Maarten van Dorp, whom Luther called ‘the most learned man in Leuven’, divides modern scholars as much as he confused his contemporaries. His career as a student, lecturer (of Latin and philosophy), and, eventually, professor (of theology) at the University of Leuven unfolded against the background of the scholastic-humanist debate which dominated Northern universities at the time. Dorp was, and still is, notoriously difficult to pin down as a supporter of either the old (scholastic) or the new (humanistic) learning. The academic authorities, on the one hand, accepted him in 1515 as one of the magistri nostri, namely as a professor and council member of the scholastic stronghold that the Leuven faculty of theology was at the time, thus acknowledging him as a spokesperson and protector of traditional learning. However, they refused to grant him a licence to teach a year later, probably as retaliation for his so-called Oratio Paulina, an inaugural lecture of a summer course on the Epistles.

1 I wish to thank E. Jennifer Ashworth for help and corrections. All translations in this essay are my own, unless otherwise indicated.


4 At the University of Leuven, professors were required to reapply for a teaching licence (the so-called legentia or regentia) at the beginning of each academic year. The
of Paul showcasing too much support for the humanist cause. Dorp was reinstated in 1517, only to suffer another disciplinary action two years later, when he was ejected from his college following a short stay in Holland and the appearance of the abovementioned *Oratio Paulina* in print. He soon managed to get back in favour and even gathered enough support to be elected rector of the university and dean of the theology faculty in 1523. His humanist friends, on the other hand, were similarly unsure whether to praise or rebuke him. They were disappointed that Dorp did not choose their side more wholeheartedly, and blamed his unstable and vain character. Erasmus, who, together with Thomas More, engaged in a polemic with Dorp concerning the primacy of the scholastic method, even called him an extremely vainglorious person, who was more inconstant than any woman.

procedure was a formality, but was occasionally used to rein in heretic or insubordinate colleagues. Cf. De Jongh, *L’ancienne faculté de théologie*, pp. 52-54.


8 *Opus Epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami*, eds. P. S. Allen et al., 12 vols (Oxonii: In Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1906-1958), III (1913), respectively 92 (‘suae gloriae perparcus, ne dicam famelicus’) and 59 (‘quaui muliere inconstantior’).
Judging by his publications, it is easy to see why his contemporaries had difficulties to place him in either the scholastic or the humanistic camp. Depending on which work one chooses to focus on, one could argue for an interpretation of Dorp as a founding father of literary humanism in the Low Countries, Dorp as a rabid defender of the scholastic tradition, or Dorp as a standard-bearer for biblical humanism. Previous studies have done all three, and more.9 A remarkable omission in the present state of scholarship on Dorp, however, is a study of his reflections on logic, or the field of philosophy in general. This is surprising for more than one reason. First, it is clear that philosophy was the discipline which Dorp claimed most as his own in the earliest part of his career (i.e. before his appointment as theology professor). When he wrote to his humanist friends during this period, he defined himself as a teacher of philosophy, and indicated that he, as a philosopher, only had a secondary interest in the teaching of literature in the humanist vein.10 Gerard Morinck, the former student and posthumous biographer of Dorp, also admits, rather reluctantly, that his teacher was so devoted to scholastic dialectic at this point in time, that no bigger sophist could be found in the whole of Leuven.12 In addition, the study of Dorp’s approach to logic

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10 See for instance his letter addressed to Johannes Despauterius d.d. 28 March 1509, in which Dorp introduces himself as ‘philosophiam Louanij in gymnasio Lilianorum profitens’, Cf. De Vocht, Monvmenta Hvmanistica Lovaniensia, p. 355. The ‘gymnasium Lilianorum’ was the College of the Lily, one of the four pedagogies of the University of Leuven. These pedagogies housed students, and were also equipped with class rooms, a library, a kitchen, a dining hall, and living quarters for the tutors and the president of the pedagogy. See Emiel Lamberts – Jan Roegiers (eds.), Leuven University 1425–1985 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990), for the organization and buildings of the University of Leuven during the sixteenth century.


12 See De Vocht, Monvmenta Hvmanistica Lovaniensia, p. 264: ‘Nam Sophistice, quam a germana philosophia velut scoriam separare luctet, ita tenuit (si modo id in laude ponendum) vt si in hanc demum studiorum omnium oleum et operam impendisset. Vis
seems worthwhile because it constituted the battlefield on which scholastics and humanists met. The strongly-worded humanist rejection of scholastic dialectic is well-documented and it is essential to determine Dorp’s position on this issue in order to establish his allegiance to either camp. Finally, an overview of Dorp’s philosophical output is important because it informs us about the teaching of philosophy at the University of Leuven during the first half of the sixteenth century, a topic which has — to the regret of historians of education — hardly been studied so far, with the exception of Jan Papy’s analysis of the so-called Commentarii Lovanienses, i.e. a compilation of commentaries on Aristotle’s dialectical works, produced in 1535 by the Leuven arts faculty as the official syllabus for the teaching of logic. For all these reasons, the present essay aims to highlight Dorp’s contribution to the field of logic by focusing on three particular publications which stem from the earliest part of his career, namely his defence of Aristotle against the attacks of Lorenzo Valla in 1510, his introduction to Aristotelian logic published in 1512, and the Leuven edition of Rudolph Agricola’s De inventione dialectica from 1515.

Defending the scholastic curriculum

When Dorp enrolled at the University of Leuven on 4 December 1501, the curriculum lying ahead of him was that of a typical late medieval institution. All students, except for the ones belonging to a religious order or with a special dispensation, were required to take a degree at


the faculty of arts before being allowed to study at one of the higher faculties of medicine, law or divinity. The training to obtain the title of *magister artium* consisted of a two-year course in philosophy, including nine months of logic, eight months of physics, four months of metaphysics and ethics, and three months of revisions. This schedule illustrates how central the teaching of logic was, as it was the starting point for all, aimed at introducing students to the system and methods which would permeate their entire education, thus leading — as the oldest preserved oration from the University of Leuven dated around 1435 would have it — ‘their obfuscated minds on the path of truth’. The statutes of the arts faculty, to which all teachers and students had to swear allegiance, inform us that most teaching was done on the basis of Aristotelian texts, and even stipulate that members of the university should defend Aristotle’s doctrine, except for the cases in which it contradicts catholic faith. This primacy of Aristotelian philosophy is clearly visible in the handbooks prescribed for the teaching of logic, namely Porphyry’s *Isagoge*, Aristotle’s logical works (*Categories*, *On Interpretation*, *Prior Analytics*, *Posterior Analytics*, *Topics* and *On Sophistical Refutations*), and Peter of Spain’s *Summulae logicales*. Naturally, we need to be

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19 Reusens, ‘Statuts primitifs de la Faculté des Arts de Louvain’, 154-155: ‘Item, statuimus de libris legendis in logica, quod primo legetur liber Porphyrii, secundo liber predicamentorum Aristotelis, tertio duó peryameniarum, quarto duo priorum, quinto duo posteriorum, sexto quatuor topicorum, et septimo duo elenchorum. (…) Item, statuimus et ordinamus quod oportet audire in studio vel in domibus tractatus Petri Hispani, suppositiones, ampliationes et restrictiones.’ The same set of texts is named in the revisions from
aware of the fact that statutory requirements were not always followed in classroom practice, and that there might be some discrepancy between the theoretical curriculum and the actual teaching programme. However, the preserved lecture notes indicate that the teaching of logic in Leuven indeed centered around Porphyry’s *Isagoge* and Aristotle’s *Organon*. Moreover, the book production for the Leuven market, which provides further proof of academic practice, illustrates the continued use of the so-called *logica vetus*, whereas Peter of Spain’s *Summulae logicales* slowly disappeared from the scene at the end of the fifteenth century.

Since Aristotelian texts formed the core curriculum for the teaching within the arts faculty, an attack on this curriculum inevitably implied an attack on Aristotle. Similarly, a defence of the traditional programme inevitably entailed a defence of Aristotle. An eloquent example of this is found in the *Oratio in laudem Aristotelis*, which Dorp delivered in front of an audience of students and academic staff on the third of December 1510.

The text makes clear that the immediate cause of this oration was 1469 (cf. Reusens, ‘Statuts primitifs de la Faculté des Arts de Louvain’, 176) and 1567/8 (?) (cf. Paquet, ‘Statuts de la faculté des arts de Louvain (1567-1568?)’, p. 234).


22 The term *logica vetus* (or *ars vetus*) refers to (the Latin versions of) Aristotle’s *Categories* and *On Interpretation* together with Porphyry’s *Isagoge*, sometimes expanded with a number of logical works written by Boethius. Concerning the editions of the *logica vetus* for the Leuven academic market, see Paul Needham, ‘Fragments of an unrecorded edition of the first Alost press’, *Quaerendo*, 12 (1982), 6-21; and Renaud Adam, *Jean de Westphalie et Thierry Martens. La découverte de la logica vetus (1474) et les débuts de l’imprimerie dans les Pays-Bas méridionaux (avec un fac-similé)*, *Nugae humanisticae* sub signo Erasmi, 8 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009).

23 This evolution is also confirmed by the *Commentarii Lovanienses* from 1535, which contain no trace of Peter of Spain. Cf. Papy, ‘The reception of Agricola’s *De inventione dialectica*’, pp. 173-174.

a recent edition of Lorenzo Valla’s *Dialectics*, which mounted an attack on scholastic philosophy. The first version of this book actually dated back to 1439, but Dorp may not have been aware of it until it was published by Josse Bade in Paris in 1509. He expresses admiration for the erudition of Valla and admits that his *Elegantiae linguae Latinae* are books of lasting value, containing great wit, but at the same time does not mince his words to show his disapproval of Valla’s philosophical stance:

His (i.e. Valla’s) presumption — not to say madness — was so vast that he not only assaulted, insulted and attacked people of his own sort, and not only waged war against Porphyry, Ciceron, Boethius, Lactantius, and many others, but also sharpened the poisoned darts of his most malicious tongue against the whole Peripatetic family and its parent Aristotle.

Further in the oration, Dorp calls Valla a ‘tardy petitifogger’, a ‘pest’ and a ‘monster of a man’ who ‘fondles philosophy with sordid hands’. He thinks that Valla’s dialectics should never have found an audience and qualifies their recent publication as ‘an inexcusable crime against philosophy’, whereby the printers ‘have stolen food for their herd of cockroaches and moths and have offered books to the public which should be condemned to eternal darkness and burial in the depths of hell’. It
quickly becomes apparent that Dorp follows a two-fold strategy to defend Aristotle’s reputation. On the one hand, he aims to discredit Valla; on the other, he professes the traditional arguments for the prominent place of Aristotle in the philosophical curriculum in Leuven and elsewhere. He, for instance, reminds his listeners that the Greeks, Romans, Jews, and Arabs all cultivate the Aristotelian school of thought, and that Valla’s favourite authors (Plato, Cicero, Quintilian, Pliny, St Jerome) praised Aristotle above all other philosophers.\(^32\) He grants that the Platonic school, favoured by some of the humanist innovators, is known for its eloquence, but it still has to yield to the Peripatetic one:

The Aristotelian sun\(^33\), on its appearance, has so obscured the Platonic one by its brilliance and has cast such a shadow over it that it is hardly touched on by students and is greeted, as they say, from the doorstep\(^34\), while, in the meantime, Aristotle is praised by all, is favoured by all, pleases all, is reread by all, and loved by all.\(^35\)

Dorp, in other words, presents Aristotle as an untouchable luminary, a divine man who should be treated as the god of philosophers (which is exactly the approach which so infuriated Valla\(^36\)) and whose attackers must be considered ‘truly sacrilegious men’.\(^37\) He was not alone in this: the reverential approach towards Aristotle was, as indicated above, entrenched in the statutes of the arts faculty in Leuven; and the opposition against Valla’s iconoclastic stance was shared by some of Dorp’s fellow-humanists, such as Juan Luis Vives\(^38\), and continued for several

philosophiam inexpiaibile sceleus perpetrasse, qui blattarum tinearumque gregi suum pabulum surripuerint et libros perpetuis damnandos tenebris ac in Plutonis regia sepeliendos in publicum emisierint.”


\(^34\) See for this expression *Sen.*, *Epist.*, 49, 6.

\(^35\) Dorpius, *Orationes IV cum Apologia et litteris adnexis*, pp. 21-22: ‘Hunc [i.e. Platonicum solem] tamen Aristotelicus sol exortus ita suo fulgore obscuravit ac tenebrescere fecit ut vix a studiosis delibetur atque a limine, uti dictur, salutetur, cum interim Aristoteles apud omnes laudetur, vigeat, placeat, relegatur, ametur.’

\(^36\) See, e.g., Valla, *Dialectical Disputations*, I, 10: ‘ipsi [i.e. recentes theologi Aristotelicis praeceptis imbuti] potius digni quibus insultetur atque illudatur tum quia Magistrum Aristotelem tanquam deum habent.’

\(^37\) Dorpius, *Orationes IV cum Apologia et litteris adnexis*, respectively ‘divinum hominem’ (p. 21), ‘philosophorum deum’ (p. 21), ‘philosophorum Achillem ac deum’ (p. 24), ‘o hominem vere sacrilegum’ (p. 19).

decades. It is certainly true that Dorp’s *Oratio in laudem Aristotelis* can be read as a reactionary defence of the scholastic curriculum — as can be expected of a member of the university council (which Dorp had become only a few months earlier) who considered it his task to secure ‘the practice which was handed down by his predecessors’ — but it was also well received by the humanist faction as an elegant specimen of Latin oratory. It is therefore perhaps best understood as an example of Dorp’s ambiguous position at the time, welcoming humanistic reform in certain parts of the curriculum (particularly those pertaining to language and style), whilst at the same time defending a traditional philosophical and theological position.

**Dorp’s introduction to Aristotelian logic**

The second piece under scrutiny was only added to the corpus of Dorp’s works in the 1980s by Jozef IJsewijn. One single copy, preserved in Pembroke College, Oxford, is known so far. This fact, together with the technical content and character of the work, probably also explains why it has remained unstudied since its discovery. The colophon refers to the book as being the ‘Termini Martini Dorpii’ and states that it was printed on 6 December 1512 at the University of Paris by Henri Estienne (the Elder) for Gilles de Gourmont. The title page advertises the book as an
introduction to the study of Aristotle’s logical works, but also promises an overview of the differences between realism and nominalism:

An easy and indeed exceedingly sound introduction which is very useful to understand Aristotle’s books about logic by Maarten van Dorp from Naaldwijk, philosophy lecturer in Leuven in the very famous College of the Lily, which indicates in an appendix, as in a list, what the differences are in logic between the nominalists and the realists.44

Two preliminary texts help place this manual in its context. The first, a short introductory poem by Dorp addressed to his book, professes his desire to distance himself from other teachers of logic who favour ‘the bombastic riddles of deception and the foolish madness of sophisms’.45 The same poem also clarifies that this manual was written for the youngsters who are studying philosophy at the Lily, and that it is explicitly dedicated to one of them, namely Gisbert van Bronckhorst (1490-1525), son of Jacob I van Bronckhorst-Batenburg (1460-1516), Lord of Batenburg and Anholt. A second paratext, a dedicatory epistle written by Nicolaas van Broeckhoven (Nicolaus Buscodensis, c. 1478-d. before 1556)46, who also taught at the Lily, suggests that Dorp never intended this text to appear in print, but agreed to have it published after Broeckhoven convinced him that ‘this little book, concise in its neatly arranged brevity, and full of genuine erudition’ deserved to be distributed ‘for the

per Henricum Stephanum e regione scolae decretorum commorantem pro honesto viro Egidio gourmuntio Anno domini 1512 octavo Idus Decembris.’ I refer to the paratexts of the Introductio facilis using the folio number, and to the main text by using the paragraph number. Gilles de Gourmont (documented 1499-1533) was a bookseller (licensed by the University of Paris) and printer who had a branch store in Leuven. He printed the first edition of Erasmus’s Praise of Folly. Cf. Geneviève Guilleminot, ‘Gilles de Gourmont’, in Contemporaries of Erasmus, II (1986), 120-121.


45 Introductio facilis, f. A1v: ‘Compendioso libelle, pure, lucide, / Bullata sperne cap-tionum enyg mata / Et stulta sperne sophismatum deliria / Araneum vaniora cassibus.’ Statements like these confirm Baumann’s opinion that More’s criticism of scholastic logic, preoccupied with sophistic trifles, does not pertain to Dorp, as the latter clearly shared the opinion that these were an aberration. Cf. Baumann, ‘Dorp, Erasmus, More: Humanistische Aspekte einer literarischen Kontroverse’, p. 158.

46 Broeckhoven studied and taught in Leuven from the beginning of the sixteenth century until 1514, after which he led several Latin schools in the Low Countries and eventually became a lutheran preacher. See the biobibliographical sources listed on Biografisch Portaal van Nederland (http://www.biografischportaal.nl/persoon/83991115; checked 17/10/2011).
common use of the young students of dialectic’.\(^{47}\) We can thus conclude that this handbook represents Dorp’s activity as *legens philosophiae* at the Lily, containing a (perhaps reworked) version of his lectures on terms, delivered as a prologue to the teaching of Aristotle’s logical works some time between October 1504 (when he was appointed as lecturer) and 10 November 1512 (i.e. the date of the dedicatory epistle in the printed edition).

Dorp’s handbook delivers on the promises made on the title page. Three main parts can be distinguished (although these are not made very clear in the lay-out of the book\(^{48}\): introductory considerations (§1-§12a), the definition and division of terms (§12b-§60), and a discussion of the main disagreement between nominalists and realists (§61-§71). At the outset, Dorp indicates that he wrote this book ‘ad notitiam terminorum’ (§1), and follows with a discussion of ‘significare’, defined as ‘to represent something or some things or somehow to a cognitive power’.\(^{49}\) He distinguishes three ways of signification (namely *significare obiective, formaliter*, and *rememorative*), and compares this distinction with another one in four categories (namely *significare naturaliter communiter, significare naturaliter proprie, significare naturaliter ex instinctu nature, *

\(^{47}\) *Introductio facilis*, f. A2r: ‘Incredibilis enim me inuisit ardor inuulgandi ad communem dialectice tyrunculorum utilitatem ea que de terminis prologo commentariorum suorum in Aristotelis dialecticam inseruit… Hunc ergo libellum concinna breuitate suffarcinatum cum certo publicare statuissem, Dorpio meo (vt michi est familiarissimus) animum de hac re meum aperui, qui primum nonnichil miratus tandem respondit se quidem ad nullam ingenii aut doctrine ostentationem, sed presenti dumtaxat discipulorum suorum vsui ea succincte prelegere.’

\(^{48}\) The structure of the text in the original edition, formatted in two densely printed columns, is somewhat obscure, as there is only a separation into 71 paragraphs through the use of larger initials.

The introductory considerations conclude with a brief presentation of the four modi significandi and the double equivalence of terms. This first part is followed by Dorp’s lengthy and detailed discussion of the various categories of terms. He explicitly states that his definition of what a term is — namely: ‘one of the parts into which a proposition is directly divided’ — is taken from William of Ockham (who is mentioned several more times in this manual, cf. infra). An overview of this section shows that Dorp made 14 main divisions, some of which are then further detailed in several subdivisions:

1. terminus vocalis / terminus scriptus / terminus mentalis (§14-§17)
2. terminus significativus / terminus non significativus (§18)
3. terminus significativus ad placitum / terminus significativus naturaliter (§19)
4. terminus significativus categorematicus / terminus significativus synthetico-categorematicus / terminus significativus mixtus (§20)
5. terminus complexus / terminus incomplexus (§21-§22)
6. terminus prime intentionis seu prime impositionis / terminus secunde intentionis seu secunde impositionis (§23-§31)
7. terminus concretus / terminus abstractus (§32-§36)
8. terminus absolutus / terminus connotativus (§37-§44)
9. terminus singularis / terminus communis (§45-§50)
10. termini impertinentes / termini pertinentes (§51-§54)
11. termini non convertibiles / termini convertibiles (§55-§56)
12. terminus univocus / terminus equivocus (§57-§58)
13. terminus transcendens / terminus non transcendens (§59)
14. terminus finitus / terminus infinitus (§60)

The handbook concludes with a discussion of the disagreements between nominalists and realists concerning absolute and connotative terms, concrete and abstract terms, terms of the second intention, and the second intentions themselves. This short presentation of the content indicates that Dorp’s handbook belongs to a group of similar treatises on the various divisions of terms, produced at the University of Paris. As such, it probably served as a

50 See for the various ways of signification for instance Nuchelmans, Late-Scholastic and Humanist Theories of the Proposition, pp. 14-16.


preparation for the students ‘in the vocabulary and mental habits necessary for the all-important study of dialectic’\(^{53}\), and ties in with Dorp’s teaching of the other standard parts of the late medieval curriculum in logic, such as obligations and insolubles.\(^{54}\) Dorp’s choice of authorities is worthy of note in this context. It is clear that he again rejects Valla’s dialectic: in his treatment of transcendental terms, he condemns Valla’s position, indicating that it is obviously foolish to think that ‘res’ would be the only transcendental (as Valla suggested), and that the words of the Italian deserve to be ‘plucked apart, one by one, by the claws of the logicians.’\(^{55}\) Dorp not only refers to Aristotle (6 times), Augustine (3 times), Porphyry (1 time), and John of Damascus (1 time), but also mentions, and always in glowing terms\(^{56}\), the work of William of Ockham (no less than 7 times) and John Buridan (1 time). This is remarkable because the acts of the Leuven arts faculty from 1427 indicated that all lecturers had to swear an oath that they would not teach the writings of Buridan or Ockham, before they could be granted a licence.\(^{57}\)

\(^{53}\) Nauert, ‘Humanist Infiltration into the Academic World’, p. 805.

\(^{54}\) That Dorp taught these topics is indicated by his biographer Gerard Morinck (see quote in n. 12). For these late medieval developments in logic, see The Cambridge History of Medieval Philosophy, eds. Robert Pasnau – Christina Van Dyke, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), and especially the article by E. Jennifer Ashworth, ‘Terminist logic’, at I (2010), 146-158.

\(^{55}\) Introductio facilis, §59: ‘Verum est tamen quod laurentius vallensis in dyalectica sua prolixè contendit solum vnum esse transcendens, puta res, quia manifestum est (inquit) non plures esse debere impares et reges sed vnum, ut apud Homerum dicit Ulisses: ‘ergo viucum erit transcendens’. Sed quam stulta sit illa illatio nemo non videt nisi qui nihil videt, sed huius dicta contemnimus, cum ipse tam multa contra philosophorum principem Aristotelien non solum imperitissime, sed etiam inuidat garriat, vt dignus sit cuius singula verba vnguius logiorum discerpantur.’ See Nauta, In Defense of Common Sense, pp. 48-81, for Valla’s critique of transcendental terms.


\(^{57}\) Reusens, ‘Statuts primitifs de la Faculté des Arts de Louvain’, p. 155; ‘Ex pluralitate vocum conclusum fuit quod nullus magister debere recipi aut admitteri ad regentiam in Artibus, nisi juraret se nunquam debere doctrinare Buridanum, Marcilium (i.e. most probably Marsilius of Inghen), Ockam, aut eorum sequaces. In quo tamen unus (magister) discrepavat.’ See also Jean Molanus, Lés quatorze livres sur l’histoire de la ville de Louvain, ed. P. F. X. De Ram, Collection de chroniques belges inédites, 2 vols (Bruxellis:
although the same passage of the acts proves that not all teachers were willing to comply, it does seem that punishments for not honouring this rule were enforced in 1480, and caution was given to dissenting lecturers in 1497.\textsuperscript{58} The result is that, in the eyes of outsiders such as Thomas More, the University of Leuven was seen as a stronghold of realism, in contrast with Paris, where nominalism reigned.\textsuperscript{59} It is therefore surprising that Dorp could profess the teachings of Ockham, apparently unopposed, regardless of the fact whether or not he also subscribed to the more strongly nominalist doctrines of the Parisians. The conclusion should perhaps be that the ban on Ockham c.s. in Leuven was either (temporarily) lifted or not enforced at this period in time. Dorp’s manual in any case clearly differs in this respect from the Commentarii Lovanienses, in which Ockham received a single mention in about one thousand pages of text (versus 7 mentions in the 36 pages of Dorp’s handbook).\textsuperscript{60}

The Leuven edition of Rudolph Agricola’s \textit{De inventione dialectica}

The third, and arguably most important, contribution of Dorp to the field of logic was his involvement in the first printed edition of Rudolph Agricola’s \textit{De inventione dialectica}, which was ‘promptly and widely circulated, and […] became the standard expression of contemporary humanist thought on dialectic’.\textsuperscript{61} The manuscript of this work was

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completed in 1479, but remained unpublished until the Leuven edition of 1515. The publication history of this editio princeps, and especially the question who deserves the credit for it, is somewhat sketchy. Some studies claim that Dorp ‘oversaw’ or ‘arranged’ the editorial work or ‘edited’ the treatise himself; others attribute the edition to Alaard of Amsterdam, to a collaboration between Alaard and Dorp, or to the joint efforts of Alaard, Dorp, and Gerard Geldenhouwer. Alaard himself explained how the edition came into being. A limited number of manuscripts of De inventione dialectica, divided into three books, circulated


Ferdinand Sassen, De Wijsbegeerte der Middeleeuwen in de Nederlanden (Lochem: De Tijdstroom, 1944), p. 143.


before 1515, but questions arose when Jacobus Faber of Deventer claimed to possess the original manuscript containing six books instead of three. Alaard subsequently travelled to Deventer, where he was eventually able — after some petty opposition from Faber — to inspect the manuscript and ascertain that it was not an autograph and only contained the three books already known. It furthermore became apparent that the manuscript was in a sorry state: it was a particularly untidy transcription by various hands and a lot of editorial intervention would be needed to prepare the text for publication. The decision was nonetheless taken to finally see the work through the press, and Faber allowed Alaard to take the manuscript to Leuven to have it printed by Dirk Martens, in return for a commission of twenty ducats. Upon his arrival in the university city, Alaard enlisted the help of Geldenhouwer, who prepared the first book for the press, and Dorp, who prepared the second and third book and contributed a short introduction. This introduction praises Agricola’s work as a source of true eloquence, and compares it favourably with the work of Aristotle and Cicero, thus providing a glowing endorsement:

Dorp to the students. This dialectic of Agricola is printed for you, students, as a service to good studies. It is my opinion that nothing will be more useful than this book for those who pursue the true art of speaking well and eloquently, and who strive to convince through great admiration, not just with empty words, but with a rich abundance of matter, and who wish to argue in a suitable and appropriate manner about whatever subject on the basis of demonstrable truths, for our author attests this function of dialectic. So do not expect the loquacious nonsense of sophists here, but expect those things which many, confusing the boundaries of the disciplines, assign to rhetoric (despite the fact that they form part of dialectic), and which are

70 Jardine, Erasmus, Man of Letters, p. 110, suggests that Dorp might only have been closely involved with the preparation of the first book, but this is contradicted by a passage from Geldenhouwer’s Vita Agricola in which he states: ‘Quare ego precibus doctissimorum virorum Martinii Dorpii, Iohannis Nevii, Iohannis Paludani, Hadriani Barlandi, in studiosorum omnium gratiam eum laborem subii, ut primum librum, ordine quo nunc legitur, desipserim [...]. Posteriores duo libri, alterius cuiusiam manu descripti, castigator Dorphio, excussi sunt’ (quoted from Agricola, De inventione dialectica, ed. Mundt, p. 670).
71 For the debate about the relation between rhetoric and dialectic in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, see Mack, Renaissance Argument, passim; and E. Jennifer Ashworth,
lacking in the works of Aristotle and Cicero. This book is certainly not inferior to those, whether we consider the elegance and thread of what is said or the communication of doctrine and precepts. Farewell.\textsuperscript{72}

Dorp’s name is the only one which appeared, together with Agricola’s and the printer’s, on the title page. Together with the introductory statement quoted above, this implies that the \textit{editio princeps} of Agricola’s work was primarily advertised as Dorp’s achievement. As a result, his name remains forever connected with an important turning point in the history of logic, since the Leuven edition of Agricola’s \textit{De inventione dialectica}, whose influence had been limited during the author’s lifetime and the first decades thereafter\textsuperscript{73}, created a massive interest. It was followed by numerous other editions, with or without commentary, and several abbreviated versions\textsuperscript{74}, which in their turn occasioned the firm establishment of Agricola’s dialectic at the expense of scholastic logic by the 1530s.\textsuperscript{75} This was also the case in Leuven, where the influence of Agricola was clearly discernible in the abovementioned \textit{Commentarii Lovanienses}, in which most (anonymous) commentators frequently cite and quote Agricola as an authority.\textsuperscript{76}


\textsuperscript{73} Mack, \textit{Renaissance Argument}, p. 257.

\textsuperscript{74} For an overview of these later editions and translations, see Gerda C. Huisman, \textit{Rudolph Agricola. A Bibliography of Printed Works and Translations}, Bibliotheca bibliographica Neerlandica, 20 (Nieuwkoop: De Graaf, 1985).


\textsuperscript{76} Mack, \textit{Renaissance Argument}, p. 270; Papy, ‘The reception of Agricola’s \textit{De inventione dialectica} in the teaching of logic at the Louvain faculty of arts in the early sixteenth century’, \textit{passim}. 
Dorp’s educational ideal

Dorp’s reflections on logic illustrate the uneasy relationship between scholasticism and humanism at Northern universities during the first quarter of the sixteenth century. In the case of Leuven, it seems that humanistic grammar and rhetoric coexisted relatively peacefully with traditional dialectic and theology until about 1514. This is also the period during which Dorp seems to have been able to butter his bread on both the scholastic and the humanistic side, earning a reputation for himself, even at a young age, as the most rhetorical philosopher and the most philosophical rhetorician. He is thus supportive of the new learning, but only to the extent that it does not touch the fundaments of the old, which explains why he, on the one hand, collaborates in a number of humanistic undertakings (such as the staging of classical comedies), but, on the other, opposes Valla’s attack on the primacy of Aristotle. The peaceful coexistence between scholasticism and humanism in Leuven is disturbed when the far-reaching implications of Erasmus’s biblical humanism come to light. Dorp is at first opposed to this reform, but eventually sides with the humanists, convinced by his own study and the arguments put forward by Thomas More.

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79 I agree with Kinney (*The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, XV, xxvii) that Dorp’s contemporaries and most modern scholars acknowledge too little that ‘Dorp might have sincere reservations about the importance to grammar and rhetoric in Erasmus’ new model for theology or that the best way to ensure the acceptance of Erasmian theology might well be to concede that traditional methods should still have a significant place in a reformed theological curriculum.’

80 At least, this is what Dorp indicates himself, for instance in his *Oratio Paulina*: ‘tum sic sentiebam, nunc nihil minus, nam qui potui aliter quam didiceram? verum simul atque veteres theologos accuratus denuo percurri et ea item legi, quae doctissimi quique huius tempestatis scripsierunt, praeципue longe eruditissimus vir Thomas Morus, perpetuum suae Britanniae decus, in epistola quadam ad me sua, continuo mutavi sententiam, neque dubitem quin mutaturus sit quiscum non omnino bonarum litterarum rudis proprie hanc rem vestigarit’ (quoted from Dorpius, *Orationes IV cum Apologia et litteris adnexis*, p. 83).
This evolution in his thought is also evident in his changing views on the teaching of dialectic. Relatively quickly after the publication of his *Introductio facilis*, Dorp seems to have made a complete U-turn. In his *Oratio in laudem omnium artium*, pronounced on behalf of the arts faculty at the opening ceremony of the academic year on 1 October 1513, he expresses the hope that the university authorities will either send back all French manuals of logic, or burn them. He also condemns, in no uncertain terms, his own previous teaching practice in the dedicatory epistle to the *Dialogus*, printed in 1514. He does, however, maintain his defence of Aristotle, calling for a — typically humanistic — return ‘ad fontem’, and argues that instead of abandoning Aristotle (as Valla did in his opinion), one should free him of his sophistic commentators and restore his true meaning:

But certain halfwits and fabricators of verbal trickery (although they are no d’Étaples) contaminate this most beautiful dialectic, worked out most elegantly by Aristotle, in such an undignified manner, and mutilate it with

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Dorp’s biographer Morinck also indicated that he came to regret his earlier predilection for scholastic philosophy later in life and wished that he had spent more time studying Cicero and the Bible: ‘“Utinam”, inquit, “per id tempus aut Ciceroni aut Sacris Bibliis vacassem, impendo melius laboris ratio constaret”’ (quoted from De Vocht, *Monvmenta Hvmanistica Lovaniensia*, p. 264).


84 Reference to Jacques Lefèvre d’Étapes (Jacobus Faber Stapulensis, 1455-1536), whose edition of Aristotle’s logical works was favoured by Dorp. See for instance also Dorp’s *Apologia* from 1521, in which he recommends the same: ‘qua [i.e. dialectica Aristotelis] utinam essent contenti, praecipua ut est ab eximio viro Iacobo Fabro Stapulensi tum repurgata, tum scholiis ill illustrata’ (quoted from Dorpius, *Orationes IV cum Apologia et litteris adnexis*, p. 100).
so many thorns and pricks, and torture it with so many layers and deposits of vile sophisms, that it seems to have emerged from a strange and smelly toilet; and nothing is in there which is serious, useful, or — to say it all in one word — Aristotelian.\textsuperscript{85} Dorp returns to the distinction between sophistry on the one hand and ‘pure, sincere, uncontaminated’ Aristotelian logic\textsuperscript{86} on the other in his \textit{Oratio Paulina}, as well as in the subsequent \textit{Apologia}. He confirms that the latter, for which he reserves the term ‘dialectic’, is a ‘good, useful, and even necessary’ part of a complete education, but also admits that it should not dominate the curriculum, as it is only meant as an instrument to pursue other, more important studies.\textsuperscript{87} In support of this opinion, Dorp refers to a recent decree of Pope Leo X, who determined at the Council of Lateran that no-one should spend more than five years on the study of philosophy, which is read by Dorp as a warning against spending a lifetime on logic (as the sophists did).\textsuperscript{88} He also adresses the same issues in a letter from January 1524\textsuperscript{89} in which he condemns bad teachers of logic within the arts faculty. He calls them ‘adulterini artifices’ (false craftsmen, i.e. a play on the word ‘artes’) and advises them to return to the ‘genuine dialectic’ of Aristotle himself, because what they now ‘babble to the students, is as little worthy of the name dialectic as the cuckoo deserves to be called a nightingale.’\textsuperscript{90} At the same time, however, he

\textsuperscript{85} \textit{Oratio in laudem omnium artium}: ‘Sed hanc pulcherrimam disciplinam ab Aristotele mundissime excultam quidam scoli et argutiarum fabri (quanquam non Stapulenses) tam indigne contaminant, tot sentibus, tot spinetis dilacerant, tot vilium sophismatun siliquis ac faecibus distendunt ut videatur ex olida extremaque latrina emersisse, ut nihil serum, nihil utile, nihil denique, ut verbo dicam uno omnia, Aristotelicum in ea appareat’ (quoted from Dorpius, \textit{Orationes IV cum Apologia et litteris adnexis}, p. 31).

\textsuperscript{86} Dorpius, \textit{Orationes IV cum Apologia et litteris adnexis}, p. 100: ‘dialectica pura, sincera, incontaminata’.

\textsuperscript{87} Dorpius, \textit{Orationes IV cum Apologia et litteris adnexis}, p. 75: ‘bona est, utilis est, adde etiam necessaria est sincera dialectica… non damno dialecticam, sed nolim illam in studiis utranque paginam facere solam’, and p. 100: ‘instrumentum ad potiores disciplinas’.

\textsuperscript{88} Dorpius, \textit{Orationes IV cum Apologia et litteris adnexis}, pp. 100-101. See also De Vocht, \textit{Monumenta Humanistica Lovaniensia}, pp. 106-107, for the decree referred to.

\textsuperscript{89} Edited in Henry de Vocht, \textit{Literae virorum eruditorum ad Franciscum Craneveldium 1522-1528. A collection of original letters edited from the manuscripts and illustrated with notes and commentaries}, Humanistica Lovaniensis, 1 (Louvain: Librairie Universitaire, 1928), pp. 212-221.

\textsuperscript{90} ‘Nam quam Hodie apud adolescentes artiste nostri — hoc est, adulterini artifices — deblerant, non est magis dialecticam nomine digna, quam coccyx lusciniae. Aristoteles sane geminam [immo: genuinam] meo judicio dialecticem tradidit, sed prolique, sed obscure ac inuolute, quod pene proprium est eius, precipue in dialecticis ac physicis’
forewarns against humanism without content. In his opinion, literature should be read critically and with discrimination, and education should be about more than mere eloquence; otherwise there will be ‘no reason, no purpose, no judgment, in fact no common sense’ in what students and teachers do and write.91

Dorp thus continued to strive for a balance between scholasticism and humanism until the end of his life, negotiating a middle road between the excesses of the new learning, too focused on philology and meaningless elegance, and the sophistic extravagances of old. In this context, he stresses the importance of a dialectic based on the logical works of Aristotle but freed from its medieval apparatus. This restoration of dialectic fits with his educational ideal, which he developed towards the end of his life. Dorp was apparently planning to publish a full exposition of his views on the matter, but since he was not able to do so before his untimely demise in 1525, we have to rely on the letters written during the last years of his life, providing us a glimpse of his most mature thought.92 The essence of education for Dorp is to train students ‘to think right’ and ‘to speak well and elegantly’, so that they can become outstanding preachers in the service of Christianity.93 In order to do this, a restoration of dialectic as sketched above should go hand in hand with a restoration of rhetoric94, keeping in mind that both need to remain subordinate to theology and a practical application. Dorp’s intellectual development may

(De Vocht, Literae virorum eruditorum ad Franciscum Craneveldium 1522-1528, p. 217). De Vocht transcribed ‘geminam dialecticem’, but based on my inspection of the manuscript (preserved in the University Library of Leuven) and the context, I would suggest ‘genuinam’ as a more plausible reading.

91 ‘Neque vero solam in scholasticis elegantiam desydero, quam alioqui, ut optarem accedere multis quidem de causis tamen non requiram pertinaciter: sed deerat ratio, consilium, iudicium, sensus denique communis. Non peruidebant scopos auctorum; non nouerant status eorum que agebantur; non habebant filum quod sequerentur; non exquirebant neque in philosophis, neque in sacris, quid quadraret, quid hereret, quid consentaneum, quid pugnans esset; ut recte ac vere dicat Melanchton: “Prestare non degustare Literas, quam tam infeliciter attingere”’ (De Vocht, Literae virorum eruditorum ad Franciscum Craneveldium 1522-1528, p. 217). Kees Meerhoff has suggested that this passage stems from Melanchthon’s oration De gradibus discentium, slightly changed because Dorp was quoting from memory. Cf. ‘Mélanchthon lecteur d’Agricola: rhétorique et analyse textuelle’, Bulletin de l’Association d’étude sur l’humanisme, la réforme et la renaissance, 30 (1990), 5-22, at p. 14.

92 De Vocht, Monumenta Humanistica Lovaniensia, p. 64.

93 Rummel, Erasmus and his Catholic Critics, I, 11.

94 ‘Neque futurum est unquam ut, non dico bone literae, sed omnino recta studia restituantur, nist dialectice ac rethorice in ludos reuocentur’ (De Vocht, Literae virorum eruditorum ad Franciscum Craneveldium 1522-1528, p. 217).
therefore be marked by the clash between the old and new learning, but resulted in an effort to found a new tradition incorporating the best of both worlds, training students to become — paraphrasing Gerard Morinck’s judgment of Dorp himself — not only ‘philosophi gravissimi’ and ‘oratores eloquentissimi’, but also ‘theologi peritissimi’.  

95 Morinck, Dorpii vita: ‘Ita ante tempus perijt in ipso virili robore vir quocumque respitias summus, dignus cui anni Nestorij contigissent, theologus peritissimus, philosophus grauissimus, orator eloquentissimus: quem si vita processisset etiam ipsa inuidia vt maximum et exactissimum suspexisset’ (quoted from De Vocht, Monvmenta Hvmanistica Lovaniensia, p. 279).