goulding, “Histories of Science in Early Modern Europe”, 34 f.
Figure 6. Page from Petrus Ramus’s textbook in mathematics, *Arithmeticae libri duo*, 1569, published by Lazarus Schonerus in 1599 under the title *Petri Rami Arithmeticae libri duo, geometriæ septem et viginti, a Lazaro Schonero recogniti et aucti* (Frankfurt, 1599).
5.3. Mathematical Studies in Marburg and Lemgo

Petrus Ramus’s interest in the mathematical arts was not unique. Apologists of mathematics across Europe in the sixteenth century argued that this discipline was exceedingly important and useful in other disciplines, such as optics, geography and mechanics, and ultimately in such earth-bound activities as construction, fortification, surveying, statesmanship and various crafts and trades. Numerous mathematical chairs were founded in Italian universities and subsequently elsewhere, in Jesuit colleges as well as reformed universities and gymnasiums, in the latter case often under Ramist influences. Even though those disciplines that did not belong to the *quadrivium* proper often retained an unclear standing in official university statutes and curricula, many students at this time nevertheless encountered one or several mathematical disciplines during their studies, whether astronomy, geography, optics, architecture or mechanics.

The principality of Hesse had by the late sixteenth century gained a certain reputation for supporting and cultivating the mathematical arts. Landgraf Wilhelm IV had become known for his interest in construction projects as well as his astronomical observations, and his son Moritz continued to act as a patron as well as practitioner of arts and learning, cultivating a special interest in medicine and alchemy. As protector of the University of Marburg, Landgraf Moritz upheld close ties to its teachers: Skytte’s mathematics teacher Johannes Hartmannus was thus frequently ordered to Kassel to assist the landgrave in his mathematical studies and experiments (or to teach at the *Collegium Mauritianum*), and Rudolph Goclenius assisted Moritz in the edition of various textbooks. As previously discussed, Skytte

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563 Reiss, *Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination in Early Modern Europe*, 135-154. By the late sixteenth-century, mathematics was by many apologists of the subject conveyed as "*de rigueur* for entrants to a large number of growing professions, surveying and seamanship for example, whose members would not normally have graced the university’s benches"; Laurence Brockliss, “Curricula” in de Ridder-Symoens (ed.) *A History of the University in Europe*, 591.


566 Borggrefe, Lüpkes, Ottomeyer (eds.), *Moritz der Gelehrte*, 11-33, and Sabine Salloch, *Das hessische Medizinalwesen unter den Landgrafen Wilhelm IV. und Moritz dem Gelehrten: Rolle und Wirken der fürstlichen Leibärzte* (Marburg, 2006). On Moritz’s interests in alchemy, see also Moran, *The Alchemical World of the German Court*, 19-24. Note that the terms “al-chemy” and “chemistry” were interchangeable at this time.

567 In 1609, Landgraf Moritz appointed Hartmannus as professor of *Chymiatiae* at the University of Marburg, which was the first professorship in chemistry at any European university.
visited the court in Kassel himself in April 1600; he delivered a model oration on the excellence of Moritz and his initiative to establish a gymnasium, and he also praised the mathematical education at the school.\textsuperscript{568} One month later, Skytte returned to the Collegium in Kassel to present a short treatise entitled “Philosophical Flowers”, where he discussed definitions and various applications of arithmetic, geometry, mechanics, politics and ethics.\textsuperscript{569} Skytte’s Swedish compatriot Nils Chesnecopherus had also received favorable attention from Landgraf Moritz: in 1595 he was appointed “court mathematician” in Kassel, and in 1599 he became professor of mathematics in Marburg.\textsuperscript{570}

Skytte himself studied geometry, music, astronomy, mechanics and geography in Marburg, using textbooks by Ramus as well as other contemporary authors.\textsuperscript{571} Rudolph Goclenius, at the time “logices et mathematices professor”, who presided over Skytte’s graduation in 1598, cultivated a wide range of scholarly interests including physics, geography, botany, zoology, medicine, astronomy and “psychology” (a term he was one of the first to use), and was praised by Skytte for his great erudition and manner of philosophising.\textsuperscript{572} Johannes Hartmannus seems, however, to have been responsible for Skytte’s more informal mathematical training: in the dedication of his master’s dissertation, Skytte expressed his deepest gratitude to Hartmannus for his kindness and generosity and for having shared with him “the beautiful treasures of mathematics” to which Skytte had attempted to add his own “small rivulets”.\textsuperscript{573} However, the specific subject of Skytte’s lengthy master’s oration—the excellence and utility of the art of mechanics (\textit{De mechanicae artis praestantia etc.})—was no doubt also a result of Skytte’s studies at the gymnasium in Lemgo in 1596-97 for Lazarus Schonerus (Schöner), a devoted Ramist and teacher of mathematics who had

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Moritz was also personally engaged in the design and construction of chemical laboratories in Kassel; Salloch, \textit{Das hessische Medizinalwesen}, 34. On Johannes Hartmannus, see also Schmitz, \textit{Die Naturwissenschaften an der Philipps-Universität Marburg}, 10-15; on the establishment of chemistry as an academic discipline, see Moran, \textit{The Alchemical World of the German Court}, 50-67. Regarding Goclenius’s collaboration with Moritz, see Borggrefe, Lüpkes, Ottomeyer (eds.), \textit{Moritz der Gelehrte}, 29 f.

\textsuperscript{568} Skytte, \textit{Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani}. See also Chapter Four.

\textsuperscript{569} Skytte, \textit{Flores Philosophici}.

\textsuperscript{570} Berg, “Nils Chesnecopherus”. Under Chesnecopherus’s supervision, Skytte’s younger brother Eric Schroderus studied mathematics in Marburg and graduated in 1599 on a dissertation which treated geometry and optics; Eric Schroderus, \textit{Dissertatio duplex mathematica, una geometrica, altera optica [...]} (Marburg, 1599); Berg, \textit{Johan Skytte}, 73, n. 99.


\textsuperscript{572} Schmitz, \textit{Die Naturwissenschaften an der Philipps-Universität Marburg}, 15 f., and Berg, \textit{Johan Skytte}, 49, note 30 (on Goclenius’s professorships). See also OED s.v. \textit{psychology}.

\textsuperscript{573} Skytte, \textit{Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta}, A2v; “[...] qui me Mathematicorum pulcherrimis delitiis, quibus etiam hos rivulos meos asperegere volui, cumulasti”. Skytte’s praise of Goclenius appeared foremost in the preface of \textit{Analyses}, as noted above, Chapter Four.
translated the ancient (Pseudo-Aristotelian) work *Mechanical Problems*. In his oration, Skytte praised Schonerus for his achievement of having translated the *Mechanical Problems* from Greek to Latin and his efforts to teach this work to his students.

Skytte’s dissertation, *Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta* (37 pages), and oration, *De mechanicae artis praestantia* (32 pages), constituted the main examinations before Skytte received his master’s degree at the University of Marburg. Attached to Skytte’s oration celebrating mechanics was a classification of the mathematical arts, constructed by Schonerus. Skytte did not comment on Schonerus’s specific classification in his oration, but years later, when he was university chancellor in Uppsala, he would create three new professorships devoted to the mathematical arts precisely according to the division suggested by Schonerus.

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574 Berg, Johan Skytte, 57 f. Schonerus also republished Ramus’s *Scholae Mathematicae* in 1599.

575 Skytte, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*, D2v; “Sed multo vehementius admiror: Mechanica problemata Aristotelis ab ipso non modo e graeco in latinum eleganti sermone conversa, sed saepius discipulis suis exposita esse.”

576 Before the promotion to magister could be performed, the students also had to pass an oral test before the decanus (dean) and professors. For the details of the academic examination procedure at the University of Marburg in the fall of 1598, see Berg, Johan Skytte, 59; “De kompetensprov, som han i och för magisterexamen skulle avlägga, voro icke få. Först kom en oration, tydligen över självvalt ämne, vilken, innan den hölls, måste genomses och gillas av professorn i retorik. Därefter följde en avhandling, likaledes över självvalt ämne, vilken måste framläggas till officiell disputation, för vilken respondenten skulle välja praeses, men där vem som helst fick opponera. Sedan den undanstöckats, kom en ny också officiell disputation kallad illuminare. Vid den hade var och en av promovendi att svara för sin del av en avhandling, som författats av deras blivande promotor, vilken vid detta tillfälle fungerade som praeses. Opponenterna fingo endast utgöras av fakultetens medlemmar, präster m.fl. Strax efter illuminare skulle ett förhör äga rum inför decanus och respektive professorer. Hela den långa proceduren skulle helst vara undangjord före den 6:e söndagen efter påsk. Efter den tiden kunde således promotion följa.”
Figure 7. Classification of the Mathematical Arts by Lazarus Schonerus (1598).
According to Schonerus, the *Mathematicae Artes* should be divided into one group of abstract disciplines (*Per se et abstractae*) and one group of disciplines devoted to matters found in nature (*Quae certi sunt in rerum natura subjecti*). The former was divided into arithmetic and geometry, which as a group would be represented by the “Euclidean professorship”. The second group of arts, related to natural matters, contained one group of arts dependent on the senses, either a single sense such as hearing (the art of music) or seeing (the art of optics), or several senses, which referred to motions “against nature” (the art of mechanics). Together these arts—music, optics and mechanics—would be represented by an “Archimedean professorship”. The other major group of arts engaging with the natural world was not dependent on senses but revolved around structures and symmetries, such as structures of buildings (the art of architecture) and the cosmography of the universe, divided into the superior part (the art of astronomy) and the inferior (the art of geography, subdivided into continents with rivers and oceans with islands). This third group of arts—architecture, astronomy and geography—would be represented by a Ptolemaean professorship.

Lazarus Schonerus’s table of the mathematical arts constitutes a characteristic example of the Ramist pedagogical impulse to structure the arts and their subject matter by using basic definitions. The resulting schemes, of course, inevitably led to huge simplifications (in Schonerus’s table, the subject of geography was divided into “continents with rivers and oceans with islands”). On the other hand, these subdivisions could be continued endlessly. The textbook author Wilhelm Scribonius (1550–1600) composed a popular division of animals (in its fourth edition in 1600) which branched out into “oviparous” and “viviparous”, and the viviparous into “those with cleft hooves and those with solid hooves, and so on”.577 Ramus’s own table of the art of physics started out with immaterial and material objects, and proceeded into “organic” (“plants, animals and beasts, man”) and “inorganic”, where the element of air, for instance, was divided into “clouds, thunders, lightnings, hails, winds, and rains”.578 Since Schonerus’s table foremost sought to provide basic definitions of the mathematical arts, it did not, however, continue into more detailed branches.579

578 Graves, *Peter Ramus*, 172. As Howard Hotson has noted, this dividing and structuring of complex subject matters eventually evolved into a number of encyclopaedic projects in the next century, pursued by post-Ramist encyclopedists like Johann Heinrich Alsted and Bartholomäus Keckermann; Hotson, *Commonplace Learning*, 292.
579 Schonerus evidently did not feel the need to include physics as a separate subject in his general classification of the mathematical arts. While this choice may be seen as an indication of the generally unclear standing of physics in Renaissance scholarship, it should also be noted that physics was traditionally not considered a mathematical art, but instead belonged to natural philosophy as explicated by, for example, Aristotle, Virgil and Pliny. Ramus
Although Schonerus’s table was not unique in its Ramist structure, its indication of professorships presents an interesting additional feature, connecting a classification scheme to a division of pedagogical responsibilities. This initiative was congenial with the Ramist mindset, where, as we have seen, the arts and the teaching of the arts were always intimately connected. The various uses and purposes of the arts in Schonerus’s classification scheme may be deduced from Skytte’s two graduation works of 1598, which, as we shall see, reflect several Ramist assumptions about the aims, order and origins of the mathematical arts. Skytte’s oration (De mechanicae artis praestantia) was also particularly concerned with the nobility and ancient pedigree also of such as practical art as mechanics, while his dissertation (Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta) was more generally devoted to a number of “problems” that would illustrate how the mathematical arts were useful in academia as well as in ordinary life. These texts indicate on the whole that Skytte’s education with regard to the mathematical arts must be considered well rounded by sixteenth-century academic standards. In the following we will take a closer look at the mathematical issues that Skytte, under the supervision of the aforementioned teachers, had learned to discuss.

5.4. Problems from the Circle of Mathematical Arts

Having established the importance of method in all arts, and the dignity and utility of the trivium arts of grammar, rhetoric and logic, Skytte devoted the major part of his master’s dissertation to a number of problems from the mathematical arts (in this case arithmetic, geometry, optics, music, astronomy, geography, mechanics, and, very briefly, physics and ethics). Judging only by Lazarus Schonerus’s classification scheme we might think that all the mathematical arts were equal branches on the mathematicae artes tree, but in reality arithmetic and geometry, following ancient tradition, had always held a special position as the purest, most abstract arts.

suggested that physics should be studied in the final year of a seven-year course of study; Goulding, Defending Hypatia, 62.

Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta. Where these two subjects, physics and ethics, belonged in the general classification scheme of the arts was not entirely clear at this time: physics was often, as previously noted, considered as part of natural philosophy rather than of the mathematical arts. While ethics during the Renaissance was often taught alongside politics, Jean Bodin had attempted to show the use of mathematics in ethics and politics (see above, Chapter Three), which added to the confusion from a classification point of view.

As noted above, Plato in particular had differentiated between on the one hand pure mathematics studied by philosophers, and on the other applied mathematics, used by common people; Gille, The History of Techniques, 310 f.
Skytte began his exposition of the mathematical arts by rhetorically asking whether “only arithmetic and geometry” should be regarded as mathematical: “What about Optics, Music, Astronomy, Geography and Mechanics? Have not these [arts] entered most parts of the mathematical kingdom? Are they not explicated as mathematical arts by the most eminent men?”\textsuperscript{582} From a Ramist point of view, the mixed or transboundary character of these other mathematical arts presented a challenge on account of Ramus’s strict laws of method that dictated that no overlapping or tautologies could exist among the arts. As Skytte characteristically argued when further introducing the circle of mathematical arts, only arithmetic and geometry could in fact be regarded as purely mathematical “if speaking strictly and philosophically”, since the mathematical arts should only treat quantities—“discrete quantities” in the case of arithmetic and “continuous quantities” in the case of geometry—and neither optics, music, astronomy, geography nor mechanics “stayed quietly within these borders”.\textsuperscript{583}

More than a Ramist curricular concern, this discussion of the relation between (pure) mathematics and the other arts rested on a longstanding metaphysical debate. As stated by Aristotle in the \textit{Metaphysics}, mathematics could not be used to explain “perceptible and perishable magnitudes; for then it would have perished, when they perished”, which in other words meant that mathematics could have no role in the investigation of physical objects.\textsuperscript{584} Rudolph Goclenius, in his philosophical lectures, published by Skytte after his graduation, would characteristically attempt to conciliate this metaphysical conundrum and argue that arithmetic and geometry in principle concerned only abstract numbers and magnitudes, but that they were also

\textsuperscript{582} Skytte, \textit{Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta}, Cr; “[...] ubi Optica, ubi Musica, ubi Astronomia, ubi Geographia, ubi denique Mechanica? nonne maximam regni Mathematici partem invaserunt? nonne artes Mathematicae a clarissimis viris proclamantur.” In his speech at the \textit{Collegium Mauritianum}, Skytte praised Johannes Hartmannus especially for having included “also optics, astronomy and geography” to the mathematical arts besides arithmetic and geometry—as opposed to “that crowd of professors who only wanted to consider the last two as mathematical”; Skytte, \textit{Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani}, A4v.


\textsuperscript{584} Dear, \textit{Revolutionizing the Sciences}, 18; Brockliss, “Curricula” in de Ridder-Symoens (ed.) \textit{A History of the University in Europe}, 590; Reiss, \textit{Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination in Early Modern Europe}, 143. As Timothy Reiss points out, the recovered ancient mathematical works (which stated that certain problems were determined by \textit{both} theory and practice) challenged this Aristotelian thought, as did also the growth of trade and commerce—perhaps even more so, as Reiss suggests, since these activities, dealing daily with mathematical questions of volumes and weights, implied a relation between “certain kinds of speculative questions and practical need, and, no less, the allied habit of seeing sure and clear mathematical rule under seeming vagary”; ibid., 143.
present in concrete things. Ramus could therefore, as Goclenius explained, “treat geodesy in geometry” when he discussed “concrete magnitudes in lands and fields”.

Following this Ramist approach, Skytte stated in his dissertation that arithmetic and geometry should be considered as the “firm fundament” of the other mathematical arts, which applied the precepts of the former. Pure mathematics was however also useful in itself: when further discussing the art of arithmetic, Skytte characteristically enumerated a number of uses of arithmetic in ordinary life—in trade, taxation, judicial matters, and military applications, among other things. As previously discussed in the context of state utility (Chapter Three), Skytte commended in particular Jean Bodin for having treated arithmetic and “harmonic proportions” in his books on the state. In this manner Skytte thus linked arithmetic both to practical applications and to other disciplines (such as politics), either as an aid or a foundation. This approach was utilized by Skytte also with regard to the subject of geometry: “The dignified benefits of geometry are diffused throughout all life, and they are also incredibly useful in other disciplines: in our understanding of physics, politics, and theology, as well as in the accomplishments of the infinite tasks of war and peace.” As Skytte moreover declared, God himself, “the supreme architect of the world”, had

585 Skytte, Analyses, 90; “Res physica sunt concretae res, Mathematicae vero secretae, id est, abstractae a materia et motu sensili. […] Arithmeticam et Geometriam principaliter quidem in abstractis numeris et magnitudinibus versari, aliquando tamen necessario etiam in concretis.”
586 Ibid., 91; “Sic quando Ramus in Geometri a tradit Gaeodesiam, agit de magnitudine concreta, ut terrae vel agri.”
587 Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium […] fontibus desumpta, Cv; “[…] imo vero profiteor Arithmeticam et Geometriam omnium reliquarum artium esse fundamenta certissima.”.
588 Ibid., Cv. While Ramus acknowledged that arithmetic and geometry were separated from the other quadrivial arts as they alone were free of matter, he had also vehemently opposed that pure mathematics was in any way useless or difficult (two common misconceptions according to Ramus); Ramus, Scholae Mathematicae, 39. In essence, as Nicholas Jardine has pointed out, Ramus’s didactic program, aimed at utility in all arts, could not distinguish between pure (as in unapplied) and applied mathematics: Nicholas Jardine, The Birth of History, 234. Cf. Reiss, “Ramus, Method, and Mathematical Technology”, 52.
589 Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium […] fontibus desumpta, Cv; “Geometriae dignitates per universam vitam sunt diffusae, imo ad reliquas disciplinas physiccas, politicas, theologicas perciendum, ad infinita bellis pacisque opera conficiendum valde sunt accommodatae.” Cf. Skytte’s oration at the Collegium Mauritianum where he underlined that the mathematical arts are “entirely necessary in order to understand the doctrines (decreta) of the ancients as well as the subjects taught in the higher faculties.”; Skytte, Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani, B3. Such arguments regarding the widespread utility of mathematics in other arts may, as has been suggested, be seen in the context of the many new editions of and comments on Euclid, which were published in the early sixteenth century, and the accompanying praise of mathematics (and in particularly geometry); Reiss, Knowledge, Discovery and Imagination, 116.
utilized geometry in his work to build and construct the universe.\textsuperscript{590} To the questions of how all “plants, trees and living creatures had received their statue”, and “by what providence earth rested in the centre of the universe”, Skytte thus provided the same answer—“divine geometry”.\textsuperscript{591} That God’s creation—from the plants to the planet itself—was ordered by numbers, weights and measures was an increasingly popular theme in mathematical literature at this time, which also explains Skytte’s mention of theology as one of the subjects that benefited from knowledge of geometry.\textsuperscript{592}

With regard to the less pure, practical mathematical arts, Skytte, starting with optics, posed the question how this art could “return its noble and splendid gifts from arithmetic and geometry”.\textsuperscript{593} As Skytte now suggested, one needed only think of the “splendid works” of Euclid, Alhazen, Vitello, Petrus Ramus, Friedrich Risner and other “Opticos” to recognize the mathematical foundation of optics.\textsuperscript{594} To further prove the utility of optics, Skytte referred to a debate between Girolamo Cardano and Julius Scaliger, which would show how a theory in optics had elegantly solved a problem in astronomy. The question was whether the element of fire existed in all things in general (as Cardano had claimed), or if fire was an element to be found in the region between the air and the moon (as Scaliger believed).\textsuperscript{595} To solve this issue, Skytte referred to the optical law stating that light beams are refracted as they travel through different media, resulting in shifting positions of objects as seen through these media.\textsuperscript{596} But since stars do not shift position as their beams fall to the earth at an angle, fire (as a thicker medium) could not possibly exist above air, as Skytte concluded. Scaliger

\textsuperscript{590} Skytte, \textit{Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta}, C2v; “Vis scire quam facultatem mundi ille Architectus summus in fabricando machinandoque universitatis opificio adhibuerit? Adi numen Geometricum.”

\textsuperscript{591} Ibid., C2v; “Vis scire quo numine terra in medio mundi posita conquieverit? Adi numen Geometricum. Vis scire quae vis effecerit, ut plantae, ut arbores, ut animantes suum statum tueantur? Adi numen Geometricum.”

\textsuperscript{592} Dahl, \textit{Svensk ingenjörskonst}, 29.

\textsuperscript{593} Skytte, \textit{Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta}, C3r; “Quomodo vero, inquies, Optica praeelearissimas et nobilissimas suas opes Arithmeticae et Geometriae referet acceptas?”

\textsuperscript{594} Ibid. The work on optics by the Arabian philosopher Alhazen (Ibn al-Haytham, 965-c. 1040), translated to Latin in the thirteenth-century, was together with the works of Vitello (Witelo, 1220-c. 1278), the author of the optical work \textit{Perspectiva}, edited and incorporated into the influential textbook \textit{Opticae thesaurus} (1572; “Thesaurus of Optics”), composed by Ramus and Friedrich Risner; Dupré, \textit{Galileo, the Telescope}, 21.

\textsuperscript{595} Ibid., C3v; “Julius Scaliger et Hieronymus Cardanus acrè contentionis studio inter se dimicant de ignis elemento, an sit in rerum natura, et inter aera Lunaeque orbem ejus quaedam regio interjiciatur?” Even though this particular issue was not part of Skytte’s subsequent publication of Goclenius’s Scaliger lectures, it is likely that Goclenius, presiding over Skytte’s dissertation was the source or inspiration of this as well as other selected problems.

\textsuperscript{596} Ibid.; “Opticum decretum non minus verum quam breve est: Radium lucis per se rectum, occursu tamen medii diversi frangi, eamque ob causam corpora per duplex medium inspecta, pro vario recessu a perpendiculo varie situm intervallum, locum et magnitudinem commutare, quod facile est in his cernere, quae per aquam, vitrum, crystalnumve spectantur.”
had thus been wrong to claim that fire existed as an element between the earth and the moon.597

This specific problem brought up in the context of optics was part of a larger Renaissance debate on first principles in natural philosophy: Cardano, critical of Aristotle, had dispensed with the element of fire, whereas Scaliger, known as a Neo-Aristotelian, had defended the Aristotelian system.598 Not surprisingly, Skytte sided with the anti-Aristotelian skeptic Cardano in this matter. The argument indicates, of course, the fragile state of Aristotelian physics at this time. On the one hand, both Scaliger and Cardano claimed to base their arguments not on authority, but on sound reasoning and experience, much like Ramus did.599 On the other hand, despite their confessed ideals, neither Scaliger nor Cardano (or Ramus) used actual empirical or mathematical components in their arguments.600 As verbal logic and rhetoric continued to be the main tools of argument, different conclusions were frequently produced by different authors.

In this context it can also be noted that the apparent empirical basis of Skytte’s optical argument stems from ancient sources rather than new observations.601 As has been pointed out, Ramus’s ideals of observing nature were typically translated in his works to a kind of “literary empiricism”, “observing” in the first place what the ancients had said about nature.602 Yet, establishing the truth of the matter was not the primary agenda of Skytte’s dissertation—his particular reference to the Cardano-Scaliger debate should instead be understood as an attempt to prove the utility of the discipline of optics. Skytte’s optical example of course also illustrates the Ramist ideal of “freedom to philosophize” (libertas philosophandi), which recommended sound reasoning, based on the arts, rather than authority as the solution to specific problems. By referring to a well-known optical phenomenon, Skytte could thus claim that the art of optics had determined a discussion between two famous and well-spoken authorities regarding an astronomical problem.

Not all disagreements between authorities were, however, so easily decided. With regard to the art of music Skytte discussed various conflicting definitions of the discipline as suggested by Ptolemy, Aristotle, Boethius and Augustine, without reaching any specific conclusion—other than the fact that music was founded in mathematics.603 Evidently, the ideal of libertas

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597 Skytte’s explanation extends across several paragraphs, which are not necessary to quote in full; ibid., C3v-C4r.
599 MacLean, “The Interpretation of natural signs”, 238.
600 Blair, “The University Context of Natural Philosophy”, 376.
601 The law of refraction was discussed already by Ptolemy. Willebrord Snellius (1591-1626) formulated the law mathematically in 1621 (today known as Snell’s law in optics).
602 Skalnik, Ramus and Reform, 49; Graves, Peter Ramus, 169; Ong, Ramus: Method, 195.
603 Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium [... fontibus desumpta, C4r-C4v.
philosophandi could lead to rather vague conclusions. The art of astronomy carried even more complexities: while Skytte followed Ramus’s definition of the subject, he was less confident with regard to a number of dissenting conclusions and theories presented by Ptolemy and Copernicus. Initially, Skytte proposed that astronomy was “almost nothing else than an arithmetic calculation of the celestial motions, and a geometrical calculation and measurement of the paths of the spheres and stars, with regard to their longitude, latitude and height”. In other words, the task of astronomy was, as Ramus had emphasized, to describe the motions of the objects in the sky—not devise speculative “hypotheses” about systems of spheres in various compositions. Skytte stated that Copernicus was “a scholar of great authority and judgment in astronomical matters”, but did not mention his heliocentric hypothesis. Also Ptolemy, “the great Homer of astronomers” (magnus Astronomorum Homerus), and his doctrines of the immovable earth at the centre of the universe, received praise from Skytte, but he added a skeptical question: “Are these hypotheses so strong that they could never be shaken, by any argument or any aid?”

The best approach in such a “difficult and delicate matter” was, as Skytte concluded, to tread carefully, respecting the wisdom of the ancients: “It appears that these hypotheses are crafted and applied in order for τὰ φανώμενα [the phenomena] to be more easily saved, so that astronomical matters may be transferred to posterity freed from all difficulty”. Yet Skytte hastily added that: “We should of course not pay so much heed to the thoughts, will and authority of these writers, as to the reasoning of Logic itself.” As a good Ramist, Skytte thus in the end suggested the application

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604 Ibid., Dr-D4v.
605 Ibid., Dr; “Astronomia succedit, quae fere nihil aliud est, quam Arithmetica numeratio motuum coelestium, quam Geometria globorum coelestium et stellarum secundum longitudinis, latitudinis, altitudinis spacia figuratio et dimensio.”
606 See especially Jardine, The Birth of History, 234 ff., regarding Ramus’s understanding of mathematics and theories in astronomy. Ramus used the word “hypothesis” in a pejorative manner, meaning essentially void “speculations” without empirical foundation. As Jardine and others have noted, Ramus’s aversion to mathematical models and theory in astronomy put him in conflict with Copernicus, Kepler and Brahe—or anyone who used mathematics to make any claims as to the actual regularities of the universe. Such claims belonged to the art of natural philosophy or physics according to Ramus’s classification of the arts; see also Sellberg, “Petrus Ramus”.
607 Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium [... fontibus desumpta, D3v; “[...] magna ejus sit in Astronomicis authoritas, magna existimatio”.
608 Ibid., D2r; “At, inquiet aliquis, tune credis has hypotheses ita esse firmas et veras, ut nullis argumentis possint everti, nunquam dimoveri loco, nunquam machinis quantumvis validis labefactari?”
609 Ibid.; “Ego in tam difficili tamque intricata quaestione caute ambulantum esse arbitror, voluntatem horum, qui eas primum introduxerunt, quousque se extendat, attendendam judico. Apparet autem ideo excogitatas et assumptas esse has hypotheses, ut per eas facilius τὰ φανώμενα salventur, ut res Astronomicae omni difficilique solutae in posteros propagentur.”
610 Ibid.; “Verum non tam consilium, voluntatem et authoritatem scriptorum, quam ipsius Logicae mentem intueri debemus.”
of logical method to solve this difficult matter. Without going into further
detail as to how this should be done, Skytte contented himself by repeating
Ramus’s second and third laws, concluding that neither of the great astro-
nomers had in fact followed these laws. 611 For all his praise of mathematics,
it was thus logic that Skytte at this point suggested as the solution to a
particularly difficult problem—a recourse that, as we shall see, was not
uncommon in Ramist thought, where the complex relation between logic and
mathematics was never fully resolved. 612

Below the heavens, geography, the sister art of astronomy, was used to
“describe the lands of the earth”, as Skytte declared. 613 In terms of the utility
of geography, Skytte stated that the first “immense use” of geography was its
function as an aid in the discipline of history, a declaration which may come
as a surprise to the modern reader. 614 Yet in the humanist endeavor to
correctly edit and interpret ancient works, a number of assisting sciences
were increasingly being applied at this time. 615 As Skytte explained,
knowledge in geography was invaluable in the “interpretation and
explication of the great historical works”, adding that those who said that
geography was “the breath of history were not unjustified”. 616 Yet, the utility
of the arts in the world outside of academia was of course also a fundamental
virtue in Ramist thinking, and in the case of geography the recent voyages
and new discoveries had not gone unnoticed at the University of Marburg. 617
Skytte thus proceeded to convey his acquired geographical education by
describing the four continents Europa, Africa, Asia, America, noting in
particular the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus and its further
exploration by a certain Amerigo Vespucci from Florence. 618 Skytte noted
that this part of the world, “unknown to Ptolemy”, seemed to surpass in
many ways Europe, Asia and Africa “by its size, the beauty of its regions,
the multitude of islands and its natural bounties.” 619

611 Ibid., D2r.
612 On this point, see especially Reiss, “Ramus, Method and Mathematical Technology”, and
Goulding, “Peter Ramus’s Histories of the Sciences”.
613 Ibid., D4v-Er; “Geographia est orbis terrae descriptio”.
614 Ibid., D4v.
616 Ibid., D4v; “Tantus mehercule est hujus scientiae usus in summorum Historicorum
monumentis interpretandis et explicandis, ut non immerito quis dixerit, Geographiam esse
animam historiarum, iisque omnem prope ab ea splendoris lucem communicari.”
617 Skytte’s education in geography seems to have been relatively thorough, as his teachers
Goclenius and Schonerus had recently composed a textbook on the subject; Geographia
Duplex Rudolphii Goclenii et Lazari Schoneri Francofurti 1596 (as noted by Berg, Johan
Skytte, 275).
618 Skytte, Problemata ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta, E2r.
619 Ibid.; “Haec pars orbis terrarum Ptolemaeo incognita, quae, sicut Europa superat Asiarn et
Africanam, omnes tres, et Europam, Asiarn, Africanam, magnitudine sua, regionum pulchritudine,
insularum amplitudine, nascentibusque divitiis multis modis vincit et superat”.

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This aspect of utility of the mathematical arts in human endeavors and ordinary life was perhaps most evident in the case of the art of mechanics, which Skytte, following a tradition with ancient roots (to be further discussed below), defined as the art of moving weights, “whether they were lifted, pulled, dragged, stopped or in any other way moved against their nature, raised to heights or immersed in depths”. Skytte chose to discuss the sling and the nutcracker as illustrations of mechanical principles at work, and with these examples Skytte concluded his dissertation, refraining from further examples in ethics and physics.

With this selection of examples and problems, Skytte had conveyed in his master’s dissertation a wide range of applications and uses of the mathematical arts. His text also exhibits, as we have seen, unresolved epistemological tensions of Ramist origins related to pure and applied mathematics, and to the standing of hypotheses and authorities, and of mathematics and logic. Many of these issues also appeared in Skytte’s master’s oration which was dedicated to one subject only—mechanics.

5.5. On the Utility and Nobility of Mechanics

The Renaissance of Mechanics

Considering Skytte’s teachers and studies in Marburg and in Lemgo, his choice of praising the mechanical arts in his lengthy master’s oration, De mechanicae artis praestantia, and again two years later at the Collegium Mauritianum before Landgraf Moritz’s students, comes as no surprise. There is however a larger context to consider in terms of the late sixteenth-century popularity of this discipline in particular. While “mechanics” (ars mechanica) at the time of Skytte’s oration was a rather unestablished part of undergraduate university studies, the subject had been given considerably increased scholarly attention throughout the century as an effect of the humanist enterprise of reviving ancient mathematical works. Not least the study of “simple machines”, that is, the lever, wedge, wheel and axle, pulley and screw (devices used to save power when conducting work), had been stimulated by the recovery of the systematized treatments of these

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620 Ibid., E2v; “Mechanica est ars machinandi ad pondera sive impellendum, sive trahendum, sive ferendum, sive tollendum, sive quacunque ratione id tandem fiat, ut res contra suam naturam in sublime atollatur, vel in profundum demergatur.”


622 Skytte held his master’s oration (De mechanicae artis praestantia) in the spring of 1598, following his mechanical studies for Lazarus Schonerus in Lemgo; Berg, Johan Skytte, 59. Cf. above, 157, n. 576. The dissertation presented at the Collegium Mauritianum in May 1600 discussing mechanics was entitled Flores Philosophici (Philosophical Flowers), to be further discussed below.
fundamental mechanical principles by Archimedes and Hero of Alexandria (written in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC). These and other ancient works, in particular Archimedes’ *On the Equilibrium of Planes* and *On Floating Bodies*, and the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Mechanical Problems* (to be further discussed below), gave rise to a flood of discussions and investigations of “mechanical problems” in the sixteenth century, from various points of departures—mathematical, philosophical, technological, educational, and so forth.

As the historian Alan Gabbey has pointed out, twentieth-century historiography has often, however, used a modern understanding of the term mechanics, and has because of this either misunderstood or overlooked sixteenth-century works devoted to *mechanica*. Whereas “mechanics” today is a sub-branch of physics devoted to the study of motion and its causes (i.e. Newtonian mechanics), “mechanica” in the sixteenth century had little to do with *nature* and the dynamics of motion as such. Instead it was concerned with what we would call technological problems—specifically devices that could move things “against nature”. Because simple machines essentially constituted a number of mechanical principles at work in various tools, mechanics as an art was closely related to crafts already from the outset—a relation that gave mechanics as a scholarly discipline a questionable status. Ancient traditions did not consider mechanical problems as part of *scientia* (generating knowledge) but rather, at best, as an *ars* in its original Greek meaning of *techne*, that is, a craft, since the purpose of mechanics was...
practical (generating work). In ancient schemes this work-related foundation of mechanical problems generally placed the mechanical arts on the lowest rung possible—Plato, for instance, had viewed learning as a hierarchy with Being and God at the top, followed by abstract entities (numbers, lines, and geometrical figures), all the way down to the study and manipulation of material objects. In this kind of hierarchy, mechanics and the crafts would naturally take the bottom position, if counted at all—neither Plato nor Augustine, in fact, considered practical arts as part of the sphere of learning.

The rediscovery of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Mechanical Problems* provided an opportunity, however, to discuss a more theoretical side of mechanics: as stated in the introduction of this work, the ability to “produce an effect contrary to nature” was ultimately dependent on “both mathematical and physical speculations.” The authoritative statements of the *Mechanical Problems* would have a tremendous impact on sixteenth-century discussions related to the definition of the *ars mechanica*, and, it may be argued, the utility of the mathematical arts in general. The combination of skill, theory and devices would, as the introduction of this work declared, provide opportunities for man to gain mastery over things that, by nature, would ordinarily conquer him:

> Remarkable things occur in accordance with nature, the cause of which is unknown, and others occur contrary to nature, which are produced by skill for the benefit of mankind. For in many cases nature produces effects against our advantage; for nature always acts consistently and simply, but our advantage changes in many ways. When, then, we have to produce an effect

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629 As argued by Ovitt, there was little incentive for change in this approach to the arts as long as the existing frames of reference were primarily theological and metaphysical, even though manual labour and crafts were not necessarily depreciated in society on the whole: “The classifications of the sciences were intended to systematize what was known in order to ensure the primacy of what was believed.”; Ovitt, “The Status of the Mechanical Arts”, 99.
630 Laird, “Patronage of Mechanics and Theories of Impact in Sixteenth-Century Italy”, 54; Hett (transl.), *Mechanical Problems etc.*, 331. Regarding the authorship of the *Mechanical Problems*, (possibly Straton of Lampsacus, fl. 287 B.C.), see Marshall Clagett, *Greek Science in Antiquity* (1955: New York, 2001), 68. The text had been established by the 1540s, but many commentaries and paraphrases of the “Mechanica” continued to be produced throughout the century; Drake & Drabkin, *Mechanics in Sixteenth-Century Italy*, 391 f.
631 As Paul Lawrence Rose and Stillman Drake once suggested, the influence of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Mechanical Problems* in the early modern era can hardly be underestimated: its simple questions gave rise to scientific as well as technological and utility-orientated discussions relating mathematics to “machines” and practical applications, discussed by e.g. John Dee in England, Pedro Nunes in Portugal (in the context of navigational problems), and by Petrus Ramus, who became the most ardent proponent of the *Mechanical Problems* in France; Rose & Drake, “The Pseudo-Aristotelian Questions of Mechanics”, 65-104.
contrary to nature, we are at loss, because of the difficulty, and require skill. Therefore we call that part of skill which assists such difficulties, a device. For as the poet Antiphon wrote, this is true: ‘We by skill gain mastery over things in which we are conquered by nature.’ Of this kind are those in which the less master the greater, and things possessing little weight move heavy weights, and all similar devices which we term mechanical problems. These are not altogether identical with physical problems, nor are they entirely separate from them, but they have a share in both mathematical and physical speculations, for the method is demonstrated by mathematics, but the practical application belongs to physics.632

This declaration of a theoretical and a practical aspect of mechanical problems caught the interest of Petrus Ramus, who in his history of the mathematical arts was able to promote the art of mechanics in terms of its many useful applications, while also stating that it was a proper liberal art, with its own set of rules and precepts, founded in mathematics.633 To Johan Skytte, who had studied both Ramus’s *Scholae Mathematicae* and Schonerus’s Latin translation of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Mechanical Problems*, this was an approach that constituted, as we shall see, an important point of departure in his academic discussions of the dignity of mechanics.

In this context, it can be noted that the idea that nature could in some manner be forced to work to the advantage of man evidently did not originate with Francis Bacon (1561–1626), whose works are commonly adduced in the context of man’s ambition to conquer nature.634 Both Ramus’s and Bacon’s agendas of practice and utility were instead deeply rooted in sixteenth-century discussions revolving around ancient texts, new methods, mathematics and its relation to logic.635 Besides the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Mechanical Problems*, another important source of inspiration in this context was the revived texts of Archimedes, who by the late sixteenth century had

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632 Hett (transl.), *Mechanical Problems etc.*, 331.
633 Ramus, *Scholae mathematicae*, 55-59, and 102. By using a physical approach instead of a metaphysical one, mechanics could be enhanced in value in the general classification schemes of the arts, or as George Ovitt concluded: “As a means to God, these human-centred arts were bound to remain the poorest of handmaidens; but as a means of enhancing the work of the other sciences, and as the means of embodying theoretical principles, they could be more properly valued.”; Ovitt, “The Status of the Mechanical Arts”, 99. The enhanced prestigious aspect of the mechanical arts was also an important factor for those scholars seeking opportunities for patronage: Laird, “Patronage of Mechanics and Theories of Impact in Sixteenth-Century Italy”, 54.
635 Few scholars had given the mathematical arts such a prominent role in their philosophical systems as Ramus and later Bacon did. However, while Bacon’s method was aimed at discovery and the enhancement of knowledge, the aims of Ramus’s method and reforms of the arts remained focused on an educational agenda. See also above, Chapter Four, on the different methodological aims of Bacon and Ramus. Note that neither Bacon nor Ramus gave “pure” mathematics more than a subsidiary role in natural philosophy; Jardine, *Francis Bacon*, 78. There is little evidence of any direct methodological influence on Bacon by Ramus; Angus Fletcher, “Francis Bacon’s Forms and the Logic of Ramist Conversion” in *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 43:2 (2005), 160.
been established as a “divine genius” with regard to inventions, simple machines and general mechanical problems.\textsuperscript{636} This Archimedes-cult had arisen not only because of Archimedes’ works, but also because of the legendary and frequently told stories about his life, which involved amazing “war machines” and other more or less mythological inventions.\textsuperscript{637} The heroic narratives of Archimedes constituted, as we will see, a rich well of illustrative examples for anyone seeking to prove the utility of mechanics.

Skytte’s Oration on Mechanics

Because a master’s oration was also a test of the rhetorical skill of the student, Skytte had crafted his speech on the mechanical arts with considerable attention to its composition, style and rhetoric.\textsuperscript{638} The title declared that it was directed against “the quasi-philosophers Aristippus and Epicurus”, and while Skytte did not further discuss these Greek philosophers (associated with an ethic of pleasure) in his oration, it is reasonable to assume that, in this context, they represented a hedonistic lifestyle devoted to the pleasures of the senses rather than to useful activities such as the study of mechanics. Skytte essentially followed a classical dispositio with an introduction (exordium), presenting himself and his reasons for discussing the chosen subject, followed by a presentation of the subject matter (narratio) along with suitable evidence and arguments for his propositions (probatio or argumentatio), and thereafter a refutation where a number of (alleged) counter-arguments were disproved (refutatio).\textsuperscript{639} The conclusion of the oration (peroratio) contained a number of commonplace admonitions and wishes related to the general prospering of the liberal arts and the Swedish kingdom. Skytte dedicated his oration to his patron and student friend from Nyköping, the nobleman Johan Hane, whose wisdom he generously praised.

\textsuperscript{636} Laird & Roux, “Introduction” in Mechanics and Natural Philosophy, 1-11.

\textsuperscript{637} As has been suggested, the great attention given to Archimedes’ works at this time may be explained by their distinctly mathematical approach, which represented a new model of thought that was neither Aristotelian nor Platonic; Hugh Kearney, Science and Change 1500-1700 (London, 1971), 47. The ancient sources of these biographical stories were foremost Plutarch, Marc. 14-17, Livy, XXIV, and Vitruvius, De Architectura.

\textsuperscript{638} Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, nobilitate, emolumentis ac fundamentis, adversus Aristippos et Epicureos philosophastros etc. For a more detailed linguistic and rhetorical analysis, see my translation of this oration to Swedish, with commentary; Johan Skyttes magisteroration 1598: Översättning med kommentar.

\textsuperscript{639} For the terminology of classical rhetoric see Heinrich Lausberg, Handbuch der literarischen Rhetorik (1960: München, 1973).
Figure 8. Title page of Johan Skytte’s *Dissertatio mathematica de mechanicae artis praestantia* (Lemgo, 1598).
Introducing the Proposition of the Oration (exordium)

The notion that “mechanical problems” were somehow less dignified and noble than other areas of learning was refuted by Skytte already in his opening statements where he imagined that Johannes Hane must ask “why I [i.e. Skytte], who previously have dealt with important and complex issues in philosophical as well as linguistic studies, have now descended to the subtleties of mechanical problems.” To this question, Skytte supplied a simple answer: one needed only to consider the “splendor” and “dignity” of the many men who had done the same to understand that he had been inspired “only by the example of the greatest and most distinguished men of letters”. To establish this dignified source of mechanics, Skytte set out to enumerate a number of celebrated ancient philosophers (labeled Mechanici) along with examples of their deeds (examples that were largely collected from Ramus’s Scholae Mathematicae).

Good and Bad Examples of “Mechanici” (narratio)

“Obviously, Greece has produced innumerable Mechanici”, Skytte declared at the outset of his oration, and he went on to say that the founding father and inventor of the mechanical arts (parens atque inventor) was Archytas, the first “to treat this noble and illustrious discipline in a systematic way”. By using the example of Archytas, who had also made a wooden dove that could fly (“it was suspended by weights and put to motion by an artificial stream of air”, Skytte explained), the essence of a model mechanicus was introduced—someone who was knowledgeable in mechanical principles but also practically inclined and capable of converting his theoretical knowledge into practice. Archytas had been the first, as Skytte noted with regard to the wooden dove, “to translate natural motion into a geometrical figure”.

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640 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, A2r; “Tacitum et jucundum animi tui sensum sermonemque audire mihi videor, omnium virtutum doctrinarumque decus, Johannes Haane, quid causae sit, quamobrem haec tenus res cum in philosophiae, tum in linguarum studio graves controversasque secutus, jam tandem ad rerum Mechanicae subtilitatem descenderim.”

641 Ibid., “[…] sed summorum et in literis facile princicipum hominum exemplo commoveri”

642 This humanist habit of enumerating a string of founding fathers of an art was not only a means of decorating and introducing a certain topic; the emphasis on history and origins also contributed to an ongoing discussion of the essence, definition and purpose of the art at hand; Goulding, “Histories of Science in Early Modern Europe, 34 f.

643 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, A2r. Cf. Ramus, Scholae mathematicae, 15. Archytas of Tarentum (fl. 400-350 BC) was a Pythagorean mathematician and statesman, and a friend of Plato. The fragments preserved in Archytas’ name indicate that he was interested in special problems in music, mathematics and mechanics; according to Diogenes Laërtius (Diog. Laert., 8.83), Archytas was the first to treat mechanics by the application of mathematical principles; DNP.

644 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, A2r; “Primus enim tam nobilem, tamque illustrem disciplinam Mathematicis principiis usus artificiosae tractavit, primusque motum Organicum in figuram adhibuit—unde et linea columba ab eo facta volasse apud Gellium praedicatur. Ita scilicet libramentis suspendebatur et aura spiritus inclusa concitabatur.”
According to Ramus’s discussions in the *Scholae Mathematicae*, the successful practice and use of an art depended, however, on more than the sole genius: it also relied on the teaching of the arts to a wider circle—not only to a few select disciples but to the public. Following Ramus in this context, Skytte noted that Plato had unfortunately discouraged philosophers from teaching the mechanicals art to common people (*in vulgus*), because, Plato, although devotedly engaged with the theory of mechanics, had not wanted its “arcane mysteries” to be exposed to a larger public. Such an action could not, Skytte concluded, be praised “unless we think that the mechanical arts have no purpose and no use” (*sine fine, sine usu*).

This utility aspect of the mechanical arts was in the following emphasized repeatedly by Skytte: the Greek mathematician Leon wanted, as Skytte declared, to be famous not only for his “skills and knowledge” (*artificio et scientia*) but also for “the utility and use of the craft” (*artificii fructu et usu*). Plato’s “jealousy” was in particular contrasted with the actions of Aristotle, the “Prince of the mechanical arts” (*artium Mechanicarum princeps*) who had not only taught mechanics to his disciples but had even discussed mechanical issues with craftsmen: “To add practical applications to the mechanical arts, Aristotle often visited the various workshops of craftsmen, and he magnificently discussed the benefits of mechanics with them.” Skytte compared this approach with contemporary Aristotelians whom he accused of ignorance and neglect with regard to the “beautiful properties” of mechanics:

They are even so ignorant of all the erudition on mechanics that, if I may express some rightful resentment, they believe they are listening to some made-up fables from the New World when they hear the principles of this subject. If someone knowledgeable of the mechanical arts proposes to discuss the beautiful properties of these arts, such as the lever, the tackle, the wheel

646 Skytte, *De Mechanicae Artis Praestantia etc.*, A2v; “[...] attamen singularis haec virtus gloriaque labecula quadam aspersa est, quod Mechanicam nobilissimam philosophorum possessionem in vulgus indicari ac publicari arcanaque philosophiae mysteria prodi vetuit, quod praestantissimos artium Mechanicarum magistros Archytam et Eudoxum, ne Mechanicam in vulgus ederent, deterreuerit. Hoc Platonis equidem factum laudare non possimus, nisi Mechanicas artes, sine fine, sine usu popullari esse contendamus.”
647 Ibid., A2v; “Nec enim minor gloria Leontem Neoclidis discipulum manet, qui Archytae studio accensus, non tam Mechanicae ipsius artificio et scientia, quam artificii fructu et usu celebris esse voluit.”
648 Ibid., A3r; “Aristoteles ut ad Mechanicae artificium usum etiam adjungeret, opificium varias officinas frequentavit, deque Mechanicae emolumentis magnifice cum ipsis disseverit.” Cf. Ramus, *Scholae mathematicae*, 40, 58. “Prince” may in this context also be interpreted as “leading authority”.

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and the wedge, they perceive it all as if someone were joking with them about
dragons, monopodes and centaurs. _O tempora! O mores!_649

As evident by this polemical remark, which is characteristically anti-
scholastic, Skytte conveyed the attitude that an educated person was also
expected to possess some knowledge of the mechanical arts and their pro-
PERTIES. Adducing Cicero’s famous lamentation, Skytte made it clear that this
was not the case, however, with regard to those scholars of his own time
whose ignorance he contrasted with the geniuses of the first _autores_ of the
mechanical subject. Skytte with a pun declared that such Aristotelians were
in fact more suitably called “Kakistotelians”, κακιστοτελείους (“kakistos”
meaning “bad”) than “Aristotelians” since they did not follow the ὀρίστον
τέλος (“good goals”) of Aristotle but their own “bad daimon’s worst
goals”.650

Ramus’s critique of Archimedes for allegedly having held in contempt
inventions and applications driven by necessity was in this context passed
over by Skytte, who instead in fact claimed the opposite: the “divine” Archi-
medes “wanted to excel more in the applications and utility of mechanical
things than in the pure science of them”.651 Skytte related an extensive cata-
logue of Archimedes’ inventions and heroic achievements—his war
machines and defence of Syracuse, his solution to the problem of the Golden
Crown, and his applications of the principle of the lever—adding however
that the art of mechanics was certainly not motivated by “amusements or
some kind of _oblectamenta_”.652 Throughout Skytte’s remaining list of philo-
sophers, their practical applications and inventions stand out, albeit collected
from rather diverse areas—the pneumatic and hydraulic instruments driven
by air and water pressure invented by Ctesibius, Aristotle’s explanation of
the nutcracker, and the war machines of Proclus Mechanicus, which had
“obliterated the enemy fleet in Byzantium”.653 As Skytte moreover pointed

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649 Ibid., A3r; “Imo vero si justum dolorem conqueri liceat, tam sunt expertes omnis
Mechanicae eruditionis, ut auditis disciplineae illius decresis, ex terris novis conflictas fabulas
se putent audire, et si quis Mechanicae artis peritus de Mechanicae pulcherrimis facultatibus,
puta vecte, Trochlea, axe in peritrochio, cuneo, disserere instituat, perinde dicit putant, ac si
quis de Alatis, Monopodibus, et Hyppocentauris, cum illis fabuletur. O tempora! O mores!”.
650 Ibid., A3r; “Sed Aristoteleos, imo κακιστοτελείους (qua non Aristotelis ὀρίστον τέλος
όλη καιστῶν κακοδαμόνος κάκιστον sequuntur) relinquamus, ad tam praecellae doctrinae
autores redeamus, ab Aristotele ad reliquos discedamus.”
651 Ibid., A3r; “Aristotelem multis annis post sequetus est divinus ille Archimedes, cujus laus
praecipue in eo posita fuit, quod usu et utitate rerum Mechanicarum illustrior esse voluit,
652 Skytte, _De mechanicae artis praestantia_, A4r-A4v. On Archimedes’ inventions, see e.g.
653 Skytte, _De mechanicae artis praestantia_, A4v-Br. Proclus Mechanicus, (_fl. 515_), was a
philosopher from Athens who allegedly set fire to the fleet of Vitalianus in 515 by using
missiles or mirrors (mentioned by Ramus as Proclus _alter_ to differentiate him from Proclus
out, both Hippocrates of Chios and Ctesibius were especially worthy of praise as they came from humble circumstances: Hippocrates was originally a merchant “who became an excellent mathematician”, and Ctesibius had been raised by a father who was a barber, but he had nevertheless become the genius inventor of water organs and air pumps.654

The catalogue of *mechanici* was concluded with a plea to Johannes Hane and Duke Charles that they would support the mathematical arts at Uppsala University. Skytte exclaimed that he hoped it would one day be possible to see Uppsala in such a state that it had scholars teaching not only arithmetic, theology, astronomy and philosophy, “but also the remaining mathematical arts, geometry, optics, music, astronomy, geography and mechanics”.655 This hopeful admonition—a digression from the main topic, which Skytte excused by his great love of his native country (patriae amore)—was formulated in a patriotic context, where Skytte appealed to the pride and patriotism of his countrymen to continue their support of the arts.

### Proving the Theoretical Foundations of the Mechanical Arts (*probatio*)

Skytte’s many examples of ancient *Mechanici* constituted ample illustrations of the core proposition of his oration—that the mechanical arts were honorable not despite of their practical utility and affinity with crafts and inventions, but because of them, or in Skytte’s own words: “Since all free and noble arts and disciplines, which offer the profusion of their theories to the daily life of humanity, ought to be desired and studied, the mechanical arts should all the more attract our love and interest as their splendor and dignity are of so much use in our common life, that without them, we would lead miserable lives”.656 With this declaration, Skytte arrived at the theo-

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654 Skytte, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*, A4v; “Laudatur Hippocrates Chius, quod ex mercatore sit effectus mathematicus insignis. Quis itaque Ctesibium nostrum, quem natura in tenui et perobscuro patrimonio nasi, quem referente Vitruvio, a tonsore procreari voluit, aeternis laudibus dignum non judicet?” Hippocrates of Chios (fl. 440 BC), a Greek mathematician who wrote a geometrical *Elementa* a century before Euclid (known only through references made in the works of later commentators), was according to tradition originally a merchant; Ctesibius was allegedly the son of a barber.

655 Skytte, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*, Bv-B2r; “O utinam Upsaliam nostram celsissimam nobilissimamque virtutis et sapientiae sedem ita aliquando aspicere liceat, ut sicut quosdam habet, qui divino quodam christianae pietatis et religionis amore ad sacro-sanctum Christi euangelium profidentem praedicandumque rapiantur, quosdam qui Arithmeticae doceant, qui mirabilium rerum praestantia constantia et delectati syderum motus caelique cursus rimentur, quosdam qui philosophiam cum eloquentiae studiis conjungant; ita etiam in celsissima illa virtutum omnium sede intueri liceat, quosdam qui reliquas artes Mathematicas, Geometriam, Opticam, Musicam, Astronomiam, Geographiam et Mechanicam juventuti proponant [...]”. Skytte also added medicine and jurisprudence to this list.

656 Skytte, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*, B2v; “Cum omnes artes et disciplinae, Nobilissime Haane, quae cognitionem honestam et liberalem scientiam continent, propter
retical definition of mechanics based on the introduction of the Pseudo-
Aristotelian Mechanical Problems, which, as we have seen, stated that
mechanical problems were characterized by mathematical method and
practical application, or as Skytte declared: “The principle is geometric, but
the object is physical”.

Following closely the statements of the Mechanical Problems, Skytte also noted that all mechanical functions were carried out
“in a certain physical medium where objects were put in motion against their
nature”. Anyone in doubt of this proposition “blinded like Polyphemus in
the cave by Ulysses” needed only, as Skytte declared, consider all those
craftsmen utilizing the art—“carpenters, architects, carriers, farmers, sailors,
and those using catapults to throw heavy weights with minimum force”.
By the end of his oration he would, as we shall see, provide more detailed
examples from these trades and crafts.

After all the praise of practical applications, the excellence or nobility of
mechanics was at this point deduced by Skytte from the most theoretical
aspect of the art, that is, its foundation in mathematics. Skytte in this
context repeated Ramus’s defence of mathematics—this subject helped men
to stabilize and strengthen their judgment, reach the truth and judge matters
“only by the necessity of arguments” (argumentorum necessitas), forcing
men’s attention to the issues at hand: “Just as the eyes need to be open, clear
and focused to see colored objects sharply, the mind needs to be attentive
and focused, elevated by reason so to speak, in order to comprehend
intelligible things.”

Noting that Plato as well as Ramus had praised mathematics, Skytte rhetorically asked whether it was not reasonable to

rerum ipsarum nobilitatem, quibus referatae sunt, maximeque propter insignem ubertatem,
quam hominum vitae suppediant, alicicre ad se percipiendum animos nostros debent, tum
profecto Mechanicae disciplinae multo nos acerius in sui amorem studiumque pellicere debent,
quarum tantus est splendor atque dignitas, tantus in vita communi usus, ut si earum praesidio
destituti essemus, miserabile aevum traheremus.”

657 Ibid.; “Principium nempe geometricum, sed subjectum physicum esse”.
658 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, B2v-B3r; “Reperies profecto omnes hasce
machinationes in mole quadam physica, qua ea contra naturam suam moveatur localiter,
exerceri.”
659 Ibid., B2v; “Pone tibi ante oculos omnes omnium generum opifices; fabros, Architectos,
Bajulos, agricolas, nautas; converte te ad mangonarios, qui magna pondera exigua potentia
tollunt”.
660 Ibid., B3r.
661 Ibid., B3r; “Ex omnibus enim artibus mathesis una praecipue veri studiosa praecipueque
logica fuit, neque personarum quamlibet probabilitum, aut probatarum authoritate, sed
argumentorum necessitate judicat, cogitque animum in rebus ipsis attentum esse, neque ulla
unquam schola severiorem logicam, quam mathematica tenuit. Ut objectos colores acute
videas, oculos corporis apertos et nitidos et conversos esse necesse est: ut igitur intelligibilia
comprehendas, mentem excitam motuque rationis erectam, et conversam esse necesse est:
mathesis porro excitat atque erigit, unaque prae caeteris omnibus artibus hominis iudicium
stabilit et confirmat.” Cf. Ramus, Scholae Mathematicae, 42. This propaedeutic value of
mathematics was often emphasised in humanist educational programs, where mathematics
was presented not only as a tool for practical utility, but also as an alternative to scholastic
logic in terms of training of the mind; Jardine, The Birth of History, 263.
celebrate mechanics as well, as this art to a great extent was an application of geometry: “Should we not let mechanics, like a little rivulet, draw some splendor off its illustrious source?” To prove that mechanics was joined by “geometrical principles and physical objects”, Skytte presented several of the Pseudo-Aristotelian mechanical problems, such as the question of why a larger balance yields more exact measurements than a smaller balance with shorter arms, why the effect of a lever is greater the further away from the fulcrum one stands, and how a small rudder can shift the course of a giant ship—problems that Skytte, following the Mechanical Problems, explained as effects of the principle of the lever. The whole purpose of this exercise (besides proving his familiarity with the Mechanical Problems) was essentially to reach one fundamental conclusion: mechanics was a noble subject because it emanated from the splendid art of geometry “as from a healthy source”. Of course, by discussing mathematics and mechanics in terms of an illustrious source and its little rivulet, Skytte also essentially reaffirmed the hierarchy of theory as nobler than practice.

While praising mathematics as the foundation of mechanics, Skytte admitted, however, that some of the mechanical problems presented by Aristotle seemed obscure. After pages of discussion on the importance of mathematics, Skytte suddenly proposed that it was logic that would dissipate all difficulty:

This may seem obscure, but if only the clear light of logic will come to our aid, how sweet the nectar for those who philosophize! We believe that nothing can arise from a human mind which is so complex and difficult, and nothing can be so obscurely written, that true logic can not reconstruct it and drag it out into the light. Logic is the fundamental principle of all other arts, not only as their source and origin, but also as a tool to solve riddles which are extremely complex.

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662 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, B3r; “Nonne nos ipsi etiam verissime Mechanicae, quae Geometriae magnam sui partem praxis quaedam est, tribuemus et ex splendore tam illustri sui fontis Mechanicam tanquam rivulum aliquid haurire permitemus?”
663 Ibid., B3r-C3r. In one case Skytte stated that Aristotle had been wrong—Pedro Nunes, the mathematician and cartographer from Portugal, was commended by Skytte as he had disproved one of Aristotle’s solutions related to propulsion of rowing boats: the experience of seamen and the investigations by Nunes had, as Skytte declared, refuted Aristotle on this point (experientia doceat); ibid., C2v.
664 Ibid., C3r; “[…] satis luculenter demonstratum est, Mechanicae materiam universam e Geometria tanquam e fonte quodam saluberrimo scaturire atque emanare.”
665 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, Cr; “[…] quod, inquam, etsi vobis obscurn videatur, si tamen Logicum lumen adhibeatur, o perjucundum, philosophantibus praeertim, erit pabulum? Nihil enim ab hominis cujusquam ingenio tam intricatum, tam perplexum profiscerit posse credeamus, nihil tam obscure scriptum esse posse arbitramur, quod vera logica non retextum in lucem proferat, quae videlicet est ars omnium, non tantum artium fabricandarum princeps, verum etiam aenigmatum et quaestionum difficillimarum interpres.” Cf. Ramus, Scholae mathematicae, 39.
Thus, once again we encounter recourse to logical method with regard to the solutions to particularly complex issues. Mathematics in Ramist thinking was clearly not considered a tool for “scientific” problem solving, but more as a foundation of reason in principle or as a precise manner of generalizing about observations (without for that matter making any claims that one could know “real” causes as they were in nature). Logic, on the other hand, represented the power of ordering things, which in Ramus’s mind was the same thing as understanding them. No wonder, then, that the relation between verbal logic and mathematics remained vague in the rhetoric of Ramus’s students and followers.

The Scholar and the Craftsman (refutatio)

Having established the principle of mathematics as the foundation of mechanics, Skytte set out to refute a number of unjust accusations that an imagined scoffer (irrisor) might direct at “the noble art of mechanics”: the art of mechanics did not deserve to be called a liberal art since it was performed in “dirty workshops”, it was not shown any appreciation in any part of society; it was held in contempt by the youth, neglected in all countries of the world, it did not amuse anyone, and so forth. Skytte particularly refuted the claim that the art of mechanics should be ignoble simply because it was associated with craftsmanship and workshops; he connected such an attitude with the Greek author Lucianos, whom he claimed had deterred philosophers from studying agriculture by ridiculing them, telling them to “go away and philosophise with a hoe”. Unfortunately there was a Lucianos “born in every age”, as Skytte remarked, and now the “new Lucianos” was trying to bring the mechanical arts into contempt by referring those who studied this subject to “the shabbiest

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666 Cf. above, regarding the case of astronomy. As Timothy Reiss concluded: “Though others soon went further, seeing mathematics as a powerful engine to know the underlying order of all the separate arts and sciences and of nature, Ramus did not.”; Reiss, “Ramus, Method, and Mathematical Technology”, 52.

667 In the textbook Skytte frequently utilised, the Scholae Mathematicae, Ramus for instance asked how Aristotle, “who never himself conducted fishing, hunting, trading, bee-keeping, or farming”, could still describe these activities, to which Ramus responded that Aristotle had achieved this “by the power of his logic”—first he had interviewed the craftsmen and then he had ordered the subject matter by dividing it into general and special species. The ignorant themselves, by Ramus’s argument, although very skilled and experienced in their craft, lacked this ability to establish and order the foundations of the art; Ramus, Scholae Mathematicae, 40. It may be noted that, when Skytte orated in Marburg on these topics, Galileo was lecturing on similar mechanical problems in Padua; Galileo eventually, however, did not consider logic to be the final means of methodological investigation visavi natural phenomena, but followed the mathematical trail: on this “mathematico-natural philosophical” conjunction in the history of science, see Schmitt, “Science in the Italian Universities in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth centuries”, 47.

668 Skytte, De mechanismae artis praestantia, C3r-C3v.

669 Ibid., C3v; “[…] abi et Ligone philosophare!”
people’s simplest workhouses”. If this were true, Skytte argued, “how simple and contemptful had not Aristotle himself been”, a philosopher so eager to understand the nature of all living things that he had forced his disciple Alexander the Great to spend thousands of talents on people who would investigate such things, and who even himself had spoken at length with fishermen and other simple people “hardly even craftsmen”, and who had returned to his school enriched by “the wisdom of all remarkable things”.

Skytte praised Ramus in similar terms—there was “not one talented craftsman in the whole of Paris whom Ramus did not cherish and regard as his friend, and whose workshop he had not visited and inspected”, as Skytte exclaimed. An inquisitive philosopher did not, however, need to get his hands dirty himself, as Skytte pointed out, by using “tongs and bellows” in a mechanical workshop—he could merely observe the work process, just as the student of geodesy who discussed this art with surveyors in the field did not have to “rush out himself and take measurements”. Devoted to the art of mechanics, the philosopher should enter the craftsmen’s workshop, not to help them work, but to investigate and consider their “riddles”. He would then return home and ponder the processes he had observed, whereupon he would “suddenly understand the things which the craftsmen with great effort had produced”. As Skytte also declared, the philosopher should finally return to the workshops and communicate his insights back to the craftsmen.

By this reasoning, Skytte in essence illustrated the Ramist ideal of uniting practice and precepts, joining the scholar and craftsman in an effort to improve the solutions to mechanical problems. The standing of mechanics as a subject at schools and universities was, however, as Skytte conceded, uncertain: “at the universities of our own corrupt time the mechanical studies have been treated poorly by some twist of fate, and the mechanical professions have been denigrated”. Skytte advised his opponent to ponder

670 Ibid., C3v. See Appendix B for a longer excerpt.
671 Ibid., C3v.
672 Ibid.; “O te P. Rame sordidum atque inhonestum, qui tanto erga Mechanica studia perhiberis amore inflammatus, ut nullum opificem in urbe Parisiorum celeberrima paulo ingeniosiorem reliqueris, quem non familiarem, charumque habueris, cujus officinam Mechanicam totam non inspexeris!”. Whether Ramus had actually visited the workshops of Paris is not known. He was not the only humanist who had discussed and praised the idea of visiting craftsmen: Luis Vives had expressed similar thoughts and recommendations in De Tradendis Disciplinis (1531), and two years later François Rabelais described how Gargantua and his teachers visited goldsmiths, watchmakers, alchemists and many other kinds of artisans and craftsmen, concluding that it was very useful for a young prince to learn how common objects were made; Crombie, Augustine to Galileo 2, 132.
673 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, C4r. See Appendix B for a longer excerpt. Cf. Ramus, Scholae mathematicae, 59.
674 Ibid., Dr; “Largior tibi haud invitus, si Academias corruptissimi hujus seculi intelligis, in illis, nescio quo tempore mato, studia Mechanica frigescere, Mechanicasque professiones minus honorari.”
whether this should perhaps not be ascribed to the worthlessness of the art, but rather to “the ignorance of people, which is the cruelest oppressor of the soul”. The opponent was nevertheless wrong, as Skytte now pointed out, to claim that no one had been interested in the study of the mechanical arts since the time of the “fathers” of this subject. Skytte adduced several scholars of his own century who had translated, edited or commented on ancient works on mechanics, especially Italian and German scholars. These humanist deeds that had brought the “beautiful theories” of the ancients out into the light were as highly praised in Skytte’s rhetoric as the original works themselves.

Final Examples and Exhortations (peroratio)

Skytte concluded his oration with a celebration of the lever and the balance, the two mechanical assets that had created “the greatest and most splendid benefits to humankind”. Addressing Johannes Hane, to whom he dedicated the oration, Skytte proposed to remind his friend of all “the remarkable things” that could be seen in the city of Cologne, where they had both studied—the boats by the river, the churches, magnificent houses, the marketplace, and not least all the admirable craftsmen, “the architects, carpenters, lumbermen, marble-masons, viniculturists, ironsmiths, goldsmiths and innumerable others”. If Hane were to ask which arts and which machines these craftsmen relied on when performing their difficult tasks, Skytte could provide the answer—the mechanical arts and their beautiful resources, the lever and the balance. These functions were seen in the harbor, as Skytte explained, where big warships were turned by the force of one man, or at the marketplace where the theory of equilibrium was practiced daily: merchants relied not only on arithmetic and geometry but also on the balance, which “helped them in all their businesses, weighing and measuring

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675 Ibid., “Sed vicissim tecum cogita, an hoc potius hujus disciplinae ignaviae quam temporum hominumque ignorantiae, quae tyrannis est animorum crudelissima, sit imputandum?”
676 Ibid., Dr-D2v. Skytte mentioned in particular Federico Commandino, Girolamo Cardano, Guido Ubaldo, and the Nuremberg professors, Regiomontanus and Vernerus. On the renaissance of mechanical studies in Italy and the works of Federico Commandino and Guido Ubaldo, see A.G. Keller, “Mathematicians, Mechanics and Experimental Machines in Northern Italy in the Sixteenth-Century” in The Emergence of Science in Western Europe, 15-34. Cf. Ramus, Scholae Mathematicae, 62.
677 Ibid., D3v; “Vectis et libra hominum generi commoditates maximas et amplissimas machinantur, nullumque vitae genus est, quod operas suas his pulcherrimis Mechanicae facultatibus non perficiat.” The functions of these two simple machines were discussed at length in several of the Pseudo-Aristotelian mechanical problems.
678 Ibid., D3v; “Nonne praeterea artifices insignes, architectos, fabros, signatores, marmorarios, vinatores, ferrarios, aurifices aiosque innumerabilies suspiceres atque admiraretis?”
And as Skytte rhetorically asked, without the help of mechanical forces, how could the splendid houses of archbishops or the private houses of citizens have been built? “I ask you, which tools or building constructions could have lifted beams and other heavy parts up into the tall groundwork, without the help of the lever with its infinite power and relief given to the eternal work of the architects and carpenters?”

Such formulations could have left no one in doubt that it was above all the practical, everyday utility of the mechanical arts which Skytte sought to promote. Yet, as Ramus had pointed out, many common mechanical devices, such as scissors, rudders, balances, and levers, were on account of their frequent and daily use often taken for granted. Skytte, too, expressed concerns regarding the general appreciation of the mechanical principles: “[…] I fear however, my friend, that these things, which are so common and can be seen by everyone, are nevertheless not enough known with regard to the skill by which they are performed”. If however the lumbermen, stonemasons, shepherds, and viniculturists themselves would make a statement about the matter, they would, as Skytte imagined, explain how dependent they were on mechanics, and especially on the lever: “[The principles of the lever] do not only relieve our harsh conditions but improve them, and they exist not only as an asset to our wives and children, but as bringers of prosperity and happiness!”

As Skytte concluded, Hane should believe these witnesses, “unable by the goodness of their nature to tell anything but the truth” and their testimonies of the many benefits of mechanical properties since “[…] no part of life exists which does not rely on these beautiful machines”. Anyone who was

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679 Ibid., D4r; “Quare et hic, videre licet, quanta sit Mechanicae commoditas non tantum in mari fluminibusque, verum etiam in commerciis diversorum hominum, dum libram ad res ponderandas et mensura comprehendendas adhibent.”
680 Ibid.; “Quaeris, quibus tandem manibus ista omnia constructa sint? Respondeo Mechanicis. Quibus enim, quae so te, ferramentis, aut quibus molitionibus in altis aedificiorum structuisionibus trabes et pondera vel elevari vel portari potuisseint, nisi unicus ille vectis, infinita sua vi, infinita architectorum fabrorumque opera sublevasset?”
681 Ibid.; “Sed hic, amice, vereor ne res quanvis quotidiane, quanvis ante oculos omnium hominum posita, tamem qua artis facultate expediantur, satis cognoscantur.”
682 Ibid.; “Quapropter tuae istae utilitates magnae sunt valdeque illustres; fortunas nostras affictas non solum sublevare, sed etiam amplificare: conjuges, liberosque nostros dulcissimo isto proventu non modo beare, verum etiam fortunatos et felices reddere. Cf. Ramus, Scholae mathematicae, 58; “Sed infinita sunt vectis opera et emolumenta: vectis non solum levandis et portandis ponderibus, fabricis, architectis, oltoribus, bajulis, agricolis, nautilis opitulatur, sed sylvas, latomias et liquidorum praela ingressus, ligna, marmora dividit, vinea, olea, unguenta exprimit.” When speaking in Nyköping the following year, he repeated this theme, praising the mathematical arts for their ability to “relieve human conditions” (ad humanis necessitatibus subveniendum); Skytte, Oratio […] in qua ostenditur artium liberalium majestas, B2r.
683 Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia, D4v; “Nos, vero suavissimae Hospes, cedamus his testibus de Mechanicae hujus facultatis emolumentis tam splendide disserentibus, quos naturae bonitas alius quam verum non sinit confiteri, certoque nobis persuadeamus nullum esse vitae genus, quod pulcherrimis hic machinis actiones suas non expediat.”
eager to learn more was recommended by Skytte to carefully study the *Dialogus* written by Nicholas of Cusa on mechanical experiments, where the author, using “an elegant technique”, had let an “investigating philosopher speak with a craftsman” about the properties of the balance. This kind of praise of the lever, the balance and other “small machines” (*machinulae*) may seem quite hyperbolic, but it should be remembered that these mechanical principles—in particular the lever—in the sixteenth century also symbolized the genius of Archimedes, whose inventions Skytte had related in some detail. In connection with Ramus’s practical utility perspective and focus on the crafts, the lever was depicted by Skytte as the instrument that had built cities, and that had provided the livelihood of countless men. In his *peroratio*, Skytte declared that he had now proven the nobility of mechanics and shown its extraordinary utility. Praying that not only the art of mechanics but all the other arts as well would flourish in Sweden, and that the light of logic, revealed in the minds of men through Petrus Ramus, would work in its full power, and that God would forever let “the Aristotelian chaos, shrouded in lies and eternal shadows, be dispersed”, Skytte concluded his oration.

Teaching Mechanics at the *Collegium Mauritianum*

As a visiting speaker at the *Collegium Mauritianum*, Skytte attempted to prove the dignity and utility of mathematical studies to Landgraf Moritz’s noble students. In a short dissertation entitled “Philosophical Flowers” (*Flores philosophici*), presented on May 3, 1600, Skytte emphasized that Plato had been wrong to differentiate between one kind of theoretical mathematics for philosophers and another kind that was practical and used by people. Following the propositions of his master’s oration, Skytte argued that these two should be considered equal (*pro paribus*), and thereafter he provided a number of examples from arithmetic, geometry and mechanics that would presumably illustrate the truth of these initial assumptions. In this

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684 Ibid., D4v; “De librae emolumentis adhuc multo plura dici possent, sed qui tantarum rerum tenetur desiderio, is diligenter evolvat Dialogum Nicolai Cusani de Stathmicis experimentis, in quo, miro quodam artificio, philosophum cum opifice de librae commoditatibus disserentem audire licet.”

685 Ibid., A3v.

686 Skytte, *De mechanicae artis praestantia*, Er; “[…] Te imploro, obtestorque, ut logicum illud lumen, mentibus nostris mirabiliter insitum perque ministrum tuum P. Ramum, eloquentiae et philosophiae professorem regium in regia Parisiensium Academia, postremis his temporibus clarius accensum, patiaris in hominum nostrorum mentibus perpetue vigere, Aristotelicumque illud chaos, commentis et perpetuis tenebris involutum, lumine hoc divino dissipari.”

687 Skytte, *Flores philosophici*, A2; “Plato Arithmeticam aliam Philosophorum et Theoreticam facit, aliam vulgi et practicam.” See also previous notes above, on this Ramist critique of Plato.
context it can be noted that Aristotle was not the only ancient authority who was accused by Ramists of having failed to treat his subject matter by method. In his “Philosophical Flowers”, Skytte characteristically accused both Euclid and Plato for not having provided proper definitions or distinctions of their subjects: “I don’t know what Euclid was thinking when he presented neither a definition nor division of his arithmetic!”688

With regard to the subject of mechanics, Skytte emphasized in particular that the students should not listen to those who muttered that mechanics was unworthy of a philosopher; the old habit of distinguishing between “liberal” and “mechanical” arts should not be interpreted in that manner, Skytte explained, since it probably stemmed from some sort of philosophical resentment toward practitioners.689 However, Skytte also emphasized that the art of mechanics was not the same as just any simple craft—only those resources that provided assistance in the overcoming of “such difficulties that may arise in human endeavours” should be called mechanical.690 This particular remark was in all likelihood prompted by the nobility of Skytte’s audience at the *Collegium Mauritianum*. In this context, it was vital to Skytte to convince Landgraf Moritz’s noble students that the mechanical arts were neither ignoble nor unworthy. Having established these premises, Skytte defined mechanics as the *ars bene machinandi*, which referred both to the ability to make machines and to understand them:

> Just as the goal of geometry is to measure well (*bene metiri*), the goal of mechanics is to engineer well (*bene machinari*), that is, on the one hand to make (*fabricare*) machines which can aid the pulling, lifting or pushing of things, superseding human powers, and on the other hand to explain the theory related to these machines.691

The machines Skytte had in mind were the simple machines of the ancient tradition (Skytte listed in this case the balance, lever, pulley, wheel, wedge and screw).692 A number of problems from the Pseudo-Aristotelian

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688 Skytte, *Flores philosophici*, A2r-A2v; ”[…] nescio quid Euclid in mentem venerit, ut in elementis suis Arithmeticis neque tantae artis definitionem neque partitionem posuerit ullam”.
689 Ibid., Bv; “Hic vero murmura quorundam nihil nos commovebunt, qui contendunt philosopho indignum esse, ingenium suum in rebus Mechanicis exercere. Quibus ita occurrendum erit: Vulgarem illam artium divisionem in liberales et Mechanicas eo sensu non esse accipiendum, sed potius conflictam eam esse a quibusdam philosophis odio tantae artis laborantibus, constanter profidentum.”
690 Ibid.; “Quamobrem non qualibet artificia vulgaria et prostrita Mechanica sunt nominanda, sed ea tantum, quae […] opitulantur difficultatibus, quae in actionibus humanis seque exhibent, ipsasque remorantur.”
691 Ibid., B2; “Quibus ita praemissis, artist Mechanicae definitionem hanc damus: Mechanica est ars bene machinandi. Ut enim Geometriae finis est bene metiri: ita Mechanicae finis est bene machinari, id est, cum ejusmodi machinas, quae ad trahendum, ferendum, impellendum sint accomodatae, quaeque vires humanas superent, fabricare, tum doctrinam facultatis machinarum explicare.”
692 Ibid., “Libra, vectis, trochlea, axis in peritrochio, cuneus et cochlea”.

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Mechanical Problems were in the following presented by Skytte to illustrate the principles at work in such machines (based foremost on the geometrical figure of the circle). This exposition of mechanics was concluded by three statements: 1. Mechanics was a more general art than architecture; 2. Every art imitated nature, but the operations of mechanics produced effects against nature; 3. Archimedes had once said: “Give me a place to stand on, and I will move the Earth”, which was not entirely inept, as Skytte remarked, as it illustrated the fundamentals of mechanics.693 These statements and conclusions provided by Skytte for the benefit of Landgraf Moritz’s students may appear somewhat haphazard, but they undoubtedly also represented some sort of minimum orientation estimated to be appropriate for the education of the noble students at the Collegium Mauritianum.

Figure 9. The Lever. Wall painting in the Stanzino delle Matematiche, Galleria degli Uffizi (Florence, Italy). Painted by Giulio Parigi (1571–1635) in the years 1599–1600.

693 Ibid., B3v; “Mechanica generalior est Architectura. 2. Ars omnis naturam imitatur et tamen Mechanica operationes naturae contrarias producit. 3. Archimedis illa vox: Da mihi ubi sistam et movebo terra, haud est inepta, imo vero Mechanicis fundamentis demonstrari potest.”
5.6. The Importance of Eloquence in Mathematics

Skytte’s discussions of the mathematical arts followed not only the Ramist ideal of uniting theory and practice, but also the general humanist ideal of joining philosophy and eloquence. Following this latter ideal, Skytte quoted poetry and the classics to illustrate mechanical principles. Even the “most celebrated Poet” (Poeta celeberrimus) relied on mechanical principles, as Skytte exclaimed when quoting Virgil’s lines on how the sea god Neptune used his trident to lift the stranded ship of the Trojans. From an educational perspective, poetry and mechanics had in fact one thing in common: neither art had enjoyed a very established position in the scholastic system of the arts. In the later sixteenth century, poetry—having conquered the Renaissance university in the first wave of humanist ideals—was thus in a manner of speaking utilized to raise other arts, such as mechanics, from their bottom rung in traditional classification schemes. The utilization of poetry in these contexts was in fact as old as ancient literature itself. As we have seen, the Pseudo-Aristotelian Mechanical Problems quoted the poet Antiphon when arguing its case (“We by skill gain mastery over things in which we are conquered by nature”).

Attached to Skytte’s treatise of Philosophical Flowers presented at the Collegium Mauritianum was a dedication from his former teacher of mathematics, Johannes Hartmannus, who praised Skytte above all for having succeeded in joining eloquence and mathematics. Without eloquence, mathematics would be sterile, as Hartmannus declared. Landgraf Moritz’s flattering characterization of Skytte as the “Cicero and Archimedes of Sweden” resonates in this context well with the Ramist manner of presenting mathematical topics—far from being mathematical in any formal sense, Skytte’s arguments were built around rhetorical figures and classical examples, focused on brilliant ancient philosophers and their deeds. In the spirit of Ramism, the agenda of Skytte’s student works thus appears as focused on the promotion of the mathematical arts and the beauty of their utility, rather than detailed explications of Euclidean geometry or harmonic proportions.

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694 Ibid., A3v; Verg. Aen. 1.145 f.; “Levat ipse tridenti, et vastas aperit Syrtes ac temperat aequor”.
695 Nauert, Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe, 111. The emperor Maximilian, praised by Skytte for his patronage of the arts, founded the “College of Poets and Mathematicians” in the early sixteenth century with the intention of strengthening these subjects; ibid.
696 Hett (transl.), Mechanical Problems etc., 331.
697 Skytte, Flores Philosophici, B4v.
698 As Per Dahl writes, the finest epithet that could be given a Swedish seventeenth-century engineer was “the Archimedes of Sweden”; Dahl, Svensk ingenjörskonst, 24.
5.7. Conclusions

In a Renaissance culture that was increasingly inspired by ancient mathematicians as well as ancient poets, the Ramist turn to the mathematical arts was not unique. As we have seen, Skytte referred in his early orations and dissertations to a number of contemporary scholars who had reached fame for their mathematical works—Pedro Nunes, Joost Bürgi, Guido Ubaldo, Girolamo Cardano, Regiomontanus, and indeed his own teachers in Marburg and Lemgo. In terms of university education, however, Petrus Ramus had been unusually systematic in his efforts to make the mathematical arts a natural part of the liberal arts curriculum. The Ramist educational ideals in this context were present in the Ramist-friendly schools of Kassel, Marburg and Lemgo, where mathematical education was encouraged and endorsed. When studying here in the late 1590s, Skytte argued in a characteristic Ramist style that the entire circle of mathematical arts, including the more practically inclined disciplines, were useful as well as dignified and should be better appreciated in schools and universities. The ancients, not least Archimedes, were in this context used by Skytte to convey the ideal *mechanicus*, who combined theoretical insight and practical skill in an endeavor to invent useful aids for the benefit of humanity. In his master’s oration discussing mechanics, Skytte praised in particular the mechanical principles and simple machines utilized by various groups of craftsmen.

In general, Skytte’s rhetoric conveys a focus not on deeper mathematical insights or the discovery of new applications, but on the improvement of skills already utilized. His promotion of the mathematical arts was thus clearly determined by an educational rather than a scientific context: new mathematical chairs, rather than new discoveries, were envisioned by Skytte, the goal being an education useful for the professions outside of the university. In his oration on mechanics, Skytte thus discussed the nobility of the art and its foundation in mathematics while also promoting its practical utility. In terms of Skytte’s praise of *Mechanici*, the teacher remained a central figure: those ancient philosophers who had made an effort to teach common people and craftsmen were especially praised, while contemporary Aristotelians who refused to teach mechanics, due to ignorance of the principles of the beautiful, simple machines, were scorned.

Skytte’s surveys of ancient as well as contemporary scholars convey a history of the revival of mechanics very similar to his history of eloquence and the *trivium* arts: mechanics as well as the other mathematical arts had been revived from darkness and ignorance, and now stood on the brink of a new age of glory at universities and schools—including Swedish ones. Skytte’s patriotic admonitions were in particular extended to his friend Johannes Hane, but his most important intended receiver was Duke Charles, the acting regent of Sweden at the time. Two decades later, Johan Skytte was appointed chancellor of Uppsala University by Duke Charles’s son, King
Gustav II Adolf, a position he would utilize to enforce the ideals of eloquence as well as the mathematical arts.
6. Returning Home: Opportunities and Challenges

6.1. Tasks

Duke Charles was the acting regent of Sweden when Skytte returned home in 1601. At the time, Charles faced several challenges—the threat of war with King Sigismund of Poland who maintained his right to the Swedish throne, an undermanned chancellery in Stockholm with few remaining loyal noblemen in his service, and an uncertain path toward international recognition as the new king of Sweden. Even though the political, administrative and diplomatic demands were high, the duke was hesitant to establish a new Council of the Realm with men from the leading noble families, who at this time were deeply distrustful of his rule.699 When Skytte entered the service of Charles, his noble friend and patron Johannes Hane was, in fact, one of very few noblemen in active service in the chancellery.700 Skytte’s orders and tasks in these early years of his career suggest a need to do several things at once: Skytte was used as a legate and propaganda writer701; he participated in an attempt to reform the national law (which rested on various medieval texts); and he defended Charles’s actions and ascendance to the throne on a number of official occasions. One of the more prestigious missions at this time involved the education of Gustav Adolf, Duke Charles’s oldest son and thus possibly the heir to the throne. Skytte was appointed his preceptor by Duke Charles in 1602. Two years later, Skytte’s educational program (or Prince’s Mirror) was published, which outlined the suitable training for the future head of state, Gustav Adolf.

This chapter will be devoted foremost to Skytte’s tasks in his early career, focusing especially on his royal tutorship and his duties as a professional administrator and civil servant. Skytte’s political, administrative and

699 To the Swedish nobility, these were dire times—four noblemen who had sided with King Sigismund had been executed in Linköping in 1600. Noble families had moreover been subjected to withdrawal of their lands to the Crown in the 1590s. In an attempt to normalize the domestic political situation, Charles IX reinstated the Council of the Realm in 1602. He preferred, however, to rely on loyal commoners in his administration, which undoubtedly favored Skytte’s early career. See Palme, “Karl IX”; 635, 639, and Berg, *Johan Skytte*, 86 f., and above, Chapter Two, regarding the political turmoil at this time.


701 For examples of Skytte’s tasks as a legate, see Chapter Two.
educational missions at this time were a sharp test of the utility of his long education. How did the actual tasks Skytte encountered correspond to the applications his Ramist education had foreseen? Skytte’s extensive studies had undoubtedly prepared him for some of his tasks (not least his eloquence which he frequently used in public orations), but hardly all of them. Ramist method, did not, for instance, involve any specific advise on how to educate a (potential) future king. Skytte was also made preceptor for Gustav Adolf’s sister, Mary-Elizabeth. This introduced another educational topic that Skytte as a student had probably not had much reason to think about—the education of women. When Skytte was married and had daughters of his own, he provided them, as we shall see, with an unusually thorough education. Looking closer at Skytte’s education of Gustav Adolf as well as of Mary-Elizabeth and of his daughters, we will see that Skytte, however, in his role as a preceptor utilized many of the educational ideals that had been present in his own studies.

Following the death of Charles IX in 1611, Skytte entered a new phase of his career, which was dependent on Charles’s son, Skytte’s former pupil Gustav II Adolf. During this sensitive transition time, when the old nobility presented a number of demands on the seventeen-year old future king, Skytte managed to hold his acquired position of power.702 While the ideal of merit at this time, however, seemed to be threatened by the demands of the nobility, the fast pace of reforms and state-building effectively counteracted, as we shall see, a total exclusiveness of the noble estate. The chapter will be concluded with a comparison of how Skytte and his brothers seized the opportunity to rise and acquire a higher standing in society.

6.2. The Preceptor
Skytte’s “Prince’s Mirror”

In 1604, Skytte composed a plan for Prince Gustav Adolf’s education, published the same year under the title *Een kort underwijsning uthi hvad konster och dygder een fursteligh person skall sigh ofwe och bruke* ("A short instruction concerning the arts and virtues a princely person must practice and use").703 Skytte began the tutoring of Duke Charles’s eight-year-old son,

702 On the shift of power to the advantage of the nobility at this time, as well as Gustav II Adolf’s subsequent and partly successful attempts to resume the political initiative, see Sven A. Nilsson, “Gustav II Adolf”, *SBL* xvii (Stockholm, 1967-69), 445-447.
Gustav Adolf, in the summer of 1602. Two years later he was also appointed tutor of Gustav Adolf's sister Mary-Elizabeth and their cousin, Duke John of Östergötland. In 1608 Charles-Philip, brother of Gustav Adolf, was added to his teaching responsibilities. Skytte was assisted by Johannes Bureus (the previously mentioned scholar and rune expert), and as of 1608 also by his own brother Ericus Schroderus with regard to basic exercises in reading and writing and certain Latin studies. The general recommendations of Skytte’s educational plan for Prince Gustav Adolf were in all likelihood valid even for the royal siblings—an education centered on eloquence, languages, the mathematical arts, history and politics.

In the case of Gustav Adolf, however, special emphasis seems to have been put on the mathematical arts and their utility in modern warfare, as well as on the specific challenges of government and politics that a future regent must be prepared to meet. Skytte could seek inspiration from a multitude of works on this subject: the genre of the “Prince’s Mirror”, to which Skytte’s short educational treatise essentially belongs, thrived in Renaissance literature. Duke Charles had in particular recommended Skytte to consider the French historian Philippe de Commynes, who had written about the art of statecraft and the manoeuvrings of (French) politics. Skytte also referred Justus Lipsius whose Politica he was already acquainted with. It may in this context be noted that Duke Charles (IX) was exceedingly well-read in political and theological literature, and entertained strong theoretical interests in constitutional law and contemporary politics. He was known to subject foreign guests to detailed inquiries, bordering on aggressive

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704 Berg, Johan Skytte, 94.
705 As previously noted, Duke John of Östergötland, the son of the late King John III, was formally the next successor in line to the throne after the recent dethronement of King Sigismund, but he renounced all claims to royal power in 1604. Even though Duke John thus did not pose a threat to the new order, Charles IX took precautions to neutralise any potential conflicts. The unhappy marriage between John and his cousin Mary-Elizabeth was in all likelihood a result of such political considerations; Lindberg, “Hertig Johan av Östergötland”, 129.
706 Bureus was appointed tutor of Gustav Adolf in 1602 and Mary-Elizabeth in 1604; E. Vennberg, “Johan Bure”, SBL vi (Stockholm, 1926). Eric Schroderus, Skytte’s younger brother, translated James I’s Prince Mirror Regium donum to Swedish in 1606, and dedicated the work to Charles, who apparently was pleased, as he appointed Schroderus preceptor of Charles-Philip two years later; Runeby, Monarchia Mixta, 50-52; Berg, Johan Skytte, 110.
709 Skytte, Een kort underwijsning, 55. See also Nilsson, “Gustav II Adolf”, 444. Commynes’s Mémoires (composed 1489–98, and posthumously published in 1524–28) were based on the author’s own observations in his services as a diplomat to the French kings, whereas Justus Lipsius’s Politica constituted a scholarly investigation of the exercise of power from the rulers’ perspective, inspired by Tacitus, Seneca and other observers of the intrigues and power games of The Early Roman Empire; Lindberg, Stoicism och stat, 90-97, 196. On Commynes as an historian, see Kelley, Faces of History, 141 ff.
710 Palme, “Karl IX”, 639.
interrogations, on the details of European politics. Composing an educational plan for Charles’s son—which would necessarily have to address political studies since Gustav Adolf would be the successor to the Swedish throne as soon as Charles was coronated—must therefore have been a delicate task. On the other hand, there was no need for Skytte to enter deeply into the theoretical foundations of the art of statecraft. The purpose of a Prince’s Mirror was after all foremost to lay down the broad outlines of suitable studies for a prince, as well as the ideal qualities of a good regent, which his education would help to cultivate.

Quoting Cicero, Skytte first of all declared that the regent should serve as a virtuous model to his subjects, since “the spirit of the Regent is reflected in the spirit of his subjects” (Thet är såsom Regenterne äre tilsinnes, så äre och theres undersåter tilsinnes). The education of a prince was therefore of national interest, as Skytte repeatedly argued throughout his instruction, comparing on one occasion the regent to the captain of a ship—since the command of a ship was given to the man who was well acquainted with the rudder and compass, and “since the common crowd was nothing but a ship, and the Regent was nothing but a captain, should not the Regent be learned and well-educated in his art?” To understand and prepare himself for his responsibilities toward the common people (gemene hopen), the realm (Rijket) and the government of the realm (Regementet), the prince needed above all to be well-educated.

The first part, concerning religious practice, was quickly accounted for by Skytte who essentially underlined that “a true and sound worship” (en rett och sann Gudztänenst), practiced from an early age would ensure that the prince developed good judgement, courage and virtues. As for the arts of chivalry, which would train the prince for his future military command, Skytte noted that these preparations and studies were outside of his own

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711 Ibid., 639.
712 Skytte, Een kort underwijsning, 37. Skytte also added the Ciceronian version, Quales in Republica Principes sunt, tales reliqui solent esse cives (cf. Cicero, Epistulae ad familiares 1.9.12: “sunt apud Platonem nostrum scripta divinitus, quales in re publica principes essent talis reliquos solere esse civis”). With the aid of such sentences from the classics, the concept of the king as a model for his subjects was, as the Neo-Latinist Peter Sjökvist notes, commonly stressed in contemporary Prince’s Mirrors; Sjökvist, The Early Latin Poetry of Sylvester Johannis Phrygius, 328 f.
713 Skytte, Een kort underwijsning, 38; “När man will gå til seglatz gifwer man honom styret j handene som weet vål omgås medh roret och förstår sigh vppå compassen oc efter then gemene hopen inthet annat är än ett skip och Regenten inthet annat än een styreman bör icke Regenten tå ware j sijn konst tilförende lård och vnderwijst?”
714 Skytte characteristically used a mixed terminology with regard to the various aspects of responsibilities of the regent; Cf. above, Chapter Three, on the political terminology used at this time.
715 Skytte, Een kort underwijsning, 40.
716 Ibid., 40.
expertise and responsibilities, but he recommended however the prince to carefully study the great rulers in history, Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, and not least the Swedish kings Karl Knutsson and Gustav Vasa, who, as Skytte pointed out, had excelled in the art of war as well as in book learning.717 The greater part of Skytte’s royal school plan thus revolved around the book arts (Booklige konster), where eloquence was also included.

Skytte in particular emphasized the many political utilities of rhetorical skills—whenever the King needed to “twist and coax the hearts of people” or convince them of a certain course of action, such as war, he would benefit greatly from his ability to speak eloquently.718 The utility of knowing foreign languages (in particular Latin) was underlined by Skytte in the context of international relations and diplomacy—a man who could not speak anything but his mother tongue could expect nothing but “shame and contempt” (föracht och bespåttelsse).719 Skytte repeated in this context several of the stories from his previous orations related to embarrassing diplomatic incidents, where legates or government officials had failed to speak in Latin.720 As Skytte concluded, it was the “great advantage” of knowing foreign languages and speaking eloquently which had induced the Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV to officially demand that all princely sons in his realm should know at least three languages.721

Language skills were thus emphasized by Skytte at the cost of the art of logic, which was discussed very briefly. Skytte nevertheless underlined that a Prince should not despise this subject, which taught how to reason correctly, and he added in Ramist fashion that the art of logic had “established and arranged” the other arts.722 Considerably more attention was on the other hand given by Skytte to the mathematical arts, and in particular their utility in statesmanship and warfare. Skytte declared that it might seem strange that a prince, born to engage in “high and important matters”, should study an art such as arithmetic, used by merchants, accountants and tax-

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717 Ibid., 55. This double theme of military and peaceful virtues, consolidated as the device Arte et Marte on the House of the Nobility in Stockholm in the 1670s, was in the early modern period a frequent argument in educational debates concerning the nobility (as discussed also above, Chapter Three).
718 Skytte, Een kort underwijsning, 42; “När krigh skal begynnas och fulfölias kan Landzens Herre och Regent medh een beprydd Oration sine vndersåthere beweka til at godwilligen sin Ledungszlamma vthgöra, och hwadh till kriget nödtorffteligen kan behöfwes. När man wil slå til sine Fiender så hafwer wältaligheet stoor krafft till at förmahne Krigzfolket: […]” It may be noted in this context that peasants constituted one of the four estates, which Swedish kings occasionally utilized when they had failed to support from the nobility; Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 206.
719 Ibid., 42-44.
720 Cf. above, Chapter Three.
721 Ibid., 45; “At alle Kurförsters Söner i Rijket skulle til thet minsta kunna thesse try tungomål som är Italianisk, Slawonisk och Latin”.
722 Ibid., 45; “Dialectica hon hafwer warit een Mästarinne till at finna och sammansetitia alle konster”.

collectors, or an art such as geometry used by “men in the fields” (that is, land surveyors).723 Arithmetic was, however, also, as Skytte stated, a means of using one’s reason. More specifically, he advised the prince to think of the Roman Emperor Augustus who had made a habit of taking notes in a little book of taxes and tolls, and of the numbers of his troops and their payments. In the following, Skytte would in particular discuss the military utilities of the mathematical arts.

Arithmetic taught, as Skytte stated, how to best organise a battle array, while geometry and geometrical instruments could aid the bombardment and occupation of fortresses.724 Geometry moreover constituted the foundation of the other mathematical arts—optics, music, astronomy, geography and mechanics, as Skytte declared. To further illustrate what geometry could “accomplish in matters of war”, Skytte adduced the story of how the Roman commander Marcellus’ fleet in Syracuse had been destroyed by one of Archimedes’ ingenious inventions (a story he had related also in his master’s oration on mechanics).725 Even astronomy could be useful to a regent, as Skytte emphasized: a moon eclipse had once thwarted a bloody Roman rebellion as the rebellious soldiers who saw the moon “loose its light”, had become so frightened that the whole rebellion in the end came to nothing.726

The utility of optics and mechanics was discussed by Skytte exclusively in terms of their military applications. The best military commanders had always, as Skytte declared, studied and practiced the mechanical arts. Skytte in particular lauded Maurice of Nassau (1567–1625), Prince Of Orange, who supported many skillful “artisans and engineers” (Mechaniske Mästerer och konstenärer) for one sole purpose: “to think and conceive of new mechanical instruments which could be invented and become useful and practiced in warfare”.727 This particular example was of course highly relevant at the time—by the turn of the sixteenth-century, Maurice of Nassau, and his quartermaster general Simon Stevin (1548–1620) had launched a program of military reforms, which included a technical school in Leiden where craftsmen were educated in the latest techniques of surveying and fortifi-

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723 Ibid., 45.
724 Ibid., 46 f.
725 Ibid., 47.
726 Ibid., 48. Skytte’s second astronomical example conveyed more clearly the advantage of possessing a certain knowledge that the opponent lacked: Skytte thus explained how Columbus, as a good “Astronomus”, had tricked the “barbarians” to help him and his starving men. Knowing that that a solar eclipse would soon occur, he had told the barbaric people that if they refused to provide food, their God would show them a “strange sign”. After the sun had eclipsed the barbarians not only obeyed Columbus, but even surrendered themselves completely to his command, which, as Skytte concluded, was all thanks to Columbus’ skills as an astronomer; Skytte, Een kort onderwijsning, 49. Beyond this anecdote of Columbus, Skytte did not further discuss the New World, although he encouraged the prince to study geography, as this subject would teach him the extensions of other lands as well his own.
727 Ibid., 49 f.
The emphasis Skytte put on military applications of the mathematical arts in his school plan for Gustav Adolf, ultimately reflects the old tradition where the ruler was not only the highest military commander in theory: he was also expected to personally lead his troops into battle. Even though this tradition by the seventeenth century was not strictly upheld in the increasingly professionalized modes of warfare, it would, as we know, be the end of the reign Gustav II Adolf, who lost his life in the battlefield of Lützen in 1632.

Beyond the traditional circle of liberal arts, Skytte also recommended the prince to study politics, history and jurisprudence. Politics would teach the prince how to “preserve and improve the bounties of his realm”, how to take advise and choose advisors, and how to handle the “volatile” common man as well as the intrigues at his own court. If the prince wanted to learn about the vices and faults of past rulers, and the rise, prosperity and fall of empires, he should “consult history” (så gak til Historiam), and if he wanted to judge fairly and independently of his advisors, he should study the law book. By the end of his treatise, Skytte concluded that the greatest rulers of history had excelled in book arts as well as in warfare, and he admonished the prince to especially follow the example of them.

As would be expected, Skytte presented many good reasons for the young prince to study—a future ruler need a sound judgement when making decisions, he would need to know how to uphold a proper reputation of himself and the Swedish kingdom, and he would need skills to control his subjects. Regarding the relation between the regent’s wise rule and the state and the common man, Skytte’s instruction was, however, characteristically unclear. As Bo Lindberg has remarked, a “notorious indistinctness” prevailed in the Prince’s Mirror genre concerning these fundamental issues. One of the authorities in the matter, Justus Lipsius, had characteristically, as Lindberg points out, on one hand insisted that the goal for a ruler’s actions must always be the people and the common good, but on the other hand, his arguments frequently revolved around how the Prince, by different means, could maintain his personal power and position. This indistinctness of purpose is evident also in Skytte’s instruction for Gustav Adolf—while Skytte declared that the Prince needed “to do the utmost to protect the common man, improving and increasing his bounties and properties, since it is for the sake of his well-being a Prince is put in charge of the realm [my

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728 Young noblemen from all over Europe travelled to the famous Dutch commander in the hope of learning more about modern warfare, which in many cases was inspired by Roman military theories of organisation and discipline; Dahl, Svensk ingenjörskonst, 26, 175; Sjöstrand, Pedagogikens historia II, 152 f.
729 Skytte, Een kort underwijsning, 50-52.
730 Ibid., 54 f.
731 Ibid., 56.
732 Lindberg, Stoicism och stat, 100 f.
733 Ibid., 101.
italics], he also advised the future king to beware of the common man, who was “inclined to have the potentates of the nation removed and exchanged”. There was however little ambiguity in Skytte’s educational plan with regard to the means of achieving these multi-faceted goals—the foundation of solid governance and successful rulership amounted in the end to one thing—education. “Pray God”, as Skytte exclaimed, that “no one in our Realm should acquire any high position unless he has learnt and understood something good!”

Such exclamations, which occurred more than once in Skytte’s Prince’s Mirror, were in all likelihood intended to motivate the prince not only to study diligently himself, but moreover to ensure that he would have access to skilled officials and advisors—who played an important role in Skytte’s descriptions of the tasks of government. While Skytte thus, as previous scholarship has pointed out, by all indications favoured a strong centralised power, where the fortunes of the state were largely in the hands of the regent, he also applied a skill-based approach to the challenges of government. For a successful rule, the king was simply dependent on wise men in his administration as well as eloquent legates who could be sent abroad. He also needed to be wise and well-educated himself; just as the musician needed to learn his instrument, as Skytte explained, and the blacksmith needed to learn and practice his trade from “skilled and experienced masters”, a prince needed to study and learn his trade (of ruling). Even poor parents, who owned “nothing but a field, a house, a domicile and a meadow”, made an effort to provide “a good upbringing and some education for their beloved children”, and as Skytte remarked: “[H]ow much more should one not be concerned over the education of someone who is expected to rule not one land or one city, but many regions and kingdoms?” It was a fateful vocation which he had been called for, as Skytte solemnly noted with regard to his own responsibilities.

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734 Skytte, Een kort underwijsning, 50; “Inthet är swårare än straffe the ofromme och wan-artighe, nyttighe och gaghnelighe Constitutioner skipa och stadga, och efter sin ytterst förmögenheet trachte huru then gemene man, för hwilkens wälfärd skuld en Förste land och Rijke är befalet, kan blifwe behollen, och hans hafwor och äghodeler förbettredhe ware och förkofredhe.” Cf., ibid., 54; “Politica hon lärer en Furste kenna gemene man och tage sigh för honom til wara. Ty gemene man är ostadigh och benägen til förandringar och seer gärne at Landzens Herrar omskiftes oc ombytes.”

735 Ibid., 53; “Gudh gifwe at och ingen uthi wart Fädernesland måtte komme til något högt embethe medmindre han hade något gott lärt författat och begripit!”.

736 The subject of Skytte’s constitutional inclinations has been discussed in greater detail by the historian Nils Runeby who in Skytte’s Prince’s Mirror saw a rather traditional perspective on government (favouring a strong monarchy), albeit updated with contemporary continental theory (especially Jean Bodin); Runeby, Monarchia Mixta, 49, 77 f. Cf. Lindberg, Stoicism och stat, 197.

737 Ibid., 36 f.

738 Skytte, Een kort underwijsning, 38.

739 Ibid., 39.
The Education of Mary-Elizabeth

As noted above, in 1604 Skytte was also made responsible for the tutoring of Gustav II Adolf’s sister, Mary-Elizabeth. Unlike her male relatives, Mary-Elizabeth was not expected to shoulder any official responsibilities beyond her role as wife of Duke John of Östergötland, to whom she was betrothed in 1610. With regard to the education of women in the Renaissance era, or their role in public life, the humanist movement had not brought about any major reconsiderations but it was nevertheless not uncommon that women of the high nobility received a rather thorough education. A letter from Johan Skytte to Mary-Elizabeth written in 1610 provides a glimpse of the contents and character of her education. At the time, Skytte was staying in Lübeck as part of a legation on route to the Netherlands and England. In his letter to the fourteen-year-old Mary-Elizabeth, he described how he had unfortunately been sent abroad on this mission just as he was planning the education for Mary-Elizabeth. The journey was, however, giving him an opportunity to acquire books in a number of subjects, which he would send home to his pupil, whom he knew was always eager to learn more about “worthy and official matters”:

While striving to put these [educational] plans into effect, I was sent abroad by your father and my most merciful king. However, in order for me to add tinder to your burning ardour and your eagerness to learn about worthy and official matters, whether I am present or absent, I have put together a collection of the most exquisite and instructive books where you will find not only Latin and German, but also French, Italian and Spanish authors, who will readily put before your eyes the most sound advice in theological, philosophical, political and other questions.

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741 Mary E. Wiesner, Women and gender in early modern Europe (Cambridge, 2000), 145 ff. Only a handful women in Sweden in the seventeenth century are known to have received any more substantial education. They typically belonged to noble families, and were educated by private tutors, shared with their brothers. They were expected to be able to administrate the house-hold and family estate in the absence of their husbands, conduct representation and be somewhat acquainted with the political world of their husbands. The most well-known learned women in Sweden in the seventeenth century (besides Queen Christina), are Beata Rosenhanke and her sisters (1638-1674). See also below, on the education of Wendela Skytte. On the standing of women and their education in Sweden in the seventeenth century, see Svante Norrhem, Kvinnor vid maktens sida: 1632-1772 (Lund, 2007), 57-60, Kekke Stadin, Stånd och genus i stormaktstidens Sverige (Lund, 2004), and Frängsmyr, Svensk idéhistoria, 166-171.
742 Letter to Mary-Elizabeth, dated May 9, 1610, in UUB, Palmsköld 371, 633-636.
743 On this legation, which Charles IX had instructed to procure alliances with France, the Netherlands and England, see Berg, Johan Skytte, 176 ff.
744 Letter from Skytte to Mary-Elizabeth, May 9, 1610; “Cognitionibus hisce cum plenius satisfacere studeo ecce in peregrina loca a parente tuo Domino ac Rege meo clementissimo amandor. Verum enimvero ut tam absens quam praesens ardori et amori tuo flagrantissimo in addiscendis rebus publico hominum conspectu dignissimis, fomitem adderem, selectissimam et instructissimam tibi comparavi bibliothecam, in qua non solum Latinos et Germanos, sed
This wide range of literature, including books revolving around political matters, was thus evidently deemed appropriate and worthy also for Mary-Elizabeth. Skytte in the same letter exclaimed that Mary-Elizabeth, through her reading, would be able to “raise magnificent memorial monuments, not only as inscriptions on the walls, but in the minds and souls of all men”\textsuperscript{745} Skytte described how he had been touched on several occasions by Mary-Elizabeth’s “extraordinary and remarkable passion” for her books, and how he had realized that he was fortunate to have the privilege of guiding her to “any knowledge of any kind of splendid things”—the support of which, as Skytte stated, would make it “easier to walk through this life which is fragile, weak and finite”.\textsuperscript{746} This emphasis in Skytte’s letter on the solace and comfort inherent in book learning in the face of human frailty and affliction may have been occasioned by Mary-Elizabeth’s notoriously bad health.\textsuperscript{747} Little else is unfortunately known about the education of Mary-Elizabeth, who died from her life-long disease at the age of twenty-two.

The Education of Wendela Skytte

In 1606 Johan Skytte married Maria Näf (–1649) who had grown up in the vicinity of Grönsöö (situated in Lake Mälaren).\textsuperscript{748} Skytte had, as previously mentioned, received a small piece of land in Grönsöö in 1605 from Charles IX, which he expanded by a number of additional acquisitions; in the 1610s he had a manor built here.\textsuperscript{749} Maria Näf, who belonged to a Scottish noble family, gave birth to nine children and died in 1649, four years after her husband.\textsuperscript{750} Wendela Skytte (1608–1629) was Johan’s and Maria’s first child

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Gallicos, Italicos et Hispanicos scriptores invenies, qui et Theologicarum et Philosophicarum et Politicarum aliarumque rerum saluberrima monita promptissime tibi ante oculos collo-ocabunt.”

\textsuperscript{745} Ibid.; “Hac ratione magnifica tibi eriges trophea non in lapidibus et parietibus tantum, sed in omnium hominum animis et mentibus.”

\textsuperscript{746} Ibid.; “Ardor hic tuus erga literas singularis et mirificus ita me aliquoties commovit, ut beatum me fore existimarem si te possem ad qualcumque rerum praclarrisimarnarum cognitionem perducere cujus adminicul0 posses vitam hanc caducam fragilem et mortalem felicius transigere.”

\textsuperscript{747} On Mary-Elizabeth’s disease, see Skoglund, “Maria Elisabet”, and Lindberg, “Hertig Johan av Östergötland”, 129 f. The theme of the solace of philosophy was a versatile humanist \textit{topos} which had also been adduced by Skytte in his orations, e.g. before the young noblemen at the \textit{Collegium Mauritianum} in 1600 (as discussed above, Chapter Three), and in his Prince’s Mirror, where he had stressed that philosophy had provided solace to King Karl Knutsson during his time of exile; Skytte, \textit{Een kort underwijsning}, 56.

\textsuperscript{748} On Skytte’s family and relatives, see Mattias Andersson, “Skytte”, \textit{SBL} xxxii (Stockholm, 2005), and Elgenstierna, “Friherrliga ätten Skytte af Duderhof”, 319 f.

\textsuperscript{749} The manor would be the primary home of the Skyttean family; Åke Nisbeth, \textit{Grönsöö} (Enköping, 1995).

\textsuperscript{750} Maria’s father Jacob Neaf or Neave (–1598) had left Scotland for Sweden in 1579. In the power struggle between King Sigismund and Duke Charles, Jacob had sided with Sigismund, and as he in 1598 went to Stora Tuna in Dalarna to propagate for the king’s cause he was attacked by the crowd, loyal to Charles. Neaf died from a blow of a sword to his head; Hans
to reach adulthood. She and her younger sister Anna (1610–1679) received
as we shall see, an unusually extensive education, designed by their father.751
Johan Skytte’s three sons, Johan (1612–1636), Bengt (1614–1683) and Jacob
(1616–1654) all conducted university studies (in Uppsala and in Holland)
and were later utilized in various political missions abroad.752 Johan (Junior)
studied in Uppsala and Dorpat, became a colonel and perished in Pomerania
in 1636; Bengt was elected into the Council of the Realm; Jacob became
county governor and rector illustris in Dorpat.

Wilhelm Simonius, son of the first Professor Skytteanus Johannes
Simonius, was appointed tutor of Skytte’s sons, but he also taught the
daughters of the family. Simonius later composed an extensive commemora-
tion of Wendela Skytte, who died in childbirth at the age of twenty-one.753
Despite her youth, Wendela had become known for her erudition and
eloquence, according to Simonius, who in his commemoration dwelled in
particular on the education her father had designed for her.754 Simonius’s
praise and commemoration in this context of course functioned also as

Gillingstam, “Jacob Näf (Neaf)”, SBL xxvii (Stockholm, 1990-91). Regarding Skytte’s
interest in investigating his wife’s Scottish ancestry and the gains and rights which could
possibly be claimed, see Steve Murdoch, Network north: Scottish kin, commercial and covert
associations in Northern Europe, 1603-1746 (Leiden, 2006), 59 f. As a result of Skytte’s
legation to Britain in 1635, on which his sons Johan and Jacob accompanied him, Jacob was
knighted and Johan Junior became a “naturalised” Scot.
751 Regarding the education of Wendela and Anna Skytte, see also my previously published
master’s thesis at the Department of the History of Science and Ideas, Uppsala University;
“Ett liv i lärdom och dygd: En studie av två äreminnen över Wendela Skytte (1608-1629)”,
752 Ewert Wrangel, Sveriges litterära förbindelser med Holland: särdeles under 1600-talet
(Lund, 1897), 66 f. Maintaining international relations and gathering information from abroad
constituted important tasks of the Swedish political elite, increasingly involved in the
continental developments, militarily and otherwise. As governor general in Livonia Skytte
sent his sons on trips to Russia in 1631-32 for educational reasons but also to collect
information on this powerful neighbor in the east; Axel Norberg, “Bröderna Skytte’s ryska
resor och deras ryslandsskildringar” in Historisk tidskrift 1999.
753 Wilhelm Simonius, Justa funebria […]Wendelae Skytte […] Laudatio funebris scripta,
(Riga, 1630). This collection of commemorations and poetry was also composed by (among
others) Johannes Loccenius, Prof. Skytteanus e. o. at the time, and Georgius Lilja (Stiern-
hielm), who had also been a tutor in the Skytte family.
754 Simonius, Justa funebria, A2r-D4v. Funeral poetry and commemorations of the deceased
constituted a specific literary genre at this time, with a number of common themes; see e.g.
Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 511-523. With regard to deceased women (of higher
standing), a number of common topics could be adduced, generally related to their virtues as
wives, daughters or mothers. While chastity, obedience, piety, moderation and diligence as a
mother and keeper of the household were commonly praised virtues of a deceased woman, her
education was less frequently mentioned, which makes Simonius’s commemoration unusual.
On the rhetorical genre of funeral poetry and its social context, see Annika Ström, Lachrymae
Catharinae: Five collections of funeral poetry from 1628: edited with studies on the
theoretical background and the social context of the genre (Stockholm, 1994), and Barbro
Bergner, “Dygdne som levnadskonst: kvinnliga dygeideal under stormaktstiden” in Eva
Österberg (ed.), Jämmerdal och fröjdesal: Kvinnor i stormaktstidens Sverige (Stockholm,
1997).
acknowledgements of the standing of her father, who at this time (1629) was at the height of his career. Regarding the general purpose of Wendela’s comprehensive education (she practically knew Justus Lipsius’ *Politica* by heart, we are told), Simonius was, however, vague, but he did argue in an unusually straightforward manner that women were unfairly denied education: “Does it disfigure a human being to study good literature which expels errors and nurtures virtue? Does virtue really depend on income or sex?”755 This last question, where the matter of sex was addressed, had in fact been raised previously at Uppsala University: in one case Johan Skytte’s sons, Jacob, Bengt och Johan, presented as part of their academic training *pro et contra* arguments regarding the question of female legates, and on a previous occasion Jonas Magni (1583–1651), at the time acting Skyttean professor, published a dissertation that discussed female monarchs in a similar manner.756 Considering the contexts of these arguments, the question of education in relation to women was evidently not foreign to Johan Skytte himself. On the other hand, one has to consider that the academic dissertation, just as the eulogy, constituted a specific literary genre, where arguments were presented as part of an academic exercise and rhetorical display.

Yet, with regard to Wilhelm Simonius’s praise of Wendela Skytte and his general arguments for the education of women, it is reasonable to assume that he did not share the hesitation shown by many humanists at the time regarding the education of women in subjects associated with the public arena, such as politics, rhetoric and eloquence.757 The *praxis* of the Skytte family moreover proves that the issue of female education was taken seriously. From the age of five Wendela was educated not only in such matters which was familiar to the “weaker sex”, as Simonius wrote, but also in such things which, “unfortunately for the public arena” (*publico pessimo*),

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755 Simonius, *Justa funebria*, C2r; “Itane dedecet hominem vitiorum expultrices, virtutum nutrices, bonas litteras addiscere? Itane Virtus vel censum vel sexum eliget?” As Bo Lindberg has noted, Justus Lipsius had used in his discussion of female regents the argument that virtue does not make choices based on income or sex (*Nec censum, nec sexum eligit*)—a sentence which originated in Seneca’s *De Beneficiis* where the argument could be found that even a slave could be virtuous, since virtue did not depend on family or income. Lipsius however altered Seneca’s sentence by exchanging the word for family (*domus*) for sex (*sexus*); Lindberg, “Citat och kontext”, 133.

756 The question of whether women could be legates was “debated” publicly in Uppsala in 1626 by the young Skytte brothers (at the time ten, twelve and fourteen years old) who presented the *pro et contra* arguments composed by Johannes Simonius; *Dissertatuumculae sex in quorum tribus primis num femina legati officio fungi possit [...] ab Johannis Skytte Liberti Baronis in Duderofo etc. filiis, generosis nobilissismisque adolescetibus, Johanne, Benedicto, Jacobo Skytte* (Uppsala, 1626). For a discussion and account of this treatise, see Hans Helander, “Kan en kvinna vara diplomatiskt sändebud?”, *ad familiares* 1996:2. On Jonas Magni’s dissertation regarding female regents, *De legitimo imperio monarchico, seu de forma gubernationis regiae* (Uppsala, 1625), see Bo Lindberg, “Anden saknar kön”, *Lychnos* 1997.

belonged strictly to the sphere of men.\textsuperscript{758} As Simonius explained, Johan Skytte had ensured that his daughter was surrounded by men who always spoke in Latin, French or German with her, “posing questions which they knew she would know the answer to, so that they could praise her for her answers and thus stimulate her to learn more”.\textsuperscript{759}

When Wendela Skytte in this manner had acquired the necessary linguistic foundation, she was introduced to the more advanced studies (\textit{graviora studia}) of eloquence, politics, history and theology.\textsuperscript{760} Simonius remarked that Wendela, unlike other women, was not interested in fancy clothing, plumes, makeup and jewelery, or in “dressing up like a peacock” but rather spent her time studying.\textsuperscript{761} In theology, she strove to reach a correct understanding of the truth, so that she could reject false things, and in history, she read Johannes Magnus, Albert Crantzius, David Chytraeus, and the chronicles about Gustav Vasa, and others who had written about her native country, because “she believed it would be a disgrace to live in a flourishing kingdom and ignore the continous series of glorious exploits that had been achieved in its historys”.\textsuperscript{762} When domestic works did not provide adequate knowledge, she would add books in Latin or French, and thus “spend her days dwelling on important matters”.\textsuperscript{763}

Many of the subjects ennumerated by Simonius were in Ancient and Christian traditions portrayed as unnecessary, or even harmful, to the chastity of women and their duties in the household.\textsuperscript{764} These arguments were met with an ironic remark by Simonius: “[So it is said that], education is not suitable for women, because they must tend to the household, which is more important!”\textsuperscript{765} As argued by Simonius, there was no reason to fear that

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{758} Ibid., A4v; “Ubi enim quintum aetatis annum atigerat, ejusmodi disciplinae fuit comissa, quae non modo sequiori sexui familiaris, sed et virorum, publico pessimo, propria facta est.”
\item \textsuperscript{759} Ibid., A4v; “Attribuerat enim Praelustris Dominus meus pie defunctae Baronissae, ejusmodi homines, qui semper Latine, Gallice et Germanice cum ea loquebantur, eademque nunc vernacula nunc peregrinis linguis efferebant, aliquando parvulam consulebant, eaque quae ipsam nosse constabat ex ea quaerebant, ut laude ad cognoscenda excitarent.”
\item \textsuperscript{760} Ibid., B2r.
\item \textsuperscript{761} Ibid., B2r; “Et quantum ab aliis conceditur temporum, ut se comant, multis pigmentis illinent, vestibus, non secus atque Lunonis ales cauda, superbiant, ostentent plumas, torquibus, gemmis, ornamentis novis seu stellis se poliant, expoliant, fiant, pingant, tantum pie defuncta Baronissa ad colenda insomnit studia.”
\item \textsuperscript{762} Ibid., B4v; “[…] In illa \textit{historia}, universali cognitione praemissa, Johannem Magni, Albertum Crantzium, Davidem Chytraeum, Chronicon GUSTAVI I. serennisimae memoriae aliosque qui umquam res patriae suo stylo illustraverunt, summa diligentia perlegit. Existimabat enim et vere, turpe fore, in regno florentissimo vivere, et ignorare seriem rerum in illo gestarum.”
\item \textsuperscript{763} Ibid., B4v; “Verum cum solidam rerum cognitionem sola patria haut suppeditet, addidit exterorum monumenta, illaque in linguis qua latina, qua Gallica familiaris sibi reddidit, ut rerum gravissimam commemoracione, sine taedio diem honeste, et cum fructu audientium consumeret.”
\item \textsuperscript{764} Wiesner, \textit{Women and gender in early modern Europe}, 145 ff.
\item \textsuperscript{765} Simonius, \textit{Justa funebria}, C2r; “Nimirum litteras foeminam non decere, ut rem domesticam curet, magis esse!”.
\end{itemize}
a learned woman would neglect her household—on the contrary, through her reading she would become even more knowledgeable of this sphere. Simonius especially praised Wendela for her eloquence and theological knowledge, which he claimed she had used when staying in Braunsberg with her husband Hans Kyle (1605–1659): “Often harassed by papal attacks, she rejected these in such a manly way that they eventually did not dare to open their mouths!” Wendela was thus praised not only for her obedience and chastity, but also for her Lutheran orthodoxy, patriotism and eloquence.

Such qualities would not, of course, have been praised by Simonius in his eulogy if he had thought that his patron, the father of the deceased, might have disapproved. We have, however, few official statements by Skytte himself concerning education and women beyond his praise of Queen Elizabeth—besides the kings and emperors of his Prince’s Mirror, Skytte praised the English Queen, declaring that all women should strive to acquire such eloquence and linguistic skill. Although this statement was formulated in a very specific rhetorical context (discussing the utility of eloquence rather than the education of women), Skytte’s constant praise of the book arts and eloquence arguably gave rise to a certain openness regarding who could benefit from such education. Through their reading, women, too, could find solace, cultivate their virtues, and even defend their fatherland and the true faith. As a father and preceptor, Johan Skytte thus undoubtedly supported the education of women in his own vicinity, even though he never raised the issue in a more programmatic manner.

6.3. The Civil Servant

The State Administration

As a student, Skytte had referred to the example of diligent men who were rewarded with “high positions in the state”. His own subsequent elevation in the service of the state was not unique (albeit unusually far-reaching). Several of his student friends of similar backgrounds, like Nils Chesne-

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766 Ibid., B4v; “Hujus diligentiae, eo tempore quo suo cum marito Brunsbergae morabatur, fructum tulit non contemnendum. Saepius enim Pontificiorum telis petita, adeo mascule eadem disjecit, ut ne hiscere quidem fuerint ausi.” The visit in Braunsberg (today Branievo) must have taken place between 1626, when Wendela married Hans Kyle, and 1629 when she died. Braunsberg was known for its Jesuit college, where many Swedish students had studied, most famously Johannes Messenius (1579 or 80–1636). Few of these students returned to Sweden after the dethronement King Sigismund. One of those who returned, Messenius, received a professorship in Uppsala in 1609, but was put on trial for treason in 1616, and sent to prison (he was not released until 1635). On the Jesuit college in Braunsberg, see Giese, Studenten aus Mitternacht, 362-364. Wendela’s husband, the nobleman Hans Kyle, served as a military commander in 1626-29; Elgenstierna, Den introducerade svenska adelns ättartavlor, 369.

767 Skytte, Een kort underwijsning, 44.
copherus and Peder Nilsson, also reached central positions in the state (more specifically, the chancellery).\footnote{As discussed also above, 3.1.} Clearly, there were at the time political circumstances which favoured a rise of well-educated commoners—as the historian Svante Norrhem showed in his study *Uppkomlingarna*, the monarchs of early modern Europe often favored administrators and advisers from outside the established elites in order to strengthen their own position.\footnote{Norrhem, *Uppkomlingarna*, 163 f.} The fact that state administrations simultaneously expanded and became more distinct administrative structures at this time further improved the opportunities for the talented to make a career as a civil servant, especially in situations where his skills were in high demand.

An increasingly pressing issue in the first decade of Johan Skytte’s career was, however, just how “open” such career opportunities in the state should be—could the arguments of the self-confident *novi homines* be reconciled with the privilege demands of the old nobility? Traditionally the duty of the nobility had been to help the king carry the “burden of ruling” and contribute to the defence of the country, but as the administrative, political and diplomatic needs of the state grew, the demands on the noble estate increased.\footnote{Englund, *Det hotade huset*, 29.} This development added fuel to the fire of a longstanding debate revolving around the value of virtues and acquired skills on one hand, and noble birth and privileges on the other.\footnote{On this debate, see Lars Gustafsson, “Den litterate adelsmannen i den äldre stormaktstidens litteratur” in *Lychnos* 1959. For a discussion of the ideological agenda of the Swedish nobility in the late sixteenth century, see Englund, *Det hotade huset*, 122 f.} The scholarly, humanist position, naturally favoured the former, while some noblemen questioned whether an absorption in books was consistent with the identity of a nobleman. Politically, the high Swedish nobility demanded that their time-honoured privileges should be confirmed, especially after the harsh treatment they had received under the reign of Charles IX. The list of demands directed at Charles IX’s son, Gustav II Adolf, included a stipulation that all high official posts should be reserved for men of noble birth only. This demand was formally granted in 1611-12 when the young King Gustav Adolf approved the privilege program of the nobility.\footnote{The Lord High Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna ensured in 1611/12 that Gustav Adolf agreed to a number of specific conditions concerning the privileges of the nobility, and that he signed a “royal pledge” (*kungaförsäkran*) to ascend the throne. The pledge, which guaranteed the social, judicial, and economical rights of the nobility, also guaranteed the exclusive right of noblemen to the highest offices in the state; Runeby, *Monarchia mixta*, 81, and Sven A. Nilsson, *På väg mot reduktionen: Studier i svenskt 1600-tal* (Stockholm, 1964), 59.} It was, however, not long before the new king found ways to counteract the ambitions of the nobility. As the historian Sven A. Nilsson has shown, the nobility did in the
end not succeed in moving their positions forward as much as they had planned.\textsuperscript{773}

Yet, the specific demand of an exclusive right on the part of the nobility to the highest offices in the state appears as a severe stumbling-block with regard to Skytte’s Ramist arguments of employment based on merit. The lord high chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, once an advocate for the exclusive interests of the nobility, did not, however, use the given opportunity to make way for the aristocracy exclusively—instead, he used the same recruitment policy as the sixteenth-century monarchs, “favouring” also commoners. There were logical reasons for this strategy—in this manner, Oxenstierna limited the impact of special interests (originating with strong noble families) that could have impeded an efficient running of the chancellery, while also strengthening his own position.\textsuperscript{774} In practice, King Gustav Adolf and Axel Oxenstierna thus kept the door to the inner circles of the power elite at least half-open.\textsuperscript{775} A talented commoner could, if needed, simply be ennobled, a possibility frequently utilised throughout the century. The example of Johan Skytte himself illustrates of course that the rules were stretchable, who despite his standing as a \textit{homo novus} was elected into the Council of the Realm in 1617, and was made Baron in 1624.\textsuperscript{776} Yet, even

\textsuperscript{773} The consequences of the royal pledge of 1611 was therefore, as Nilsson argues, less revolutionary than has previously been assumed—already by 1612, the king had managed to restrict and limit the privileges of the nobility. This rapid development occurred despite the fact that the Lord High Chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, was himself a member of the old nobility. As Nilsson suggests, the limited success of the nobility to move their positions forward at this time may be explained by the “Crown’s severe financial situation” (\textit{det statsfinansiella nödläget}) during Gustav II Adolf’s reign, when the tremendous costs of war created a pressure on the Crown to increase its income by any means possible, also at the expense of the nobility and their privileges; Nilsson, \textit{På väg mot reduktionen}, 78-82.

\textsuperscript{774} Norrhem, \textit{Uppkomlingarna}, 56, 164. Axel Oxenstierna seems in fact to have increasingly identified himself with the interests of the Crown, as argued by Sven A. Nilsson; idem, \textit{På väg mot reduktionen}, 79. Following the death of Charles IX, several of the old secretaries, who were associated with Charles IX’s reign, had nevertheless been transferred. For instance, Nils Chesnecopherus, who had not been raised to nobility, met a less fortunate fate than Skytte, as he was outmanoeuvred from the centre of power by Axel Oxenstierna and the younger generation of noblemen; Berg, “Nils Chesnecopherus”, 437. The Treasury did not undergo the same process, but kept most of its employees; Runeby, \textit{Monarchia mixta}, 87.

\textsuperscript{775} Gunnar Wetterberg has discussed this practice in terms of an “open elite”; Gunnar Wetterberg, \textit{Levande 1600-tal} (Stockholm, 2003), 219-240. David Gaunt has also noted that no group excluded the other: “What is characteristic for the Swedish administration is that neither noblemen nor non-nobles excluded each other. Nobility were allowed to advance to higher office quickly, but a considerable proportion of the higher administrative personnel was of non-noble origin. This hardly meant that the bureaucracy obtained an antinoble impression. The majority of the commoners who advanced to high office were ennobled on the way up. They became clearly integrated with the lower nobility.”; Gaunt, \textit{Utbildning till statsens tjänst}, 202.

\textsuperscript{776} Because he was not born noble, he could in Swedish be labelled “vanbördig”. At the time of the signing of the royal pledge, Axel Oxenstierna argued that men who were foreign or “vanbördiga” should not be given the highest posts in the state. Later he nevertheless claimed to have recommended the king to make Skytte a member of the Council of the Realm; Wetterberg, \textit{Axel Oxenstierna}, 147, 266.
Skytte seems, however, to have reached a limit—he was never granted the highest office in the state, which would have been the leadership of one of the five state departments (see below, next page), even though he was in reality the leader of the Treasury in the 1620s.\footnote{On Skytte’s hopes and later disappointments regarding the highest posts in the government, especially following the death of Gustav II Adolf when new appointments were to be made, see Sondén, “Johan Skytte och Oxenstiernorna”, 133 ff.}

Family and other resources always remained crucial factors to young men seeking career opportunities, or as Norrhem concludes: “Family connections or wealth could in itself open doors to the administration, whereas a well-educated man with neither money nor connections would have little chance—if any—of making a career”.\footnote{Norrhem, \textit{Uppkomlingarna}, 172.} There existed, however, means of making such connections, by way of finding a powerful patron or by way of “marketing” one’s skills, making them known to the king or his officials. As will be further discussed below (6.4), Skytte as well as his brothers all found various ways in their youth to achieve or improve such connections.

Opportunities could also arise as the state administration expanded and became more formalised, which created openings at the administrative levels below the highest (political) posts in the state. The lord high chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, was the architect behind the first Swedish Instrument of Government, approved in 1634, which formalised many of the practices used in the daily work in the state administration. The text spoke of three sources of misfortune that had previously affected Sweden—disputed royal elections, religious disunity, and the lack of permanent order in the government.\footnote{Nils Edén, \textit{Den svenska centralregeringens utveckling 1602-1634} (Uppsala, 1902), 309-315. Oxenstierna had deliberated these issues thoroughly. Following the death of Charles IX in 1611, Oxenstierna had, as a young but accomplished nobleman, set out to organise the regulations of the rudimentary Swedish state administration. Oxenstierna was appointed lord high chancellor in 1612 and cooperated closely with Gustav II Adolf in subsequent years. As noted by Edén, the paragraph on religious disunity was added to Axel Oxenstierna’s original concept.} It was particularly imperative to avoid disruptions in the government, regardless of circumstances, as the text stated. Daily procedures must be upheld, whether the king was underaged, present or absent, well or sick, or indeed, whether he was alive or dead. A break of principle with the regime of personal rule, the Instrument of Government thus clearly acknowledged the necessity of continuity and systematization in the state administration, regardless of individual fates.\footnote{As Sven A. Nilsson has argued, the 1634 Instrument of Government formalised many administrative practices which Gustav II Adolf and Axel Oxenstierna had put in place in order to build a strong state that could meet the demands of war. This state-building project had however, as Nilsson notes, occurred in parallel with the expansion of the royal power—if Gustav II Adolf had wished to deviate from an established practice he had generally done so. Axel Oxenstierna’s Instrument of Government was constructed to put an end to this personal rule. A strong administration, run by high officials of the noble estate would now take control of the state. When the king died the document was still unsigned which gave rise to some}
In terms of daily practices, the Instrument of Government of 1634 did not introduce entirely new routines in the state administration: many of the prescribed routines were already being applied to some extent. In essence, the Instrument of Government confirmed that the Swedish state administration was organized in five central departments (kollegier)—the Judiciary (originally only Svea hovrätt), the War Council (Krigskollegiet), the Admiralty (Amiralitetskollegiet), the Chancellery (Kanslikollegiet) and the Treasury (Kammarkollegiet). The departments were led by five members of the Council of the Realm, entitled the drots, marsk, amiral, kansler and skattmästare. These five high offices were first mentioned by Charles IX in 1608 as a distinct group of officials representing a division of the state administration into five sections. The first regulation for the Chancellery, issued in 1612 by Oxenstierna, was in fact based on an instruction given already in 1599 by Duke Charles as he was preparing a military campaign in Finland. The duke appointed at this time three secretaries to take care of the administration at home according to a linguistic division of Latin, Swedish and German matters (that is, documents). Johannes Hane (whom Skytte had known since his school years) was at that time appointed Secretary of the State (riksens överste sekretarius), and Skytte himself was given the responsibility for the administration of Latin documents (due to his return to Marburg the same year, he does not, however, seem to have begun any work in the chancellery).

The reorganization of the chancellery did not entail a surge in terms of the number of employees. In his detailed account of the development of the Swedish state administration in the first decades of the seventeenth century, the historian Nils Edén noted that the entire chancellery counted 19 employees in 1602, according to the payroll, and that the numbers did not vary much in the first two decades of the seventeenth century. The Treasury employed about the same number at the time, but had in 1626

In the process of formal approval—the council and estates simply had to trust Oxenstierna’s word that Gustav II Adolf had in fact approved the Instrument of Government, before he died; Sven A. Nilsson, “1634 års regeringsform i det svenska statssystemet”, Statsvetenskaplig tidskrift 1984:5, 305. See also Edén, Den svenska centralregeringens utveckling, 320.

781 Nilsson, “1634 års regeringsform i det svenska statssystemet”, 305.
782 Edén, Den svenska centralregeringens utveckling, 47. The titles of drots and marsk were of medieval origin, the former referring to a civil leader and the latter to a military leader. In the early seventeenth century the drots was the president of the Court of Appeal, but after the creation of more than one Court of Appeal, he functioned as a minister of justice.
783 Berg, Johan Skytte, 75. Edén’s assumption that no secretary at all was appointed to the Latin matters at this time is thus not entirely correct. In time, Oxenstierna suggested new forms for the Chancellery: in his regulation of 1618, a division according to domestic and foreign affairs was established, and permanent offices, which supposedly would exist independently of changes in the employee lists, were stipulated; Edén, Den svenska centralregeringens utveckling, 121, 172-76.
784 Edén, Den svenska centralregeringens utveckling, 60, 184-85. The regulation of 1620 notes 22 employees; ibid., 166.
grown to 40 employees not counting the five councilors, *kammarråd*. An unusual feature of the Swedish administration was that the employees of the Chancellery and Treasury did not work at home: these departments were physically located in the Royal Castle in Stockholm. The hours and conditions of the secretaries and clerks were specified in a number of regulations that laid down the procedures and routines expected to be followed in the departments. All of these regulations confirm the impression that the state administration at this time was increasingly disengaged from the royal court.

A crucial bottleneck for further expansions of the Swedish state was, however, the supply of educated employees, not only in Stockholm, but across the realm. The crown had, for instance, identified the need for more efficient ways of tax collection, and ways of improving the trades, in order to further increase the revenues of the state. During the rare periods of peace which occurred in the first half of the seventeenth century, the king and the lord high chancellor initiated various reform activities, which only further underlined the need for educated civil servants. Also reforms that relied on local administration demanded, as we shall see, a certain level of education on the part of the leadership. Following the Treaty of Stolbova with Russia in 1617 and the final installments of the “ransom for Älvsborg” (*Älvsborgs lösen*) to Denmark in 1619, a particularly intense period of reform was initiated, involving initiatives related to the trades, the organisation of towns and the crafts, and the mapping of the realm and its resources. Both Johan Skytte and his brother Lars would, as we shall see, become deeply involved with these reforms, especially related to the towns and trades.

Between 1619 and 1624 about ten new towns were established and granted town privileges. The attention was at this time turned also to the

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785 Ibid., 68, 196.
786 Edén, *Kammarkollegiets historia*, 47.
787 The pattern was similar in kingdoms across Europe; Pere Molas Ribalta, “The Impact of Central Institutions” in Reinhard (ed.), *Power Elites and State Building*, 19. Quoted above, 105, n. 361.
788 Birgitta Ericsson, “De anlagda städerna i Sverige (ca. 1580-1800) in Grethe Authén Blom (ed.), *Urbaniseringsprosessen i Norden: Del 2—De anlagte steder på 1600-1700 tallet* (Oslo, 1977), 107. As discussed by Ericsson, towns were established by the crown in the period 1580-1680 in Sweden for administrative, economic and strategic (military) interests. The state’s town-founding policy (encouraged by Duke Charles and enforced by Gustav II Adolf) roughly doubled the number of towns in Sweden (not counting, in this case, Finland and the Baltic provinces) by the end of the century. This urbanisation should not, however, as remarked by Eli Heckscher, be exaggerated: “By and large, the towns, especially the new ones, remained rural settlements equipped with town charters”; Eli F. Heckscher, *An Economic History of Sweden* (1954; Cambridge, 1968), 110. Heckscher’s largely negative assessment of these towns, which was based on the weak development of their economy and populations, has been criticized by Ericsson: “I sin skenbara obetydlighet har de många små städerna i Sverige fyllt viktiga funktioner. De nya städerna har vidgat fältet för statsmakten" svart aktivitet men också skapat arbetsmöjligheter för många av landets invånare, lett till en ökad social rörlighet och vidare kontakter”; Ericsson, “De anlagda städerna i Sverige”, 130.
little explored northern realms, including Lapland, where the governmental policy was to encourage trade, commerce and crafts. Therefore, in 1620, Johan Skytte was sent north on a commission by Gustav II Adolf to survey the conditions of these northern realms. Unfortunately, neither the official instruction nor Skytte’s report from this journey has been preserved. A letter written by Skytte to Axel Oxenstierna, dated March 31, 1620, relates some observations Skytte made during his journey, regarding mills (sågekvarnar), marketplaces, trade, timber cargo, and transcriptions. He was evidently optimistic about the possibilities of these lands. As is clear from other preserved records, Skytte at this time became actively involved with the founding of new towns by the northern coast. Skytte conducted negotiations with the local inhabitants, and instructed representatives from the major parishes to travel to Stockholm (presumably to confirm their town-privileges). The process was quick: by 1621 town privileges had been issued for Umeå, Piteå, Luleå and Torneå.

The Crown was also interested in the organization of towns, new as well as old. In 1619, a revision of town privileges was conducted, which resulted in detailed regulations for the administrations of towns. As the historian Birgitta Ericsson writes, this was a period of increasing state bureaucratization at the expense of local rule. The body of borough administrators were expected to look after the interests not only of the town but also of the Crown (their bookkeeping was subjected to royal revision), and the king appointed mayors who were expected to be acquainted with judicial matters. Such local government clearly demanded a certain level of education. The matter of education was considered important also for other reasons—it was assumed that a number of occupations related to the “burgher livelihood” would benefit from educated men. The establishment of schools in new towns was consequently a matter that received attention at the highest level. In the 1619 revision of town privileges, one paragraph stated that towns were obliged to provide a school where the youth could be “fostered in useful arts” (må til nyttiga Konster blifwa uptuchtade). To this end, the towns should hire teachers who could instruct the pupils in “mathematics and such things which were useful in commerce and the burgher livelihood, so that no one would be accepted as a merchant who had

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789 Letter from Johan Skytte to Axel Oxenstierna, March 31, 1620; E369, UUB.
791 On these town foundations, see Gunnar Westin (ed.), Övre Norrlands historia: Del II, Tiden 1600-1721 (Umeå, 1965), 223-225, 248 f. The cartographer Anders Bure, who had created the pioneering map of Lapland in 1611 (Lapponia), was given the task of drawing the town plans of these new towns.
792 Quoted from Anders Anton Stierman, Alla riksdagars och mötens besluth ... ifrån år 1521 intil år 1727 (Stockholm, 1743), 752.
not learnt proper accounting and bookkeeping." 793 The privileges for new towns contained similar formulations, in some cases adjusted for local needs. The mining towns of Falun and Sala, for instance, were requested to provide schools and teachers that could foster skills “demanded by the mining trade, useful for town life” ([...] huadh mehre bergz och köpmannehandellen kräfuer och till dedh borgerlige lefwernet nyttigt är). 794

Johan Skytte was well aware of the demands of the “burgher livelihood”—his father Bengt as well as brother Lars had been mayors in Nyköping. As governor general of Livonia, Ingria and Karelia, Skytte became involved in the founding of new towns in Ingria (Nyen and Sordavala). 795 Besides his engagements with the establishment of a gymnasium in Dorpat (transformed to a university in 1632), he was at this time also concerned with the establishments of new schools across the provinces. In a letter to Gustav II Adolf in February 1632, he spoke of his daily thoughts on how “small schools” could be established (små particular scolar). 796 The result of these thoughts regarding new town schools are, however, not known (on the University of Dorpat, see below, 7.2)

Skytte’s awareness of the educational needs related to the expanding geographical as well as political dimensions of the state was, in conclusion, in his early career influenced by several contexts—while his diplomatic missions (as was discussed in 2.1), showed the importance of eloquence and political skills, his domestic travels and participation in the founding of new towns by the Northern coast raised questions related to lower and local education. With regard to the government of the realm, Skytte’s work in the increasingly burdened Treasury, starting in 1612, moreover provided first hand insights regarding the core of the state activities—the finances of the Crown.

The Toil of the Treasury

Skytte began his work in the Treasury as a councilor (kammarråd) in 1612. This was an eventful time in many respects—Charles IX had died in Nyköping in the fall of 1611, Denmark had declared war against Sweden earlier the same year, and the Swedish nobility had, as previously mentioned, managed to procure a pledge (kungaförsäkran) from Gustav II Adolf, that would circumscribe his power and restore the time-honored

793 Ibid., 752; “Och på det Ungdomen må til nyttiga Konster blifwa uptuchtade, så wele Wij at de förmembste Kiöpstäder som rådh och ámbne hafwer, skola uprätta goda Räknescholar, och hwar icke hemma finnes sådana Män, skola de dem utifrån inskrifwa, som instituera och lära Ungdomen i Räknekonsten, och hwad mera som nyttigt är uti Kiöphandeln och det Borgeliga lefwernet, och at ingen sådan antages och hålles för Kiöpswen som icke lärdt at hålla sin Kööpmans-Bok, och wet ther medh rätteligen at umgå.”
794 Corin & Sleman (eds.), Privilegier, resolutioner och förordningar: Sjätte delen, 212, 263.
795 Liljedahl, Svensk förvaltning i Livland, 485 f.
796 Ibid., 406.
rights of the nobility (which had been grossly violated during the reign of Charles IX). The war with Denmark, known as the Kalmar War (*Kalmarkriget*), meanwhile increased the financial burdens of the Crown and thus the pressure on the nobility to fulfill their duties of military armament. The Treasury, which had kept its employees from Charles IX’s reign (unlike the Chancellery), was at the centre of the ensuing tug of war between the king and the nobility. In 1612, the new king managed to restrict some of the privileges of the nobility by the help of the peasantry as well as the secretaries of the Treasury. As one of the leading men in the Treasury, Johan Skytte soon became involved with the practical aspects of the withdrawals of enfeoffments from the nobility. Even the powerful lord high chancellor himself, Axel Oxenstierna, at one point felt the need to make an appeal to Skytte to be exempted from these withdrawals.

After the peace with Denmark in 1613, a new burden was laid on the Swedish Crown. The peace settlement dictated that Denmark should return all conquests except Älvsborg (Sweden’s only port on the western seaboard) and its surrounding districts. If Sweden, however, within six years paid one million *riksdaler*, Älvsborg would be returned. Otherwise, these conquests would befall Denmark permanently. The payment of the so-called second *Älvsborgs lösen* would require tremendous efforts in regard to the finances of the Swedish Crown. Skytte’s eloquence and diplomatic skills would in the forthcoming years be frequently utilized, often in the context of legations sent abroad, in an attempt to raise money or otherwise improve the Swedish situation.

During these years Skytte repeatedly tried to be relieved of his duties in the Treasury. In a letter to Axel Oxenstierna dated December 5, 1612, he asked to be freed from his “arduous office” (*mödesamme embethe*), and in July the next year he asked the lord high chancellor for protection against the “machinations and plots” (*subdolas machinationes*) that were directed at him. In November 1614, Skytte again explained that he wished to be relieved from his trying duty, not because he wanted to escape his duties to the public, the country or the king, but because he wished to be spared from “the mean talk of the most corrupted people” (*perversissimis perver-
As has been discussed in previous scholarship, one source of Skytte’s complaints and recurring wishes to leave the Treasury was in all likelihood the tension with the nobility during the Kalmar War. Yet, as can be argued, there was also a rhetorical element involved in Skytte’s complaints, as we shall see.

In April 1621, Skytte wrote to Oxenstierna in response to a previous letter, in which the latter had celebrated the quiet life in the countryside: Skytte agreed wholeheartedly, exclaiming that the way of life and the manners of men were indeed purer in the countryside compared to life at the royal court, where ambition, jealousy, and “supercilious display” dominated. Of course, both Skytte and Oxenstierna were familiar with the bucolic poetry of Virgil and other classical authors who had celebrated the tranquility of country-life, far from the public arena. In reality, the court and the chambers in Stockholm remained the primary focus of attention for Skytte as well as Oxenstierna, who were both watchful of their positions and interests. The frequent complaints expressed by these powerful statesmen were in all likelihood not without cause, but the recurring rhetoric also appears almost as an emerging narrative of the burdened, albeit dutiful and loyal, statesman, who is forced to make sacrifices for the Crown but who at the same time wish to distances himself from the “machinations” of others. In the case of Johan Skytte, the historian Per Sondén has moreover remarked that even though the Treasury surely involved unpleasant challenges in the 1610-20s, it was also “a source of power, which Skytte ingeniously utilized, especially in the absence of the lord high chancellor, for the benefit of himself and his friends.” It was not until 1629, when Skytte was appointed governor general of Livonia, that he finally left the Treasury.

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802 Ibid., 174 f., letter from Johan Skytte to Axel Oxenstierna dated November 30, 1614.
803 A tension which may have been aggravated by different political ideals—whereas Skytte favored a strong monarchy, the nobility preferred a larger degree of shared power; Sellberg, “Johan Skytte”, 513; Runeby, Monarchia Mixta, 50, 77 f.; Lindberg, Stoicism och stat, 197.
804 Letter from Johan Skytte to Axel Oxenstierna dated April 5, 1621, in Sondén (ed.), Rikskanslernens Axel Oxenstiernas skrifter och brefexling, 257 f.; “Ubi mores sunt puriores, in agro an vero in aula! Hic ambitio, avaritia, libido superbe dominantur, illic vero in agris pudor, innocencia, simplitias domicilium suum fixisse mihi videntur.”
805 Cf. the correspondance and comments of Axel Oxenstierna and his brother Gabriel Oxenstierna—when stationed abroad, Axel Oxenstierna frequently complained of the lack of financial means sent to him, while his brother, Gabriel Oxenstierna, complained at home over the incompetence of others and of the “machinations” directed at him; Sondén, “Johan Skytte och Oxenstiernorna”, 122-127.
806 Ibid., 123 f.; “Det är emellertid tydligt, att, om också finansförvaltningen hade sina törnen, var den tillika en maktkälla, som Skytte väl förstod att begagna, särdeles i rikskanslerens frånvaro, till sin och sina vänners fördel, men till mindre belätenhet för andra.”
807 Whether this appointment was really a promotion is in fact doubtful—it was a substantial removal from the centre of power in Stockholm; Sondén in fact speaks of Skytte’s appointment in terms of an “honorable exile” (hederlig förvisning); ibid., 128. Skytte’s growing collection of titles, missions and appointments was nevertheless noticed by skeptical members of the old nobility, who wondered what would be next—would the king even make
Although the details of Skytte’s political career fall out of the scope of this study, his tasks in the Treasury tell us that life in the state at this time was demanding in more than one way. Mathematical, rhetorical and political skills evidently all came in handy with regard to, for instance, the mission of raising the daunting Ålvsborgs lösen. From the perspective of merit and skills, such varied demands put pressure on the educational system, as we shall see in Chapter Seven.

Figure 10. Grönsöö. Johan Skytte’s estate in Lake Mälaren, built in the 1610s. Engraving by Jean Marot 1670, from the Svecia antiqua.

6.4. Skytte and his Brothers

As we have seen, the first decades of the seventeenth century in Sweden were seething with reform activities and national ambitions related not only to the administration of the state, but also to its expansion. The careers of Johan Skytte and his two brothers, Lars and Ericus, reflect different aspects of this “age of ambition”. Skytte’s younger brother Ericus Schroderus (1575–1647) became engaged in a life-long cultural endeavor, translating Latin literature to Swedish: he was in 1622 designated Regius Translator. Skytte’s brother Lars [Lasse] (–1634) initially followed in the footsteps of their father and became mayor of Nyköping. He was later appointed deputy judge (assessor) of Svea Hovrätt (established 1614), and was five years later introduced into the House of the Nobility as Skytte af Sätra. During this second decade of the Swedish seventeenth century, many state activities

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809 Andersson, “Skytte”, 496. Lars Skytte was in 1625 moreover made governor of Stockholm and Uppsala Castles; Elgenstierna, “Adliga ätten Skytte af Sätra”, 321.
were directly linked to the payment of Älvsborgs lösen to Denmark and the immediate need to yield revenue to the crown. This was not least the case with the copper trade and the formation of a Swedish Copper Trading Company (1615 and 1619), a venture in which both Johan and his brother Lars Skytte were actively engaged—the former as a Treasury official as well as an investor, and the latter as vice governor. Lars Skytte was appointed to this post in 1623.810 In different ways, the three brothers from Nyköping thus became deeply involved with projects aimed to develop or refine the Swedish economy, culture, and state.

From Trade to Translations

As previously discussed, the prospering of towns and the trades was in the early seventeenth century given much consideration by the Crown, for fiskal as well as strategic reasons. When a revision of the town privileges was initiated in 1619, the crafts, too, were identified as in need of closer scrutinization with the intent to render them more effective and productive.811 Johan Skytte’s brother Lars presented at this time a number of ideas on how this should be done, which may have contributed to the king’s choice of engaging him in the preparations for an ambitious town revision.812 Already in the spring of 1621, the period of peace seemed, however, to be coming to an end—as negotiations with Poland broke down, Gustav II Adolf began to prepare for war. To ensure that the reform work did not come to a halt, the task of overseeing the initiated revision of the guilds was given to two trusted men, Gabriel Oxenstierna (1587–1640), brother of Axel Oxenstierna, and Lars Skytte. The result of this reform work, conducted in 1621-22, was a national regulation of the guilds, that defined in detail the obligations and rules of a number of crafts.813 Lars Skytte, who had been raised to nobility in

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810 Elgenstierna, “Adliga ätten Skytte af Sätra”, 321. On the foundation of the Swedish Copper Trading Company, see Georg Wittrock, Svenska Handelskompaniet och kopparhandeln under Gustaf II Adolf (Uppsala, 1919), 29. The secular career of Lars Skytte was not repeated by his son, also named Lars Skytte (1610-96), who left Sweden and eventually converted to Catholicism: Lars Skytte (junior) studied at his uncle’s Collegium Illustre, but acquired most of his higher education abroad. He was accepted as a Franciscan friar in 1647 in Portugal. Following Queen Christina’s abdication and conversion, Lars Skytte Junior moved to Rome where he became father confessor to the queen; Magnus Nyman, “Lars Skytte: Diplomat, franciskan, humanist” in Kyrkohistorisk Årsskrift, 1982.

811 Folke Lindberg, Hantverkarna: Första delen—Medeltid och äldre vasatid (Stockholm, 1947), 180. In order for the Crown to profit from the crafts and achieve an efficient taxation, it was considered necessary to have an improved system of control; Dag Lindström, “Skråhantverket: mellan mästarhushåll och stormakt” in Stellan Dahlgren, Anders Florén & Åsa Karlsson (eds.), Makt och vardag: Hur man styrde, levde och tänkte under svensk stormaktstid (Stockholm, 1993), 207. As a start, craftsmen in Stockholm were in 1620 requested to inform the town leadership of the facts and statistics of their guilds.

812 Lindberg, Hantverkarna, 183.

813 It was not an entirely new set of rules, but rather a unification and standardisation of older rules; Lindström, “Skråhantverket”, 206-209. Yet this initiative, coming from the state, was,
1619, a proposed at this time to the king that a new office should be created, responsible for the supervision of towns. Lars, who evidently hoped to be appointed to this new function, did not, however, manage to convince the king to establish such an office.

In his position as councilor in the Treasury, Johan Skytte, too, became deeply involved with a number of reform projects, related not only to the administration of the state finances but also to their improvements. In 1620, Skytte was, as we have seen, sent North on a commission by Gustav II Adolf to conduct a survey of the natural resources in these distant and unexploited lands. Skytte’s journey resulted in the establishment of a number of new towns in Northern Sweden, and later, following a second trip, the establishment of a school for the children of the Sami people.814 By the mid-1620s, the resourceful Dutch merchant and industrial man Louis De Geer (1587–1652) had become involved with investments in Sweden related to the arms and copper trade. When arriving in Sweden in 1627, he first met with Gustav II Adolf and soon thereafter with Skytte in the Treasury, where business negotiations were initiated. The resulting arrangements gave De Geer essentially a monopoly position in Swedish iron production and weapons manufactories.815

The career of Skytte’s younger brother Ericus Schroderus (1575–1647) was less diversified, and remained closer attached to the academic context of his youth. After his studies in Marburg, Ericus returned home to become a teacher in the school in Nyköping.816 Schroderus’s career as a translator began with his translation of James I’s Prince’s Mirror Regium donum in 1606, which thus appeared two years after Skytte’s Prince’s Mirror for Gustav II Adolf appeared in print. Schroderus received financial support from 1612 to oversee the crown’s prints and translations; as of 1616, he was explicitly given the task of importing and translating “useful literature which would benefit the citizens and especially the youth”, and in 1622 he was designated “royal translator”, Regius Translator. Around 40 translations done by Schroderus are known, but the total number may have been more—Schroderus was in all likelihood responsible for a greater number of printed

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814 To be further discussed below, Chapter Seven.
816 Anders Burius, “Ericus Benedicti Schroderus”, SBL xxxi (Stockholm, 2001). Schroderus was responsible for at least forty translations to Swedish, among others Comenius’s Janua Linguarum (1640).
pages than had been produced in Sweden during the entire previous century.\textsuperscript{817}

As discussed by the historian Axel Norberg, Schroderus’s publications were focused on history and politics, religion and church history, and miscellaneous works relatated to educational and morally flavoured treatises.\textsuperscript{818} Especially noteworthy is his translation of Johannes Magnus’s \textit{Historia de omnibus gothorum svecorumque regibus}, published in 1620 in Swedish under the title \textit{Swea och Götha Crönika}. This work, which had been so crucial in the formation of Johan Skytte’s as well as the Vasa dynasty’s perception of a proud national history, was now available in Swedish. Schroderus also translated Hemming Gadh’s Latin oration against the Danes (\textit{En sanfärdigh Oration}, publication year unknown), which Skytte had quoted in one of his student orations. The selection of translations was thus not random, but was focused on moral education and edifying patriotic literature. Schroderus also translated new pedagogical literature, by John Amos Comenius, which would have an impact on the new school orders formulated by mid-century.\textsuperscript{819} Schroderus received financial support for his work, but he was not ennobled like his brothers.

The examples of the Skytte brothers show that knowledge and skills acquired by education (for instance, jurisprudence, mathematics, economy, languages, eloquence) constituted an important foundation and starting point for a career in the state. Patronage and individual initiatives—marketing specific talents—from then on affected the actual outcome of the individual effort. Johan Skytte and his brothers all skillfully presented their talents to their patrons and the regent in various manners—Skytte by producing and performing patriotic orations as a student, celebrating the wisdom of his patron, Duke Charles; Ericus Schroderus by dedicating his translations to the king or other patrons, and Lars Skytte by sending his own reform proposals to the king. Such strategies were in many cases succesful, and contributed to the elevation of several “new families” in the early Swedish seventeenth-century.\textsuperscript{820}

\textsuperscript{818} Ibid., 387 ff.
\textsuperscript{819} See Chapter Seven.
\textsuperscript{820} The careers of the Bure brothers may also be adduced in this context. See Chapter Seven on Anders Bure’s career as a cartographer, and above, Chapter Three, on Johannes Bureus’s role as “chief custodian” of national monuments.
6.5. Conclusions

During the first two decades of his career, Johan Skytte established himself as a loyal administrator and statesman. His career, which started with his appointment as preceptor of Prince Gustav Adolf and his siblings, was shaped by national ambitions as well as bureaucratic professionalization. Skytte’s long education had prepared him for many of his tasks in terms of specific skills (for example eloquence, mathematics, and jurisprudence). Yet, there was no specific Ramist instruction regarding the best way to teach a prince or to prepare him for his future fateful duties. With regard to this specific task Skytte consulted the Prince’s Mirror genre as well as literature on statecraft. In Skytte’s resulting Prince’s Mirror for Gustav Adolf the utility-orientated ideals of his own education are nevertheless evident: Skytte emphasized in particular the importance of eloquence and the mathematical arts, not only for the regent himself but also for his civil servants in the state. The success of the king’s rule was in Skytte’s portrayal dependent not least on skillful advisors and officials such as himself—the professional, well-educated civil servant, ready to advise the regent on the right course of action in any matter.

From the perspective of the expanding state bureaucracy, however, education was at this time an Achilles’ heel in Sweden. As declared in the Instrument of Government of 1634, it was imperative to avoid disruptions in the government and maintain daily procedures regardless of individual fates. Such continuity required a staff of educated officials, who could be used on legations, in the Courts of Appeal, in the Chancellery or in the Treasury. A university degree and documented skills in eloquence or jurisprudence could at this time be the first step towards a rewarding career. Johan Skytte and his brothers all adopted strategies at an early stage to make their talents known, by means of patriotic orations, dedications, translations, proposals, or other initiatives. Two out of three brothers, Johan and Lars, were raised to nobility, while the third brother, Ericus Schroderus, was appointed Regius Translator. In light of these successful career paths, the Skytte family appears as one of the new families of the Swedish political elite in the early seventeenth century, striving not only for employment and offices in the state, but also for recognition and rewards.

Skytte carefully planned the education for his children. As was noted at the time, Skytte’s daughters received an unusually thorough education, even in subjects traditionally withheld from women, such as history, politics, and ancient languages (Latin and Greek). While Skytte left no official motivation for his daughters’ extensive education, one of the commemorations of Wendela Skytte, who died young in childbirth, reveals patriotic as well as moral motivations—it was good for women as well to be able to tell truth from falseness in religious matters, and to know the history of their native country. While similar arguments were discussed in the academic setting of
Uppsala University (at one time presented publicly by Skytte’s sons), the matter of female education did not, however, at the time prompt any more far-reaching reconsiderations of women in relation to higher education.

Skytte’s tasks in the public arena, and especially in the Treasury, illustrate the multifaceted demands of a life in the state at this time, from mathematics to the “machinations” of politics. When Skytte was made chancellor of Uppsala University in 1622, to be discussed in the next chapter, he had served for two decades as a professional administrator and statesman. As will be argued, these years further strengthened Skytte’s conviction of the benefits of a utility-orientated and not least well-rounded educational system, covering a wide range of skills.
7. Studied for Action: Education and Reform

7.1. Reinstating Uppsala University

Several attempts to revise and improve the conditions for Uppsala University were initiated in the early seventeenth century. Because King Charles IX did not release sufficient resources to the university, no significant improvements were, however, made during his rule. The major university reforms would instead be realized by his son, King Gustav II Adolf, in the early 1620s. Skytte, the former Prince teacher, who was appointed chancellor of Uppsala University in 1622, had by this time been rewarded with wealth as well as political influence, which, as we shall see, gave him the opportunity to act himself as a patron and protector of learning and education, also beyond Uppsala University.

This chapter will be devoted to Johan Skytte’s role as an educational reformer in the context of the early era of Sweden’s Age of Greatness. More specifically, I will discuss Skytte’s role as a university chancellor, and his initiatives as a patron of schools and learning, such as his support of the establishment of a school in Lapland. With regard to the reinstatement of Uppsala University, I will particularly discuss the impact of Ramism, and Skytte’s initiatives to strengthen eloquence as well as the mathematical arts.

Troubled Beginnings

Johan Skytte was involved with matters related to Uppsala University even before his appointment to university chancellor in 1622. Charles IX, entitled the “entrepreneurial prince” in recent scholarship on account of his interest

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821 Regarding Charles IX and Uppsala University, see Annerstedt, *Upsala universitets historia I*, 105-149.
822 When speaking to the students in Uppsala, Skytte liked to emphasize, as we shall see, that diligence could ultimately be rewarded with employments and even estates. A complete survey of Skytte’s own “rewards”, in terms of monetary compensation as well as estates is, however, yet to be made.
in trade and manufactories, was not indifferent to the state of domestic education.\textsuperscript{823} At the church meeting of 1593, known as the Uppsala Assembly (at which the Swedish Church adopted the \textit{Confessio Augustana}), Charles supported the decision to reinstate Uppsala University—a decision heavily influenced by religious and strategic political concerns. The role of the university as a political strategy is not least evident in the privileges adopted in 1595, which stated outright that “nothing is more suitable than to maintain schools and churches […] which could foster skilled individuals who could teach and defend the right Evangelical doctrine.”\textsuperscript{824} Duke Charles was at this time clearly motivated by his wish to be perceived as a defender of the Lutheran faith.\textsuperscript{825} The lectures could immediately begin, as the professors of John III’s college in Stockholm were unemployed at the time. Trouble was, however, looming on the horizon.

After the turn of the century, Charles IX, in his new position as king, emphasized the need for educated men also for state utility reasons. He even proposed a bill in the matter directed toward the nobility, which stipulated a demand for noble families to provide their children with education and schooling that would be useful for the Crown, either in the book arts or in skills suitable for future service at the royal court—or else the noble parents would forfeit their right to the state of nobility.\textsuperscript{826} Charles also directed this emphasis on worldly needs toward Uppsala University, though this created tensions with its Lutheran leadership, who viewed university matters as a domain of the Church.\textsuperscript{827} Charles IX’s growing discontent with the university is evident from a letter he wrote in 1602 to the professors in Uppsala, in which he asked for a “learned political person” who could be sent on lega-

\textsuperscript{823} Hedberg, \textit{Karl IX: Företagarfursten och enväldshärskaren}. At the Assembly of the Estates in 1604, Charles particularly expressed his concerns regarding the standard of Swedish schools compared to schools abroad; Sjöstrand, \textit{Pedagogikens historia II}, 104.

\textsuperscript{824} Reprinted in Annerstedt, \textit{Bihang 1}, 30-34; “[…] och inngen ting är der till tänligere, ännat holle kyckeri och skolor widh macht, på thedh man motte hafwe wisse personer tilltage, som skickelige och tänligare ware kunne, att cristeligen och sannfärdelh genn före denn rätte ewangelij lähre, som nu här i riket brukes, och allmennelhigen wedertagen är….”.

\textsuperscript{825} Erland Sellberg, \textit{Kyrkan och den tidigmoderna staten: en konflikt om Aristoteles, utbildning och makt} (Stockholm, 2010), 109. King Sigismund, on the other hand, was understandably less than enthusiastic concerning the establishment of privileges for a Lutheran university championed by his enemy. Duke Charles and the Council went ahead and signed an official letter of privileges for Uppsala University themselves in 1595. See also Lindroth, \textit{Uppsala universitet}, 29 f.


\textsuperscript{827} For a thematic treatment of the tension between the early modern Swedish state and the Church, see Sellberg, \textit{Kyrkan och den tidigmoderna staten}. On Charles IX and Uppsala University, see ibid., 111, 120 f.
tions, since “everyone can not be vicars”.828 During the assembly of the Estates in Norrköping two years later, Charles proposed a strengthening of Uppsala University through several new professorships in jurisprudence, medicine, rhetoric-history and Greek-Hebrew, as well as a reinforcement of mathematics, including arithmetic, geometry, optics, mechanics and isoropica (that is, Archimedes’ theory of equilibrium).829 As noted by Tor Berg, the details of the proposal reveal striking similarities with professorships used in Marburg and in Lemgo, and it is therefore not unreasonable to assume that Johan Skytte and Nils Chesnecopherus, as former Marburg students, had assisted their employer in this matter.830 Three new professors were at this time in fact also appointed—Johannes Canuti Lenaues (1573–1669) in logic, Johannes Rudbeckius (1581–1646) in mathematics, and Martinus Olai Stenius (1574–1644) in astronomy. They had all studied at German universities, and would make substantial contributions to the academic life in Uppsala in the following years.

Yet, with regard to the necessary financial support of Uppsala University, Charles IX proved to be parsimonious. The conflicts and tensions between Charles and the orthodox Lutheran leadership in Uppsala resulted in a number of unresolved problems.831 The professors informed the king that they were forced to become vicars in the countryside since they were not paid sufficiently. They also complained that the students in the community house did not get proper food, and that the university lacked adequate printing facilities.832 Charles IX’s slow and stingy responses did not generally accommodate the demands of the professors. The ambitions of the 1604 proposal were thus not fully implemented at this time with regard to funding and professorships. The vulnerable situation for the professors was also affected by the ongoing conflict between Charles and Sigismund. Laurentius Paulinus Gothus (1565–1646), an accomplished professor of theology who was suspected by Charles IX to have sympathized with Sigismund, was interrogated and suddenly dismissed from his professorship in 1606.833

Johan Skytte’s first visit to Uppsala, which took place in 1605, was also occasioned by the Swedish-Polish conflict. Together with Johannes Hane, he was sent to Uppsala to ask for the professors’ recommendations regarding a

828 Annerstedt, Uppsala universitets historia I, 106, note 6; “Och ther något gott skulle blifwa uthaf then Academie, då motte icke alle blifwe Prester, uthan somlige och informeres till thett wereldlige regementhe”.
829 Reprinted in Annerstedt, Bihang I, 48-50.
830 Berg, Johan Skytte, 122.
831 Annerstedt, Uppsala universitets historia I, 107-149
832 Ibid., 110. The letters exchanged between the professors and Charles IX are available in reprint in Annerstedt, Bihang I, 62-64.
833 After a two year period of vicarship in the countryside, he was, however, restored to favour by Charles IX; Sellberg, Kyrkan och den tidigmoderna staten, 131.

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French proposition for mediation with Poland. On this visit Skytte and Hane received a number of complaints from the professors, which they brought back to Charles, but the latter merely proposed further investigations of the situation. When Charles IX died in 1611, the state of the university was thus unstable, not least financially. Professorship salaries varied wildly from year to year, and the community house only kept 30 students, whereas the ambition was 100 according to the 1604 proposal. Nine professors—two in theology, one in jurisprudence, one in rhetoric, one in logic, one in mathematics, one in astronomy, one in physics, and one in Greek and Hebrew—were nevertheless struggling to maintain an acceptable level of education under the circumstances.

The Professors and the Utility of Education

Academic activities, such as the production of orations and dissertations, provided opportunities for scholars to define as well as defend their understanding of the value and utility of education—to each other or to the king or other patrons. At Uppsala University, a magister promotion was held against all odds already in 1600, thanks to the previously mentioned Laurentius Paulinus Gothus, a leading academic force at the time. Paulinus had studied at John III’s college in Stockholm and subsequently in Rostock, where he had learned to appreciate the ideals of Ramism. As a mathematics professor in Uppsala in the 1590s, Paulinus taught arithmetic and geometry using textbooks by Petrus Ramus. In the subject of astronomy, he had, as one of the first Swedish scholars, given lectures on planetary motions not only according to Ptolemy but also according to Copernicus and Tycho Brahe.

When Paulinus was appointed professor of theology in May 1600 he delivered a sophisticated humanist oration, which in a characteristic Ramist manner celebrated the utility of the whole range of liberal arts as well as the importance of teaching them “correctly, distinctly and by a legitimate order”. In the context of the mathematical arts, Paulinus emphasized their

834 Berg, Johan Skytte, 125
835 Ibid., 128 f.
836 Annerstedt, Upsala universitets historia I, 149
837 Ibid., 101.
839 Lundström, Laurentius Paulinus Gothus, 40 f. As Erland Sellberg points out, there is of course no evidence that Paulinus should have particularly supported these (non-Ptolemaean) theories; Sellberg, Kyrkan och den tidigmoderna staten, 128.
840 Laurentius Paulinus Gothus, Oratio de studio s. theologiae recte inchoando ... habita in illustri academia Ubsaliensi sub initium professionis theologicae, die XXIII Maij, anno supra millesimum sexcentesimo (Stockholm, 1616); B2r; “Ut enim Coelestis Doctrina recte, distincte, et legitimo ordine doceri, erroribus etiam atque corruptelis dextre refutatis, defendi.
utility not only in the context of biblical studies and with regard to the admiration of God’s creation, but in all philosophy (“in music, optics, physics, astrology, medicine, and politics”) and in fact in all of life—in the tasks of “land surveying, mechanics, mining, as well as in typographical, nautical and weight-related matters”. These kinds of arguments were of course wholly embraced by Skytte as well. As we shall see, Paulinus would later as archbishop stand side by side with the university chancellor, i.e. Skytte, in the defence of Ramism, but at the same time he would become involved with a crusade against Aristotelian ethics, which was not, as Erland Sellberg has noted, a characteristic feature of Ramism.

Because of the uncertain situation of Uppsala University in the first years after its reinstatement, decisive initiatives of individual scholars could make a considerable impact on everyday academic life. New statutes, regulating the inner life and organization of the university, were written in 1606 by one of the professors, Johannes Rudbeckius. Although the statutes were never officially ratified, they served the university in practice until Johan Skytte’s and Axel Oxenstierna’s statutes were approved in 1626. Also Rudbeckius delivered orations celebrating the utility of learning in these early years after the reinstatement of the university. When he was inaugurated professor of mathematics in 1604, Rudbeckius delivered an oration that celebrated learning as the foundation of civilizations, but he warned any ruler against taking success and prosperity for granted—while the Assyrians had been the first to study astronomy, they were also the first, as Rudbeckius explained, to lose a position of world hegemony because other peoples had “eagerly turned their attention to arts and learning” and thus increased their power and eventually surpassed the Assyrians. Rudbeckius ominously stated that “sad destinies awaited even the most flourishing states” if the arts were neglected. If, on the other hand, the arts received protection and support, they would be extraordinarily beneficial to the common good.

841 Ibid., B3v; “Verumenimvero quanta sit Mathematum vis ad contemplandum in tota Philosophia, in Musicis, Opticis, Physicis, Astrologia, Medicina, Politicis: Quanta ad agendum necessitas in tota vita Civili; in Geodaesia, Mechanicis, Fodinis; Quantum Pacis et Belli tempore adferat, et jucunditatis et commodi; Quid in Typographica, Nautica, Ponderibus et aliis id genus exercitijs praestet utilitatis, copioso a Nobis ante annos 5 sub initium Professionis Mathematica, fuit explicata. Idem argumentum P. Ramus, pro summis illis Ingenij et Eloquentiae donis, quibus abunde a Deo Opt. Max. cumulatus erat, lib. 2. Scholae Mathematicae luculentem et splendide, ut alia omnia, est persecutus [...]”.

842 Sellberg, _Kyrkan och den tidigmoderna staten_, 375-387. Even though a certain amount of skepticism toward metaphysics was typical of Ramism, Sellberg argues that the source of Paulinus’s aversion to Aristotelian ethics and metaphysics was rather his involvement in an academic fight with the professor of ethics Jonas Magni, who was not, unlike the churchman Paulinus, opposed to an increased control over the university by the state.

843 Annerstedt, _Upsala universitets historia I_, 122-125.

844 Johannes Rudbeckius, _Oratio de literarum et scholarum utilitate simul ac necessitate, habita in illustri academia Ubsaliensi a M. Johanne Rudbeckio Nericio, Anno, 1604.12._
The examples of Laurentius Paulinus Gothus and Johannes Rudbeckius show that leading scholars in Uppsala early in their careers conveyed arguments for the utility and benefits of education extending beyond the needs of the education of clerics, even though both men were convinced that the Church should retain its control of the university. Paulinus and Rudbeckius moreover seem unified in terms of the contents of education—a well-rounded education for the benefit of the state, the Church and the common good. Yet, in terms of their approach to the fundamental subject of logic, they were, as we shall see, less unified. While Paulinus embraced Ramism, Rudbeckius had studied in Wittenberg, Jena and Helmstedt, where Neo-Aristotelianism and a more advanced text-critical study of Aristotle had begun to dominate higher education. This rise of a Lutheran Neo-Aristotelianism in the late sixteenth century occurred, as has recently been discussed by Erland Sellberg, in the context of religious strife and tension across Europe, which had stimulated a strong focus on controversial theology. The demand of Neo-Aristotelian professors that their students should study Aristotle thoroughly in the Greek original was at odds with the Ramist approach to logic, which, as we have seen, considered this subject as one art in a system of arts arranged and defined “by method”. While Rudbeckius and many other Aristotelians were generally not opposed to using Ramist textbooks in lower education, they demanded a more careful reading of Aristotle in the advanced classes, including his metaphysics, which Paulinus vehemently opposed.

The Neo-Aristotelian tendencies in Uppsala in all likelihood did not go unnoticed by Johan Skytte. Paulinus may even have presented his worries to Johan Skytte and Johannes Hane on their visit in 1605. However, neither Skytte nor Hane, who both served merely as Charles IX’s emissaries at this time, had any official say in the matter. Two official instructions empha-

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**Septembris ...** (Västerås, 1624), A4r. Transl. to Swedish in B. Rudolf Hall (ed.), “Johannes Rudbeckii akademiska högtidstal: utgivna i översättning från latinet”, ÅSU 5 (Uppsala, 1922), 7-34.

845 Ibid. A message that was undoubtedly directed at Charles IX. Rudbeckius eventually became the bishop in Västerås, where he founded Sweden’s first gymnaisum (1623) and a school for girls (1632).


848 Ramus had even made a special point that his three laws of method were independent of authorities and instead followed the “Socratic” way of philosophising freely. Cf. above, Chapter Four.


850 Skytte later claimed that Paulinus expressed his concerns in an official oration during his and Hane’s visit to Uppsala in 1605, but this is doubtful, as Sellberg shows. On the other hand, as Sellberg notes, Skytte may very well have discussed the matter of Aristotelian scholars with Paulinus at the time, privately or in another context; Sellberg, *Kyrkan och den tidigmoderna staten*, 373 f.
sizing the importance of Ramism, however, would appear in the following years with regard to the appointment of new professors, signed in the first case by Charles IX and in the second case by Gustav II Adolf. In 1610, a scholar by the name of Johannes Raumannus (1570–1614) was about to be sent to Uppsala to teach logic and supervise the unruly state of academic life at the time. Raumannus was specifically instructed to teach the youth according to the “right Socratic philosophy” and to “refrain from useless sophistry of no use, benefit or utility to either the spiritual or worldly order”. The formulation is typically Ramist and bears the mark of Skytte’s polemical rhetoric, even though it can not be definitely decided whether he actually wrote the text. Two years later, when a magister by the name of Jacobus Johannis was appointed professor of logic, the letter of privileges signed by Gustav II Adolf stated that Johannis was expected to teach Ramus’s logic and ensure that the students learned how to “transfer precepts to use” (praeccepta ad usum), which should be the goal of any “good professor in logic”.853

When a new school plan regulating lower education in Sweden was drafted and approved in 1611, Paulinus and Rudbeckius reached a compromise regarding the use of Ramist and Aristotelian logic. The school plan thus stated that those who taught Ramist method should not scorn Aristotle and deter their students from Aristotelian studies—instead they should refer to Aristotle as a “richer source”. Those who lectured on Aristotle should, on the other hand, not condemn Ramus’s logic as useless but merely show what more could be learned from Aristotle. However, the printed version of the school plan, published in 1613, was slightly altered with regard to the references to Ramus and Aristotle, which indicates that some disunity remained in the matter. The altered text thus emphasized that Ramus had deduced his precepts from “Socratic and Aristotelian principles” with an “extraordinary clarity and a well thought-out method”, and that he had

851 Which was not related to Ramism and Aristotelianism but to a personal strife between Johannes Rudbeckius and another headstrong professor, Johannes Messenius.
852 Annerstedt, Bihang I, 88 f.
853 Ibid., 91 f.; “[…] att han skal vara förplichtadt att publice läsa och underwijsa ungdomen Logicam Rami, att göre sin störste flijt, att ungdomen uthan wijde ambagibus kan opå allehanda sätt transferera praeccepta ad usum, som en rätt Logices Professor ägnar och bör […]”.
854 B. Rudolf Hall (ed.), “Sveriges allmänna läroverksstadgar 1561-1905: 1/3, 1561, 1611 och 1649 års skolordfningar: i avtryck och, de båda senare, i översättning”, ÅSU 4 (Lund, 1921), 48; “Quiqunque Rameam Philosophiam proponunt non calumnientur Aristotilem [sic], ut ab ejus studio suos discipulos dehortentur, quin ad eum tanquam ad ubiorem fontem ablegabunt, ne si forte alicuj ad Academias ire contigerit ex praeccepto Aristotilis odio ab ejusdem lectione, proprio cum detrimento abhorreat. Qui vicissim Aristotilem vel privatim in Scholis, aut alias in Academia, proponunt, non debent condemmare Logicam Rami tanquam inutilem; sed tantum ostendere quid ulteriorius ex Aristotile utilitter disci possit. […] modo hoc constat Ramum compendiosius scripsisse, et tanquam ad juniorum captum magis accommodatum in Scholis proponi debere, Aristotilem ab ijs qui ingenio valent, et ad majora contendunt cum fructu legi et cognosci posse.”
utilized splendid examples from good authors and designed them with the aim of “the practical utility which should always be desired in the arts.”

The altered version moreover stated that Cicero, Plato and Aristotle had all declared that experience and practice (usuus) were often superior to precepts.

As speculated by previous scholarship, Johannes Rudbeckius may have written the original version, whereas Petrus Kenicius (1555–1636), who was archbishop at the time (and thus vice-chancellor of the university), was responsible for the Ramist-friendly alterations. However, as Erland Sellberg has argued, the school plan of 1611 should not be seen as a great battle between Ramism and Aristoteliansim, since ultimately it appears to be a conciliatory product that stresses, in both versions, that it was “no matter of holiness” whether logic was defined as an ars (the Ramist approach) or an instrumentum (the Aristotelian tradition). Neither was the revised school plan, as Sellberg remarks, extraordinarily Ramist in spirit or content. Even though the altered version stressed usuus and practice even more than the original, the school plan emphasized neither efficiency nor an ambition to embrace a more well-rounded education, stretching beyond the needs of clergics. Its emphasis was instead wholly on languages and the trivium arts, leaving the mathematical arts as optional. This emphasis on the trivium arts did not necessarily go against the preferences of the ruling elite; as Sellberg notes, on one occasion the lord high chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, expressed his concern that the students’ need for useful linguistic training would suffer from too much quadrivium study at gymnasiums.

Also Johan Skytte, who at the time was building a career on his eloquent skills and patriotic orations, would later strive to enforce the importance of linguistic skills in all learning. However, during his toil in the Treasury and journeys across the realm, he was also reminded of the need for other kinds of practical skills depending not least on the mathematical arts.

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855 Ibid., 53; “[...] P. Ramum ex socraticis et Aristotelicis principijs sua praecpta singulari perspicuitate et exquisita methodo deduxisse eaque illustribus bonorum authorum exemplis illustrasse, et ad usum, qui primo et praecipue in artibus spectari debet, accommodasse. Usus enim frequens Omnium artium praecpta superat: teste Cicerone lib. I. de Oratore. [...] Unde Plato et Aristoteles Experientiae et usui, tanquam praestantissimo Magistro Omnium artium et doctrinarum inventionem et perfectionem, tribuerunt.”
857 Sellberg, Kyrkan och den tidigmoderna staten, 306-316.
858 Ibid., 307.
859 Ibid., 310.
7.2. The University Chancellor
Ramism and Reform

Educated by Johan Skytte, Gustav II Adolf had been taught the value of a utility-orientated education ranging from historical studies to mathematics and eloquence. Higher education was, however, still in a fragile state almost three decades after the decision to reopen Uppsala University. At the Assembly of the Estates held in Stockholm in 1620, Gustav Adolf expressed his concerns, complaining that it was hardly possible to find a literate bailiff in the kingdom.\(^{860}\) The Estate of clergy, which three years earlier had requested a reinforcement of Uppsala University, did not object to this assessment. Within a week of Gustav II Adolf’s request for a proposition in the matter, they presented a proposal of reinforcements, which met with approval by the king. The result was, among other things, an increase in the number of professors from eight to thirteen, an improved funding of their salaries, and twenty new scholarships for students. Johan Skytte and Per Banér were sent to Uppsala the same year with a document from the Treasury, confirming the professors’ new salaries.\(^{861}\)

From the perspective of long-term stability for the university, three fundamental conditions were, however, at this point still lacking: proper university statutes, a formalised leadership, and financing. All three issues were resolved within the next few years. Gustav II Adolf appointed Johan Skytte as university chancellor in 1622, and two years later he donated his hereditary estates in Uppland and Västmanland to the university, which in fact made it financially independent until the 1830s.\(^{862}\) In 1626 new university statutes were presented by Johan Skytte and Axel Oxenstierna. Skytte had presented a draft the previous year, which was finalised by Oxenstierna, approved by the king, and signed by both Skytte and Oxenstierna.\(^{863}\)

The mission of the university was, according to the statutes, to satisfy the needs of ecclesiastical as well as worldly needs: “[N]othing makes the states happier than the piety, courage and wisdom of those who take care of ecclesiastic as well as political matters, of whom no small number is required in this nation.”\(^{864}\) In the following, the statutes—clearly colored by Skytte’s Ramist ideals—prescribed the manner in which this utility-orientated goal was to be achieved. All professors were obliged to follow the Ramist method, in particular the professors of philosophy. One paragraph specifically demanded that the professors should present their subjects in a


\(^{864}\) Ibid., 256.
clear and ordered way, and refrain from “scholastic entanglements and metaphysical speculations”. Regarding the length of education, the statutes prescribed that a degree in philosophy should take six years, which was in fact one year less than Ramus’s recommendation of seven years.

When the students were to be divided into different classes, the professors were recommended to carefully consider the age, talent and skill of each student, assess whether the boy could successfully continue his education, and in that case plan his course work in a systematic way. If he was not deemed to be successful in his remaining education due to lack of “talent, time or money”, his teachers should nevertheless direct him to something “close to his trade”, because “there existed such people in the state who had, for instance, learned to carry out calculations in a useful way, or could write neatly, or had learned at least some Latin, or could compose a letter in his mother tongue [...]. Everyone could be useful in their own way. Applications useful to the state were emphasized in several paragraphs: the professor of jurisprudence was thus obliged to teach not only Swedish and Roman law, but to consider the foundations of law in ethics and politics and in particular discuss practical applications useful to the government. A new professorship in political science (philosophia civilis) that was focused on ethics and politics, was requested to apply this subject matter to Swedish conditions in particular. Three new professorships in mathematics were established, following the scheme proposed by Skytte’s teacher in Lemgo, Lazarus Schonerus (to be further discussed below). The required mathematical literature, as listed in the statutes, was essentially identical to the literature Skytte had used as a student.

865 Annerstedt, Bihang I, 274-276. No one could be mistaken regarding the Ramist foundation of the university—with regard to the subjects of logic and rhetoric, the statutes dictated that the professors should avoid tiring their students with “onerous scholastic disputationes and an excessive dictating”, and instead follow Ramus’s logic and consider “contents more than form”. The professor of Greek was explicitly prescribed to follow the “Socratic” method, and illustrate the Greek grammar using the New Testament, Homer, Euripides, Pindaros and others. We recognise here the Ramist “natural” way of learning a language—from real examples rather than grammatical rules; Annerstedt, Bihang I, 274-280; Annerstedt, Uppsala universitets historia, 215-224.

866 Cf. Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 39.

867 Annerstedt, Bihang, 280 f.

868 Ibid., 278. As Nils Runeby has noted, Skytte’s original draft of 1625 did not prescribe any particular authors in politics. In the finalized statutes, Axel Oxenstierna had, however, made an interesting addition: the German political theorist Johannes Althusius (1557–1638) was now prescribed, which meant that political study at Uppsala University was to be based on a federal theory, prescribing a limited royal power; Runeby, Monarchia Mixta, 171 f. Runeby calls the addition “highly noteworthy” (ytterst annärkningsvärt), noting, however, that the statutes were signed by both Skytte and Oxenstierna. These two statesmen both represented a belief in a strong state, but as Runeby concludes, Skytte, the Prince teacher, who had always worked closely and loyally to the king, did not embrace the theories of power-sharing to the same degree as Axel Oxenstierna who preferred a strengthening of the aristocratic Council of the Realm at the expense of royal power.
The statutes moreover encouraged the professors to induce a patriotic spirit in the students, who should learn not to “think low and shy thoughts of themselves or the state of the nation”—such thinking would only “cause moaning and lamentation, an admiration for all things foreign and disbelief in one’s own ability to achieve great things, which is the greatest obstacle in the government of a state”\textsuperscript{869} The prescribed remedy was a proper education that lifted the spirit of the students and instilled in them a hope of great deeds. Such were the general recommendations of the teaching activities at Uppsala University, aimed at state utility and patriotism.

As the chancellor of the university, Johan Skytte was responsible for its well-being and for inspecting its condition. Skytte performed this task by visiting Uppsala and by writing letters and statements. In one such letter to the university, written more than ten years after his appointment, Skytte explained why he did not take his mission as chancellor lightly:

Since it has always been my passionate interest to support the Republic of Letters and bring it to the highest crest, nothing will extinguish this commitment, as long as I am breathing. This is why I regard the improvement and prosperity of the royal University of Uppsala as a most important task. For we know that from a university, living sprouts, as from a public nursery garden, may be transferred to all estates of the realm. It is of great importance to the entire state that these sprouts be successfully educated and fostered there, for the benefit of the common good.\textsuperscript{870}

Skytte repeatedly, however, expressed his concerns that learning in Uppsala was not sufficiently directed toward useful ends. In the letter quoted above, Skytte in particular declared his discontent with the linguistic abilities of the students—many of them lacked the necessary training in Latin in Skytte’s opinion. To remedy this situation, the chancellor suggested that the students should be required to spend one whole year studying Latin before they could move on to philosophical studies, and that the book-keepers should provide the necessary classical literature—no one should be able to excuse themselves by saying that they had not found books to read, as Skytte declared. Students who failed to adhere to the requirements would be punished, for example by exclusion from food privileges, whereas the diligent would be rewarded, as Skytte explained, with employments at the royal court, the Treasury, and so forth.

869 Ibid., 281.
870 Johan Skytte to Uppsala University (1634), in Annerstedt, \textit{Bihang I}, 316-318: “Qui semper hactenus noster fuit ardor Remp. literariam promovendi et ad optatum fastigium perducendi, de illo nihil adhuc nec impostерum remittere animus est, dum vita est. Unde inter reliquas muneris nostri partes, Regiae Academiae Ubsalensis incrementum et salutem, non minimam curarum nostrarum facimus. Scimus enim ex Academia, ut plantario publico stipes vivas in omnes status transferendas esse. Quae, ut in spem boni publici feliciter istic educentur et succrescant, universae interest Reipublicae.”
Skytte’s Ramist ideals of utility and practice reveal themselves frequently in his role as chancellor. In 1627 Skytte went so far as to demand that subjects at the university that could “not be put to any use” (*quae ad usum aliquem dirigi non possent*) should be excluded from lectures, with the exception of a few, such as astronomy, which “by its own excellence” recommended itself.\(^\text{871}\) On another occasion Skytte was worried about the lack of mathematical textbooks and instruments, and promised that he himself would order books, instruments and maps from Leiden.\(^\text{872}\) Not everyone agreed, however, with Skytte’s Ramist demands. The university inspection of 1639, conducted by Skytte and the archbishop and pro-chancellor Laurentius Paulinus Gothus, has become especially well known in the history of the inner life of the university. On this occasion, the professor of logic (among others), Laurentius Stigzelius (1598–1676), was subjected to the scrutiny of the two visiting magnates, who suspected the professor of being too Aristotelian in his teachings.\(^\text{873}\) During an official examination of students, Skytte suggested at one point that Stigzelius—who was examining his students on applications of logic in a text by Martialis—should instead choose the text “No one can serve two masters” from the New Testament. Quoting Seneca, Stigzelius answered that he was “nobody’s slave” and declared that Ramus’s logic was adequate for beginners but not for the more advanced students—an answer which of course did not satisfy Skytte, who accused the professor of reading Ramus like the devil read the bible.\(^\text{874}\)

In this context it is important to remember that Skytte believed not only that Ramism was a force of good, but also that Aristotelian “sophistry” was actually harmful. The rhetoric of his early orations, lamenting the scholastic shadows that had almost destroyed learning across Europe, now reappears in his role as chancellor. As we have seen, the anti-scholastic rhetoric was even included in the university statutes. The consequences of the 1639 inspection were, however, less severe than might have been expected—one year later Stigzelius in fact received a professorship in theology. A letter written by Skytte to Axel Oxenstierna after the inspection moreover reveals that Skytte was in fact largely pleased with the general development of Uppsala University. Recalling the poor condition of the university 35 years earlier, Skytte concluded that the university was now in a very good standing: “One must thank God for the felicity she [the university] now enjoys”.\(^\text{875}\) He only

\(^{871}\) Quoted from Hans Sallander (ed.), *Uppsala Universitet: Akademiska konsistoriets protokoll I: 1624-1636* (Uppsala, 1968), 16.

\(^{872}\) Sallander (ed.), *Akademiska konsistoriets protokoll I*, 16 f


\(^{874}\) Annerstedt, *Bihang I*, 356 Stigzelius: “[...] incipientibus sufficiere potest, doctioribus autem et iis, qui ad exquisitam logicae cognitionem adspirant, non item.”

\(^{875}\) Annerstedt, *Uppsala universitets historia I*, 299.
wished that the opinion that the professors were the *domini academiae*, “rulers of the university”, could be eradicated.

Skytte nevertheless did what he could to counteract the growing Aristotelian tendencies at Uppsala University. When visiting Uppsala again in 1640 to speak before the students, he quoted the university statutes which stated that the teachers must refrain from all sophistry and metaphysical speculation, and only treat things “useful to the other faculties and to society at large”.876 While this was essentially the same message as had been conveyed in his enthusiastic student orations, his speech of 1640 was characterized by disappointment—Skytte reminded his audience of the teachers of his own youth at the *Collegium Regium Stockholmense* in Stockholm who had restored true philosophy by using the Socratic method and banished the artificial and useless terminology that had “disgusted the youth”.877 The next generation of teachers had, however, failed to follow the good example of their predecessors; they had, in fact, with all their might tried to “reinstate the scholastic poison”.878 This presented a worrisome development, since by Skytte’s argument the source of all disunity and quarrels at universities and schools across Europe was excessive metaphysical speculations. Skytte declared that he “shivered” as he thought of the present state of German academies, devastated by wars and turmoil, and engaging again in metaphysics and scholastic nonsense.879 Invoking all his authority as a university chancellor, Skytte devoted a large part of his speech to convincing his academic audience in Uppsala of this scholastic threat.

In this context, it may of course be argued that Skytte’s Ramist focus on efficiency was rather uncontroversial at the time—growing states were interested in well-educated civil servants, while universities were interested in funding and support of the ruling elites. Ramist textbooks and pedagogy had also, as we have seen, become popular in typically small and ambitious German principalities, where Skytte and other Swedes studied in the 1590s. The political and religious landscape of Reformed Europe was, however, complex. As argued by the historian of ideas Gunnar Eriksson, Ramism proved to be a blunt tool in the Swedish ideological landscape, colored by the perceived threat from Poland and a Swedish Lutheran Church that saw Aristotle as part of its bulwark against the “papist” threat.880 Yet, the Swedish archbishop himself supported Ramism, which illustrates the difficulty of interpreting Ramism solely from a religious perspective. As Howard Hotson

877 Ibid., 37.
878 Ibid., 38 f.
879 Ibid., 41.
880 Eriksson, “Johan Skytte som kansler och filosof”, 121 f.
has pointed out, Ramism was basically religiously neutral and was adopted as well as rejected within several reformed strains, Calvinism as well as Lutheranism.\footnote{Hotson, Commonplace Learning, 108-114.} While the archbishop Paulinus thus favored the Ramist separation of philosophy and theology, it was precisely because philosophy had been “weeded” out from theology in this manner that Ramism fell theologically short of Aristotelianism. With a logical textbook reduced to one tenth the size of the Aristotelian logic, Ramism could not satisfy the scholarly demands of university professors.

Johan Skytte shared the archbishop’s distaste for metaphysics, albeit for different reasons. To Skytte metaphysics represented theoretical speculations that did not have any purpose in the world outside of academia. What he had in mind was the needs of the professional civil servant—the clerk in the Treasury, the assessor in the Court of Appeal, the land surveyor or cartographer, and the eloquent legate sent abroad, representing the Swedish glory and kingdom. In Uppsala, the defence of Ramism and in particular Ramist method, however, ceased when Johan Skytte and Laurentius Paulinus Gothus both died in the mid-1640s. Yet, the characteristic Ramist emphasis on utility and eloquence would reappear in future declarations of the aims of learning in Uppsala. Rhetorically, Ramism had served for almost five decades as a vehicle for these ideals. It may be argued that the Ramist agenda had in particular, in the early seventeenth century in Uppsala, provided arguments for the \textit{raison d’être} of a number of relatively unestablished subjects in the university curriculum, such as optics, mechanics, geography and other mathematical arts. The chancellor of the university in these crucial years of rebuilding, Johan Skytte, had moreover enforced his idea of the typical receiver of this education: a professional civil servant who was skilled, knowledgable, patriotic and self-confident.

The Mathematical Arts

Generous attention was given to the mathematical arts in the new statutes of Uppsala University issued in 1625-26. Mathematics had been taught in Sweden also earlier; the first generation of Swedish Ramists had been teaching mathematics at John III’s college in Stockholm and subsequently in Uppsala.\footnote{Lindroth, Svensk lärdomshistoria I, 325.} Yet, the new statutes of Uppsala University conveyed a new programmatic approach to the mathematical arts. Several formulations bear the mark of Skytte’s studies at the University of Marburg. The first paragraph of the section devoted to lectures in the arts faculty (or the “faculty of philosophers” by the terminology used in Uppsala), stated that the king, unlike the “common crowd of professors”, knew that the mathematical
profession included more than arithmetic and geometry. In the following, a number of “excellent authors” were enumerated, contemporary as well as ancient—Copernicus, Regiomontanus, Ramus and Schonerus, as well as Euclid, Archimedes, Ptolemy, Pappus, Proclus, and others. As further declared by the statutes, the works by these authors should be explicated “correctly and beautifully” (bene beateque) from the mathematician’s cathedra.

Following the classification scheme proposed by Skytte’s teacher in Lemgo, Lazarus Schonerus, three new professorships in mathematics were established and defined in the new statutes—the professor Euclideus, the professor Archimedeus and the professor Ptolemaicus. The Euclidean professor was obliged to teach arithmetics, geometry and algebra, while the Archimedean professor should teach optics, mechanics, and music, and the Ptolemaean professor was responsible for astronomy, geography, and architecture. As further declared, these professors were obligated to consider useful applications (ad civilem usum) of their subjects “in all things measurable”, which was defined as the “surveying and measuring of fields, heights, depths, buildings, mountains, channels, camp sites, rivers and distances”, the “distribution of property by judges”, or applications in the “art of war and architecture, in trade and navigation, and in calculations in the Treasury”. The Ramist ideal of practical utility, beneficial for the society at large, was thus clearly stated as the overall purpose and justification of the mathematical arts. As indicated by the higher salary given to the mathematical professors in comparison with the salaries of other professors in the philosophical (arts) faculty, the king attached great value and hope for the new mathematical professorships.

The specific designations of Euclideus, Archimedeus and Ptolemaicus, however, do not seem to have become popular among the mathematical professors themselves: the “Euclidean” professor, Martinus Erici Gestrinius (1594–1648), a native of Gävle who had studied in Uppsala and acquired a

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883 Annerstedt, Bihang I, 277. A similar formulation was used by Skytte in his oration at the Collegium Mauritianum in 1600, where he praised his teacher Johannes Hartmannus for having adopted the proper definition of the mathematical arts. Cf. above, 161, n. 582.

884 Annerstedt, Bihang I, 277. On these authors, see Dahlin, De matematiska vetenskapernas historia, 76 f., and Appendix 1 of my translation of Skytte’s master’s oration on mechanics, which contains biographical information on mathematicians and philosophers mentioned or discussed by Skytte; Ingemarsdotter, “Mekanikens förträfflighet: Johan Skyttes magisteroration 1598”, 109-114.

885 Annerstedt, Bihang I, 277.

886 Ibid., 277 f.

887 The professors were obliged to use certain authors and works—for example, Risner in optics, Guidus Ubaldo’s commentaries to Aristotle’s mechanics, and Ramus’s books in arithmetic and geometry—that is, essentially the same works as those Skytte himself had studied as a student.

888 Annerstedt, Bihang I, 277.

889 Dahlin, De matematiska vetenskapernas historia, 75.
master’s degree in Greifswald, was denoted Professor of “Inferior” Mathematics, that is, referring to mathematics of the sublunar world. The “Archimedean” professor, Martinus Olai Nycopensis (1596–1657), who had studied in Uppsala as well as at a number of German academies, was awarded a mathematical professorship in Uppsala in 1626, and was usually referred to as Professor of Optics and Mechanics. The “Ptolemaean” professor Martinus Olai Stenius (1574–1644), who had likewise studied in Uppsala and abroad (mathematics in Helmstedt), had been appointed professor of “Superior” mathematics, that is, astronomy, already in 1605 and came to be referred to simply as Professor of Astronomy. These mathematical professors would in the following years further establish the mathematical arts as proper university disciplines in Uppsala, albeit not exactly according to Skytte’s plans.

One fundamental challenge for the revived university would be to realize the call in the statutes for practical applications: as we have seen, the university was supposed to produce men skilled in surveying, judicial matters, architecture, trade, navigation, bookkeeping, and so on. On a visit to the university in 1627, Skytte wanted to know how the Mathematici were doing, reminding the university senate that the king needed men who could be used in the Treasury, or in “engineering matters”. The Euclidean professor Gestrinius, answered at this time that some students had learned bookkeeping, but they needed more practice. Skytte now promised that he would convince the king to send someone knowledgable of bookkeeping to Uppsala for teaching purposes, adding that such things which the professors learned should be taught to others. It thus seems that Skytte intended such an initiative as a means of raising the competence foremost of the professors for the benefit of their students and ultimately the state.

While Skytte, as a representative of state interests, wished to see a higher degree of mathematical professionalization, it is also evident that he did not encourage specialization in a more structured manner as a means to this end. As noted by the historian of science Maija Kallinen, the ideal that a mathematician should “master all topics of his field”, was instead wholeheartedly embraced by Skytte, who in fact during his inspection of 1627 inquired whether the mathematical professors did not want to “change their

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891 Dahlin, De matematiska vetenskapernas historia, 117 ff.
892 Ibid., 56 f.
893 Meeting of the senate of the university and the chancellor on May 26-28, 1627; Sallander (ed.), Akademiska konsistoriets protokoll I, 15–16. As was discussed in Chapter Six, Skytte had himself gained many years of experience from the demands of the Treasury.
894 Ibid., 15 f. To further motivate the professors, Skytte pointed out that bookkeeping skills could be useful also to themselves “in domestic matters”. 233
professions between themselves, so that it would not be tedious to always discuss the same things.” 895 There were several factors which upheld such a “non-specialized” approach. For one thing, university scholarship, devoted to a general study of the “classics”, had traditionally shared little or no interface with the more specialized world of trades, engineering, crafts, and so forth, which was the world in which academic mathematical knowledge was supposed to be carried into effect.

Specialization in mathematics was neither encouraged by the academic career system where it was not uncommon for one scholar to go through several professorships during his career, maneuvering towards the most desirable (and well-paid) chairs in the theological faculty. 896 Neither did the Ramist “encyclopedic” approach to learning help to shape an education that could interlock more effectively with the (vocational) demands outside of the schools. Even though Petrus Ramus’s educational ideal was clearly utility-orientated, it also emphasized, as we have seen, the benefits of a well-rounded education, which was intended not only to transmit certain parts of knowledge but also, in humanist style, to foster a set of general skills. The subjects of logic and mathematics were, for instance, both meant to produce the ability to think clearly, while eloquence and classical literature were to provide the skill to speak clearly. The subject matter of each discipline was portrayed by Ramus as an element in a larger and harmonious system of arts and knowledge.

Even though Skytte operated within these traditions and intellectual structures, he occasionally initiated “circuits” between the world he knew as a statesman and the academic world. Besides his idea of strengthening accounting skills in Uppsala, Skytte suggested (also in 1627), that with regard to judicial training the professor should choose twelve of his best students in politics who could sit in (auscultate) the Court of Appeal and become “acquainted with judicial matters” in order to become useful in civil jurisdiction (civilibus negotiis) later on. 897 Transferring students into the world of engineering or of “measuring” things, presented, however, a greater challenge. One recurring problem at Uppsala University was the lack of


896 The “civil engineer” had not in the early modern era established itself as a prosperous career path, except for the occasional genius architect or fortification specialist rewarded by the king. Cf. Kallinen, “Lectures and Practices”, 115, on the hierarchy of professorships.

897 Sallander (ed.), Akademiska konsistoriets protokoll I, 15. With regard to the reforms of the judicial system, Skytte was, as noted in Chapter Two, involved with an overview of the town law as well as the national law, where he utilized his own recent education in jurisprudence, acquired at the University of Marburg. As noted by the historian David Gaunt, students of law in Marburg were encouraged to acquire practical training in the courts (Hofgerichts). Gaunt, Utbildning till statens tjänst, 41-47.
mathematical instruments. While Skytte in 1627 promised that instruments as well as “all sorts of maps” would be bought from Leiden, the discontent of the mathematical professors recurred more than ten years later when the professors complained that they would have to build instruments themselves, as far as they could. At this time, Skytte promised that he would procure 100 riksdaler for the acquisition of mathematical instruments. The instrument problem does not seem to have been resolved, however, until a permanent instrument-maker was established in Uppsala in 1649.

Yet, despite these problems, the new professorships and the Ramist ideals upheld by the chancellor, laid the foundation for a new era of mathematical teaching activities in Uppsala. Preserved lecture catalogues and published theses written for the master’s degree, as well as published works and textbooks authored by the professors, provide a rough picture of the mathematical teaching activities at Uppsala during these first two decades after the revival of the university. A relatively small amount of this material was actually mathematical in a formal sense, that is, built upon mathematical rather than a verbally based logical reasoning. As noted by Maija Kallinen, students in many cases produced “mathematical” dissertations that revolved around general themes in natural philosophy or ethics and politics. As we shall see, the prescribed division of subjects among the three professors was moreover typically blurred.

The Euclidean professor, Gestrinius, who spawned a large quantity of dissertations between 1622 and 1646, wrote the first textbook on astronomy in Sweden (Urania, 1647). This textbook, which contained descriptions of Galileo’s discoveries, including Jupiter’s moons and Venus’ phases and sunspots, adopted essentially the same approach as Skytte had in 1598 with regard to Copernicus—the hypothesis was described, but Ptolemy was still thought to have given the true model of the universe. Gestrinius surpassed his contemporaries in Uppsala with regard to pure mathematics: he was the first to introduce the plus and minus signs (+ and –) in Sweden, as well as the decimal system, which Simon Stevin had introduced in the late sixteenth century. He also wrote the first Swedish book in algebra (preserved in manu-

899 Bengt Hedraeus (1608–1659), professor of “practical mathematics” at the University of Uppsala in 1649–1659, was also a professional instrument-maker; Lindroth, Stormaktstiden, 472 f.
900 For the oldest surviving lecture announcement of the University of Uppsala (November 20, 1636), see Annerstedt, Bihang I, 329. For the student theses, see J. H. Lidén, Catalogus disputationum in Academiis et Gymnasiis Sveciae I (Uppsala, 1778); Gestrinius, 207–210, Nycope, 371–373, and Stenius, 441–442.
901 Kallinen, “Lectures And Practices”, 116. As discussed in Chapter Five, politics and ethics were sometimes considered part of the mathematical arts, but according to the statutes of 1626, Skytte did not intend these subjects to be treated by the mathematical professors.
902 Gestrinius, Uraniae Libri IV (Uppsala 1647). On Gestrinius’s Urania, see Frängsmyr, Svensk idéhistoria, 134 f.; Dahlin, De matematiska vetenskapernas historia, 115. For dissertations produced under his presidium, see Lidén, Catalogus disputationum I, 207-210.
script form) which was based on Ramus’s algebra. In 1637, Gestrinius published a commentary on Euclid (In geometriam Euclidis demonstrationum libri sex), which was also intended for teaching purposes. The requirement of explicating mathematics “beautifully” was also met by Gestrinius, who introduced his Euclidean commentary with an eloquent celebration of the many benefits of the art of geometry, including its utility in mining, fortification, surveying and so on. Gestrinius’s treatment of Aristotle’s Mechanical Problems bears further witness to his broad range of interests.

The “Archimedean” professor, that is, the professor in Optics and Mechanics Martinus Olai Nycopensis, was less productive in terms of publications. In 1633 he published a textbook in optics, Compendium Optices (87 pages), which in Ramist style provided definitions as well as examples of geometrical problems. The records also reveal that Nycopensis lectured on geography and architecture, “civil as well as military” in the latter case (Architectonicam tam civilem quam militarem).

One of his students defended a thesis that discussed, in an encyclopedic approach, a number of mathematical questions (Questionum Mathematicarum Decas, 1640), in arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, mechanics (utilizing Aristotle’s Mechanical Problems), optics and geography. The least active in terms of published works was the professor of astronomy, Stenius, that is, the professor Ptolemaicus, who nevertheless seems to have been diligent with regard to his lecturing duties.

903 Gestrinius, Algebra (1638); Dahlin, De matematiska vetenskapernas historia, 103.
904 Martini E. Gestrini in geometriam Euclidis demonstrationum libri sex. In quibus Geometria planorum traditur, & brevibus Notis perspicue explicatur (1637); Dahlin, De matematiska vetenskapernas historia, 98.
905 Lindroth, Svensk lärdomshistoria I, 470.
906 Gestrinius, In Aristotelis mechanica argumenta ... : publice mathematum studioesis in academia Upsaliensi proposita (1627); Dahlin, De matematiska vetenskapernas historia, 82.
907 The student theses produced under Gestrinius’s presidium resemble the approach of Skytte’s mathematical graduation works, focusing on definitions and questions that were answered by logical reasoning. In some cases, the Ramist predilection for basic definitions led to shallow treatments of the actual topic: in a thesis defended by Johannes Otto Cuprimontanus entitled Disputatio geographica (1642), the term insula was defined as a “piece of land surrounded by water”, while the world was divided into three parts: I. Europe, Asia and Africa; II. America; III. Magellanica. Yet, many theses also reveal an impressive level of erudition, occasionally utilizing references and quotes in Hebrew. In a thesis on optics presented by Ericus Petri Noraeus we find geometrical “proofs” mixed with quotes by Alhazan as well as Ovid; Disputatio mathematica de optice definitio, subjecto & divisione (1640).
908 Ibid., 119 f.
909 Nycopensis also engaged with astronomical studies, as evident by student theses: one of his students defended a thesis on the phenomenon of new stars in the sky, De novis Coeli Phoenomenis in 1631; Dahlin, De matematiska vetenskapernas historia, 119.
910 Stenius presided over 22 philosophical disputations between 1611-39. The first of these has received some attention, as it contained an early critique in Sweden of the activities of
As evident by the total production of these professors, and their often practically orientated lecture series, they seem to have been willing to accommodate the chancellor’s wish for an education directed toward practical use. Gestrinius as well as Nycopensis also produced compendia and mathematical textbooks in Ramist style for the benefit of the students. The diverging topics of the student theses nevertheless bear witness to great academic freedom.\footnote{This was not least a consequence of Gustav II Adolf’s generous endowments, which had provided the university and the professors with a certain level of economic independence.}

In particular astronomy appears to be a subject which was captivating many minds in Uppsala at this time. This interest may be explained by the “new” astronomical hypotheses which, as we have seen, were well known in Uppsala in the early seventeenth century. While the Ptolemaean system at this time was not truly questioned, Tycho Brahe and Copernicus were discussed in student theses as well as in professorial publications.\footnote{Galileo’s recent observations had also become well-known in Uppsala by the 1620s—one of Gestrinius’s students discussed Jupiter’s moons in a thesis 1622 (only twelve years after Galileo’s discovery); Dahlin, \textit{De matematiska vetenskapernas historia}, 82.}

The chancellor himself did not disapprove of astronomy as a subject, as we have seen. However, this focus on astronomy at Uppsala University meant that less attention was given to those subjects which Skytte had intended to be the prime focus of mathematical education. Land surveying and cartography were, for example, two especially interesting areas of mathematical applications from the perspective of the government, as these subjects supported the planning of new towns as well as the explorations of the realm. Although Swedish cartography based on mathematics (rather than mythology) can be traced back to an order issued already in 1603 by Charles IX, the expertise in the area two decades later still relied essentially on one man—the cartographer Anders Bure (1571–1646).\footnote{Charles IX wanted at this time to achieve a rectification of the border to Norway. Anders Bure was a brother of the rune expert Johannes Bureus; E. Vennberg, “Anders Bure”, \textit{SBL vi} (Stockholm, 1926). He was named Andreas Bureus before he was risen to nobility in 1624. See also Widmalm, \textit{Mellan kartan och verkligheten}, 19.}

His first cartographical work for Charles IX, a detailed map of the Northern realm of the kingdom, published in 1611, had proved a success. Bure, whose education is unknown, based his map on a mathematical positioning of Scandinavia and detailed investigations conducted by himself during journeys in Lapland. The result represented a pioneering effort, which at the time had no counterpart in terms of accuracy and level of detail (Figure 11).
As Bure’s cartographical mission expanded, the need for educated assistants eventually, however, became acute. In 1626, Bure, who at this time received support from Gustav II Adolf to continue his mapping of the realm, finished a comprehensive map of the entire kingdom, entitled \( \textit{Orbis Arctoi nova et accurata delineatio} \). Also this work was appreciated by his employer, who two years later appointed Bure \textit{Generalmathematicus}, in essence Chief of Surveying. The official instruction for Bure as \textit{Generalmathematicus} stated that the intent of the king was not merely to defend his lands and kingdom from the enemy but also to improve their means.\(^{914}\) In order to better achieve this ambition, it was necessary for the king to have a general survey that would help him evaluate “the state of each district and town”. In this manner, the king would be able to consider means for “repairs and improvements”.\(^{915}\) The mission outlined in the ensuing paragraphs amounted to

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nothing but a complete inventory of Sweden’s geography, buildings, towns, and natural resources.\footnote{To achieve all this, Bure must first, according to the instruction, educate land surveyors. His immediate task was thus to educate young men who could accompany him on his travels across the country. These surveyors seem to have been trained largely in the field.\footnote{After his appointment to \textit{Generalmathematicus}, Bure spent most of his time travelling. In 1633, the land surveyors he had educated along the way became independent government officials.}} To achieve all this, Bure must first, according to the instruction, educate land surveyors. His immediate task was thus to educate young men who could accompany him on his travels across the country. These surveyors seem to have been trained largely in the field.\footnote{Clas Tollin, “De första lantmätarna” in Mats Höglund (ed.), \textit{1600-talets jordbrukslandskap: En introduktion till de äldre geometriska kartorna} (Stockholm, 2008), 16-31.} After his appointment to \textit{Generalmathematicus}, Bure spent most of his time travelling. In 1633, the land surveyors he had educated along the way became independent government officials.

The special education of land-surveyors illustrates why Johan Skytte was supported from the highest instance to strengthen the mathematical arts at Uppsala University. The ability to survey the Realm and its resources was recognized as directly linked to the prosperity of the Crown. In this context, the intent of the university statutues was, as we have seen, completely unambiguous—the professors were obliged to consider useful applications “in all things measurable”, defined as fields, heights, depths, buildings, mountains, channels, and so forth. This ambition seems also to have been realized to some extent: several students in the first generation of land-surveyors had in fact studied mathematics at Uppsala University before they were recruited to Bure’s field practice.\footnote{Tollin, “De första lantmätarna”, 21.}
In 1655, when new statutes for Uppsala University was approved by Queen Christina (1626–1689), Skytte’s three mathematical professorships were reduced to two. Whether this quantitative decline also caused a qualitative decline is uncertain. When Johannes Rudbeckius’s son, Olof Rudbeck (1630–1702), subsequently the famous medical scholar, architect, and engineer, arrived in Uppsala in 1648, after his first studies at his father’s gymnasium in Västerås, he got the opportunity to study mechanics as well as instrument making. Inspired by his technical education in Leiden, Rudbeck later set out to teach engineering at Uppsala University in an unusually practical manner, which Skytte would not have recognized from his own mechanical studies (based mostly in classical literature).

In this context, the challenge of introducing technical or engineering subjects at early modern universities should be kept in mind. Despite the “scientific renaissance” of the sixteenth-century and the revival of ancient

mathematical works at this time, the trivium arts had retained their overall dominance in school plans and curricula throughout the Renaissance. This *de facto* situation may be seen in the light of tradition and the existing separate spheres of interest of different groups in society: individuals practicing the mechanical arts (engineers and craftsmen) seldom explored links between technology and theory, whereas theoretical studies within universities remained to a large extent focused on metaphysical issues rather than technology and applications. Anders Bure’s land surveying students, who had received their basic mathematical education in Uppsala, nevertheless illustrate that the university had taken steps to broaden its educational mission.

Eloquence and Politics

The mathematical arts did not constitute the only group of subjects which Skytte watched over at Uppsala University. Skytte was also passionately interested in the well-being of the linguistic arts and their applications in eloquence and politics. These disciplines constituted of course an important foundation of his own career, as a public speaker, legate and statesman. Prior to his appointment to university chancellor, Johan Skytte decided to establish a new professorship in Uppsala devoted to eloquence and politics (*Eloquentia et Politice*). As he explained in his official deed of gift dated January 1, 1622, he had achieved much fortune and success thanks to his studies of these subjects, and he now wished to repay God’s grace. For the maintenance of the professorship he donated several farms that he had bought in the vicinity of Uppsala, as well as a stone house, situated very near the cathedral.

The details of the establishment of the Skyttean professorship have been related elsewhere and need not be repeated. What is noteworthy in terms of Skytte’s aims and hopes for this professorship, however, is that the tripartite aims of education that were present already in his student orations clearly reappear in this context. With regard to the students at the university, Skytte promised that merit would translate into rewards and career opportunities, while the native country, for its part, would benefit from the many patriotic orations produced by the professor and his students, and...
finally, the state would benefit from the many skilled future officials who had studied eloquence and politics in Uppsala. As Barbro Lewin has noted, the Skyttean professorship was especially appreciated by the nobility, which was natural considering the duty of the noble estate to serve the king either in the civil or military arena. In the former case, skills in eloquence and politics constituted crucial requirements, and Skytte did not in this context conceal that he expected the Skyttean students to be hard working and assiduous. His utility-orientated statements were, however, framed also by his characteristic narrative of *rewards*, which included material as well as honorific and patriotic aspects.

In order for the new professorship to succeed as planned, Skytte first and foremost stipulated a number of demands on the professor. In all things, the Skyttean professor should be a good “politician, historian and orator” and always utilise the Ramist method, as Skytte stated in a second deed of gift written in Swedish in October 1622. The professor was expected to celebrate and elevate the Swedish kings (especially those of the Vasa line) and praise their deeds in war as well as peace; the professor should do this through his own orations, but also the students were to produce patriotic orations. This demand was in all likelihood prompted by more than *decorum* and duty on Skytte’s part; it can in fact be seen as a manifestation of Skytte’s political ideal—a strong monarchy, with limited elements of power-sharing. Besides this obligation of praising the Swedish kings, the Skyttean professor was also required, according to the regulations, to praise Skytte’s family and their descendants, as well as previous professors holding the chair. Cleary, this demand was not least meant to preserve the memory of Skytte himself, and indeed his life-story—through Skytte’s own *exemplum* his narrative of diligence and success would be preserved to posterity.

927 Lewin, *Johan Skytte och de skytteanska professorerna*, 21 f.
928 Ibid., 214: “...at han för all tingh ähr en politicus, historicus och en godh orator, och at han utih allt detta förmämmbda ähr besynnerligen methodo Rameus.”
929 Ibid., 214; “att han framfarne Sweriges konungars (och iu serdeles deres, som af den högtäährade salige konungh Gustaffz familia härkompne äre) läflige och manlige bedriffter i krig så wäl som i fredlige tidhjer utrettede tilbörligen celebrerer och vphöijer, ickie allenast medh sijne egne orationer, vthan och tillhållandes vungdommen”.
930 As noted by Sven A. Nilsson, Skytte was more favorable to a strong monarchy than the lord high chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna; Nilsson, “Gustav II Adolf”, 448. As Bo Lindberg has noted, Jonas Magni, who in the 1620s gave lectures in politics in Uppsala as a temporary Skyttean professor, was nevertheless allowed to present the complexity of contemporary political theory and power-sharing models to his students (including Skytte’s sons). Although, as Lindberg remarks, the political dividing lines between different statesmen at this time (e.g. Skytte and Oxenstierna) are not necessarily easily drawn, he concur’s with the impression that Skytte favored a strong monarchy (several subsequent Skyttean professors also focused on the needs of the royal power, as Lindberg notes); Lindberg, *Stoicism och stat*, 228-232. On the complexity of these issues, see Runeby, *Monarchia Mixta*, 207 f. With regard to the fundamental educational needs of the state, Skytte and Oxenstierna were, however, in agreement.
931 See also Chapter Eight on the “Skyttean legacy”.

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Skytte had high hopes for his professorship and did not immediately find a suitable candidate. Meanwhile, the professor of ethics, Jonas Magni, was appointed e.o. Professor Skytteanus. The first professor ordinarius to hold the Skyttean chair, a German scholar from the University of Rostock by the name of Johannes Simonius (1565-1627), was inaugurated as Professor Skytteanus in 1625. Simonius was introduced by Skytte as a scholarly star: “the brilliant and most excellent man Johannes Simonius”, who “for more than thirty years had proven his extraordinary erudition”. Skytte expressed his firm confidence that Simonius would help the Swedish youth to achieve their goals and become skilled orators: “I do not doubt that you will help the Swedish youth, aspiring to the highest excellence in this field, as much as you can, which undoubtedly will be the best possible support.”

Skytte’s inaugural oration was also aimed directly to the students listening in Uppsala, and his message to them was unambiguously clear: if they followed his advice to study diligently, they need not be in doubt with regard to their future in the state:

If you meet my expectations and conduct yourselves well, you should not have any doubts concerning your opportunities to dwell in the light of the state with the greatest dignity and praise. If you are equipped with the gifts of eloquence you will gain the benevolence of many men. Our most serene and gracious King, who for a long time has been in dire need of contributions from eloquent and well-spoken men, will most kindly invite you to the Royal Court, to the Senate and to the judicial court rooms, he will extend to you his benevolence, he will graciously use your services in embassies, at assem-

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932 This choice might seem strange seeing that Magni was known as an Aristotelian and had previously been involved in a vicious academic conflict with the Ramist Laurentius Paulinus Gothus. Yet, as Erland Sellberg has recently shown, Jonas Magni had conducted his teachings in ethics and politics according to a utility-orientated program that evidently had pleased Skytte (who was not as vehemently opposed to ethics as Paulinus). Clearly, in this case Skytte did not find Magni’s Aristotelian tendencies so harmful that they cancelled out his merits; Sellberg, Kyrkan och den tidigmoderna staten, 383 ff.

933 Lewin, Johan Skytte och de skytteanska professorerna, 32-35. Skytte held his inauguration speech, Inauguralis actus, on December 5, 1625. The speech is available in reprint in Schück, Bidrag till Uppsala universitets historia. Page references below refer to Schück’s edition. The translations from Latin to English are my own. For a longer excerpt from this speech, see Appendix B.

934 Skytte, Inauguralis actus, 5 f.; “Anxie et sollicite mihi demum inquirenti, cui hoc munus recte demandari posset, occurrat clarissimus et excellentissimus vir Dominus Johannes Simonius, quem praesentem hic intuemini. Non potui committere, quin eum ad munus hoc obeundum literis meis humanissime invitarem. Et cum eruditionem suam singularem, qua in eloquentiae facultate pollet, in Academia Rostochiensis ultra annos triginta probaverit, cum publicis scriptis et monumentis quanta facundia valeat, omnibus testatum reddiderit, potuissetne alius dignior illi in hac functione praferri et anteponi?”.

935 Ibid., 7; “[..] non dubito, quin Svecanae juventuti ad summam eloquentiae laudem efflorescenti tantum ipse prodesse coneris, quantum possis, quod certe maximum esse video.”
bles, in parliaments, and what is more—when you meet his expectations, he will reward you with property, positions and even estates.936

For this goal to be achieved, Skytte delivered a number of admonitions to all parties involved: the “fathers of the university” (that is, the other professors) were reminded of their duty to welcome Simonius and recognize him as “a colleague and legitimate member of this university”, while the students were admonished to “strain every nerve to comprehend the fundamentals of true eloquence under the auspices of such a great man”, since the utility of eloquence was, as Skytte underlined, “enormous and diffused in all parts of life, far and wide”.937 The students should therefore, by Skytte’s admonition, make an effort to leave behind the “arid, weak, inane and sophist way of conducting philosophy”, knowing that the best and most blessed method of all is the one which is strewn with “the salt of eloquence”.938

Turning to Simonius, Skytte proposed to remind him “in a friendly spirit” about the method that should be used in the practice and teaching of this art: “You will not deny that innumerable teachers in this art are constituted in such a way that they mix many things in one heap, useful or useless, and shower their listeners with a multitude of rules, and thereafter tire the minds of their pupils with disputations filled with trifles and sophisms.”939 Instead of this useless manner of teaching, Simonius should implore the students to imitate “some wise and excellent orator and statesman, and carefully demonstrate what is the most excellent in his example”.940 The practical, action-orientated and anti-scholastic spirit of Ramism clearly comes across

936 Ibid., 6; “Admonitioni meae si parueritis, si morem gesseritis, ne dubitetis, quin aliquando maxima cum dignitate et laude in Reipubl. luce versari possitis: Eloquentiae donis si fueritis instructi, multorum benevolentiam vobis conciliabilitis: Serenissimus et clementissimus noster Rex, qui eloquentium et disertorum hominum opera vehementer jam indiget, vos in aulam, in curiam, in judicum subsellia clementissime invitatib, favoris sui gratiam vobis indulgebit, servitio vestro in legationibus, in conventibus, in Comitis gratiose utetur; imo vero, ubi cognoverit vos expectationi illius satisfacere, bonis, facultatibus, praedii etiam vos amplificabit.”

937 Ibid.; “Vestrum jam est, patres Academici, virum tam eximium, tam bene de republ. literaria meritum, vestrum jam est, senem hunc venerandum omni favoris et benevolentia significatione complecti: vestri munera est, eum pro collega vestro et Academiae hujus membro legimo agnosceres. […] Et cum maximis sit eloquentiae usus; isque per totam vitam longe lateque diffusus, manibus pedibusque annitimin, ut sub tanti viri auspiciis verae eloquentiae fundamenta possitis comprehendere.”

938 Ibid.; “[…] date operam, ut arida, tenui, inani et sophistica Philosophandi ratione relicta, eam Philosophandi rationem optimam omniumque saluberrimam existimetis, quae eloquentiae sale sit conspersa.”

939 Ibid., 7; “Non inifiaceris quin infiniti hujus artis magistri ita sint comparati, ut multa cujusvis generis tam utilia quam inutilia congerant unum in locum, auditores suos praeceptorum multitudine obruant, et denique minutis et spinosis disputationibus ingenia discipulorum fatigent.”

940 Ibid.; “Tibi vero ad gloriosae cujusdam laudis palam consequendam nihil erit promptius, quam si egregium et excellentem aliquem oratorem et politicum ad imitandum proponas, et in eo quae maxime excellent, accurate demonstris.”
in Skytte’s pedagogical advice as well—frequent exercises constituted the best path toward rhetorical “fullness of expression, variation and authority” (*copia, varietas, gravitas*), as Skytte declared, but Simonius should also as often as possible lead his students from their practice straight out onto the scene, to the “public arena”. In this way the students would build up courage, so that they “one day during consultations with kings and princes may express their correct and wise thoughts with excellent wording and authoritative sentences”. Skytte expressed his fullest confidence that Simonius would also teach in this manner.

The oration held by Simonius in turn signals a new situation with regard to learning in Sweden. Sweden was portrayed by Simonius as an ancient and civilized nation, with an enlightened king supportive of a proud university, “home of the Muses” (*Musarum domicilium*). While Uppsala University two decades earlier had been practically dormant and comparable to a small town gymnasium, the Swedish government had now managed to recruit a respected professor from Rostock to a new professorship devoted to eloquence—the finest art of humanism—which was paired with politics, a subject given much scholarly attention abroad but lacking in formal professorships.

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941 Ibid., 7; “Nihil erit tibi vel singulari quadam voluptate delectabilius, vel studiosis eloquentiae utilius, quam si eos assiduis exercitationibus ad omnem copiam, varietatem, gravitatemque traducas, quam si eos ex domestica exercitatione in medium agmen, in pulverem publicum quam saepissime educa.”

942 Ibid.; “Haec res, prout per se est laudabilis et vehementer commendanda: ita etiam efficiet, ut dicentibus inque Scholastico hoc pulvere se exercentibus animus addatur, ut tandem aliquando in regum et principum consessibus ea quae recte et sapienter cogitarunt, lectissimis verbis gravissimisque sententiis, eloquantur.”


944 Ibid., 9.
Figure 13. Johan Skytte (1577–1645).
The Establishment of the University of Dorpat

Johan Skytte’s life and career, as well as his educational reform initiatives, were defined by a larger world of propaganda, diplomacy, war, and constant fiscal concerns. While the Treaty of Stolbova in 1617 had secured strategic military advantages over Russia, it did not lead to a general Swedish disarmament—instead Sweden entered a period of military ventures never seen before. In the next decade Sweden would gain control over Riga and Livonia, and enter the war in Prussia and eventually Germany. Following this Swedish expansion in the Baltic region, Skytte was appointed governor general of Livonia, Ingria and Karelia in 1629. Education was, as we shall see, an integral part of the Swedish agenda in these new acquisitions.

Although the instructions Skytte received from the king in 1629 were vague, he set out to realize an extensive reform program, involving a general oversight of the public administration, the Church, the trades, the toll system, the roads, the town privileges, and not least the educational as well as judicial system. Skytte’s often far-reaching reform ambitions occasionally encountered sharp opposition not only from the Swedish and the old Livonian nobility, watchful of their interests in old respectively newly acquired estates and lands, but also from older towns, like Riga, protective of its time-honored rights and privileges. In time, one of Skytte’s sharpest opponents would in fact be the lord high chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna, who did not agree with Skytte that all revenue from the Baltic trades and tolls should stay within the province (and thus within Skytte’s own budget).

Since Oxenstierna and the king himself in practice acknowledged Riga’s claims, Skytte’s integration plans in this case could not be realized to the extent he had planned. The conflicts Skytte encountered as the governor general of Livonia, Ingria and Karelia ultimately reflect different views on how to handle the new Swedish provinces. As discussed by Ragnar Liljedahl, Skytte’s provincial agenda was rooted in a policy formed already by Charles IX, which involved a belief that the Swedish realm should be unified and integrated under one law and one religion. In Skytte’s words, the goal was simply Unus rex, una lex et grex unus, that is, one king, one law, and one people. This ideal was certainly not opposed by Gustav II Adolf in principle, but he and his lord high chancellor, Oxenstierna, were also

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946 As a result of the so called Altmark Peace with Poland in 1629, Livonia was given to Sweden.
948 Ibid., 531. The Swedish Crown had previously granted Riga privileges that protected its right to self-government. If the Swedish law was to be adopted throughout the realm, these rights naturally had to be abolished.
concerned with the immediate demands of the war budget as well as with domestic policies and the complex and variegated political landscape of the new provinces.\footnote{Liljedahl, Svensk förvaltning i Livland, 274.}

With regard to the area of education and culture, Skytte’s instruction of 1629 was, however, less ambiguous. His task was to ensure that sermons were conducted according to the Augsburg Confession and that “heresy, delusions, and idolatry” were eradicated.\footnote{Ibid., 279.} Yet, Gustav II Adolf had also included a peculiar sentence in the instruction, which advised Skytte to make an effort to understand the nature of the people and the character of the locations before he decided to enforce any fundamental changes: “In summa I måste änteligen beflita eder att väl förstå naturam gentis och genium loci förr än I något synnerligt i en eller annan måtto stadga eller förändra”.\footnote{Ibid., 528.} This statement should not be interpreted as an expression of religious leniency or a particularly democratic state of mind of the king, but rather as a pragmatic governmental instruction—if Skytte was to achieve an effective government, he needed to know the land and people he was set to govern. During his extensive and frequent travels in the Baltic provinces between 1629 and 1633, Skytte also evidently took the opportunity to carry out this aspect of his instruction, as noted by Ragnar Liljedahl.\footnote{Ibid., 529.}

More specifically, Gustav II Adolf’s instruction stated the need for a gymnasium that would educate the youth for future service in the Church or in the state.\footnote{Ibid., 395.} By the end of the summer of 1630, Skytte announced the imminent establishment of a gymnasium in Dorpat (present-day Tartu in Estonia). According to Skytte’s plans, the school should be orientated toward practical aims and be open to all Estates; that is, it should accept the sons of noblemen, burghers and peasants. Since those educated at the new gymnasium were intended to serve the public administration throughout the eastern provinces, languages were especially emphasized, not only the classical languages but also French, Latvian, Estonian and Russian.\footnote{Ibid., 396.} The mathematical arts were to be taught and directed toward practical applications—considering the exposed geographical position of Dorpat, it is not surprising that fortification was mentioned in particular. The gymnasium was inaugurated by Skytte on October 13, 1631.\footnote{Ibid., 397 f.}

From his camp in the German battlefields, Gustav II Adolf soon decided that the gymnasium should be further enforced and given university status. As the prospective chancellor of the new university, Skytte set out to recruit additional professors, organize student housing, and procure stable finan-
The privileges of the new university were modeled closely on the statutes of Uppsala University (1625-26). Skytte thus enforced the same mathematical program as Uppsala, with identical professorships (i.e. three professors, designated Euclideus, Archimedeus, and Ptolemaicus respectively). As noted by Henrik Sandblad, lectures in geometry and various practical applications, such as fortification and land surveying, were also subsequently conducted at the new university. In terms of method, the demand of the Uppsala statutes that all professors must follow the “Socratic or Ramist method” and avoid metaphysical speculation was also repeated.

The University of Dorpat was inaugurated under ceremonial forms on October 15, 1632. A few weeks earlier, when the date of the inauguration was officially announced, Skytte delivered a celebratory oration praising the Swedish king and government for initiating a new era in Livonia. Whereas previous generations had lived uneducated and uncivilized in this region, it would now be possible, as Skytte declared, for “rich and poor” to study without leaving Livonia, thus eliminating the need to go abroad for this purpose. Instead of foreigners holding official posts, the Livonian inhabitants themselves would acquire these posts in the future, as Skytte declared. On the occasion of the inauguration, Skytte also emphasized that even sons of peasants should have access to the university—a proposition that was not well received by the Polish nobility, but was in line with the broad educational ideals that Skytte had presented already as a student. As suggested by Henrik Sandblad, the idea of mixing sons of commoners with the young nobility was hardly controversial in Uppsala, where this was done at this time, but in the Livonian context, where the nobility had expressed their skepticism toward the founding of the university in the first place, Skytte’s meritocratic ideals were perceived less amicably.

In the late fall of 1632, Skytte wrote to King Gustav II Adolf informing him that he had now successfully inaugurated the university in the presence of the noblest Estates, and that they, as well as many other inhabitants (Landzsens inbyggiere), had expressed their gratitude and humility for this most charitable deed (högstberömmelligh wällgerning). Skytte concluded his letter by expressing his hope that the university would now function as an instrument for the subduing and ultimate rooting out of all the “coarse and

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958 Ibid., 399.
959 Janu Vasar (ed.), Quellen zur Geschichte der Universität Tartu [Dorpat] (Tartu, 1932), 64.
961 Vasar (ed.), Quellen zur Geschichte der Universität Tartu, 38-73. 62.
962 Ibid., 19-21.
963 Ibid., 20
964 Sandblad, “Om Dorpats universitet under dess äldsta skede”, 214, and Liljedahl, Svensk förvaltning i Livland, 404.
965 Vasar (ed.), Quellen zur Geschichte der Universität Tartu, 25
abominable” barbarism that had hitherto prevailed. Most students who attended the university in Dorpat in the coming decades were, however, Swedish, which of course constituted a failure from the perspective of Skytte’s ambition to recruit students locally. The subsequent fortunes of the University of Dorpat have been related elsewhere. Here it will suffice to note that Skytte’s central subjects—eloquence, politics and the mathematical arts—were given a central position from the start, and that they were in fact also actively taught in the next decades. Skytte’s engagement in the Baltic provinces was cut short when Gustav II Adolf was killed in the Battle of Lützen. Without official permission, Skytte at this time hastened back to Stockholm to protect his interests in the formation of a new government.

7.3. The Patron

The Collegium Illustre

During his own long education abroad, as well as in his career, Skytte had been dependent on resourceful patrons. When Skytte rose to power he was given possibilities to act as a patron himself, supporting students and young scholars who in return produced academic orations in Skytte’s honor. As has been recognized by historians, systems of patronage formed an important framework in the “honour economy” of the learned world in early modern Europe, where funding and support were exchanged for suitable praise of the “learned, virtuous and generous” patron in question. Patronage may also be interpreted as the support of arts or schools more generally. However, because the early modern era was a time “when the public and the private were not yet clearly separated”, it may in this context be difficult to draw a clear line between state and individual initiatives. This is particularly evident in the context of reforms undertaken in Sweden in the early seventeenth century. As the historian Margareta Revera has shown, the Swedish government and the Lord High Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna, who

966 Ibid., 25; “Så förmnodar iagh näst Gudz till hielp, att förmedelst denne Academiens, Såsom ett Instrumentz bijståndh, Skall den grofwa och wederstyggelege Barbaries, som in til Dato her warit hafwer, så småningom kunna dempas och vthrootas.”
967 Sandblad, “Om Dorpats universitet under dess äldsta skede”, 223 ff.
968 See for instance the Uppsala student Jacobus Magni Westhius’s dedication to Skytte in 1607; *Oratio de Praestantia Literarum* to Skytte; Berg, *Johan Skytte*, 117, n. 110.
969 Danneskiold-Samsøe, *Muses and Patrons*, 41-51; Magnus von Platen (ed.) *Klient och Patron: befordringsvägar och ståndscirkulation i det gamla Sverige* (Stockholm, 1988). We have already encountered one of Skytte’s protégés, Wilhelm Simonius, who wrote an eulogy of Wendela Skytte. Like Georg Lilja (Sternhielm) he had worked as preceptor for Skytte’s children, and when Skytte was appointed governor general in Livonia, Simonius and Lilja were both given posts in the newly founded Court of Appeal in Dorpat; Liljedahl, *Svensk förvaltning*, 292, 301; Wrangel, *Sveriges litterära förbindelser med Holland*, 67.
at this time was “concerned at Sweden’s unimpressive status as a civilized nation”, put a great responsibility on the aristocracy to lead the way in reforms initiated “with the object of modernizing the country”. Education was an important part of this cultural renewal. Aristocratic patronage was, however, directed not only at the education of the nobility but also at lower education. The first orphanage (barnhus) in Stockholm was, for instance, partly funded by donations from the nobility, and schools were in some cases established locally on the private estates of noble families.

Johan Skytte was the originator, patron or supporter of several schools, such as the Collegium Illustre in Stockholm (an academy for young nobility), a school for the local children at his own estate Strömsrum (in Älem in Småland), and a Sami school in northern Lapland. The contexts of these foundations, and Skytte’s motivation to support them, are somewhat different.

The Collegium Illustre, established in 1626, was intended to accommodate the educational needs of young noblemen. This was a time when the Swedish nobility was busy putting their house in order, in some cases quite literally—the previous year the building plans of a Palace of Nobility in Stockholm had been approved. Johan Skytte became at this time involved with the founding of a college for the nobility. He donated 2000 daler to the planned school, and appointed one of his protégés, Johannes Matthiae (1593–1670), as rector of the new academy. Matthiae was also instructed to write the statutes of the noble school. As declared in these statutes, an appropriate education for young noblemen should not exaggerate philosophical studies and book learning, but instead focus on eloquence, languages, and chivalrous arts like music, fencing and gymnastics. A small group of teachers were engaged in 1626-1628: besides Johannes Matthiae, two other of Skytte’s trusted men were employed, Wilhelm Simonius and Göran Olovsson Lillie (later known as Georg Lilja Stiernhielm)—both of whom

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972 Another, more eye-catching, form of cultural renewal was the building activities of the royal family and the aristocracy, resulting in the residences of Drottningholm, the Palace of Nobility in Stockholm, and Skokloster, which were all built in the mid-seventeenth century; ibid., 103.
973 On the financing of the orphanage established in Stockholm in the 1630s, see Christina Unger, Makten och fattigdomen: Fattigpolitik och fattigvård i 1600-talets Stockholm (Stockholm, 1996), 126. To be further discussed below, Lower Education.
974 As Nils Runeby has noted, the Collegium Illustre seems also to have accepted commoners, which in fact was not an unusual practice with regard to noble colleges at this time; Runeby, Monarchia Mixta, 184. Cf. the Collegium Mauritianum in Hesse-Kassel, discussed above, which had a public section.
975 Revera, “The Making of a Civilized Nation”, 110. These building plans were delayed several times—the Palace of Nobility was in the end built between 1641 and 1674.
had been preceptors in Skytte’s family. One teacher in French, “Frantzosen Claus”, was also engaged, as well as an engineer from Holland: “Medhen och hitj var ankommen en treflig Ingenieur ifrån Holland, som och skulle profitera här i Collegio, att the, som villia låta exercera dehres barn uthi samma konst, kunne dhe lätteligen dett göra”.978 Engineering was at this time increasingly seen as a crucial component of noble education—Skytte had, as we have seen, emphasized the importance of engineering skills in warfare already in his educational instruction for Gustav Adolf.979

Due to a plague that broke out in Stockholm in 1629, the thirty students were scattered and thus the school only lasted for three years.980 Even though the Stockholm academy failed to attract sufficient interest to overcome this setback (Uppsala University was also beginning to attract noblemen at this time), Matthiae’s statutes were not wasted as they served as an inspiration for the Dorpat gymnasium a few years later.981 The introduction of Matthiae’s statutes is particularly interesting, as it clearly states Skytte’s motivations for supporting a noble academy. First of all, Matthiae speaks of the new academy in terms of an “ornament and improvement of the country” (ornamento et augmento patriae) and states that Skytte had decided that the capital of Sweden needed an illustrious school.982 The school was to be financed partly by the state and partly by “governors and the noble parents of the young students”.983

Matthiae moreover stated that Skytte believed that it would greatly benefit learning if different kinds of students were given appropriate kinds of education—just as craftsmen (Mechanici) utilized different kinds of workshops for different kinds of work, schools should be separated into noble and ignoble, distinguished and less distinguished.984 In this case—on the level of schools rather than specific subjects—Skytte thus evidently considered specialization as desirable, as a means of rendering the educational system more effective. While this may seem to contradict Skytte’s meritocratic ideals, we have to keep in mind that Skytte never

979 As discussed above, 6.2.
980 Sjöstrand, Pedagogikens historia II, 258 f. For the teaching activities at the Collegium Illustrre during these years, see, see Runeby, Monarchia Mixta, 182-191.
981 Liljedahl, Svensk förvaltning i Livland, 397.
983 Ibid.; “[...] partim Regio stipendio substitendarum; partim ab illustribus Toparchis et Nobilissimis juvenum parentibus dotandam.” On the Latin word toparcha, see Helander, Neo-Latin Literature, 211.
984 Ibid.; “Id enim admodum conducibile et re literaria fore existimatis, ut, quemadmodum suas officinas segregatas habent Mechanici pro cujuslibet opificii conditione, ita etiam Scholae distingvantur Nobiles ac Ignobiles, Principes ac minus Principes [...].

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opposed the fundamental social division into nobility and commoners. He did, however, believe that the nobility must earn their positions, and that diligent university-educated commoners, like himself, should also be rewarded.\textsuperscript{985}

The benefits of education to the youths themselves were also discussed by Matthiae. Not only would they be able to serve their native country, and thereby “acquire certain advantages for themselves”, but they would also learn traditions (mores) befitting of noblemen, through a frequent engagement in games and exercises as well as a study of foreign manners and languages.\textsuperscript{986} This culturally flavored sense of utility was often articulated with regard to the nobility, whose traditional (military) services to the king could not be transferred, as it were, to administrative tasks in the state without considerations of their time-honored social standing.\textsuperscript{987} Whether “the sword or the pen”, that is, physically orientated chivalrous skills, or book-learning, should be emphasized was debated.\textsuperscript{988} The deputy judge Aegidius Girs (1583–1639) emphasized in a tract dedicated in 1627 to the Collegium Illustre that both were equally important.\textsuperscript{989} The matter depended to some extent on whether the young nobleman was intended to become a military officer or a civil servant, working in the courts, the Chancellery, or the Treasury. In the latter case, Uppsala University could also provide the necessary education, as remarked by Axel Oxenstierna.\textsuperscript{990}

While Johannes Matthiae acknowledged the importance of physical training, he devoted the statutes of the Collegium Illustre mostly to book learning and languages.\textsuperscript{991} He particularly emphasized the necessity of knowing Latin and Greek for those “who wished to be recognized as educated”.\textsuperscript{992} Yet, Matthiae also discussed the benefits of knowing other languages, “especially those of our neighbors with whom we should conduct negotiations regarding treatises and friendship”, adding that King Mithridates had “had 25 peoples within his empire, and he had known all

\begin{footnotes}
\item[985] Cf. above, Chapter Three.
\item[986] Ibid., A3v.
\item[987] As discussed by Englund, Det hotade huset.
\item[988] On this expression, see Curtius, European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages, 178.
\item[989] Sjöstrand, Pedagogikens historia II, 253.
\item[990] Ibid., 253 f.
\item[991] Here we find the humanist tradition boiled down to the essentials—Matthiae listed six authors as an absolute necessity to read: Cicero, Terence and Virgil in Latin, and Demosthenes, Isocrates, and Homer in Greek. A nobleman needed also to be familiar with the mathematical arts—practically as well theoretically, according to Matthiae, but only to a “sufficient” degree; Matthiae, Ratio studiorum; C7 r-v; “Rerum physicarum quoque scientia studiosum Nobilem vale ornat: Mathematicarum et theoriam et praxis cumprimis illi necessaria est. Quoniam vero ista omnia a quolibet perfecte cognosci non possunt, sequendum sententiam Crassi apud Cic. lib. 3 de Oratore censemus, ut tantum discatur earum, quantum sat est.”
\item[992] Matthiae, Ratio studiorum; “Linguae latinae et Graecae studium ut omnibus qui nomen aliquod inter Eruditos mereri cupiunt est necessarium”.
\end{footnotes}
their languages and never required to speak with them through translators”. This emphasis on languages, negotiations and other peoples bears the mark of Skytte’s humanist ideals of eloquence and language skills, but in all likelihood it also reflects Skytte’s own experiences as a legate, frequently sent abroad to conduct negotiations on behalf of the Swedish king. In this context it should be noted that diplomacy and languages had also been a crucial component of Landgraf Moritz’s academy, the Collegium Mauritianum, which Skytte visited at the turn of the sixteenth century. Skytte may, of course, have been inspired by this example when founding his own illustrious academy.

Skytte (and other patrons) were thus arguably motivated not only by a personal need for self-assertion, but also by an interest in Sweden’s national reputation. As we have seen, a certain international competitive awareness was present already in Skytte’s student orations, which discussed Sweden’s standing amongst nations in the context of eloquence and learning. This national agenda was expressed clearly also in the Council of the Realm, not least by the Chancellor himself, Axel Oxenstierna, who, as Margareta Revera has noted, in 1641 on one occasion explicitly stated the importance of “civilizing the nation”. The nobility, and the quality of their education, played an important role in such cultural discussions, and this was no doubt a factor when the Collegium Illustre was founded.

Exactly when the teaching activities at the Collegium Illustre ceased is unclear—also after the year of the plague, the protocols speak of teachers at the noble academy (for instance in 1642, when the number of students, however, appears to have been only a handful). Evidently, the interest on the part of the nobility to send their children to the Collegium Illustre remained low—other, more established, alternatives were after all available. One such option was the previously discussed Skyttean professorship in Uppsala that attracted young noblemen at this time.

993 Ibid., §44. As evident by the statutes of the Collegium Illustre, Matthiae was pedagogically interested, and he entertained thoughts on how to make learning efficient as well as easy. The Ratio Studiorum is filled with advice for teachers concerning how to inspire students to study (rather than deter them). Like Skytte, he advised against an incessant study of grammatical rules, and emphasized, with regard to literature, that it was important that the students actually understood what they read, and that they were not embarrassed by their teacher before their friends if they made mistakes. Matthiae also warned that corporeal punishment should never be used excessively, even though he said that he could not completely forbid it either, since the ancients in several cases recommended such punishment. 994 Graf, “The Collegium Mauritianum in Hesse-Kassel and the Making of Calvinist Diplomacy”. 995 Revera, “The Making of a Civilized Nation”, 112. 996 Leuhusen, “Vården av riddarhusets enskilda angelägenheter”, 445. 997 In the early eighteenth century, the Collegium Illustre was restored on the initiative of Sebastian Tham (1666–1729), councilor in the Board of Trade (kommerseråd), who like Skytte was a homo novus (ennobled in 1716). Tham made a substantial donation in his will in order for lectures to be resumed. The famous scientist, Mårten Triewald (1691–1747), who had studied in England, started out in 1728-29 by giving a set of lectures on mechanics—a
Lower Education

Also other groups in the Swedish society—beyond the political elites—were considered in the context of raising national standards. The sources reveal that Skytte started local schools at some of his estates, even though the details regarding their foundations have been lost. The \textit{paedagogium} at his estate Strömsrum in Ålem socken is, for instance, mentioned as Johan Skytte’s “barnschola” in 1637, but the year of establishment of the school is unknown. It was not unusual that the land-owning nobility started schools in conjunction to their estates. Also the crown, however, took measures to support schools at this time, in particular in the context of the establishments of new towns, as was discussed above (6.3).

In the same spirit of utility, an orphanage (\textit{barnhus}) was established in Stockholm in 1624, intended to provide poor children or orphans with shelter and basic training in a trade or suitable craft. In 1633, the leadership of this orphanage was given to Johannes Matthiae (author of the statutes for Johan Skytte’s noble academy, \textit{Collegium Illustre}), whose educational responsibilities thus were transferred from young noblemen to homeless children. As the 1633 privileges of the orphanage stated, the purpose of the school was to educate the children so that they would be useful to their native country. Matthiae zealously set about working with this new project: naming the orphanage \textit{orphanotrophium}, Matthiae hired a number of craftsmen of different varieties as teachers, and by 1637 a traditional school section was added. From now on, the children (girls as well as boys) split their time between theoretical studies and practical training. The idea of orphanages (\textit{barnhus}) was also discussed within the more immediate Skyttean circles: Johan’s brother Lars proposed to the king in 1621 to found an orphanage in Stockholm, but it failed to be realized at the time. Instead he donated in his testament a stone house in Stockholm for this purpose.

The examples of lower education adduced so far were all dependent on some larger supporting structure, such as a noble estate, or a town. Educating

choice of subject that would undoubtedly have pleased \textit{Collegium Illustre}'s original advocate; ibid., 445.
998 Sjöstrand, \textit{Pedagogikens historia II}, 196 f.
1001 Wiberg, \textit{Till skolslöjdens förhistoria}, 16 f.
1002 Ibid., 17. See also Unger, \textit{Makten och fattigdomen}, 128.
the Sami people who lived in the vast roadless inlands of Lapland presented, however, a challenge of a greater magnitude. During his Northern journey in 1620, Skytte had been made aware of this challenge.

Educating the Samis

As historical scholarship has shown, the Swedish Crown took an active interest in the Northern parts of the realm during the sixteenth- through eighteenth centuries for economic as well as political-strategic interests. Skytte’s previously mentioned Northern expedition in 1620 indeed bears witness of this wide range of interests. On a later occasion, Skytte explained in the Council that the king had wanted new towns to be established in the North so that soldiers in the region could use their services—statements which bear witness of the interest of the state to create useful bases also in these remote parts of the kingdom. There was also the issue of educating the Samis—a people considered heathen and barbaric at the time, and in need of civilizing.

Johan Skytte’s name occurs in relation to the education of the Samis for the first time in 1612, when he (among others) as a Treasury official granted a scholarship to a student in Uppsala who had been teaching a group of Sami boys. These Sami pupils had in all likelihood ended up in Uppsala as a result of Charles IX’s ambition to procure Sami clergymen who could be sent back to their native Northern districts and enlighten their own in the Christian faith—an attempt which failed as most of the Sami boys gathered for this purpose ran away already on the journey south (and of those who studied in Uppsala, none seems to have returned as a clergyman). As noted above, the government in Stockholm was in the years following Charles IX’s death burdened by the wars with Denmark and Russia, and the need to raise the enormous sum for Älvsborg’s lösen. In 1614, a proposal from the vicar in Piteå, Nicolaus Andreae (known as “herr Nils”), of translating to Lappish the essential books necessary for the education of the Sami people, was nevertheless received with approval by the government in Stockholm. Five years later, a missal and an ABC-book were printed (poorly written as Nils was better acquainted with Finnish than Lappish). “Herr


1007 Ibid., 5 f. Original documents related to the early church and school history in Lapland, including Charles IX’s relations and plans for the education of the Saami people, have been published in Erik Nordberg (ed.), Källskrifter rörande kyrka och skola i den svenska lappmarken under 1600-talet (Umeå, 1973).
Nils” in Piteå was moreover granted remuneration (1618) for his initiative to take in six Same boys to teach them in the book arts.\textsuperscript{1008}

During Skytte’s Northern travels in 1619-20, questions regarding the education and schooling of the Sami people was not specifically on the agenda, but Skytte met with representatives of the Lule Samis at this time, and listened to their complaints over their heavy tax burden (evidently the complaints made an impression on Skytte who procured a reduction of their tax level by half).\textsuperscript{1009} The conditions of the vast, inner regions of Lapland were thus in all likelihood brought to Skytte’s attention at this time. When Skytte again travelled north along the Gulf of Bothnia in 1629 on route to his new post as governor general of Livonia, he was approached with a proposal on how to improve the poor state of education in this part of the realm.\textsuperscript{1010} After the recent demise of Nicolaus Andreae (herr Nils), only three Sami boys studied in the school in Pitêå. The minister Olof Niurenius in Umeå now proposed to Skytte that a school should be established in the inner regions of Lapland to facilitate the education of the mountain Samis.

By the aid of Niurenius’s written accounts in the matter, Skytte managed to procure a foundation letter from Gustav II Adolf, stating that a school was to be established in Ume lappmark, with Skytte (and his descendents) as its director.\textsuperscript{1011} From his post in Dorpat, Skytte shortly thereafter, in July 1631, wrote to the Council of the Realm and related his discussions with Niurenius in Umeå, as well as Gustav II Adolf’s recent decision to grant the establishment of a school in Lapland (vthi Lappmarken).\textsuperscript{1012} As Skytte explained in his letter, the poor state of the Samis had been brought to his attention by the vicar in Umeå, “Mester Oloff”, whose relations had been “horrible to hear and read” (gräseligt till at höra och läsa). The Sami people still lived liked heathens, he wrote, “persisting with their idolatry and superstition” (afguderij och widskepelsse), even though a hundred years of preaching and Christian sermons had now passed. Informing the Council that he would himself act as the director of the school and Olof Niurenius as its inspector, Skytte asked for their assitance with regard to certain practical matters. A few months later, Skytte wrote again to the Council, expressing his gratitude for their support. He again emphasized his desire to turn the “miserable [Sami] people” (vssle folkedh) away from their heathen and barbaric nature.

\textsuperscript{1008} Nordberg, \textit{Källskrifter}, 57-59. The ABC-book was published in facsimile 1922 in the previously mentioned Wiklund, \textit{ABC-bok på lapska}.
\textsuperscript{1009} Ibid., 280.
\textsuperscript{1011} The foundation letter, dated June 20, 1631, and the related correspondence is printed in Nordberg (ed.), \textit{Källskrifter}, 85, 77-103. See also Ernst Lundström, “Hvem var den egentlige upphofsmannen till den berömda s.k. Skytteanska Lappskolan i Lycksele?”, Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift I: 15 (1914), 415, and Wiklund, \textit{Om de svenska lapparnas skolundervisning i äldsta tid}, 10-15.
\textsuperscript{1012} Nordberg (ed.), \textit{Källskrifter}, 85.
(deres hednesche och Barbarische wäsende), and moreover his wish that the complaints “made by that Portuguese nobleman Damianus de Gois in a book entitled ‘de deplorando Statu Lapponum’” would have no cause in the future (den klagan må blifua afschaffat).  

1013 A sign of Skytte’s commitment to these tasks was his contribution with a grant of 5000 daler in silver to the school, which at the time was a considerable amount of money.  

1014 What then lay behind Skytte’s interest in the education of the Samis?

As is well-known in historical scholarship, the missionary activities in Lapland at this time determined many of the contacts between Samis and the Swedish state.  

1015 These contacts may at first hand be seen as a self-evident part of a larger effort to discipline the population in the interest of the Crown and its bounties. In the correspondence preceding the foundation of the Skyttean school in Lycksele, economical interests per se are, however, conspicuously lacking. Niurenius’s plan for a school in Lapland—which Skytte attached to his first letter to the Council in July 1631—focuses instead on the miserable living conditions of the Samis, their lives in heathen darkness, and on the difficulty of finding ministers who could endure the harsh conditions in the mountain regions where one was “eaten alive” by mosquitoes in the summer, and plagued by snow and freezing cold in the winter.  

1016 As Niurenius wrote, not even the Samis themselves, educated in Uppsala or Piteå in the Christian faith, would return to their old life when they had become used to the comfort of beds and warm houses.  

Niurenius also emphasized that “no nation or people in the world” had been able to accept the words of God until they had received teachers of their own breed who could preach in their own tongue, which was a grace that the Samis had not yet been granted.  

1017 The sick among them thus received no visits and no sacrament, but died instead without comfort and relief: “Dhe siucke […] döö sin koos oschrifttade, otröståte och oaflöste”.  

Skytte, who from the beginning had attested his deep impression by “Mester Olof” and his accounts of the poor conditions of the Samis, subsequently

1013 Ibid., 90. The book Skytte referred to was Damião de Góis “Deploratio lapponiae gentis ad Paulum Papam […] Lovanii 1544”, as noted by Lundström, “Hvem var den egentlige upphofsmannen till den berämda s.k. Skytteanska Lappskolan i Lycksele?”, 415.  

1014 Wiklund, Om de svenska lapparnas skolundervisning i äldsta tid, 20.  


1017 Nordberg (ed.), Källskrifter, 81.  

1018 Ibid., 81; “Klart är af alle Historier at ingen Nation eller folck i werlden, är nogen tidh komnit till rätta Gudz och Salighetens kunschaph, för än de havue fådt lärare, af sin egen barn, och lärern på sit eget tungomåhl, den nåden är Lapperne ännu aldrig wederfahren till denne dagh.”  

1019 Nordberg (ed.), Källskrifter, 80.
became a natural patron of Sami-related matters: in 1643 Niurenius sought support for another ambitious project, a work of Lapland written in Latin, *(descriptio Laplandiae, latine et historico stylo)*, relating the conditions and culture of the Samis.\(^\text{1020}\) The correspondence concerning this project was cut short by Skytte’s death in 1645, and Niurenius’s work remained unpublished. The manuscripts would, however, form an important inspiration to Johannes Schefferus’s *Laponia*, published 1673.\(^\text{1021}\)

It is noteworthy that Schefferus in his collection of inspirational and curious *exempla* from the Swedish history, published 1671, described the establishment of the first school in Lapland in the context of a general (educational) elevation of the kingdom at this time: under the heading of generosity, *De liberalitate*, Schefferus thus praised Gustav II Adolf for his generosity toward the book arts, with regard to Uppsala University, the gymnasium in Västerås, and also with regard to the Sami school in the most Northern realms of the kingdom (*in ultimo Septentrione*), which had taken the Sami people out of “the blind shadows of heathendom” and elevated them to “the light of Christian piety”.\(^\text{1022}\) Schefferus’s remarks reveal that even though the Samis in the seventeenth century were referred to as a distinct people (or “peoples” in plural, as in *gentes Lappones*), they were also undoubtedly considered a responsibility of the King.

To Johan Skytte, the schooling of the Samis was a matter of elevating them to at least basic level of (Christian) education. As he had emphasized in his Prince’s Mirror for Gustav Adolf, a true Christian faith was the foundation of all other virtues. An awareness of the reputation of the Swedish kingdom is also evident from Skytte’s correspondence with the Council—as noted above, Skytte declared as one of his motivations to support the Sami school, the “complaints” of the Portuguese scholar. The Republic of Letters and its authorities evidently remained an important reality to Skytte also in the context of these most remote parts of the realm.

The Christening of the Samis remained a matter of concern to the Council of the Realm in the following years—following the establishment of a mine in Nasa-fjäll, where silver had been discovered in 1634, the Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna characteristically declared that “just as our eagerness to cultivate our native country (*cupido excolendi patriam*) has led us to break a mine in Lapland, we should also strive to plant God’s word in this region”.\(^\text{1023}\) While both aspects were important, the cultivation of the lands

\(^{1020}\) Ahnlund, “Bröderna Niurenius”, 67 f.

\(^{1021}\) Ibid.

\(^{1022}\) Schefferus, *Memorabilium Sueciae gentis exemplorum liber singularis*; “[…] e caecis paganorum tenebris erutì, ad Christianae pietatis lucem valeant emergere”, 144.

\(^{1023}\) Axel Oxenstierna, February 1640; published in Severin Bergh, (ed.), *Svenska riksrådets protokoll. 8, 1640, 1641* (Stockholm, 1898), 33; “Såsom cupidí excolendi patriam haffver drifftvi oss till att uptaga ett bergverk op i Lappmarken, så böör oss och planta där Gudz ord”.

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was, however, not conveyed as dependent on the cultivation of souls and minds, that is, the schooling of the Samis—the education and Christening of the Samis was instead described as a matter of elevating a “miserable people” from barbarism and superstition. As the historian Gunlög Fur has argued, the Samis were clearly “regarded as royal subjects, but subjects in need of proper integration into the realm”.1024 Also Skytte’s northernmost educational initiative may therefore be seen as part of the Swedish ambition to educate and raise the general standards of the nation.

7.4. The Pedagogue

One obvious motivation for the state to establish schools in Sweden in the early seventeenth century was, as we have seen, the prospect of fostering individuals to be useful for king and country. This state-building context coincided with an increasing interest in Sweden in new pedagogical theories, which conveyed ideas of a more generous access to education among the population. Already in 1614, Johan Skytte’s brother Ericus Schroderus had translated Wolfgang Ratke’s Didactica to Swedish, and in 1640, he translated John Amos Comenius’s (1592–1670), Ianua linguarum reserata (“Uplåste tungomåls dör”, 1631).1025 Two years later, his translation of Comenius’s Informatorium Maternum (Moder-Schola, 1633), appeared.1026 These pedagogical works assumed that all children could be educated, boys as well as girls, rich as well as poor.1027 Ratke and Comenius moreover argued that learning should be a “natural” and practically orientated process, and that its subject matter should be pedagogically organised and visualized. These ideals were inspired by the methodological discussions of Petrus Ramus and Francis Bacon, but Comenius had developed a pedagogy also for small children, revolving around different stages of development.1028

Not surprisingly, Skytte was appealed by Comenius’s pedagogical ideas (clearly congenial to the spirit of Ramism). When writing a draft for a new national school plan in the late 1630s, Skytte thus recommended two of Comenius’s textbooks (the Vestibulum and Ianua) as required reading in the lower classes.1029 When a new school plan was further discussed in the 1640s, the Swedish government, represented by Axel Oxenstierna, decided

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1025 Used already 1634 by Johannes Matthiae in his education of Queen Christina; Tomas Kroksmark (ed.), Johan Amos Comenius: Modersskolan [Informatorium maternum] modernisering och inledning av Tomas Kroksmark (Göteborg, 1989), 40. On Schroderus’s career as a translator, see above, Chapter Six.
1026 Kroksmark, Modersskolan, [Inledning], 15 f.; Norberg, Ericus Schroderus, 394
1027 Kroksmark, Modersskolan, [Inledning], 10.
1028 Ibid., 8.
1029 This short draft, which is undated, is reprinted in Pehr-Erik Thyselius, Handlingar rörande svenska kyrkans och läroverkens historia (Örebro, 1841), 69-72.
to engage Comenius himself. In 1642, Comenius was received by Queen Christina, Oxenstierna, Skytte and Matthiae, which resulted in a commission to Comenius to produce new textbooks for the Swedish school system and write the new school plan (which Comenius accepted). In the end, Comenius delivered several textbooks to his Swedish employers, but was cut off from further engagements on account of his unorthodox religious ideas. His ideas were, however, included into the 1649 school regulation by Johannes Matthiae.

The pedagogical impact of these reforms, that is, the resulting class room practices, are inherently difficult to assess (in all likelihood they depended on the level of engagement of individual teachers). Yet, the pedagogical influences of Ramus and later Comenius clearly inspired an increased interest in education and pedagogy in the first decades of the seventeenth century among high officials in Sweden, regarding all levels of education. Skytte’s pedagogical preferences were discussed by Wilhelm Simonius, who, as we have seen, praised Skytte’s initiative to educate his daughters. In his eulogy of Wendela Skytte, Simonius also claimed that Johan Skytte was the first in Sweden to have abolished the old useless method of “tormenting young minds” with grammatical precepts—instead Skytte had introduced the method of learning by speaking the language and reading the classics, as Simonius explained. This pedagogical ideal was of course nothing but the Ramist recommendation of practice and learning by example, which Skytte had learned to praise during his own education and which seems to have been appreciated at the court in Stockholm. Even long after Skytte had been...

1031 Ibid., 45 f. The 1649 school plan also defined gymnasiums as an intermediate stage between school and university, which thus made the ambitious gymnasiums in Västerås and Strängnäs more distinct and lower in rank from Uppsala University; Sjöstrand, *Pedagogikens historia II*, 196 f.
1032 As Lawrence Stone has argued, changed attitudes towards children was in fact one important aspect of the “educational revolution” in Europe between 1560 and 1640: “The reasons for the astonishing expansion of education between 1560 and 1640 are fairly clear. It was made possible by the overthrow of the ancient clerical monopoly of culture and was stimulated by the consequent demand for lay administrators and professional men. But other forces must have been at work to cause the extraordinary scale of the movement. One factor whose importance it is almost impossible to assess was the change in attitude towards children. A child began to be regarded less as a piece of property of the father and more as an individual whose potentialities should be developed and whose opinions should (within limits) be respected”; Stone “The Educational Revolution”, 69 f.
1033 Simonius, *Justa funebria*, Br; “Hic vero, ut modum consiliumque instituendi, a Praelustri et Generosissimo Dno meo observatum, mirificis laudibus prosequamur, res ipsa meretur. Est quidem mos inveteratus, quique tam altas radices egit, ut citius Herculi suam clavam excusseris, quam Orbiliis hanc discendi methodum, Grammatices praecepta teneremis animis primitus ediscenda proponere, summum cum illorum taedio dispendioque. Hunc morem *Praelustris Dnus meas* primus in patria sua improbavit, improbatum repudiavit, repudiatum ipsis linguae *latinae parentibus solemn* et faciliiori discendi modo (felici Deo laus successu) mutavit.”
released from his duties as the preceptor of Gustav II Adolf (around 1610), he continued to give advice to the royal family.

In 1632 Skytte wrote to Charles IX’s daughter, Catherine, and advised her on the schooling of her ten-year-old son (the future Charles X Gustav). Catherine should not bother her son with “grammar and its rules” (grammatica och dess praeceptis), at least not before the boy had reached a more mature age: he should instead read Latin authors who had written about worldly as well as divine matters. “Foreign languages can only be learnt by their use”, which was also true of the Latin language, as Skytte emphasized. To achieve good results, Skytte in particular advised Catherine that good results could be achieved if she hired other men besides the preceptor who could converse with the boy in Latin a few hours every day. Skytte added that he did not completely reject grammar; he merely believed that it should be postponed until the pupil had acquired some knowledge in many things (månge tingz wettskap). These were the ideal first steps of learning, according to Skytte—practice before precepts.

Skytte’s pedagogical ideals were not, however, limited to lower education. The professors and students at Uppsala University were recommended, as noted above, to first and foremost consider practice. In this manner, Ramist method was truly singular and universal as it did not differentiate between high learning and the teaching of very young boys. It can be argued that this indifference to variations in pedagogical situations constituted a weakness in Ramism with regard to the increasingly differentiated demands of the state as well as the educational system. As we have seen, the professors at Uppsala University were less convinced than Simonius had been of the excellence of Ramism. Yet, Skytte’s consequent emphasis on practice and utility arguably provided a coherent ideological framework for the educational reforms undertaken in these expansionist decades of the Swedish state.

7.5. Conclusions

The many uses and applications of education that Skytte in Ramist style had depicted in his student orations turned out to be not as easily fulfilled as the rhetoric promised. As Skytte would learn in Uppsala as chancellor of the university, some professors were skeptical of the greatness of the concise Ramist textbooks and contended instead that Aristotle’s logic was irreplaceable, at least on the levels of higher education. With regard to the introduction of new professorships in Uppsala, Skytte was more successful—three new professorships in the mathematical arts were established and

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1034 The letter is available in print in Hall, Reformpedagogik i Gustaf Adolfs anda, 73 f.
1035 Ibid., 74.
described in the new statutes of 1626. Skytte moreover founded a professorship in his own name devoted to eloquence and politics. However, transforming the teachings in the mathematical arts into practical applications proved to be a greater challenge than teaching students rhetoric and eloquence.

Although the mathematical professors adhered to the admonitions of the chancellor and lectured on the utility of mathematics in civil as well as in military life, their attention was divided across many areas of interests. The dissertations of their students tended to revolve around astronomical topics rather than mechanical ones, or indeed on subjects that were formally not “mathematical” at all, like politics and ethics. Due to the generous donations to Uppsala University in 1622 by King Gustav II Adolf, which had made the university financially independent, there was not much Skytte could do with regard to the details and trends of the lectures. The prevalence of logical reasoning in mathematical education, as well as the non-specialized “encyclopedic” approach to learning, contributed also on a deeper level to the difficulties of producing the specialized engineering skills that the university statutes called for. Some ambitions of the Crown had to be complemented by other means in order to be fulfilled—when King Gustav II Adolf initiated a general survey of the lands and natural resources of the realm, he ordered the talented cartographer Anders Bure to educate his own assistants. Yet, Bure’s first land surveying students did not come into his training completely uneducated; they had in fact in several cases studied mathematics and acquired degrees at Uppsala University, which shows that the university did, to some extent, provide the necessary theoretical foundations in mathematics.

During the crucial revival years of Uppsala University in the first decades of the seventeenth century, Johan Skytte’s Ramist educational agenda functioned as a powerful impetus for a secular agenda of practical utility in all education, especially, as we have seen, with regard to eloquence and the mathematical arts. These subjects were strengthened not only at Uppsala University, but also subsequently at the University of Dorpat. An international awareness, framed by concerns of the reputation of Sweden, was also present in Skytte’s educational arguments and rhetoric. The Skyttean professor was thus especially encouraged to produce patriotic orations, celebrating Sweden and Swedish kings, while training his students in eloquent speech. The noble academy Collegium Illustre in Stockholm was intended to educate and train noblemen in suitable subjects (especially languages) that would ultimately prepare them for international affairs and diplomatic missions. Meanwhile, educational discussions and initiatives with regard to lower as well as higher education were stimulated by an increasing pedagogical interest in Sweden, inspired not least by John Amos Comenius’s Ramist-inspired pedagogy. Encouraged by Skytte, the scholar Johannes Matthiae got the opportunity to apply these pedagogical ideals (first as a
rector of the *Collegium Illustre* and later as the head of an orphanage in Stockholm).

Johan Skytte’s patronage of professorships, schools and individual scholars was made possible by his own elevation to “high positions in the state”. In return, he expected to be honored and praised, as evidenced not least by his foundation letters for the Skyttean professorship. In Skytte’s actions as a statesman, patron and university chancellor, we thus recognize the main themes of his student orations—the importance of education for the state, for the king and country, and not least for the student himself, who would be generously rewarded for his diligence and acquired skills.

Johan Skytte died in 1645, just prior to his planned participation in a set of peace negotiations with Denmark. Following the death of his powerful patron, King Gustav II Adolf, in the battle-field of Lützen in November 1632, Skytte had obtained less central positions of power. He was made president of the newly established second Swedish Court of Appeal (Göta hovrätt) in 1634, but the position was located in Jönköping more than 300 kilometers away from Stockholm. This was in all likelihood not what Skytte had had in mind when he left Livonia in 1632, hastening back to Stockholm to guard his interests in the formation of an interim government (Christina, the future queen, was at the time six years old). Skytte nevertheless continued to make frequent visits to Stockholm and Uppsala, where his long experience in political, diplomatic and educational matters was also utilized up to the end by the lord high chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna.

Johan Skytte was buried in Uppsala Cathedral on June 24, 1645, in the chapel of St. Botvid. His interest in learning and education was carried on by his son Bengt Skytte, albeit in a more utopian manner—traveling back and forth across Europe, Bengt visited famous scholars as well as prospective patrons of learning, proposing ideas for schools and pedagogies. Other members of the Skytte family acquired central positions in the political elite of the Swedish Age of Greatness. The areas in which these (male) Skytte family members engaged serve as a reflection of the eventful seventeenth century—religious conversions, expansions in trade, diplomacy, education and government. The male family line of this “new family”, which had originated with Johan Skytte of Duderhof and Maria Näf of Grönsöö, ended with Bengt Skytte in 1683.

1037 In the end Bengt Skytte failed to realize most of his plans. Inspired by Amos Comenius, Bengt Skytte proposed in 1667 to the elector Fredrik Wilhelm in Kur-Brandenburg that a new city for scholars should be created called “Sophopolis”, a sanctuary completely devoted to the sciences, with tax exemption and religious freedom. Fredrik Wilhelm first agreed to this project but later abandoned it; Stellan Dahlgren, “Bengt Skytte”, SBL xxxii (Stockholm, 2005). Bengt Skytte was also suspected of being involved in Queen Christina’s preparations to abdicate; Nils Runeby, “Bengt Skytte, Comenius och abdikationskrisen 1651”, Scandia 1963.
1038 To this list, piracy can be added: Johan Skytte’s grandson Gustaf Adolph (1637–63), son of Jacob, switched his military career for one of piracy in the Baltic Sea, but was caught and executed in 1663; Andersson, “Skytte”, 499.
The legacy Skytte wanted to pass on to posterity, as a memory of himself and his achievements, was well prepared by the time of his death, not least through the professorship he had founded in Uppsala which bore his name. As we have seen, the instruction Skytte wrote for the Skyttean professorship in eloquence and politics dictated that the professor holding this chair must frequently praise not only God Almighty and the line of Swedish kings, but also the testator, that is, Skytte himself, and his descendants. The idea of eternal glory was indeed a powerful source of inspiration at this time and it served more than one purpose—besides creating edifying monuments of an immortal name, it functioned as a rhetorical device, pointing out models for others to emulate. In Skytte’s case, the eulogies following his passing would, however, revolve not around the glory of great military conquests or a fine lineage, but something more congenial to Skytte’s own origins and ideals—untiring and hard work and rewards based on merit and skills. In this final chapter, which will provide the concluding remarks of the study, I will summarize the results of the study and consider how Skytte himself attempted to establish a legacy and narrative of his life.

This thesis has revolved around education and reform in an early modern Swedish context. I have used a Latin source material that mirrors and expresses the values of humanism and Ramism, which Johan Skytte had been imbued with and made his own during his almost decade-long studies abroad (primarily at the University of Marburg), as well as a Swedish source material related to the political arena where Skytte’s subsequent career took place. Through my analysis of this source material, which has previously largely been neglected, I have been able to show how the ideological aims and philosophical contents of educational reform were intrinsically linked in Skytte’s reform agenda. Whereas older scholarship has recognized that issues of education formed a main thread in Skytte’s career—from his tutelage in the royal family, to his appointment to university chancellor—the present study, with its contextual approach, has analyzed why education constituted such a burning topic in the early Swedish Age of Greatness, how Skytte meant to improve the situation, and which groups he directed his message toward.

By way of conclusion, the expanding Swedish state administration in the early seventeenth century was in urgent need of educated civil servants, and this basic demand favored an ideology based on the Ramist arguments of education, skill and merit. Johan Skytte directed this message to noblemen as well as commoners. While the spread and reception of Ramism has previously been studied with regard to a number of Anglo-Saxon and continental countries, my thesis contributes to a Northern European perspective on Ramism, especially in relation to an early modern state-building context. To achieve his goals, in the interest of the realm and of his own career, Skytte skillfully combined, as I have shown, patriotic ideas of an
imagined glorious Gothic past with the highly modern utility-orientated and meritocratic ideals of Ramism.

As has clearly been evidenced by the sources, Johan Skytte never tired of relating his achievements to a wider audience. The life-story he presented (of himself) reveals more, however, than the details of an eventful career. It also illustrates the ideological mindset of an elevated commoner. The foundation stones and supporting pillars, as it were, of Skytte’s ideals—education, diligence and merit—are particularly evident in the speech he gave in 1625 in Uppsala, on the occasion of the inauguration of his new chair in eloquence and politics, the Skyttean professorship. On this occasion, Skytte described how he had traveled abroad at the age of fifteen “to obtain a richer cultivation” of his intellect, and how he, charged with an “eagerness to learn”, had never been broken by “any difficulty or weakened by any languor”. Throughout his subsequent studies, he had been spared the fates of other students “who had also been sent away to foreign countries by their parents, carelessly consumed a great deal of their money, spent their time thoughtlessly and were thus almost overwhelmed by severe difficulties”. Skytte, on the other hand, had been “given the generous opportunity not only to go away, but also to return home”.

In the continuation of the speech, Skytte enumerated the many rewards he had received for his diligence and hard work. Already as a student he had been granted the fortune of meeting “the most erudite men” at universities “in many kingdoms, provinces and states”, and he had moreover been given the opportunity to speak with them about “brilliant matters, worthy of eternal life”. Skytte also noted in passing—perhaps as good advice to the students listening—that before he had attempted to speak in public himself, “in full view of everybody”, he had practiced at home in the seclusion of his study chambers. When summoned by the king to engage in “difficult and grave questions” he was well prepared, and the king had deemed him worthy of speaking “at public meetings, at assemblies, at coronations, at legations and on other important occasions”. As Skytte concluded, he had been shown much appreciation in response to his performances, and he had been

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1039 See also above, 7.2., on Skytte’s inauguration speech for the Skyttean professorship, *Inauguralis actus* in Schück, *Bidrag till Uppsala universitets historia*. Page references below refer to Schück’s edition. For a longer excerpt from this speech, see Appendix B.
1040 Skytte, *Inauguralis actus*, 3, and Appendix B
1041 Ibid., 3.
1042 Ibid., 4; “Oblata mihi fuit libera non solum eundi, verum etiam redeundi facultas.”.
1043 Ibid., 4; “[...] de rebus praeclarissimis et semipeterna vita dignissimis disserere.”
1044 Ibid., 4; “Non jam commemorabo, quod cum ex umbratili et domestica exercitacione dictionem meam in publicum omnium conspectum.”
1045 Ibid., 5; “[...] in publicis conventibus, comitiis, coronationibus, legationibus, aliisque solennitatibus”.

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rewarded accordingly—with “rewards and opportunities” as well as “various honorary titles”.\footnote{1046}

The major events in Skytte’s career and life (which were also related in some detail by Skytte in his official foundation letter for the Skyttean professorship)\footnote{1047} reappear in contemporary accounts. Those of Skytte’s peers who celebrated his career and achievements often emphasized the importance of his youth and studies, portraying this early time of Skytte’s life as the fundament of his later fortunes. Laurentius Stigzelius, the rector of Uppsala University at the time of Skytte’s passing in March 1645, dwelled in his commemorative speech on Skytte’s student years and his aptitude for eloquence (\textit{aptus ad Eloquentiam}) and foreign languages, which, according to Stigzelius, had created opportunities “not only to speak and deliver orations at universities”, but also “at the courts of princes and kings”.\footnote{1048} Skytte was presented as a model for students to emulate, and as Stigzelius emphasized, Skytte had not spent his nine years abroad leisurely, indulging in amusements—instead he had devoted himself to exercises, “preparing himself for public performances and striving to think as well as speak well”.\footnote{1049}

The theme of education and merit was also present in the wedding poem written by the scholar Johannes Bureus when Skytte married Maria Näf in 1606. Bureus praised Skytte’s long education and his diligence, proclaiming that “fine relatives and fancy display” were of little worth if the individual was not himself diligent and talented—a noble birth was certainly a fine gift, but “bettinger one’s mind” was an even greater treasure.\footnote{1050} The \textit{exemplum} in this case conveyed the idea of the possibility of elevation and individual reward—at least for the talented and diligent. Clearly, such manifestations of personal honor were not unimportant to a “new family” only recently raised to nobility. The image of Skytte as a successful statesman and civil servant, elevated on account of his skills, was also discussed by Johannes Schefferus (1621–1679), Skyttean professor from 1647, who published a collection of inspirational and curious \textit{exempla} from the Swedish history in 1671. In a chapter devoted to men “who despite their humble origins had reached fame” (\textit{De iis, qui humili loco nati, inclaruere}), Schefferus described how Skytte had come from “insignificant beginnings”, but his “almost divine

\footnote{1046} Ibid. “… bonis et facultatibus […] variis honorum titulis”. See also Appendix B.
\footnote{1048} Stigzelius, \textit{Rector Academiae Upsaliensis Laurentius Stigzelius SS. Theol. Professor ordin. Omnibus Academiae Civibus S.D. 24 Junii 1645}.
\footnote{1049} Ibid.; “[Inde in Daniam navigat, qua peregrata in Patram redit, sub finem anni 1601, post consumptos in exotics regionibus integros novem annos,] non otio illicitisque voluptatibus, sed cura dictisse praeclarissimis exercitationibus, quibus se publico parabat, ut jam et sapere posset et bene dicere, idque variis Lingvis exoticis, et convenienter utrique bono vivere.”
\footnote{1050} Bureus, \textit{Bröllopsgäfia}; “At hafwa godh ått at slächtas uppå / Thet är een stor Guds gåfwa / När en sitt kynne bättra må / År thet fast ädhlare håfwa”.

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talent and effective eloquence” had raised him to nobility and given him missions “of the utmost importance to the state”. The theme also recurred over the years in professorial orations in Uppsala, performed not least by Skyttean professors who were obliged to praise the testator’s diligence and talents.

By founding the Skyttean professorship, Skytte had apparently found a clever way of ensuring that he and his family would be praised and lauded for a long time to come (and by professors, as well as their students, who specialized in eloquence). Yet, one of Skytte’s letters regulating the terms of the professorship also reveals the insecurity of the homo novus. Skytte concluded his second foundation letter, written in Swedish and dated October 1, 1622, by stating that he wished that any professor who did not follow the demands of the statutes would be afflicted by “damnation, misfortune and adversity” (förbannelsser, olyckor och mootgångh). However, considering the contemporary as well as the later praise of Skytte, his worries seem to have been unwarranted. It helped of course that his career had actually been successful in terms of titles and appointments—from his appointment as teacher of Prince Gustav Adolf and his ennoblement, to his entrance in the Council of the Realm, to his appointment as chancellor of the universities in Uppsala and in Dorpat, to his appointment as governor general of the Baltic provinces. If Skytte had not been rhetorically and politically skilled, it is indeed unlikely that he would have been sent so early in his career to the diplomatic frontlines of the propaganda war between Charles IX and King Sigismund of Poland. However, as we have seen, Skytte himself also actively contributed to the creation and formation of a glorious Skyttean legacy through his habit of speaking about his achievements and successful career, and framing them by references not least to his education and assiduousness.

Whether Skytte was favored throughout his career by powerful patrons, or if his father in Nyköping, as a mayor and successful merchant, was perhaps more powerful than Skytte admitted, is in this context less important—what is interesting from the perspective of the history of ideas, is the narrative Skytte wished to establish, interconnecting education and merit with high positions, honor and rewards. This narrative, therefore, ultimately reflects more than one man’s ambition and striving for honor—it is also a powerful statement of an ideology of utility and merit, which contended that education and hard work should be rewarded. It was a message with several potential

1051 Johannes Schefferus, Memorabilium Sueticae gentis exemplorum liber singularis (1671; Hamburgi & Holmiæ, 1687), 198: “Fuerunt et Johannis Skytte levia initia. Sed divini plane vir ingenii, promtissimaeque eloquentiae meruit, ut ex Gustavi Adolphi Regis adhuc pueri moderatore vitae studiorumque in nobilium evectus gradum, gravissimis reipublicae negociis praefeceretur. Quae cum dextteritate summ a, fide, circumspectione, […] confecisset, tandem in numerum regni Senatorum et ipse transcriptus est”.

1052 Lewin, Johan Skytte, 214.
receivers: students (whether they were commoners or noblemen) were to realize that their education would benefit them as well as the state, and rulers were to understand the importance of their support to learning and education. Drawing inspiration from the epic historiography of Johannes Magnus, Skytte moreover let this message be framed by a patriotic rhetoric. Reminding his audience of the greatness of the Swedish ancestors, the brave Goths, Skytte implied that a similar glory lay in wait for the present-day Swedes and their king—if they only exerted themselves and feared no obstacles or hardship. Judging by Gustav II Adolf’s large donations to Uppsala University in the early 1620s, these messages of utility and patriotism had been successfully implanted by his teacher, Skytte.

At the core of Skytte’s meritocratic ideal, conveyed already in his student orations and later in the statutes of Uppsala University, lay the assumption that skills mattered more than lineage and birth. Inspired by Petrus Ramus’s textbooks on the mathematical arts, Skytte in one of his student orations even argued that “simple craftsmen” could benefit from education.¹⁰⁵³ No contradiction existed, however, between Skytte’s exhortations to commoners on the one hand, and noblemen on the other, to study and expect great rewards. In the first case, education was presented as an opportunity—which indeed could be rewarded with ennoblement—and in the latter case, education was conveyed as a duty (albeit a joyful one) that was befitting of the nobility. The latter argument may be seen in the context of the pressure on the nobility at this time to educate their sons—a pressure that had only increased since the early sixteenth century, as the administrative, political and diplomatic needs of kings and states had grown more complex and demanding. Noble academies arose at this time, such as Landgraf Moritz’s Collegium Mauritianum in Hesse-Kassel, as alternatives to full-fledged universities, and, as we have seen, Skytte wholeheartedly supported the landgrave’s educational initiatives (which were partly open to commoners), contending that a noble pedigree was no longer enough. Skytte’s attempt to found a noble academy in Stockholm was, however, relatively unsuccessful, as the teaching activities at the Collegium Illustre lasted for only a few years. Like the Collegium Mauritianum, this Swedish initiative was nevertheless motivated by a wish to procure skilled and well-spoken noblemen who could represent their realm in international affairs and negotiations. In the end, the Skyttean professorship in eloquence and politics in Uppsala assumed the essential functions of the Collegium Illustre.

The exemplum of Johan Skytte himself, however, also points toward the formation of a new professional category in the Swedish society, one that was distinguished from the royal courtier, the clergymen, the merchant, the warrior, and the scholar. This category is the professional administrator or civil servant, who may be characterized not only by his loyalty to his patron

¹⁰⁵³ Skytte, De mechanicae artis praestantia.
(usually the king), but also by his well-rounded, yet sophisticated, education and his personal dedication to his mission as a state official, whether he was placed in the Treasury or sent abroad on legations to defend the reputation of his native country and his king. The embryo of this type of statesman in Sweden may be traced back to the secretaries of Gustav Vasa and his sons Erik XIV and John III. In some cases, these well-educated and ambitious secretaries—imported at the time from German universities—became extraordinarily powerful (much to the dismay of the nobility). Also Johan Skytte’s career bears resemblances to the advancement of these early secretaries, as he started out as one of the trusted men of Charles IX and later became a tool for Gustav II Adolf in the Treasury at a time when the nobility was asked to sacrifice more to the state finances. The political situation at this time was, however, more complex compared to the time of Gustav Vasa: by the second decade of the seventeenth century, King Gustav II Adolf, Lord High Chancellor Axel Oxenstierna, the Council of the Realm, and occasionally the Estates, as they were summoned, all partook in the government of the realm, even if the king formally had the last word. In this political landscape, Skytte, as a professional civil servant and an aspiring statesman, showed his loyalty not only to the king, but also to the lord high chancellor and to the more abstract entities of patria and state.

Skytte’s generation of professional administrators in time became more differentiated. As Skytte himself reached higher in his career, he became more and more integrated with the political elite of the nobility—having been ennobled in 1604, Skytte entered into the Council of the Realm in 1617, and he was made baron in 1624. Through this journey he also moved from being an administrator to a leader and statesman. Other well-educated men, who were not necessarily ennobled, made other kinds of careers at various levels of the state—as clerks, deputy judges or secretaries, serving in the Chancellery, the Treasury or in the legal courts. In some cases they received entirely new titles—Skytte’s brother, Ericus Schroderus, who was not ennobled, was, for instance, appointed Regius Translator, in charge of translating useful literature to Swedish, while Anders Bure, ennobled in 1624, was appointed Generalmathematicus, in charge of the surveying of the realm and its resources. The organizational reforms in these early decades of the seventeenth century (engineered by Axel Oxenstierna) meanwhile stimulated the creation of more formalized employments and offices, identified by functions rather than individual names. With regard to the procurement of employable men who could fill these posts—specialized, better skilled, and capable of fulfilling the arduous administrative duties on

1054 The image of the loyal, dedicated and well-educated civil servant would be repeated by secretaries and civil servants throughout the seventeenth century; Norrhem, Uppkomlingarna, 99 ff.
1055 As discussed in Nilsson, På väg mot reduktionen, 60-85, and Runeby, Monarchia Mixta.
the different levels of the state—both Johan Skytte and Axel Oxenstierna recognized the importance of education.

In this context the educational reform agenda of Ramism seemed to be remarkably well suited—Petrus Ramus’s method and definitions of the liberal arts primarily spoke not about finding the truth or doing things correctly, but of doing things well. Utility was therefore in Skytte’s Ramist arguments deeply interlinked with skills and practical applications, whereas uselessness was related to the studying of precepts or logical problems that did not have any clear purpose in real life. Because Ramus’s educational program had been developed with the needs of the students in mind, and with the assumption that their education was a preparation for tasks outside of the university, Skytte believed that he had found the perfect method and model to achieve the goals of education. As chancellor of Uppsala University (and later Dorpat), Skytte prescribed the Ramist method in all teaching and encouraged the professors to always consider the practical applications of their subjects.

Besides the efficient administration of the state, one such area of applications concerned the survey and procurement of the natural resources of the kingdom. In this context, the mathematical arts assumed a central position. Like Petrus Ramus, however, Skytte was from the beginning more an enthusiastic advocate of mathematics than a mathematician himself—the task that he had taken upon himself as university chancellor was primarily to convince others of the promises of useful mathematical applications in civilem usum. While Skytte succeeded in establishing the mathematical arts, including mechanics and optics, as proper university disciplines, in the end he did not manage to direct the university toward more of a practical schooling with which to produce a generous number of land surveyors and other mathematical specialists. It is, however, unlikely that Skytte wanted to turn Uppsala University completely into a practically defined vocational school—his own mindset, shaped by a decade-long education at universities abroad with daily study of the classics in Latin and in Greek, had in all likelihood made Skytte’s thinking more academically inclined than he knew.

Of course, also core academic subjects like rhetoric, poetry and Roman history constituted in the highest degree in Skytte’s mind a preparation for a special vocation, namely that of the state official who would be required to go on legations, deliver patriotic orations, or conduct negotiations with foreign legates. As a university chancellor, Skytte thus expressed his concerns over the students’ skills in Latin and eloquence as well as the lack of mathematical instruments. In essence, Skytte wanted Uppsala University to produce a very wide range of abilities and skills—from refined diplomats, skilled in politics, history, and eloquence, to land surveyors, accountants, and architects. These broad educational demands were at the time larger than Uppsala University could meet.
Johan Skytte’s educational reform agenda at large can not, however, be reduced to a matter of state interests alone. Educational arguments had acquired a particular strength throughout Europe by the seventeenth century, as rising national competition, religious strife and state-building processes had simultaneously increased the demand for educated civil servants. Early seventeenth-century Sweden underwent all of these shifts and developments, with an unfolding perception of its own place on the “theatre stage of the world” (*theatrum mundi*). By the time of Skytte’s first missions in the state, Sweden was entering a period of military great-power status that would strengthen the confidence of the Swedish government and hasten its cultural and economic reform plans. In this context, ambition and self-assertion existed as motivating factors on an individual as well as a national level. As the ruling elite of Sweden were well aware, however, their country existed in the geographical as well as cultural periphery of Europe. While little could be done with regard to geography, scholars as well as statesmen took an active interest in the matter of cultural renewal and international reputation. The growing Swedish ambitions in this area drew inspiration from several sources—a revived Gothic mythology, the humanist celebrations of eloquence and the liberal arts, as well as the particular strain of utility belief in Ramism. Johan Skytte’s educational arguments, which he presented already as a student in the 1590s, were framed by all of these themes.

As an “educational politician” and ennobled *homo novus*, Skytte continued throughout his career to contribute above all to an educational agenda of merit and utility, for the benefit of the country as well as its students. Toward the end of his career, however, when speaking to the students of Uppsala University, Skytte expressed his disappointment over the decline of Ramism and his fear that useless sophistry would once again infiltrate and ruin the university. When Skytte died in 1645, and soon thereafter also the Ramist archbishop Laurentius Paulinus Gothus, no one was left to defend Ramism at Uppsala University. More than Ramist method *per se*, Johan Skytte’s own example eventually constituted his legacy, carrying the ideals of diligence, utility and merit—ideals that were to be related by generations of Skyttean professors in Uppsala.
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Abbreviations

ADB Allgemeine deutsche Biographie & Neue deutsche Biographie
DNP Der neue Pauly: Enzyklopädie der Antike
OED Oxford English Dictionary
SAOB Svenska Akademiens Ordbok
SBL Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon
UUB Uppsala universitetsbibliotek
ÅSU Årsböcker i svensk undervisningshistoria

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Skytteana
Orations and Dissertations


— Problematas ex artium liberalium suavissimis et amoenissimis fontibus desumpta, et in illustissimorum Hassiae principum Academia, sub praesidio Rodolphii Goclenii philosophi acutissimi, Pro consequendis summis in philosophia dignitatibus a Johanne Schrödero Nicopiens Sueco, ad disputandum proposita (Marburg, 1598) [37 pages]. Abbr. Problematas ex artium liberalium [...] fontibus desumpta.


— Oratio Iohannis Schroderi Skytte Sveici, De svecorum gothorumque vetustate et fortitudine militari. Recitata in nobilissima Marpurgensium Academia, mens. Ianuar. Anno etc. 1599. Ad serenissimum, potentissimum et bellicosissimum Principem ac Dominum, DN: Carolum, designatum Regem Sueciae et Principem haereditarium, Sudermanniae, Nericiae et Vermelandiae etc Ducem, Dominum suum clementissimum etc. (Stockholm, 1604) [56 pages]. Abbr. Oratio [...] de svecorum gothorumque vetustate. Translated to Swedish in 1604 (see next title)

— Een Oration Om the Swenskes och Göthers första ursprung och mandom j Krijgh. Hållen på latin Uthi then wijdherömde Academien j Marpurgh uthi Hessen j Januarij månadh åhr etc. 1599 af Johan Skytte ... på Swenska utgången ... (Stockholm, 1604) [28 pages]. Abbr. Een Oration Om the Swenskes och Göthers första ursprung.


— Rudolphi Goclenii professoris logici et mathematici [...] Analyses in exercitationes aliquot Julii Caesaris Scaligeri, de subtilitate, quas ex dictantis ore exceptas Philosophiae studiosis exhibet et communicat M. Johannes Schroderus Suecus (Marburg, 1599) [125]. Abbr. Analyses.

— Oratio, darinnen ausführlich erkleret und dargethan wird, wer angefanglich ursach geben zudem Tumult, Zwispalt und uneinigkeit, so nun eine geraume zeit in dem urhalten und hochlöblichen Königreich der Schweden und Gothen geschwebt, dess gleichen auch zu dem blutdürstigen Kriege, der noch heutiges tages zwischen den Schweden und Polen unendtscheiden stehet. [...] Durch Johannem Skytte zu Elwesiö Suecum. Aus dem Schwedischen exemplar in Teutsche sprach versetzt (1608; Stockholm, 1609) [48 pages].

— Een kort underwijssning uthi hwad konster och dygder een fursteligh person skall sigh öfwe och bruke (Stockholm, 1604) [23 pages]. Abbr. Een kort underwijssning.
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Appendices

A. Chronologies

Sweden

1523: Gustav Vasa elected as king.
1527: Confiscation of church property.
1544: Succession Pact adopted (the law of hereditary succession)
1554: Publication of Johannes Magnus’s *Historia Gothorum Sveonumque*
1571: A new school plan is adopted in Sweden.
1587: Sigismund, John III’s son, becomes king of Poland
1592: Death of John III; succession of Sigismund to the Swedish throne
1593: Uppsala Assembly: the Augsburg Confession adopted. Uppsala University is formally reinstated.
1598: Sigismund looses the Battle of Stångebro.
1599: Sigismund dethroned.
1600: Duke Charles recognised as the new King of Sweden. Linköping Bloodbath.
1611: Charles IX dies. His son Gustav II Adolf ascends the Swedish throne. A new national school plan is approved.
1614: The first Court of Appeal is established (*Svea hovrätt*).
1617: The districts of Ingria and Kexholm are granted Sweden in the Treaty of Stolbova. Death penalty instated for conversion to Catholicism.
1623: Sweden’s first gymnasium is founded in Västerås.
1626: New statutes for Uppsala University.
1629: Livonia (Livland) granted Sweden in the Truce of Altmark.
1632: The University of Dorpat is founded.
1634: An Instrument of Government is approved. A Court of Appeal for southern Sweden is established (*Göta hovrätt*).
Johan Skytte

1577: Born in Nyköping.
1598: Graduates at the University of Marburg as Johannes Schroderus.
1599: Visits Nyköping and delivers an oration at his old school.
1600: Visits the *Collegium Mauritianum* in Hesse-Kassel.
1602: Appointed tutor for Gustav Adolf.
1604: Raised to nobility by the name Skytte.
1605: Visits Uppsala University.
1617: Appointed senator (*riksråd*). Travels to Lapland.
1622: Founds the *Skyttean professorship* in eloquence and politics. Appointed Chancellor of Uppsala University.
1625-26: Writes new statutes for Uppsala University (with Axel Oxenstierna).
1632: Chancellor of the new university in Dorpat. Founds a school in Lapland.
1634: President of Göta hovrätt (Court of Appeal)
1645: Dies in Söderåkra
B. Latin Excerpts with English Translations.

I. On the Nobility of the Art of Mechanics

Excerpt from Johan Skytte’s master’s oration *De mechanicae artis praestantia* (Marburg, 1598).

II. On Method at the *Collegium Mauritianum*

Excerpt from Johan Skytte’s oration at the *Collegium Mauritianum* in Hesse-Kassel, *Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani* (Kassel, 1600).

III. The Inauguration of the Skyttean Professorship

Excerpt from Johan Skytte’s inauguration speech for the Skyttean Professorship, *Inauguralis actus* (Uppsala, 1626).
I. On the Nobility of the Art of Mechanics

Excerpt from Johan Skytte’s master’s oration *De mechanicae artis praestantia* (1598), C3r-C4r.
Dic quaeo, inquis, qua nobilitatis splendorisque luce Mechanicae disciplinae colluceant, cum ne quidem disciplinae honestae liberalesque dici mereantur, ut quae in sordidissimis opificium officinis tractentur, doceantur, omnibusque modis exerceantur. Hei mihi, quale animal et quam ineruditum erudiendum suscepi! O doctor inauditae temeritatis, quae vertigo mentis te impellere potest, ut haec scribas! Imo vero, pro preciosissimis mercibus, discipulis tuis vendites? Huc, huc, omnes qui subtilitatum arguias discere cupitis, huc undique sine mora concurrite: Huic vos Doctori in disciplinam tradite, hic vos sic docebit, ut neque quid ipse sibi velit, neque quid vos agatis intelligere possitis. At quo usque tandem hominis hujus prorumpet audacia?

Audet Mechanicam ex artium liberalium numero iccirco profiligare atque tollere, quod illius in diversorum opificium officinis luculentus et praeclarus apparere usus. Valde indignum putat philosophi majestate, si cum sordidissimis illis gregibus aes, ferrum, aliaque metallica tractantibus, de rerum mirabilium causis confabuletur, de artis Mechanicae emolumentis subtiliter et acute disserat—jubetque nos forcipe, forfice, follibusque philosophari! Videor hic mihi hominem, Luciano, omnium non modo humanarum, sed etiam divinarum rerum turpissimo irrisori, non absimilem videre. Is etenim ut nullam esse liberalem, rerum ad agriculturam pertinentium, cognitionem obtineret, philosophoque ab harum rerum contemplatione deterreret, in hanc vocem delapsus est:

‘Philosophe et admirator agriculturae, si adeo contendis cognitionem hanc, quae ex agricultura efflorescit, liberalem esse tamque insignem, abi et Ligone philosophare!’

Hic vero novus Lucianus (singulis etenim aetatibus renascitur) ut Mechanicas artes odio omnium exponat, in contemptum adducat, ludibrio habeat, rerum Mechanicarum studiosissimos ad res metallicas nescio quas in sordidissimorum hominum sordidissimis ergastulis, forcipe, alisque organis praeparandas et conficiendas amandat. O quam praeclare hominis hujus velitatio cum Lucianica ista conspirat et consentit! At deus optime et maxime si convicium tolerari debet, quam abjectus, quam sordidus, summus ille, philosophorum Coryphaeus, Aristoteles (ut quidem multis persuasum est) existimandus foret, qui tam ingenti desiderio omnium animalium naturas cognoscendi perhibetur flagrasse, ut in homines eas exquirentes discipulum suum Alexanderum Magnum tot millia talentorum impendere quodammodo coegerit et impulerit: qui ipse etiam cum piscatoribus, alisque hominibus vilissimis vix ac ne vix quidem cum opificibus conferendis diu conversatus, in scholam suam, mirabilium rerum eruditione locupletatus, reedit? Quid, quod etiam idem Aristoteles, ut in proaemio diximus, ut Mechanicae sibi usum insignem compararet, non ignominiosum duxit, id ex hominibus his, qui tibi tantopere sordent, petere?
Tell me, I implore you, by what light of honor and glory do the mechanical arts shine, as they do not even deserve to be called honorable and liberal arts, because they are treated, taught, and practised in all ways in the dirtiest workshops of craftsmen? Alas! What an uneducated creature I have undertaken to educate! O learned man of incredible audacity, what kind of delirium of the mind has impelled you to write such a thing! Do you even wish to sell this to your disciples instead of the finest goods? Come together from everywhere, everyone who wishes to understand the quibbles of subtleties, hurry without delay, turn yourselves over to this teacher in this subject, and he will teach you in a manner which will cause you to neither understand what he really means or what you are supposed to do. How far does the audacity of this man really go?

He dares to expel and dispatch Mechanics from the circle of liberal arts, since its use appears so bright and clear in the workshops of various craftsmen. He thinks that it is incredibly unworthy for the dignity of a philosopher if he were to discuss the causes of remarkable things with those very dirty crowds who work with copper, iron and other metals, and if he were to discuss the utilities of the Mechanical art in detail and in a clear manner. So he bids us to philosophise with tongs and bellows! I recognize here a man who is not unlike Lucian, that shameful derider of all things, human as well as divine. He resorted to the following argument to prove that there is no liberal knowledge regarding agricultural things, and to deter philosophers from the contemplation of these things:

Philosopher and admirer of agriculture, if you think that the knowledge that flourishes from agriculture is liberal and dignified, then go away and philosophise with a hoe!

In order to subject the mechanical arts to everyone’s hate, bring them into contempt and deride them, this new Lucian—since he seems to be reborn in every age—refers those who eagerly study mechanics to some kind of metal work which must be performed with fire tongs and other tools in the shabbiest people’s simplest workhouses. Alas, how well they concur, the bickering of that man and Lucian’s!

But God Almighty, if we were to accept this defamation, how contemptful, how simple must we not consider the great Aristotle to have been, the leader of philosophers according to the opinion of many, who in his eagerness to understand the nature of all living things, as it is told, almost forced his disciple, Alexander the Great, to spend many talents on people investigating these things, and who even himself spoke at length with fishermen and other very simple people, hardly even comparable to craftsmen, and who returned to his school, enriched with the wisdom of remarkable things? What do you say about the fact that this very same Aristotle, as we have remarked in our preface, did not think it was beneath him to seek answers among these men, who seem so simple to you, in order to learn about the noble utility of Mechanics?
O te P. Rame sordidum atque inhonestum, qui tanto erga Mechanica studia perhiberis amore inflammatus, ut nullum opificem in urbe Parisiorum celeberrima paulo ingeniosiorem reliqueris, quem non familiarem, charumque habueris, cujus officinam Mechanicam totam non inspexeris! Sed nos importunitati hujus, qui Mechanicas artes tam vehementer allatrat, opponentes, statuumus artium liberalium scientiam et facultatem hanc veram esse, quae praeceptu hominis omnem vitam ornare et constituere possit, cujus praecepta, rerum scientiam dexteritatemque capiendi consilium suppeditare queant. Etenim ars omnis est solertia quaedam verique, certo in genere rerum perspicientia, praeceptis comparata, qua id, quod unicuique subjicitur, absque lapsu et errore ad nostram utilitatem discimus adjungere. Sic enim dicendi praecepta sunt, quae quid in oratone faciendum, quid commodum fit, monent. Sic numerorum et magnitudinum praeceptio nequaquam est otiosa, sed quae suarum quoque rerum præxícioria dirigat. Sic quoque Mechanicae decreta minime sunt otiosa, sed quae eam adolescentium animis, si modo recte suscipiantur, ingenere possunt prudentiam, cujus proprium est ad degendam vitam lumen praeferre, ut nosmet ipsos primum tum omnia nostra ratione non cupiditati regenda permittamus.

At jam, opinor, inspectis horum doctissimorum hominum exemplis, inspectaque artium liberalium natura, excitaberis, liberalemque cognitionem, quae ex officinis hominum Mechanicorum petitur, exclamabis. Hoc vero unicum philosophi persona indignum judicabis: manibus illum suis aequam est otiosa, sed quae suarum quoque rerum πρᾶξιςορία dirigat. Sic quoque Mechanicae decreta minime sunt otiosa, sed quae eam adolescentium animis, si modo recte suscipiantur, ingenere possunt prudentiam, cujus proprium est ad degendam vitam lumen praeferre, ut nosmet ipsos primum tum omnia nostra ratione non cupiditati regenda permittamus.

Erras, et quidem vehementer, aliosque tecum in errorum illam sentinam deductis! Non enim philosopho hominis Mechanici scholam ingredienti, deque Mechanicae mysteriis cum illo discipianti, magis necessarium erit fabrilia opera exercere, quam eidem geodaesiam callenti deque geodaesiae commoditatibus cum agrimensoriis disputanti, agri mensorem protinus agere, hominibusque aliis constituta mercede operas suas locare. Philosophus igitur, cupiditate rerum Mechanicarum accensus, ingrediatur ludum Mechanici ingredientem jubeat digitis suis metalla contractare, et ut poeta loquitur: ‘Prensare versareque tenaci forcipe ferrum?’

Erras, et quidem vehementer, aliosque tecum in errorum illam sentinam deductis! Non enim philosopho hominis Mechanici scholam ingredienti, deque Mechanicae mysteriis cum illo discipianti, magis necessarium erit fabrilia opera exercere, quam eidem geodaesiam callenti deque geodaesiae commoditatibus cum agrimensoriis disputanti, agri mensorem protinus agere, hominibusque aliis constituta mercede operas suas locare. Philosophus igitur, cupiditate rerum Mechanicarum accensus, ingrediatur ludum Mechanici ingredientem jubeat digitis suis metalla contractare, et ut poeta loquitur: ‘Prensare versareque tenaci forcipe ferrum?’
O, Petrus Ramus, dirty and undignified man, you who are said to have been so filled with love of the study of Mechanics, that there was not one half-talented craftsman in the whole of the famous city of Paris, whom you neglected, and who you did not consider your dear friend, and whose workshop you had not inspected in its entirety! When defending ourselves from the insolence of anyone who violently barks at the Mechanical arts, we should state that true knowledge and skill in the liberal arts are constitutive of that which can ornament and support man’s entire life, a knowledge, the precepts of which are capable of providing advise regarding the acquisition of knowledge and skill in many things. Each art provides, for a specific domain, a certain dexterity and knowledge of the truth, which are acquired through precepts that help us to add to our utility without error and mistakes that which belongs to each art. That is how the rules of speech are, which teach us how to compose an oration, and what is appropriate. Neither is the theory of numbers and magnitudes unnecessary as it determines what is applicable in its domain. In the same manner, the precepts of Mechanics can hardly be useless, as they impress a kind of prudence in the minds of young people, if they acquire these precepts it in the right manner, which enlightens us to lead our lives by letting ourselves, and everything associated with us, to be guided not by passion but by reason.

As we now have studied the examples of the most learned men, and as we have investigated the nature of the liberal arts, I believe that you will be awakened, and that you will exclaim that the knowledge which is sought in the workshops of craftsmen is also free. Only this one thing you will maintain is unworthy for the standing of a philosopher—that he with his own hands will treat and handle copper, iron and other metals. But can such a foolish and ignorant man ever be found, who would order a philosopher to enter a craftsman’s workshop and touch the metals with his fingers, or as the poet says: ‘Take hold of the iron and turn it with the fire-tong’! You are gravely mistaken, and you drag others with you down into this sewer of misconception! Just as it is not necessary for anyone knowledgable of geodesy, who discusses issues of geodesy with landsurveyors, to immediately go out and measure the field himself, or offer his services to others for a certain salary, it is not necessary for a philosopher visiting the school of a craftsman, discussing the mysteries of Mechanics, to perform the actual work himself. The philosopher, burning with passion for Mechanical things, will enter the craftsmen’s workshop, not to join their work, but to investigate and observe their riddles. He will then go home and devote himself to his theories, directing all his diligence and reason toward the causes of these things, and then, by some kind of divine insight, he will suddenly understand all that which the craftsmen using great labour could hardly produce, and he will then communicate this with the craftsmen.
II. On Method at the Collegium Mauritianum

Excerpt from Johan Skytte’s *Oratio de splendore Collegii Mauritiani* (Kassel, 1600), Br-Cr.

Verumenimvero postquam adolescens hisce egregijs Grammaticorum, Rhetorum, Logicorum opibus fuerit cumulatus, ex inferiori Schola in augustissimum hoc auditorium deductur, ut majores divitias consequatur, ut melioribus epulis vescatur. Inprimis vero artium Mathematicarum, quae et antiquissimae et ad superiora facultatum scientiarumque decreta summe sunt necessariae, artium, inquam, Mathematicarum habetur ratio. Artes deinde Mathematicas excipiunt Physicorum suavissima monita, utilissimae praeeceptiones, quae omnes accurata brevitate proponuntur. Quibus deinde succedunt suavissimae Theologorum epulae, dulcissimae jureconsultorum divitiae. Quid quaeris?

In Collegio Mauritiano ejusmodi Philosophandi ratione utuntur, ut veterum quidem dogmata amplectantur, omnique ratione foveant, sed tamen si quid in rebus sit falsum, vanum, inutile, si quid sit a veteribus inepte et imprudente conturbatam, id ad certissimam veritatis normam exigant, id clarissima rationis trutina perpendant, id conjuncta doctrinarum luce ponderent.

So, what manner of teaching, what method of philosophising, is practiced here? If our illustrious Landgrave has accepted a student into this seat of erudition and learning in order for the boy to earn his heritage through diligent studies, his education will be carried out in the following manner. He will first be placed in the lower stage, which is divided into two classes, and there he will listen to the best grammatical works. He will then be brought from the training field of grammar to the arena of rhetoric and logic, where he from the same works shall acquire an even richer cultivation of his talent, so that he will be able to apply the sound admonitions and precious precepts for his own use and immense utility. Here, both languages, Greek and Latin, are used; here, exercises and tests are frequently conducted in both languages; here, the Roman authors are explicated, and method is developed from the particulars of all things, as far as is possible.

When the boy has become well acquainted with these excellent works of Grammarians, Rhetoricians, and Logicians, he will be moved from the lower school to the higher, to pursue even greater riches, and enjoy even finer meals of learning. The mathematical arts, which are both very old and entirely necessary for the comprehension of the higher rules of the faculties and the arts, are particularly emphasized. The delightful doctrines and useful precepts of physics, which are explicated accurately and concisely, follow after the mathematical arts. The wonderful dishes of theology, and the sweet riches of jurisprudence follow thereafter. What more do you ask?

In the Collegium Mauritiam, a way of philosophising is applied which will allow the ancient doctrines to be cherished and considered in all ways, but if something seems false, meaningless or useless, if the ancients have confused something in an ignorant or imprudent manner, then this will tried against the sharp measure stick of truth, and it will be weighed carefully in the excellent scale of reason, and it will be considered in the accumulated light of all doctrines.

In the Collegium Mauritiam, there are plenty of disputation exercises. Declamations—prose as well as verse—are frequently performed. Orations are recited by the aid of scripts as well as from memory. Philosophy itself is not explicated or taught without the apparatus of elegant speech, without the light of tropes and the ornament of rhetorical figures, or without pleasant gestures and an appropriate performance. It is this union of philosophy and eloquence which has created the greatest scholars—whether they were philosophers, orators, theologians, jurists, or medical men.
Contraria vero disjunctio omnes literarum pestes peperit et aluit. Sentio vos, Auditores, hac mea commemorazione ordinis et methodi, non leviter commoveri. At Deum immortalem quam longe pseudo-Aristotelicorum institutio et Philosophandi ratio ab hac Mauritiana recedit! Puer etenim pseudo-Aristotelicis in disciplinam traditus, Grammaticae quidem et Rhetoricae cognitionem usumque consequitur, quod laudamus, mirificeque comprobamus; Sed cum ad Logicam ventum est, pro puro et nitido sermone barbarissimos et solaecissmos facere incipit. Neque vero Logicae sapientiae vim in oratoribus, in historicis, in poëtis excutium, sed ad nescio quas quaestiones de ponte asinorum, de circularibus syllogismis enodandas eam traducunt.


Pseudo-Aristotelici artes suas ita conscriptas tenent, ut infinitis contradicitionibus, nugis, nebulisque Sophisticis sint refertae, ut nulla ordinis methodique luce colluceant: Pseudo-Aristotelici hunc in philosophando morem sequuntur, ut damnata de rebus liberiore disquistione ad veterum dogmata tanquam ad Sirenum scopulos adhaerescant: Pseudo-Aristotelici discipulos suos in certis quibusdam disciplinis ita exercent, ut reliquas artes plane contemnant vel ignorant: Declamationum exercitia vel omnino intermittunt, vel raro instituunt: Disputationes non de rebus humano generi necessarijs, sed sophisticis planeque inutilibus suscipiunt.

[...]

Hanc pseudo-Aristotelicorum philosophandi rationem ineptam esse quis negabit? Quis inficiabitur Mauritianam pseudo-Aristotelicam illam multis modis superare? Quis non existimabit multum dignitatis, multumque splendoris ex tam eximia studiorum tractatione Scholae huic illustrissimae accedere?
If, on the other hand, philosophy and eloquence are kept apart, all kinds of diseases in book-learning are bred and nurtured. I notice, Listeners, that you have been moved not a little bit by my account of method and order! However, by God how different is the Pseudo-Aristotelian manner of teaching and way of philosophising, compared to the Mauritian method! A boy who has been taught according to the Pseudo-Aristotelian way, will admittedly reach some knowledge of grammar and rhetoric, which we must applaud and surprisingly approve, but when he comes to logic, he will exchange his pure and beautiful speech and begin to produce barbarisms and solecisms. Neither do the Pseudo-Aristotelians apply the power of logical reasoning in the works of orators, historians, and poet—they prefer instead to conduct investigations of those odd questions, like the *pons asinorum* and circular syllogisms.

Instead of teaching the mathematical arts as a united whole, they teach them bit by bit. But why do I even say that they explain these parts of a number of disciplines to their students, when it is rather a matter of meaningless hairsplittings and nonsense from weak minds? The Pseudo-Aristotelians are so ignorant of pure mathematics and related things, which can be studied in the works of Archimedes, Apollonius of Perga, Hero of Alexandria, Euclid, Ptolemy, Copernicus, Vitello, Pappus, and others, that they turn pale if they hear these authors being mentioned, revealing thus that they have been shamefully mislead by their shameful ignorance.

The Pseudo-Aristotelians have their arts written down in such a way that they are filled to the brim with contradictions, trifles and sophist mists, so that they do not shine by any light of method and order. In their way of philosophising, they condemn a more free way of investigating things, and cling instead to the dogma of the Ancients as if they are stuck on the cliffs of the Sirens. The Pseudo-Aristotelians train their students excessively in a few disciplines which make them contemptuous or ignorant of other subjects. They neglect exercises in declamation or conduct them on rare occasions, and they devote themselves to disputationes of no relevance to humankind, revolving around sophisms which are clearly useless.

[…]

Who will deny that the Pseudo-Aristotelian manner of philosophising is useless? Who will begrudge that the Mauritian way will surpass the Pseudo-Aristotelian many times over? Who will not conclude that much honor and much splendor will befall this illustrious school on account of its excellent manner of conducting studies?
III. The Inauguration of the Skyttean Professorship

Quod a Deo Praepotente, largitore omnium rerum liberalissimo, summis votis hactenus postulavi, Auditores, ut, postquam ex literarum studiis immensas percepsissem utilitates, liceret mihi aliquando animi mei promptitudinem erga eadem studia, atque adeo universum literatorum ordinem declarare; potissimum vero de patriae hac Academia bene praecclareque mereri; id jam mihi hodierno die contigisse, non solum vehementer laetor, verum etiam divinae illius Majestati infinitas, et quantas animo concipere, ago gratias. Maxima quidem semper fuerunt Divini Numinis in me beneficia; Sed si illam Dei immortalis bonitatem, qua dum in ipsis literarum studiis adhuc versor, cumulatus fui, penitus contemplatus fuero, deprehendo eam esse tantam, ut omnium, quos hic sol adspicit, et quos haec terra sustinet, essem ingratiissimus et negligentissimus, atque adeo lucis hujus usura indignus, si de gratitudinis quodam documento ad posteritatem etiam duratu non cogitarem. Etenim cum ante annos tres et triginta, regnante adhuc Serenissimo Svecorum et Gothorum rege, Johanne ejus nominis tertio, anno aetatis meae decimoquinto in exoticas Academias ad capessendum uberiori ingenii cultum me contulissem, tam insignem, tam promptam et paratam Dei eum. Quod quidem Dei beneficium eo magis depraedicandum censeo, quod cum alii in exteras regiones a parentibus emissi ingenti pecuniae vim desultorie consumerunt, tempus inaniter contriverunt, ingentibusque difficiulitatis paene oppressi fuerunt; ego per Dei gratiam omnibus isti molestiis fuerim liberatus. Oblata mihi fuit libera non solum eundi, verum etiam redeundi facultas. Concessum mihi fuit in tot regnorum, provinciarum et rerumpubl. Academis non solum frui literatissimorum hominum conspectu, verum etiam cum isdem de rebus praeclarissimis et sempiterna vita dignissimis disserrere. […]

Felicitatem hanc meam auxit, vehementerque cumulavit, quod regibus aliisque principibus viris innotuerim et benevolentiam eorumdem mihi conciliaverim; Quae quidem res mihi ad alia aspiranti postmodum fuit ac etiamnum est adjumento.

Non jam commemorabo, quod cum ex umbratili et domestica exercitatione dictionem meam in publicum omnium conspectum eduxissem, aliorum quoque benignitatem fuerim demeritus. Sed ne hac tam prolix a commemoratione earum rerum, quae mihi in Peregrinis regionibus evenerunt, vos offendam, ad eas, quae mihi in patriae visceribus constituto obtigerunt, provocabo.
Dear listeners, ever since I had realized the immense utility of literary studies, I prayed with the utmost devotion to God Almighty, the generous provider of all things, that I should one day get the opportunity to prove my promptitude to promote such studies and the whole range of book learning, and, above all, to serve this academy of our native country well and splendidly. Not only do I feel an incredible joy that this has been granted me today, but I also give endless thanks, as much as I can conceive in my soul, to His Divine Majesty. The benevolence of the Divine Will has indeed been great toward me. If I further contemplate God’s goodness bestowed on me as I have conducted these literary studies, I realize that this goodness is so great that I would be the most ungrateful and negligent man of all who walks under the sun and treads this earth, and that I in fact would be unworthy to enjoy the light of day, if I did not conceive of some sort of token of gratitude that would last to posterity. Thirty-three years ago, under the rule of John III, the most serene King of the Swedes and Goths, when I fifteen years old had gone to foreign schools in order to obtain a richer cultivation of my intellect, I received from God during my whole sojourn, the threefold best and greatest, such extraordinary, cogent and prompt proof of his benevolence, that my soul, burning with an eagerness to learn, could not be broken by any difficulty, or be weakened by any languor.

I believe that this benevolence from God should be praised even more strongly, because when other students, who had also been sent away to foreign countries by their parents, carelessly consumed a great deal of their money, spent their time thoughtlessly and were thus almost overwhelmed by severe difficulties, I by God’s grace was spared from all such trouble. I was given the generous opportunity not only to go away, but also to return home. It was granted me not only to enjoy the presence of the most erudite men at universities in many kingdoms, provinces and states, but also to speak with them about brilliant matters, worthy of eternal life. […]

Meeting kings and other potentates, and gaining their benevolence toward me, increased my good fortune and forcefully strengthened it. This circumstance was subsequently, and still is, a help for me when aspiring to other things.

I shall not further recall how I brought my speeches from the tedious practice at home to the public arena in full view of everybody, or how I earned the benevolence of other people as well. But since I do not want the detailed remembrance of these things that happened in foreign lands to inadvertently offend you, I shall now turn to the things that has happened to me during my time in the heartland of our native country.
Et licet Amplissimus hic mihi dicendi campus oboriatur, ita tamen me geram, ne bonitatis vestrae aura abusus fuisse videar. Post Deum immortalem literarum studiis debo, quod ante annos quatuor et viginti, a Serenissimo Svecorum et Gothorum rege, Carolo ejus nominis nono in aulam fuerim vocatus. Vocationis vero hujus quis extiterit fructus, quas ex eadem commoditates, quas utilitates hauserim, depromerim, quid opus est referam? Etenim cum tacitas animorum vestrorum cogitationes, tacitumque sensum audire mihi videar, quo non solum fortunam meam admiramini, verum etiam eandem mirifice collaudatis, non ero in iis, quae omnium oculis observantur, enumerandis, copiosus. Functio haec aulica effecit, quod cum defuncti Regis Caroli, benignissimae recordationis, tum hujus Sereniss. Svecorum et Gothorum regis, Gustaphi Adolphi, Domini mei clementissimi, inusitatum benevolentiam acquisiverim; quod gravissimis reipublicae temporibus tantorum regum consultationibus fuerim adhibitus; quod ab iisdem regibus dignus fuerim judicatus, qui in publicis conventibus, comitiis, coronationibus, legationibus, aliisque solennitatibus verba facerem; quod saepissime vel cum aliis regni magnatibus, vel solus, res arduas et graves, a Regum, principum, rerum public. et civitatum legatis propositas pertractarim, dictisque legatis ex mandato et jussu clementissimorum meorum regum responderim.

Functioni huic aulicae post Deum ter opt. max. humillime refero acceptum, quod in regni hujus venis, bonis et facultatibus, quod variis honorum titulis cum a clementissimis meis Regibus, tum a Serenissimo Magnae Britanniae rege, Jacobo ejus nominis primo, quod a nominatis et aliis etiam Regibus, principibus et rebus publicis, eximiis et magnificentissimis muneribus fuerim cumulatus. Videte, et Dei praepotentis in me collata beneficia accuratius mecum recognoscite, judicate annon eadem mereantur, ut gratitudinis quodam signo affectionem meam erga studia vicissim demonstrem?

Cogitanti itaque mihi, qua potissimum ratione favorem exhibitum, omnium oculis subjicerem, nulla res mihi visa est commodior, nulla aptior, nulla decentior, quam si ex reditibus meis, quos Deus elargitus esset, professorem eloquentiae vel politicae in patria Academia honorificentissime alerem, sustentarem, qui studiosae adolescentiae ad eadem studia rectius colenda veluti facem quandam praebetur.
Although a great source of many topics is available here, I would like to act in such a way that I will not abuse your good will. Next to God, I have my education to thank for the fact that I twenty-four years ago was called to the royal court by Charles IX, the noble King of Swedes and Goths. What need is there for me to tell you about the wonderful results that came from this mission, the benefits, the usefulness which I could draw and collect from it? Because I sense the silent thoughts of your minds and your quiet consideration, conveying that you not only admire my fortune, but that you praise it exceedingly, I shall not be verbose and give a detailed account of such things that will be easily perceived by everyone. The function of this post at the royal court entailed that I received an incredible benevolence from the late King Charles of blessed memory, as well as from the most serene King of Swedes and Goths, Gustav Adolf, my most merciful Lord, and that I during very difficult times for the state was asked to attend the consultations of these great Kings. It also meant that I was considered by them worthy to speak at public meetings, at assemblies, at coronations, at legations and on other important occasions, and that I often, together with other important men of the state or alone, got to study difficult and serious issues that had been proposed by the ambassadors of Kings, Princes, states or peoples, and when the ambassadors had spoken I was by my most gracious Kings mandated and authorized to give a reply.

Next to God, I humbly acknowledge that I have this post to thank for the benefits, rewards and opportunities I have received from this Kingdom, and for the various honorary titles I have been given from my most gracious King as well as from the most serene King of Great Britain, King James I, and all the exquisite and magnificent gifts I have been given by the sovereigns I have mentioned and other kings, princes, and states. Behold, and consider carefully the benefits bestowed on me by God Almighty! Do you not then think that this in return calls for a display of my devotion toward learned studies by some kind of token of gratitude?

When I thus consider, in what way I should preferably present the favor that has been granted me before the eyes of all, it seems to me that nothing would be more suitable, nothing more appropriate, nothing more fitting, than for me to use my funds, which God has bestowed upon me, to honorably found and support a professorship in eloquence and politics at the university of our native country, which would offer a torch, as it were, for the studying youth, helping them to conduct their studies in a more advantageous way.
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