



**HAL**  
open science

**Oration “Constantinopolitana clades” of Enea Silvio Piccolomini (15 October 1454, Frankfurt). Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. Final Version. 2024. (Collected Orations of Pope Pius II; 22)**

Michael Cotta-Schönberg

► **To cite this version:**

Michael Cotta-Schönberg. Oration “Constantinopolitana clades” of Enea Silvio Piccolomini (15 October 1454, Frankfurt). Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. Final Version. 2024. (Collected Orations of Pope Pius II; 22). 2019. hal-01097147v2

**HAL Id: hal-01097147**

**<https://hal.science/hal-01097147v2>**

Submitted on 19 Jul 2024

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

**Oration “*Constantinopolitana clades*” of Enea Silvio Piccolomini (15 October 1454, Frankfurt). Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg**

**(Collected Orations of Pope Pius II; 22)**

**Final Version**

**2024**

## Abstract

After the Fall of Constantinople on 29 May 1453, three imperial diets were held to discuss a crusade against the Turks. At all three diets, the main spokesman for the emperor, Friedrich III, was Enea Silvio Piccolomini, a seasoned imperial diplomat and Bishop of Siena. The first of the diets was held in Regensburg in May 1454, where Piccolomini gave the oration "*Quamvis omnibus*". The second was held in Frankfurt in October. Here, Piccolomini gave the oration "*Constantinopolitana clades*", one of the most important humanist Turkish orations of that period - and indeed one of the period's most remarkable orations generally. In the oration, Piccolomini spoke of the legitimacy (*justitia*), the benefits (*utilitas*), and the feasibility (*facilitas*) of the war. Though he may have managed, for a time, to revive flagging German enthusiasm for the crusade, the only result of the diet in this respect was the decision to hold another one in Wiener Neustadt, in the presence of the emperor, and a specific offer of military help to the Hungarians.

## Keywords

Enea Silvio Piccolomini; Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini; Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini; Pope Pius II Papa Pio II; Kaiser Friedrich III (Habsburg); Emperor Frederick III (Habsburg); Crusades against the Turks; Ottoman Turks; Ottomans; Renaissance orations; Renaissance oratory; Renaissance rhetoric; Diet of Frankfurt, 1454; Reichstag Frankfurt, 1454; Origin of the Turks; Fall of Constantinople; 1454; 15<sup>th</sup> century

## Editor/translator

Michael v. Cotta-Schönberg

Mag. Art. (University of Copenhagen)  
Bachelier en Philosophie (Université de Louvain)  
Emeritus Deputy Director / The Royal Library, Copenhagen  
Emeritus University Librarian / University of Copenhagen

ORCID identity: 000-0001-8499-4142

e-mail: [typsita@gmail.com](mailto:typsita@gmail.com)

## Note to the reader

Although Enea Silvio Piccolomini's crusade orations at the German diets in 1454-1455 have been admirably edited in the *Deutsche Reichstagsakten*, they could not – of course - be excluded from the present comprehensive, bilingual edition of Pius II's orations. As a matter of principle, they have been collated directly for the purpose of the present edition, with special care to differentiate between the various versions of the text.

The RTA-edition was prepared by professor Johannes Helmrath and Gabriele Annas. All readers interested in the "*Constantinopolitana Clades*" and especially its Early Version should also consult this edition with its excellent introduction, its comprehensive list of manuscripts and editions, its critical apparatus, and its copious notes.

Michael von Cotta-Schönberg

# Table of contents

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. Context
2. Themes
3. Date, place, audience, and format
4. Text
  - 4.1. Early Version
    - 4.1.1. Manuscripts
    - 4.1.2. Editions
  - 4.2. Final Version
    - 4.2.1. Manuscripts
    - 4.2.2. Editions
  - 4.3. Present edition
5. Sources
6. Bibliography
7. Sigla and abbreviations

## II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

1. Introduction [1-7]
2. Justice of the war (Justitia) [8-17]
3. Benefits of the war (Utilitas) [18-30]
4. Feasibility of the war (Facilitas) [31-44]
5. Conclusion [45-52]

# I. INTRODUCTION

## 1. Context<sup>1</sup>

At the Diet of Regensburg held in May 1454, the representatives of the German nation and of other princes had in principle decided to go to war against the Turks and to hold another diet to plan for the crusade.

After the diet, Piccolomini returned to the emperor and asked to be released from his service in order to return to Italy and to his Sieneese diocese. The emperor refused and instead required Piccolomini to represent him at the next diet, to be held in Frankfurt. In his *Commentarii* Piccolomini wrote:

*Aeneas ... had made up his mind to return to Italy and live out his life in his native city, but when he asked the emperor's permission, Frederick refused. He kept Aeneas on to serve as his spokesman at the Diet of Frankfurt, for he seemed the only man at court who cared at all about the defence of the faith, and the only one whose rhetoric was at all effective.*<sup>2</sup>

That Piccolomini himself entertained no illusions as to the possibility of mobilising the German nation for a crusade, is manifest in his own letters from the period.<sup>3</sup>

The enthusiasm for the crusade displayed in Regensburg turned out to be shortlived:

*By this point, the Commentarii say, the Germans had changed their minds: none of them now favored the idea of a crusade. It was as if someone had dripped poison in their ears: the slightest mention of the emperor or the pope was insufferable. Both were greedy liars, they said, more interested in profit than holy war. It was a fine trick, to swindle the Germans of their treasure by proclaiming a crusade against the Turks – as though the Germans were mere barbarians! The lords of the world were greedily scheming to divide the spoils between them. But things would turn out very differently at the Diet than they expected, for the people of Germany would contribute neither money nor men for military service. All were persuaded of this opinion; they cursed the emperor and the pope, abused the ambassadors, jeered at the Burgundians (who seemed inclined to favour the expedition) and harshly assailed the Hungarians for first failing to defend their kingdom and now trying to involve Germany in their*

---

<sup>1</sup> CO, I, 27; RTA, 19, 2; Ady, pp. 129; Bisaha; Blusch (from a rhetorical point of view); Boulting, pp. 209-210; Helmrath: *German*, esp. pp. 60-62; Helmrath: *Pius*, esp. pp. 93-94; Helmrath: *Poli-*

*tical* Assembly, pp. 83-94; Housley, esp. pp. 219, 224-227; Kaiser; Mitchell, pp. 113-114; Nowak, pp. 178-185; Reinhardt, p. 162-165; Schwoebel, p. 33; Setton, II, pp. 153-154; Stolf, pp.

282-285; Toews, pp. 241-26, esp. pp. 251-253; Voigt, III, pp. 119-131; Introduction to oration "Quamvis omnibus" [21]

<sup>2</sup> CO, I, 27 (Mereserve, I, 133)

<sup>3</sup> Voigt, III, pp. 118-120

*misfortune. The resolutions passed at Regensburg were being rejected out of hand, and it seemed impossible to imagine that matters would turn out well.*<sup>1</sup>

Matters were not improved by the absence of the emperor and by the fact that the pope, in spite of Piccolomini's proposal to send a cardinal legate, was only represented by a bishop.<sup>2</sup>

The crusade was not the only matter on the diet's agenda, and behind the scene, an intense power struggle took place, involving even the possibility of effectively replacing the emperor with his own brother, Archduke Albrecht.<sup>3</sup>

But the Turkish threat was undeniable, and its seriousness was shown by the presence of envoys from Bohemia and Hungary and their urgent requests for help against the Turks.<sup>4</sup>

Piccolomini's oration to the Diet, the "*Constantinopolitana clades*", is one of the most famous of his orations.<sup>5</sup>

According to the *Commentarii*, Piccolomini's speech was well received by the audience:

*But when the Diet formally convened and Aeneas made his speech – wonderful to relate – the old enthusiasm for a crusade suddenly revived in every heart. His oration lasted nearly two hours; but the audience was so utterly absorbed that no one even cleared his throat or took his eyes off the speaker's face. No one thought the speech too long, and all were sorry to hear it end<sup>6</sup> ... Aeneas' speech was praised by all and written down by many, and because of it the declaration of war passed at Regensburg was reaffirmed; the Hungarians were promised aid (some 10.000 cavalry and 32.000 infantry) and it was agreed that the imperial electors and the other German princes should meet with the emperor at the approaching feast of Pentecost to make final arrangements for the expedition.*<sup>7 8</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> CO, I, 27 (Meserve, I, 133)

<sup>2</sup> Voigt, III, p. 119. Voigt believed that Piccolomini only made this proposal to be appointed cardinal himself. This may be true, though it is difficult to see how such an appointment could be made and have effect within the given timeframe. At any rate, Piccolomini's proposal turned out to be quite sensible since, at the diet itself, the German princes were piqued at the low-grade repre-

sentation of the pope (Voigt, III, p. 125)

<sup>3</sup> Voigt, III, pp. 120-122; Toews, p. 255-256

<sup>4</sup> Voigt, III, p. 122-123

<sup>5</sup> Helmrath: *Political-Assembly*, p. 83

<sup>6</sup> That others, too, thought highly of the oration is known from the great number of copies extant in European libraries and by its many later editions (RTA, 19, 2, pp. 469 ff.) as well as by remarks by the Franciscan preacher, Gio-

vanni da Capistrano and the Bavarian envoy, Konrad Rottenauer (Voigt, III, pp. 124-125, and RTA, 19, 2, p. 467)

<sup>7</sup> CO, I, 27 (Meserve, I, pp. 135-137)

<sup>8</sup> Of Pius' contemporary biographers Campano wrote: *Profectus eodem studio Frankfordiam, quod in Ratisponensi conventu fecerat, ad suscipiendum in Turchas bellum excitavit, ita ut passim arma caperentur, constitutis ex ejus sententia ducibus, qui essent*



In view of the reluctance of the German princes to commit themselves genuinely to a crusade, the decision to send concrete military aid to Hungary was actually a victory for the imperial diplomats,<sup>1</sup> first among them Piccolomini.

And as a piece of oratory in itself, the “*Constantinopolitana clades*” is, in the words of Johannes Helmrath: ...*eine der bedeutendsten und wirkmächtigsten Akte, mit denen versucht wurde, im Westen den Fall Konstantinopels am 29. Mai 1453 intellektual und emotional zu bewältigen.*<sup>2</sup> It was also, again according to Helmrath, *one of the most widely copied orations from the last phase of manuscript production.*<sup>3</sup> And Housley called it “*a virtuoso display of his learning and oratorical elegance.*”<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Themes

The main topic of the oration is obviously the war against the Turks, as decided upon at the Diet in Regensburg. Says Piccolomini in the speech: *The whole issue is whether or not to go to war* [Sect. 7], and: *Your primary task is to consider and discuss the articles approved in Regensburg* [sect. 5].

In Regensburg, six months earlier, Piccolomini had provided a double motivation for the crusade: firstly to avenge the injuries inflicted upon the Christians by the Turks, and secondly to protect Europe against future attacks.

In Frankfurt, the motive of revenge was barely mentioned, and Piccolomini’s focus was now purely on the need for protection, e.g.:

- *His Serene Highness has therefore found it worthwhile to summon an assembly of the princes and cities of the German nation in order to take counsel on how to protect Christianity.* [Sect. 4]<sup>5</sup>

---

*publico nomine rerum summas praefuturi* (Zimolo, p. 24). And Platina: *Missus itaque ob eam rem ad Franckfordiensem conventum, Germanos principes, qui ex tota provincia eo convenerant, gravissima et longa oratione ad bellum periculosum et necessarium multis rationibus adhortatur. Visus*

*est omnes vehementer commovere. Verum hoc natura comperitum est eorum animos cito residere, quorum affectus facillime moventur.* (Zimolo, p. 103)

<sup>1</sup> Voigt, III, p. 127

<sup>2</sup> RTA, 19, 2, p. 463. On Piccolomini’s Turkish orations as a rhetorical innovation at the Ger-

man diets, see RTA, 1, 2, p. 464, and Helmrath: *Reichstagsreden*. On Piccolomini’s rhetoric in the oration see also Blusch and Kaiser

<sup>3</sup> Helmrath: *German*, p. 62

<sup>4</sup> Housley, p. 225

<sup>5</sup> Christianity in the broad sense of Christian Europe

- ... in this case, where you come to the defence not only of the fatherland, the weak, and the allies, but also of faith, the religion, and the honour of God. [Sect. 16]
- Your fathers entered savage battles in order to protect their lands. Should you then refuse to take up arms in order to protect your religion and faith? [Sect. 47]

In his oration, Piccolomini, following classical models, deals with three main issues of the war, i.e., the justice (*justitia*), the benefits (*utilitas*), and the feasibility (*facilitas*) of the war.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the **justice (*justitia*)** of the war, Piccolomini refers to the injuries and damages inflicted upon the Christian religion by the Turks, the need for the Christians to protect themselves against further attacks, and the fact that the war is requested by the two heads of Christianity, the emperor and the pope – and even by God himself! [Sect. 9]

Concerning the **benefits (*utilitas*)** of the war, Piccolomini first points to the need for self-defence:

*If you take up arms in defence of the Hungarians, the Albanians, the Serbians, and the other peoples who are neighbours of the Turk and who share our Faith, you will protect not only your allies but also yourselves, your wives, and your children from this terrible danger. This is, Princes, the great benefit of the war as I see it.* [Sect. 22]

Secondly, he points to the benefits of showing gratitude, in this case to God, who has not only created the Germans as men but also given the German Nation empire over the Latin Christian World [Sect. 24-26]. And finally, though advising against them as a motive for war, Piccolomini describes the spoils of war that will fall to the victors [Sect. 29].

Concerning the **feasibility (*facilitas*)** Piccolomini claims that the Germans are, in all matters, better suited for war than the Turks:

*You have an abundance of all that is considered necessary for war; you are strong soldiers; and you have experienced leaders who are lucky in war. Moreover, it is reasonable to hope that God will favour his own cause. Since your enemies are so greatly inferior to you, there is absolutely no reason for you to shy away from a war that is so just and so advantageous.* [Sect. 36]

---

<sup>1</sup> Though he knew the classical models directly from the sources (e.g., Quintilian: *honestum, utile, facile*), Piccolomini's division of the "*Constantinopolitana clades*"

into *justitia, utilitas, and facilitas* may well have been inspired by Francesco Filelfo's division of his crusade letter to Charles VII of France into *necessitas* (mostly *honestas*), *facilitas*, and *utilitas*,

cf. Filelfo: *Collected*, I, pp. 429. A similar division had also been used by Georg of Trapesunt in his oration to King Alfonso V, 1452 (RTA, 19, 2, p. 505, n. 35)

A subtheme worth mentioning is the need for the study of letters and learning, which figures significantly in Piccolomini's description of what was lost to the Christians with Constantinople. This matter might not seem very important to princes, nobles, and soldiers. But Piccolomini, developing a common and classically inspired theme of the humanists, points to nobles' need for glory, fame and reputation, which can only be assured in literature. Therefore, the nobility and the warrior class greatly need literate people who alone can give them eternal fame:

*The stronger, the braver, and the more powerful you are, Noble Knights, the more you will benefit from intellect and letters. For it is those that can make your forefathers, famous men who died a long time ago, stay alive, so to say, and transmit your name to posterity. [Sect. 15].<sup>1</sup>*

### 3. Date, place, audience, and format

The RTA gives the date of delivery of the oration as 15 October 1454.

The location was the Town Hall of Frankfurt (Römer).<sup>2</sup>

The audience consisted of the participants in the diet.

The format was that of a diplomatic speech on behalf of the emperor.

### 4. Text<sup>3</sup>

The text is extant in two versions: the Early Version, identical or very close to the oration as delivered in Frankfurt, and the Final version, as included in the Collected Orations of Pius II, compiled in 1462

---

<sup>1</sup> This is a topos frequently used by humanists, e.g. Poggio Bracciolini, who, in his *Historiae de Varietate Fortunae*, I (Opera Omnia, II, p. 34-35) regretted that many princes did not have court huma-

nists to pass on their fame to posterity: *Quotus enim quisque reperitur, qui virum doctum aut eloquentem secum habeat aut quicquam de se literis commendari velit?*

<sup>2</sup> RTA, 19, 2, p. 464

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the textual transmission of Pius II's orations, see COR, 1: ch. 5

under the direct supervision of Pius himself. Further studies are required to determine if one or more intermediate versions are documented by the manuscripts.

For a comprehensive survey of the manuscript versions and the editions of the oration, see the RTA edition, pp. 477 ff. Below are only mentioned the two manuscripts and one edition used here for the Early Version and the six manuscripts containing the Final Version.

## 4.1. Early version (EV)

### 4.1.1. Manuscripts<sup>1</sup>

- **Paris / Bibliothèque Nationale**  
Ms. lat. 4314, ff. 135r-158v **(P2)** \* [Collated in RTA as P1]  
Ms. lat. 5565A, ff. 41r-70v **(P1)** \* [Collated in RTA as P]

### 4.1.2. Editions

- [Pius II: Epistolae familiares]. Nürnberg: Koberger, 1486 / nr. 131 [= Hain, nr. 154] **(KO)**
- *Deutsche Reichstagsakten*, Ältere Reihe, Bd. 19, 2. München, 2013, pp. 494-565

The edition in the *Opera Omnia* has not been used as it appears to be a reproduction of the text in the early printed editions of Piccolomini's letters, the *Epistolae familiares*.

The edition of Mansi has not been used since it appears to be a reproduction of the text in the *Opera Omnia*.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Manuscripts for which an orthographical profile is given in COR, 1: 11, are marked with an asterisk

<sup>2</sup> For other editions, see the RTA-edition COR, 1: 11

## 4.2. Final version (FV)

### 4.2.1. Manuscripts

The Final Version is included in six of the seven extant manuscripts containing the Collected Orations of Pius II:

- **Mantova / Biblioteca Comunale**  
100 A-IV-26, ff. 138v-154v
- **Milano / Biblioteca Ambrosiana**  
97 inf., ff. 95r-106v
- **Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana**  
Chis. J.VI.211, ff. 94v-105v **(D)** \*  
Chis. J.VIII.284, ff. 98v-106v **(A)** \*  
Chis. J.VIII.286, ff. 142v-158v **(C)** \*  
Vat. lat. 1788, ff. 140v-153r **(B)** \*

### 4.2.2. Editions

Manuscripts containing the Final Version were selectively collated by Helmrath in his *Reichstagsreden* and in the the RTA.<sup>1</sup>

## 4.3. Present edition

For principles of edition (incl. orthography) and translation, see COR, 1: ch. 9-10.

*Text:*

In view of the RTA-edition, the Early Version is based only on the two manuscripts in the Bibliothèque Nationale and the *Epistolae familiares*-edition listed above. The Final Version is based on the four manuscripts in the Vatican Library.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Helmrath: *Die Reichstagsreden*;  
RTA, 19, 2

<sup>2</sup> The Milano ms. is derived from B, and the Mantova ms. is a late copy from 1472 without interest

in terms of establishing the original text or the transmission of the text

In the text of the Early Version, the lead ms. is the Paris 5665A (P1). In the text of the Final Version, the lead manuscript is the Chis. J.VIII.284 (A).

*Presentation:*

The Early Version and the Final Version are presented synoptically, the Early Version above and the Final Version below. Identical words and passages in the two versions are marked in bold (with no regard to differences in grammatical form and syntax, and et/ac/atque-variations).

In the Final Version, passages taken from Piccolomini's letters to Pope Nicolaus V and Cardinal Nikolaus of Kues of 19 July and 21 July, respectively, are underlined.

*Textual apparatus:*

Variants not indicated in RTA-edition (where they have the sigla P and P1 respectively) are marked with an asterisk.

*Pagination:*

Pagination is from the Chis. J.VIII.284 (A).

## 5. Sources<sup>1 2</sup>

In this oration, 103 direct and indirect quotations from various sources have been identified, less than half from the Bible. The number of quotations is much greater than in the previous oration, the "*Quamvis omnibus*" [21], which had only 13, possibly indicating a greater level of preparation.

---

<sup>1</sup> On Piccolomini's use of sources in general, see COR, 1: 8. On his use of contemporary sources concerning the Fall of Constantinople, see the oration "*Quamvis*

*omnibus*" [21], Introduction, sect. 5

<sup>2</sup> For a closer analysis of Piccolomini's sources in the Constantinopolitana clades", especially

Cicero's *Pro lege Manilia*, see Helmrath: *Political-Assembly*, pp. 88-94; Kaiser, pp. 89 ff.

Biblical: 43  
Classical: 36  
Patristic and medieval: 13  
Contemporary: 11  
**All: 103**

**Biblical sources: 43**

Old Testament: 25

- Genesis: 1
- Exodus: 1
- Deuteronomy: 3
- Baruch: 1
- Ecclesiasticus: 1
- Ezekiel: 1
- Isaiah: 4
- Job: 1
- Judges: 1
- Judith: 1
- 1. Kings: 1
- 4. Kings: 1
- Psalms: 5
- 1. Samuel: 2
- Wisdom: 1

New Testament: 18

- Matthew: 9
- Luke: 2
- Apocalypse: 1
- 1. Corinthians: 1
- Galatians: 2
- Hebrews: 1
- 1. Peter: 1

- Philippians: 1

### **Classical sources: 36**

- Aethicus Ister: 2
- Cicero: 14<sup>1</sup>
- Horatius: 2<sup>2</sup>
- Jordanes: 1
- Julius Caesar: 1<sup>3</sup>
- Juvenalis: 1
- Livius: 1
- Quintilianus: 1
- Sallustius: 2<sup>4</sup>
- Suetonius: 3<sup>5</sup>
- Vergilius: 8<sup>6</sup>

### **Patristic and medieval sources: 13**

- Ambrosius: 2<sup>7</sup>
- Augustinus: 1<sup>8</sup>
- Otto von Freising: 9<sup>9</sup>
- Tertullianus: 1<sup>10</sup>

### **Contemporary sources: 11**

- Flavio Biondo: 5<sup>11</sup>
- Francesco Filelfo: 1
- Jacopo Tedaldi: 1
- Leonardo of Chios: 2

---

<sup>1</sup> Ad familiares: 1; Pro lege Manilia: 5; De officiis: 2; De re publica: 1; Pro Archia: 4; Tusculanae disputationes: 1

<sup>2</sup> Carmina: 1; Epistulae: 1

<sup>3</sup> De bello Gallico

<sup>4</sup> Bellum Catilinae

<sup>5</sup> De vitis Caesarum

<sup>6</sup> Aeneis: 6; Georgica: 1

<sup>7</sup> De officiis ministrorum

<sup>8</sup> Contra Faustum

<sup>9</sup> Chronaca: 2; Gesta Friderici: 8

<sup>10</sup> Liber apologeticus

<sup>11</sup> Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades



- Niccolò Sagundino: 2

## 6. Bibliography

Ady, Cecilia M.: *Pius II (Æneas Silvius Piccolomini) – the Humanist Pope*. London, 1913

Aethicus Ister: *Cosmographia*.

- *The Cosmography of Aethicus Ister*. Ed., transl. and comment. By Michael W. Herren. Turnhout, 2011 (Publications of the Journal of Medieval Latin; 8)

Biondo, Flavio: Ad Alphonsum Aragonensem serenissimum regem de expeditione in Turcos [1 August 1453]. In: *Scritti inediti e rari di Biondo Flavio*. Con introd. di B. Nogara. Roma, 1927. (Studi e testi; 48), pp. 32-58

Biondo, Flavio: *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades*. [1439-1453]

- Biondo, Flavio: *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades*. Venezia: Octavianus Scotus, 1483. (Hain, 3248). [Digitized version in Gallica, images 274-276]<sup>1</sup>

Biondo, Flavio: Oratio coram serenissimo imperatore Frederico et Alphonso, Aragonum rege inclito, Neapoli in publico conventu habita [March/April 1452]. In: *Scritti inediti e rari di Biondo Flavio*. Con introd. di B. Nogara. Roma, 1927. (Studi e testi; 48), pp. 107-114

Biondo, Flavio: *Scritti inediti e rari*. Introd. di B. Nogara. Roma, 1927. (Studi e testi; 48)

Bisaha, Nancy: Pope Pius II and the Crusade. In: *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. N. Housley. Houndmills, 2004, pp. 39-52

Blusch, J.: Enea Silvio Piccolomini und Giannantonio Campano – die unterschiedlichen Darstellungsprinzipien in ihren Türkenreden. In: *Humanistica Lovaniensia*, 28 (1979) 78-138

Boulting, William: *Aeneas Silvius (Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini – Pius II) – Orator, man of letters, statesman, and pope*. London, 1908

---

<sup>1</sup>  
http://visualiseur.bnf.fr/Visualise

ur?Destination=Gallica&O=NUM  
M-60241

Bracciolini, Poggio: *Historiae de varietate fortunae*. [1447]

- In: Poggius Bracciolinus: *Opera Omnia*. 4 vols. Torino, 1964-1969. (Monumenta politica et philosophica rariora; ser. 2, nr. 5). / T. II

*Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III*. Fünfte Abteilung, Zweiter Teil: Reichsversammlung zu Frankfurt 1454. Bearb. von J. Helmrath unter Mitarb. von Gabriele Annas. München, 2013, pp. 461-565. (Deutsche Reichstagsakten, ÄR; 19, 2) **(RTA)**

Filelfo, Francesco: *Epistolae*

- Filelfo, Francesco: *Collected letters*. 4 vols. Transl. Jeroen de Keyser. Alessandria, 2015

Hack, Achim Thomas: Pius II. und der Empfang des heiligen Andreas 1462 in Rom. In: *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 48 (2015) 325-387

Hain, Ludwig: *Repertorium bibliographicum, in quo libri omnes ab arte typographica inventa usque ad annum MD. typis expressi, ordine alphabetico vel simpliciter enumerantur vel adcuratius recensentur*. Stuttgart, 1831

Helmrath, Johannes: The German Reichstage and the Crusade. In: *Crusading in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. N. Housley. Houndmills, 2004, pp. 53-69

Helmrath, Johannes: Pius II. und die Türken. In: *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance*, hrsg. von B. Guthmüller & W. Kühlmann. Tübingen, 2000, pp. 79-138

Helmrath, Johannes: Political-Assembly, German Diets, and Silvius Aeneas Piccolomini. In: *Beyond Reception: Renaissance Humanism and the Transformation of Classical Antiquity*. Berlin, 2019, pp. 71-94

Helmrath, Johannes: *Die Reichstagsreden des Enea Silvio Piccolomini 1454/55 – Studien zur Reichstag und Rhetorik*. Universität Köln, 1994

Jorga, Nicolae.: *Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisade au XVe siècle*. 6 vols. Paris, 1899-1916

Kaiser, Ronny: Antikettransformationen in Enea Silvio Piccolominis Clades-Rede (15. Oktober 1454). In: *Europa, das Reich und die Osmanen : die Türkenreichstgare von 1454/1455*, ed. by Marika Bacsóka. Frankfurt a.M., 2015, pp. 87-109

Leonardo of Chios: Epistola ad Nicolaum papam V. In: Pertusi, Agostino: *Testi inediti o poco noti della caduta di Constantinopoli*. Tom. I. Torino, [1976] 2012, pp. 120-171

Loeb Classical Library. Digital Edition. Harvard University Press

Manetti, Giannozzo: *De vita ac gestis Nicolai Quinti summi pontificis*

- Ianottii Maneti De vita ac gestis Nicolai Quinti summi pontificis. Ed. Anna Modigliani. Roma, 2005

Mertens, Dieter: Claromontani passagii exemplum. Papst Urban II und der erste Kreuzzug in der Türkenkriegpropaganda des Renaissance-Humanismus. In: *Europa und die Türken in der Renaissance*, eds. B. Guthmüller & W. Kühlmann. Tübingen, 2000, pp. 65-78

Meserve, Margaret: *Empires of Islam in Renaissance Historical Thought*. Cambridge, MA., 2008

Meuthen, Erich: Der Fall von Konstantinopel und der Lateinische Westen. In: *Historische Zeitschrift*, 237 (1983) 1-36

Migne, Jacques-Paul: *Patrologia latina*. 217 vols. 1841-1865 (MPL)

Mitchell, R.J.: *The Laurels and the Tiara – Pope Pius II, 1458-1464*. London, 1962

Moudarres, Andrea: Crusade and Conversion. Islam as Schism in Pius II and Nicholas of Cusa. In: *MLN*, 128 (2013) pp. 50-52

Niccolò Sagundino: *Oratio ad regem Alfonso*. [January 1453]<sup>1</sup>

- Extracts in: Jorga, N.: Notes et extraits pour servir à l'histoire des croisades au XVe siècle. 3 vols. Paris, 1899-1902 / T. III, 1902, pp. 315-323

---

<sup>1</sup> According to Jorga, the text is not the oration itself, but a memorandum, which King Alfonso asked Sagundino to write, after he had heard Sagundino's oration: *Le roi, ayant entendu ses paroles, lui*

*demanda de mettre par écrit une information sur le fait des Turcs et Nicolas, auteur de plusieurs autres traités latins, obtempéra à cette demande ... En voici, les parties les plus saillantes, d'après*

*le ms. J 28 sup. de la Biblioth. Ambrosienne à Milan (Jorga, III, p. 316). Cited in the present edition of Pius II's orations as Niccolò Sagundino: Oratio ad regem Alfonso*

- *Ad serenissimum principem et invictissimum regem Alphonsum Nicolai Sagundini oratio*. A cura di C. Caselli, Roma 2012. (Fonti per la storia dell'Italia medievale. Antiquitates; 39)

Nowak, Jessika: *Ein Kardinal im Zeitalter der Renaissance – die Karriere des Giovanni di Castiglione (ca. 1413 – 1460)*. Tübingen, 2011

Otto von Freising: *Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus*.

- Ed. A. Hofmeister & W. Lammers. Übers. A. Schmidt. Berlin, 1960. (Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutschen Geschichte des Mittelalters; 16)

Otto von Freising: *Gesta Friederici seu rectius Cronica*.

- *Die Taten Friedrichs oder richtiger Cronica*. Übersetzt von Adolf Schmidt. Herausg. von Franz-Joseph Schmale. Darmstadt, 1974. (Ausgewählte Quellen zur Deutsche Geschichte des Mittelalters; 17)

Pertusi, Agostino: *Testi inediti o poco noti della caduta di Constantinopoli*. Tom. I. Torino, [1976] 2012

Piccolomini, Enea Silvio SEE ALSO Pius II

Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Epistola de ortu et auctoritate Romani imperii ... ad Friedericum Romanorum regem*. [1446]

- Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Epistola de ortu et auctoritate Romani imperii ... ad Friedericum Romanorum regem*. In: *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*, hrsg. von Rudolf Wolkan. 3 vols. Wien, 1909-1918 // Tom II, pp. 6-24. (Fontes rerum Austriacarum, II, 67)

Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Epistolae*

- *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*. Ed. Rudolf Wolkan. 3 vols. Wien. (Fontes rerum austriacarum; 61-62, 67-68)
- *Enee Silvii Piccolominei Epistolarium Seculare*. Ed. A. van Heck. Città del Vaticano, 2007.
- *Collected Letters of Enea Silvio Piccolomini*. Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 10 vols. 2022-2026. [.\[Available on the web in HAL Archives\]](#)

Pius II SEE ALSO Piccolomini, Enea Silvio

Pius II: *Orationes*. [1436- 1464]

- Pius II: *Orationes politicae et ecclesiasticae*. Ed. Giovanni Domenico Mansi. 3 vols. Lucca, 1755-1759
- *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*. Ed. and transl. by Michael v. Cotta-Schönberg. 12 vols. 2019-2020. [Final Version, 2024-2025] [Available on the Internet in HAL Archives].

Schwoebel, Robert: *The Shadow of the Crescent – the Renaissance Image of the Turk (1453-1517)*. Nieuwkoop, 1967

Setton, Kenneth M.: *The Papacy and the Levant*. 4 vols. Philadelphia, 1976-1984 (Memoirs of the American Philosophical Society; 114+161-162)

Stolf, Serge: *Les Lettres et la Tiare. E.S. Piccolomini, un humaniste au XVe siècle*. Paris, 2012. (Etudes et Essais sur la Renaissance; 98)

Tedaldi, Jacopo: Relazione sulla conquista di Constantinopoli. In: Pertusi, Agostino: *Testi inediti o poco noti della caduta di Constantinopoli*. Tom. I. Torino, [1976] 2012, pp. 172-189

Toews, John B.: *Emperor Frederick III and his Relations with the Papacy from 1440 to 1493*. University of Colorado, Ph.D., 1962

Voigt, Georg: *Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini als Papst Pius der Zweite und sein Zeitalter*. 3 vols. Berlin, 1856-63

Zimolo, Giulio C. (ed.): *Le vite di Pio II di Giovanni Antonio Campano e Bartolomeo Platina*. Bologna, 1964. (Rerum Italicarum Scriptores; t. III, p. II)

## 7. Sigla and abbreviations

**A** = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Chis.I.VI.211

**B** = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Vat. Lat. 1788

**C** = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Chis.I. VIII 286

**D** = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Chis.I.VI.211

**P1** = Paris / Bibliothèque Nationale / ms. lat. 5565A

**P2** = Paris / Bibliothèque Nationale / ms. lat. 4314

**KO** = *Epistolae familiares*. Nürnberg: Koberger, 1486

## Abbreviations

### Works

**AC** = Acta Cusana

**APD** = Acta pontificum danica

**CAR** = Eneas Silvius Piccolomineus (postea Pius II): *Carmina*. Edid. Adrian van Heck. 1994.

**CB** = *Concilium Basiliense*.

**COD** = *Conciliorum oecumenicorum decreta*, ed. G. Alberigo. 1952.

**COM** = Pius II: *Commentarii rerum memorabilium quae suis temporibus contigerunt*. [1464].

**COR** = *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*. Edit. and transl. by Michael v. Cotta-Schönberg. 12 vols. 2019-2020.

**CRDM** = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Collected Reports of Diplomatic Missions, 1447-1455*. Edit. and transl. by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 2021.

**DBI** = Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani.

**DGCB** = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *De Gestis Concilii Basiliensis Commentariorum Libri II*. Ed. and transl. by Dennis Hay and W.K. Smith. London, 1967.

**DIA** = Enea Silvio Piccolomini: *Libellus Dialogorum*. A cura di Simona Iaria. 2015. (Edizione Nazionale dei Testi Umanistici; 12).

**DLE** = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *De Liberorum Educatione* [1450]. In: *Humanist Educational Treatises*. Ed. and transl. by C.W. Kallendorf. 2002, pp. 126-259.

**DRBG** = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *De Rebus Basiliae gestis Commentarius*. [1450]

**DVI** = *De Viris Illustribus and other biographical Writings* of Enea Silvio Piccolomini. Edit. and transl. by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 2021.

**EPI** = Collected Letters of Enea Silvio Piccolomini. 10 vols. Ed. and transl. by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 2022-2026.

**EUR** = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Europa*. [1458].

- Enee Silvii Piccolominei postea Pii II *de Europa*. Ed. A. van Heck. Città del Vaticano, 2001. (Studi e testi; 398).
- Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini: *Europe (c. 1400-1458)*. Transl. by Robert Brown. Washington, DC, 2013.

**GER** = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Germania*. 1458.

- Aenas Silvius Piccolomini: *Germania*. Edit. A. Schmidt. 1962.
- Aenas Silvius Piccolomini: *Deutschland*. Transl. A. Schmidt. 1962.

**HA** = Eneas Silvius Piccolomini: *Historia Austriacalis*. Teil 1: Einleitung von Martin Wagendorfer. 1. Redaktion ed. von Julia Knödler. Teil 2: 2./3, ed. Martin Wagendorfer. 2 vols. Hannover, 2009. (Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum. Nova Series; 24).

**HB** = Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini: *Historia Bohemica*. Herausg. J. Hejnic & H. Rothe. 2 vols. Köln, 2005. (Bausteine zur slavischen Philologie und Kulturgeschichte. Neue Folge. Reihe B; 20).

**HE** = Enee Silvii Piccolominei *Epistolarium seculare*. Complectens De duobus amantibus, De naturis equorum, De curialium miseris. Cur. A. van Heck. Città del Vaticano, 2007. (Studi e testi, 439).

**KO** = *Epistolae familiares. De duobus amantibus Euryalo et Lucretia. Descriptio urbis Viennensis*. Edit. Nicolaus de Wyle. Nürnberg: Antonius Koberger, 1481. [With later editions of 1486 and 1496].

**ME** = Enea Silvio Piccolomini: *Briefe. Dichtungen*. Übers. Max Mells. 1966.

**MPL** = Migne. Patrologia Latina.

**RE** = Reject Aeneas, Accept Pius. Selected Letters of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II). Edit. Th. M. Isbicki. Washington, 2006.

**RTA** = Deutsche Reichstagsakten.

**SRD** = Scriptores rerum danicarum.

**ST** = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *Les misères des gens de cour. Le songe de Fortune*. Trad. Serge Stolf. 2015.

**VO** = Voigt, Georg: *Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini als Papst Pius der Zweite und sein Zeitalter*. 3 vols. 1856-1863.

**WI** = Widmer, Berthe (ed.): *Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Papst Pius II. Ausgewählte Texte aus seinen Schriften*. 1960.

**WO** = Wolkan, Rudolf: *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*. 3 vols. Wien, 1909-1918. (Fontes rerum Austriacarum, II. Abteilung, 61, 62, 67, 68).

### Others

\*\* Lead manuscript.

**BC** = Christian Era

**BCE** = Before Christian Era

**DV** = digital version.





## II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

**Oratio Aeneae Silvii Piccolominei episcopi Senensis, qui postea pontificatum maximum adeptus<sup>1</sup> Pius Secundus appellatus est, habita in conventu Frankfordiensi ad suadendum Germanos<sup>2</sup> bellum<sup>3</sup> contra Turcos<sup>4</sup>**

---

<sup>1</sup> pontificatum ... adeptus *omit.* B

<sup>2</sup> *omit.* B

<sup>3</sup> Germanos bellum : bellum Germanis C

<sup>4</sup> Oratio ... Turcos : Enee Silvii, episcopi senensis, legati Caesaris, oratio habita Francfordiae ad sua-

dendum Germanos bellum contra Turcos **D**; Oratio Enee episcopi Senensis legati Caesaris habita in conventu Frankfordiensi die Martis XVa Octobris anno MoCCCC-oLIIIo **P1**; Oratio admonitoria de bello gerendo pro Christi nomine

contra Turchum et infideles habita ab Enea Silvio in consilio Francfordiensi omnium nobilium ... ... [*illeg.*] Alamaniae **P2**; Oratio Enee de Constantinopolitana clade et bello contra Thurcos congregando **KO**

**Oration of Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Bishop of Siena, who was called Pius II after he became pope, delivered at the diet in Frankfurt to persuade the Germans to go to war against the Turks**

[1] [EV] {41r} Constantinopolitana clades, reverendissimi patres, illustrissimi principes, ceterique viri genere ac<sup>1</sup> doctrina praestabiles<sup>2</sup>, quoniam Turcorum grandis victoria, Graecorum extrema ruina, Latinorum summa infamia fuit, unumquemque vestrum, ut arbitror, tanto magis angit magisque cruciat, quanto et nobiliores estis et meliores. Quid enim viro bono et nobili magis congruit<sup>3</sup>, quam curam gerere fidei orthodoxae, favere religioni, Christi nomen salvatoris pro {41v} sua virili magnificare atque extollere? Sed amissa nunc Constantinopoli, tanta urbe in potestatem<sup>4</sup> hostium redacta, tanto Christianorum sanguine fuso<sup>5</sup>, tot animabus in servitatem abductis<sup>6</sup> vulnerata est miserabiliter<sup>7</sup> catholica fides, confusa turpiter nostra religio, Christi nomen damnificatum nimis atque oppressum<sup>8</sup>.

[1] [FV] {98v} Constantinopolitana clades, reverendissimi patres, illustrissimi principes, ceterique viri generosi ac praestabiles, quoniam Turcorum grandis victoria, Graecorum extrema ruina, Latinorum summa infamia fuit, unumquemque vestrum, ut arbitror, tanto magis angit magisque cruciat, quanto et nobiliores estis et meliores. Quid enim viro bono ac nobili magis congruit, quam fidei orthodoxae curam gerere, religioni favere, Christi salvatoris nomen pro sua virili extollere atque amplificare? Sed amissa nunc Constantinopoli, tanta urbe in potestatem hostium redacta, tanto Christianorum sanguine fuso, tot animabus in servitatem abductis, vulnerata est miserabiliter catholica fides, confusa turpiter nostra religio, Christi nomen damnificatum nimis atque oppressum.

---

<sup>1</sup> et KO

<sup>2</sup> spectabiles P2

<sup>3</sup> ingruit P2

<sup>4</sup> potestate KO

<sup>5</sup> sanguine fuso : fuso sanguine P2\*

<sup>6</sup> adductis P2\*

<sup>7</sup> mirabiliter P2\*

<sup>8</sup> oppressum *omit.* P2

## 1. Introduction

[1] [FV] Reverend fathers, illustrious princes, and you others, Noble and Eminent Men. The Fall of Constantinople was a great victory for the Turks, a total disaster for the Greeks, and a complete disgrace for the Latins, which - I trust - will pain and hurt each of you, and the more so, the more noble and good you are. For what is more proper for a good and noble man than to care for the true faith, to favour religion, and to extol and spread the name of Christ, Our Saviour, as much as you can? But now that Constantinople is lost, and this great city has fallen into the power of our enemies, now that so much Christian blood has been shed, and so many people<sup>1</sup> have been carried off into slavery, the Catholic Faith has been grievously injured, our religion has suffered a shameful reverse, and the name of Christ has been grievously harmed and abused.

---

<sup>1</sup> "animae"

[2] [EV] **Neque si verum fateri volumus, multis ante saeculis majorem ignominiam passa est, quam modo Christiana** societas. Retroactis<sup>1</sup> namque temporibus **in Asia atque in Africa, hoc est in alienis terris, vulnerati fuimus<sup>2</sup>**: nunc vero **in Europa, id est in patria, in domo propria, in sede nostra percussi caesique<sup>3</sup> sumus**. Et licet dicat aliquis ante plurimos annos ex Asia Turcos in Graeciam transivisse, Tartaros citra Tanaim in Europa<sup>4</sup> consedisse, Saracenos {42r} Herculeo mari trajecto Hispaniae portionem occupasse, numquam tamen aut urbem aut locum<sup>5</sup> amisimus in Europa, qui Constantinopoli possit aequari. Est enim civitas illa totius terrae, quae commode colitur, paene centrum, portumque habet et amplissimum<sup>6</sup> et tutissimum, in quo non dicam naves, sed numerosae classes armari sustentarique possunt atque inde per Bosforum, hinc per Hellespontum ad omnia Mediterranei maris sive tuenda, sive<sup>7</sup> vexanda<sup>8</sup> littora transmitti. **At hic locus tam commodus<sup>9</sup>, tam utilis, tam necessarius, nobis tacentibus, ne dicam dormientibus, amissus Christo salvatori, lucrifactus Mahumeto seductori est.**

[2] [FV] **Neque si verum fateri volumus, multis ante saeculis majorem ignominiam passa est, quam modo Christiana** communitas. Patres nostri **in Asia et in Africa, id est in alienis terris, nonnumquam vulnerati fuerunt**: nos **in Europa, in patria, in domo propria, in sede nostra percussi caesique sumus**. Quod si dicat aliquis ante plurimos annos ex Asia Turcos in Graeciam transivisse, Tartaros citra Tanaim in Europa consedisse, Saracenos Herculeo mari trajecto Hispaniae portionem occupavisse stragesque multas Christianis intulisse<sup>10</sup>, numquam tamen aut urbem amisimus aut locum, qui Constantinopoli posset aequari<sup>11</sup>, numquam in Europa tantum Christiani et nobilissimi sanguinis quantum modo ab infidelibus fusum accepimus. Est enim Constantinopolis totius terrae, quae commode colitur, paene centrum, portumque habet amplissimum et tutissimum, in quo, non dicam naves, sed ingentes ac numerosae classes armari<sup>12</sup> sustentarique possint. **Inde per Bosforum** in Euxinum mare, quod nostri majus appellant, ad omnes septentrionis et orientis oras iter patet. **Hinc per Hellespontum**, quem nunc Brachium Sancti Georgii vocamus, sive occidentis cupias seu meridiana littora facile penetrabis. **At hic locus tam commodus, tam utilis, tam necessarius, nobis tacentibus, ne dicam dormientibus, amissus Christo salvatori, Mahumeto seductori lucrifactus est.**

---

<sup>1</sup> ratioactis P1

<sup>2</sup> sumus P2\*

<sup>3</sup> omit. P2

<sup>4</sup> Europam KO

<sup>5</sup> urbem aut locum : locum aut urbem P2

<sup>6</sup> et amplissimum *omit.* P2\*

<sup>7</sup> sive ... sive : seu ... seu P2

<sup>8</sup> tuenda seu vexanda : vexanda seu tuenda P2\*

<sup>9</sup> tam commodus *omit.* P2\*

<sup>10</sup> Tartaros ... intulisse *omit.* B

<sup>11</sup> adequari B

<sup>12</sup> ac *add.* C

[2] [FV] Truly, for many centuries, the Christian community has suffered no greater disgrace than today. Our forefathers often experienced setbacks in Asia and Africa, that is, in other regions, but we, today, have been beaten and struck in Europe<sup>1</sup> itself, in our fatherland, in our own home and seat. If somebody says that it has been many years since the Turks came from Asia<sup>2</sup> to Greece, the Tartars settled in Europe on this side of Tanais,<sup>3</sup> and the Saracens crossed the Herculean Sea,<sup>4</sup> occupied a part of Spain,<sup>5</sup> and inflicted many defeats upon the Christians, [my answer is that] until now we have never lost a city or a place equal to Constantinople, and never have we, in Europe, lost so much Christian and noble blood to the infidels as now.

Constantinople is almost at the centre of all lands<sup>6</sup> that may be easily cultivated, and it has a very large and safe harbour where ships, nay immense fleets, can be armed and provisioned. In one direction, the way is open through the Bosphorus to the Euxine Sea, which we today call the Great Sea<sup>7</sup>, and all its northern and eastern coasts. And in the other direction, you may easily pass through the Hellespont,<sup>8</sup> which we now call the Arm of Saint George, to the West and to the coasts of the Mediterranean. This place, so advantageous, so useful, and so important, has now been lost to Christ, Our Saviour, and gained by Muhammad, the Seducer, while we were silent, not to say asleep.

---

<sup>1</sup> Note Piccolomini's geopolitical use of the concept of Europe

<sup>2</sup> I.e., Asia Minor. The Battle of Gallipoli 1354 (Turks)

<sup>3</sup> I.e., the river Don. In Antiquity, considered to be the frontier river

between Asia and Europe. The Battle of Liegnitz, 1241 (Mongols)

<sup>4</sup> i.e. the Strait of Gibraltar. Cf. the Pillars of Hercules

<sup>5</sup> 711 AD (Arabs)

<sup>6</sup> "terrae"

<sup>7</sup> I.e., the Black Sea

<sup>8</sup> I.e., the Dardanelles



[3] [EV] Quid quod<sup>1</sup> ibi ex **duobus imperatoribus Christianis** alter occisus est? Nonne ex **duobus Christianitatis oculis {42v} erutum esse alterum** dicere possumus<sup>2</sup>, **ex duabus manibus alteram amputatam**<sup>3 4</sup>? Addite, quod **ex quattuor** sedibus **illis** patriarchalibus primis et **principalibus**, quibus veluti solidissimis basibus Christiana subnixa fides in omnem terram ramos suos extendit, **majores nostri duas simul cum Jerosolymitana per ignaviam atque secordiam perdiderunt; nos tertiam, et illam quidem, cui omnes<sup>5</sup> Ruteni<sup>6</sup>, multi ad Boream, multi ad orientem Tanaim jacentes<sup>7</sup> populi serviebant, non minori desidia, majori tamen infamia prorsus amisimus. Nimirum, principes, si doletis<sup>8</sup> omnes<sup>9</sup> ac de tanto Christianitatis vulnere, quo cecidisse Graecos, superasse Turcos, confusos esse Latinos animadvertitis, consternati atque attoniti estis.**

[3] [FV] **Duos** insuper **Christiani** habuerunt **imperatores**: alterum Latinum, alterum Graecum. Quid nunc Graeco cum sua nobilitate necato dicetis, nisi **ex duobus Christianitatis oculis erutum esse alterum, ex duabus manibus alteram amputatam**? Quattuor imperia totus orbis, quae maxima et praecipua dicerentur, habuit: Assyriorum, Graecorum, Carthaginensium, et Romanorum: et orientale primum, boreale alterum, australe tertium, occidentale ultimum dictum est. Pari modo quattuor patriarchales sedes nostri veteres erexerunt: et Antiochenam orientalibus, Constantinopolitanam septentrionalibus, Alexandrinam meridiei, Romanam vespero et occidenti tradiderunt. Jerosolymitana {99r}, Aquilegiensis, et, quae nunc Venetias translata est, Gradensis longo post tempore constitutae sunt nec pares prioribus habitae. At **ex quattuor illis principalibus majores nostri duas simul cum Jerosolymitana per ignaviam atque secordiam<sup>10</sup> perdiderunt; nos tertiam et illam quidem, cui omnes Ruteni, cui multi ad Boream et ad orientem Tanaim jacentes populi serviebant, non minori desidia, majori tamen infamia prorsus amisimus. Nimirum, proceres, si doletis omnes ac de tanto Christianitatis vulnere consternati estis atque attoniti, cum cecidisse Graecos, superasse Turcos, confusos esse Latinos unico vulnere animadvertatis.**

---

<sup>1</sup> quidque P2\*

<sup>2</sup> erutum esse .. possumus :  
alterum erutum KO

<sup>3</sup> dicere possumus *add.* KO

<sup>4</sup> sed *add.* P2

<sup>5</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>6</sup> Pruteni KO

<sup>7</sup> adjacentes P2

<sup>8</sup> doleatis P2\*

<sup>9</sup> *omit.* P2\*

<sup>10</sup> socordiam B

[3] [FV] Moreover, the Christians have had two emperors, one Latin and one Greek. Now that the Greek emperor has been killed together with his nobles, will you not say that one of the two eyes of Christianity<sup>1</sup> has been plucked out and one of its two hands cut off?

In the whole world, four empires have been considered great and outstanding: the empire of the Assyrians, the empire of the Greeks, the empire of the Carthaginians, and the empire of the Romans. The first one may be called the Eastern Empire, the second the Northern Empire, the third the Southern Empire, and the fourth the Western Empire.

In the same way, our forefathers established four patriarchal sees: the Antiochene See they gave to the Eastern people, the Constantinopolitan See to the Northern people, the Alexandrian See to the Southern people, and the Roman See to the Western people. The patriarchal sees of Jerusalem, Aquileja, and Grado, now translated to Venice, were founded long afterwards and are not to be considered equal to the first four. Of the four principal patriarchates, our forefathers lost two, together with the See of Jerusalem, due to passivity and mutual conflicts.<sup>2 3</sup> Because of the same passivity, but to our greater shame, we ourselves have now lost the third one, the one that is followed by all the Ruthenians and many peoples to the north and east of Tanais. No wonder, Nobles, that you are all grieving, shocked, and stupefied by this great blow to Christianity, seeing that at one stroke the Greeks have fallen, the Turks are victorious, and the Latins have been thrown into confusion and disorder.

---

<sup>1</sup> The image of Rome and Constantinople as the two "eyes" of the world was coined by Themistius (4<sup>th</sup> century)

<sup>2</sup> Sallustius: *Bellum Catilinae*, 58.4: *socordia atque ignavia Lentuli quantam ... cladem attuleri*

<sup>3</sup> Alexandria 641; Jerusalem 1187 (final conquest); Antioch 1268

[4] [EV] {43r} **Sed non est minor divi Caesaris Friderici, domini nostri gloriosissimi, quam vester maeror. Vidissetis eum<sup>1</sup>, cum tanti mali factus est primum certior, in cubiculo<sup>2</sup> flentem, in aula maestum, in consilio sollicitum, in ecclesia supplicem, in quovis loco turbatum et anxium<sup>3</sup>. Verum, cum res Christianae non tam dolorem et lacrimas quam vigorem et arma requirerent<sup>4</sup>, nam Turci majora in dies mala<sup>5</sup> Christianis minabantur, operae pretium existimavit sua serenitas tum<sup>6</sup> principum, tum<sup>7</sup> civitatum accersiri<sup>8</sup> conventum, in quo de tuenda Christiana republica consilia caperentur<sup>9</sup>. Nam priusquam incipias, consulto<sup>10</sup>; et ubi consulueris<sup>11</sup> mature, facto opus est<sup>12</sup>. Fuit itaque concilium<sup>13</sup> apud Ratisponam convocatum. Quae ibi gesta sunt, omnes tenetis. Ex auctoritate {43v} illius congregationis hic nunc conventus habetur. Cur non fuerit apud Nurembergam indicta<sup>14</sup> conventio<sup>15</sup>, et cur nequiverit ad haec negotia Caesar ascendere<sup>16</sup>, satis his diebus expositum est. Ille quidem pro tanta Christianitatis necessitate in hoc conventu minime defuisset, si domum tutam<sup>17</sup> relinquere potuisset.**

[4] [FV] **Sed non fuit minor divi Friderici Caesaris quam vester maeror. Vidissetis illum, cum tanti mali factus est primum certior, in cubiculo flentem, in aula maestum, in consilio sollicitum, in ecclesia supplicem, in quovis loco turbatum et anxium. Diu sibi neque cibus voluptati neque somnus quieti fuit. At cum res Christianae non tam dolorem et lacrimas quam vigorem et arma requirerent, nam Turci majora in dies mala minabantur, operae pretium existimavit sua serenitas cum principum tum civitatum Germanicae<sup>18</sup> nationis accersiri conventum, in quo de tuenda Christianitate<sup>19</sup> consilia caperentur, memor illius dicti: *Nam priusquam incipias, consulto; et ubi consulueris, mature facto opus est*<sup>20</sup>. Fuit itaque concilium apud Ratisponam convocatum. Quae gesta ibi sunt, omnes tenetis. Ex auctoritate illius congregationis hic nunc conventus habetur. Cur non fuit<sup>21</sup> apud Norimbergam indicta convocatio, et cur imperator nequiverit ad nos<sup>22</sup> sese conferre, abunde his diebus dictum est. Ille namque omnino in tanto negotio superiores imperii partes visitasset, si domum tutam relinquere potuisset.**

<sup>1</sup> enim P2

<sup>2</sup> cubili P2

<sup>3</sup> annexum P2\*

<sup>4</sup> requirent KO

<sup>5</sup> omit. KO

<sup>6</sup> tam P2

<sup>7</sup> quam P2

<sup>8</sup> arcessiri P2

<sup>9</sup> cuperentur KO

<sup>10</sup> consulta KO

<sup>11</sup> consulere P2

<sup>12</sup> facto opus est : opus est facto P2

<sup>13</sup> consilium P2

<sup>14</sup> indita P2

<sup>15</sup> conventia KO

<sup>16</sup> accedere P2

<sup>17</sup> tantam P2

<sup>18</sup> Germanie corr. from

Germanice A

<sup>19</sup> Christianitatis D

<sup>20</sup> omit. C

<sup>21</sup> fuerit C

<sup>22</sup> vos corr. from nos C

[4] [FV] The grief of Holy Emperor Friederich was just as great as yours. You should have seen him when he was first informed about this catastrophe, crying in his chamber, sorrowful in court, worried in council, praying in church, and everywhere downcast and anxious. For a long time, food gave him no pleasure and sleep no rest.<sup>1</sup>

But since the Turks are daily threatening Christendom with greater evils, we need moaning and tears less than vigour and weapons. His Serene Highness has therefore found it worthwhile to summon an assembly of princes and cities of the German nation in order to take counsel on the protection of Christianity. Indeed, he remembered the saying: *For, before you begin, there is need for deliberation, and for prompt action after you have deliberated.*<sup>2</sup> An assembly was therefore summoned in Regensburg, and you all know what happened there. The present meeting is held at the decision of that assembly. During the last few days, it has been amply explained why this meeting is not held in Nürnberg and why the emperor is unable to be present, for he would most certainly have come to the upper parts of the empire in such an important matter if he had been able to leave his lands safe.

---

<sup>1</sup> Piccolomini probably exaggerates the distress of the emperor,

who was not generally given to strong expressions of emotion

<sup>2</sup> Sallustius: *Bellum Catilinae*, 1.6

[5] [EV] Sed cum ejus desiderium ab his impediretur<sup>1</sup>, quibus non tam pax et otium quam contentiones et bella sunt usui, misit hosce praestantissimos et celeberrimos legatos, qui suum locum tenerent suasque vices impleant, cum plena et ampla potestate: sive res imperii, sive commune fidei<sup>2</sup> tuendae<sup>3</sup> negotium tractare libet, praesto erunt. Ceterum quia super articulis Ratisponae meditatis haec potissimum {44r} congregatio consultura<sup>4</sup> est, vosque<sup>5</sup> Caesaris animum circa illos<sup>6</sup> cognoscere cupitis. Quae sit ejus mens, quae sententia, quae voluntas, aperire me nunc collegarum meorum auctoritas jubet. Ego qui malo per oboedientiam parum prudens quam per contumaciam videri sapiens, onus meis humeris paene intolerandum subivi, confisus in ejus auxilio, qui victimis<sup>7</sup> oboedientiam praetulit<sup>8</sup>. Nec timeo sub tanto fasce deficere, quando praesto sunt, qui cadenti mihi manum porrigant. Pareo quoque in hac re tanto libentius, quanto et conspectum vestrum frequentiore intueor, et mihi benigniorem autumo.

[5][FV] At cum ejus desiderium ab his impediretur, quibus non tam pax et otium quam contentiones et bella sunt usui<sup>9</sup>, noluit hunc conventum negligere: misit hos principes, qui suum locum teneant vicesque suas impleant, potestatem plenam atque amplissimam eis dedit. Sive res imperii, sive commune fidei negotium<sup>10</sup> tractare placebit, praesto erunt. Verum quia super articulis Ratisponae meditatis haec potissimum congregatio consultura est, vosque Caesaris animum cognoscere cupitis. Quae sit circa illos mens ejus, quae sententia, quae<sup>11</sup> voluntas, aperire me modo collegarum meorum auctoritas jubet. Ego, qui malo per oboedientiam parum prudens quam per<sup>12</sup> contumaciam videri sapiens, onus meis humeris paene intolerandum subivi, confisus in ejus auxilio, qui *victimis oboedientiam praetulit*<sup>13</sup>. Nec timeo sub tanto fasce deficere, quando praesto sunt, qui cadenti *manum porrigant*. Pareo quoque in hac parte tanto libentius, quanto et conspectum vestrum frequentiore intueor, et mihi benigniorem autumo.

---

<sup>1</sup> impediatur P2

<sup>2</sup> omit. P2

<sup>3</sup> tuendi P2

<sup>4</sup> consulta P2

<sup>5</sup> vos qui P2

<sup>6</sup> circa illos omit. P2

<sup>7</sup> victurus P1\*

<sup>8</sup> pertulit P1

<sup>9</sup> add. in marg. A, C

<sup>10</sup> negotii B

<sup>11</sup> mens add. A

<sup>12</sup> omit. B

<sup>13</sup> corr. from pertulit A, C

[5] [FV] Though his desire was frustrated by those who benefit more from strife and war than from peace and tranquillity, he still wanted this meeting to be held. Therefore, he sent these princes<sup>1</sup> to act in his place and to represent him, and he has given them full and ample powers. They are prepared to negotiate both the affairs of the Empire and the common matter of the Faith. But since your primary task is to consult and deliberate on the articles considered in Regensburg, you wish to know the emperor's mind on the matter. Therefore, by the authority of my colleagues, I am now requested to explain his mind, his opinion, and his intentions on these issues. As I would rather seem stupid through obedience than clever through defiance, I have taken this almost unbearable burden upon my shoulders, trusting in help from Him, who would rather have *obedience than sacrificial victims*.<sup>2</sup> And I do not fear faltering under this great burden since some here will readily *lend me a hand* if I stumble.<sup>3</sup> And I obey so much more gladly that I see your numerous and kindly disposed assembly.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Ulrich Sonnenberger of Gurk; Henrich von Pappenheim; Hartung von Cappel; Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg; Margra-

ve Karl of Baden; and Piccolomini himself

<sup>2</sup> 1. Kings, 15, 22: *Domini melior est enim oboedientia quam victimae*

<sup>3</sup> Ecclesiasticus, 7, 36: *et pauperi porrige manum tuam*

<sup>4</sup> Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 1.1: *mihi semper frequens conspectus vester ... jucundissimus*

[6] [EV] Nec ego de omnibus articulis verba faciam, sed illum, qui est principalissimus, aggredior<sup>1</sup>, hoc est an contra Turcos, qui Constantinopolim {44v} per injuriam invaserunt, nobilitatem cum principe Graecorum occiderunt, sacra nostra<sup>2</sup> omnia polluerunt, et ultra vincula, verbera, caedes Christianis omnibus<sup>3</sup> minitantur<sup>4</sup>, sit bellum suscipiendum? Quo persuaso quantas habere copias sit<sup>5</sup> necesse, quomodo legendi milites, quae stipendia danda, quae privilegia concedenda, unde commeatus habendi, quae bellica instrumenta paranda, quo tempore, qua via sit eundum facile concordabimus. Capitaneum quoque seu belli ducem, quem prisci Romanorum imperatorem appellare consueverunt, non erit arduum nominare. Neque dubitabitis illum eligere, in quo sit scientia rei militaris eximia, virtus excellens, auctoritas evidens<sup>6</sup>, praesumpta felicitas, qui sit laboriosus in negotiis, fortis in periculis, industrius {45r} in agendo, celer in conficiendo, consultus in providendo, qualem reperiri apud vos minime dubitaverim. Nec de pace domi tenenda<sup>7</sup> multum laborabitis, si foris bellum gerere<sup>8</sup> decreveritis, ut postea suo loco dicemus.

[6] [FV] Tum res ipsa me hortatur, de qua sermo futurus est, et magna et necessaria, hoc est, an contra Turcos, qui Constantinopolim per injuriam expugnaverunt, {99v} nobilitatem cum principe Graecorum occiderunt, sacra omnia polluerunt, et ultra vincula, verbera, caedes, dura supplicia Christianis omnibus minitantur, sit bellum suscipiendum? Quo<sup>9</sup> persuaso quantas habere copias sit necesse, quomodo legendi milites, quae stipendia danda, quae privilegia concedenda, unde commeatus habendi, quae bellica instrumenta paranda, quo tempore, qua via sit eundum facile reperiemus. Capitaneum quoque seu belli ducem, quem<sup>10</sup> prisci Romanorum imperatorem vocabant, non erit arduum nominare. Neque illum eligere dubitabitis, in quo sit *scientia rei militaris eximia, virtus excellens, auctoritas evidens, praesumpta felicitas*,<sup>11</sup> qui sit *laboriosus in negotiis, fortis in periculis, industrius in agendo, celer in conficiendo, consultus in providendo, qualem apud vos esse minime dubitaverim*. Neque de pace domi tuenda laborabitis, ut suo loco dicam, si foris bellare decreveritis.

<sup>1</sup> aggrediar P2

<sup>2</sup> omit. P2\*

<sup>3</sup> vincula verbera ... omnibus :  
Christianis omnibus vincula  
verbera cedens P2\*

<sup>4</sup> unitantur P1\*

<sup>5</sup> omit. KO

<sup>6</sup> ac add. P2

<sup>7</sup> tuenda KO

<sup>8</sup> pugnandum esse P2

<sup>9</sup> Que bello necessaria *in marg.* D

<sup>10</sup> omit. B

<sup>11</sup> Quae duci necessaria *in marg.*  
D

[6] [FV] I am also moved by the fact that the matter on which I am to speak is important and urgent: should we go to war against the Turks who have unjustly conquered Constantinople, who have killed the Greek nobles and their emperor, who have polluted all the holy places, and who are threatening all Christians with chains, whips, murder, and atrocious torture? If I convince you to do this, we shall easily settle the issues of how large a force is necessary, how the soldiers should be found, what wages to pay, which privileges to grant, how to provision the army, what war machines to prepare, as well as the time of departure, and the route to follow.<sup>1</sup> It will also be easy to appoint a captain or leader of the war - whom the ancient Romans called *imperator*. You will not hesitate to choose someone who *has expert knowledge of military affairs, great bravery, evident authority and luck,*<sup>2</sup> and who shows *application to duty, courage in danger, thoroughness in operation, rapidity in execution, wisdom in strategy.*<sup>3</sup> I do not doubt that there is such a man among you. And as I shall explain later, you will not have to worry about keeping peace at home if you decide to go to war abroad.

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 2.6

<sup>2</sup> Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 10.28:  
*Ego enim sic existimo, in summo imperatore quattuor has res inesse*

*oportere, scientiam rei militaris, virtutem, auctoritatem, felicitatem*

<sup>3</sup> Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 11.29:  
*in negotiis, fortitudo in periculis,*

*industria in agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, consilium in providendo*



[7] [EV] **Intelligitis jam, principes, oratio mea quibus in rebus radices agat, et, quae sit causa, in manibus videtis: de bello gerendo tota consultatio est. Ego, qui nomine Caesaris bellum venio suasurus, nequaquam hoc oneris<sup>1</sup> accepissem, nisi rem dignam vestra virtute, vestra nobilitate, vestraque natione manifestissime<sup>2</sup> prius intellexissem. Agite igitur, audite, ac<sup>3</sup> cognoscite, an bellum hoc pro fide vestra<sup>4</sup> Christiana suscipere debeatis. Omnis senatus omnisque populus, cui de bello gerendo consultatio est, clarissimi principes, tria diligenter ac rigide {45v} ac<sup>5</sup> presse discutere debet<sup>6</sup>, ne quid agat, cujus denique poenitudo sequatur. Turpe est<sup>7</sup> enim, ut Scipionis proverbium fuit, postquam erratum est dicere: non putaram<sup>8</sup>. Bellum ergo gesturus primo quaerat<sup>9</sup>, an sit justum; secundo, an utile; tertio, an facile. Nisi enim haec tria concurrant, non est cur bonis atque<sup>10</sup> prudentibus viris belligerendum sit. Discutiamus et nos haec<sup>11</sup> ex ordine, principes, ac primum de belli justitia cognoscamus.**

[7] [FV] **Intelligitis jam, principes, oratio mea quibus in rebus *radices agat*, et quae causa sit, in manibus videtis: de suscipiendo bello tota est controversia. Ego, qui nomine Caesaris bellum venio suasurus<sup>12</sup>, minime hoc oneris accepissem, nisi rem dignam vestra virtute, vestra nobilitate, vestraque natione manifestissime prius intellexissem. Agite igitur, audite, ac cognoscite, an bellum hoc pro fide catholica suscipere debeatis. Omnis senatus omnisque populus, cui de bello gerendo consultatio est, clarissimi principes, tria diligenter, rigide ac presse discutere debet, ne quid agat, cujus denique poenitudo sequatur. *Turpe est enim*, ut Scipionis proverbium fuit, postquam erraveris, *dicere: non putaram*. Bellum ergo gesturus primo quaerat, an justum sit; secundo, an utile; tertio, an facile. Nisi enim haec concurrant, non est cur bonis viris belligerandum sit. Discutiamus et nos haec<sup>13</sup>, principes, ac primum de belli justitia<sup>14</sup> cognoscamus.**

---

<sup>1</sup> onus P2

<sup>2</sup> manifeste P2

<sup>3</sup> et KO, WY

<sup>4</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>5</sup> et KO

<sup>6</sup> debeatis KO

<sup>7</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>8</sup> putarem KO

<sup>9</sup> querit P2\*

<sup>10</sup> et P2

<sup>11</sup> *omit.* P2\*

<sup>12</sup> Bellum suasurus *in marg.* D

<sup>13</sup> hoc B

<sup>14</sup> De belli justitia *in marg.* D

[7] Now you understand, Princes, the substance of my oration and what the matter is all about.<sup>1</sup> The whole issue is whether or not we should go to war. I have come to persuade you, in the name of the emperor, to go to war, and I have only accepted this burden because I see that the matter is clearly worthy of your courage, your nobility, and your nation. So, do now consider, hear, and examine the issue of undertaking this war for the sake of the Catholic Faith. Noble princes, every senate and every people that has to deliberate on going to war should discuss carefully and stringently three things lest it do anything that it will later regret. For, as the saying of Scipio goes, it is shameful to err and then afterwards to say: *I had not thought of that!*<sup>2</sup> So, anyone who is going to war should first ask: Is the war just? Secondly: Is it useful? And thirdly: Is it feasible?<sup>3</sup> If these conditions are not met, there is no reason for good men to go to war.

Let us now discuss this matter, Princes, and first let us examine the justice of the war.

---

<sup>1</sup> Cicero: *De officiis*, 2.12

<sup>2</sup> Widely used saying, cf. Cicero: *De officiis*, 1.81

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Quintilianus: *Institutio oratoria*, 3.8.22: *honestum, utile, necessarium/facile*. Commonly used

division of classical orations of the deliberative kind

[8] [EV] **Bellum, quod<sup>1</sup> pro tuenda religione, pro salvanda<sup>2</sup> patria, pro conservandis sociis ex auctoritate superioris gereretur<sup>3</sup>, nemo umquam veterum<sup>4</sup> reputavit<sup>5</sup> injustum. Hinc Moysi, hinc Josuae, hinc Saulis, hinc Davidis,<sup>6</sup> hinc Maccabaeorum proelia commendantur. Hinc illi<sup>7</sup> Demosthenis<sup>8</sup> clamores, quibus plenum exultabat<sup>9</sup> {46r} apud Athenas theatrum, in Marathone, in Arthemisio, in Salamina pro patria defunctos commendantis. Hinc ex Romanis<sup>10</sup> Horatii, Decii, Fabii, et alii paene innumerabiles celebrantur, qui pro salute suorum civium se devovere. Hinc ex vestris Germanis Caroli, Rolandi, Rainaldi, Conradi, Ottones, Henrici, Friderici aeternis praeconiis extolluntur, qui pro tutandis Christianorum finibus maximis<sup>11</sup> se periculis objectarunt. Numquam tamen vestris progenitoribus tam justa pugnandi causa quam vobis objecta est. Numquam illi tam atrocem injuriam, tam insignem contumeliam ab<sup>12</sup> infidelibus<sup>13</sup> acceperunt<sup>14</sup>, quemadmodum perpessa est hoc<sup>15</sup> nostro tempore Christiana communitas. Repetenda est breviter hoc loco Constantinopolitana calamitas. {46v} Sic<sup>16</sup> enim et injuriae magnitudo notior, et<sup>17</sup> belli justitia manifestior erit.**

[8] [FV] **Bellum, quod pro tuenda religione, pro conservanda patria, pro juvandis sociis ex auctoritate superiorum gereretur, nemo umquam veterum reputavit injustum. Sic Moysi, sic Josuae, sic Saulis, sic David, sic Maccabaeorum proelia commendamus. Hinc illi Demosthenis clamores, quibus plenum exultabat theatrum in Marathone, in Arthemisio, in Salamina pro patria defunctos commendantis. Hinc ex Romanis Horatii, Decii, Fabii, alii paene immemorabiles<sup>18</sup> memorantur, qui<sup>19</sup> pro salute suorum civium se<sup>20</sup> devoverunt. Hinc ex vestris<sup>21</sup> Caroli, Rolandi, Rainaldi, Conradi, Ottones, Henrici, Friderici, Rudolphi aeternis praeconiis extolluntur, qui nunc Tartaros, nunc Saracenos non solum ex suis domibus, verum etiam ex sociorum et amicorum finibus pepulerunt. "At illos," dicat aliquis, "injuriarum provocavit acerbitas." Quid hic, principes, an levis injuria est, quam perpessa est hoc tempore Christiana societas? An non meministis eorum, quae gesta apud Constantinopolim referuntur? Repetenda est vobis, ut arbitror, quam brevissime Constantinopolitana calamitas<sup>22</sup>. Sic enim et injuriae magnitudo notior, et belli justitia manifestior erit.**

<sup>1</sup> si *add.* P2\*

<sup>2</sup> servanda P2

<sup>3</sup> gerentur P1; geretur P2

<sup>4</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>5</sup> reputabit P2\*

<sup>6</sup> David P2\*

<sup>7</sup> illius P2

<sup>8</sup> Greci *in marg.* D

<sup>9</sup> exaltabat P1

<sup>10</sup> Romani *in marg.* D

<sup>11</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>12</sup> a P2\*

<sup>13</sup> fidelibus Christianis P2\*

<sup>14</sup> receperunt P2

<sup>15</sup> *omit.* P2; hec KO

<sup>16</sup> si P2\*

<sup>17</sup> est P2

<sup>18</sup> [possibly a scribal error for innumerabiles in A, repeated in the other mss.]

<sup>19</sup> se *add.* C

<sup>20</sup> *omit.* C

<sup>21</sup> Germani *in marg.* D

<sup>22</sup> Calamitas Constantinopolitana *in marg.* B; Constantinopolitana calamitas *in marg.* D

## 2. Justice of the war

[8] [FV] None of the ancients ever doubted the justice of a war conducted on the authority of superiors with the purpose of protecting religion, saving the fatherland, or helping allies.<sup>1</sup> Thus, we remember the battles of Moses, Joshua, Saul, David, and the Machabees, as well as the harangues of Demosthenes,<sup>2</sup> when he filled the whole theatre with enthusiasm, praising those who had died for the fatherland at Marathon<sup>3</sup>, Artemisium<sup>4</sup>, and Salamis<sup>5</sup> <sup>6</sup>. Of the Romans, we remember the Horatii, the Decii, the Fabii, and almost countless<sup>7</sup> others who gave their lives for the salvation of their countrymen. And of your own, we shall always praise [those named] Charles, Roland<sup>8</sup>, Rainald<sup>9</sup>, Konrad, Otto, Heinrich, Friederich, and Rudolf who drove now the Tartars, now the Saracens, not just from their own homes but also from the lands of their allies and friends. Here someone may say, "But these men were provoked by savage injuries." But, Princes, is it a slight injury that the Christian community has suffered now? Or have you forgotten the reports from Constantinople? I must tell you again<sup>10</sup> about the catastrophe in Constantinople, for thus the magnitude of the disaster will be better known and the justice of the war will be made more evident.

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Ambrosius: *De officiis ministrorum*, 1, 27, 129 (MPL 16)

<sup>2</sup> Probably Demosthenes' *Epitaphion* oration on those who had fallen at Charoneia in 338 BC

<sup>3</sup> 490 BC

<sup>4</sup> 480 BC

<sup>5</sup> 480 BC

<sup>6</sup> Piccolomini may have known Leonardo Bruni's translation of Demosthenes

<sup>7</sup> "immemorabiles"

<sup>8</sup> The legendary hero Roland

<sup>9</sup> Uncertain whom Piccolomini refers to

<sup>10</sup> Cf. his oration "*Quamvis omnibus*" [21], given half a year before at the earlier diet in Regensburg

[9] [EV] Nulla pulsatus injuria Mahumetus (sic enim vocatur, qui Turcis imperat), bellum Graecis indixit<sup>1</sup>, Constantinopolim obsedit ac male defensam expugnavit. Ibi<sup>2</sup> Constantinus, Graecorum imperator, intransibus urbem Turcis in extremo patriae<sup>3</sup> suae periculo<sup>4</sup> fortissime pugnans obtruncatur. Caput ejus lancea infixum spectaculo fertur. Fit miseranda Graecorum caedes: occiduntur non solum, qui se tueri conantur, verum etiam qui projectis armis sese dedunt<sup>5</sup>. Nec ego hoc<sup>6</sup> magni duco in ipso furore primi introitus trucidatos esse quamplurimos: illud horreo, illud abhominor, illud omnino detestor, capta civitate<sup>7</sup>, depositis armis, coniectis in vincula civibus, tum maxime saevitum<sup>8</sup> {47r} est, tum filii ante ora parentum occisi, tum viri nobiles velut bestiae<sup>9</sup> mactati, tum sacerdotes laniati, tum monachi excarnifiati, tum sacrae virgines incestatae, tum matres ac<sup>10</sup> nurus ludibrio habitae. O miseram urbis faciem! O infelicem populum! O sceleratum Mahumetum! Quis talia fando temperet a lacrimis? Omnia luctu plena, caede, cruore, cadaveribus erat cernere.

[9] [FV] Nulla pulsatus injuria Mahumetus (sic enim vocatur, qui Turcis imperat) bellum Graecis induxit<sup>11</sup>, Constantinopolim obsedit ac male defensam expugnavit. Ibi Constantinus imperator intransibus urbem Turcis in extremo patriae periculo fortissime pugnans obtruncatur. Caput ejus lancea infixum spectaculo fertur. Fit<sup>12</sup> miseranda Graecorum caedes; occiduntur non solum, qui se tueri conantur, verum etiam qui projectis armis sese dedunt. Nec ego magni hoc<sup>13</sup> duco in ipso furore primi introitus trucidatos esse quamplurimos<sup>14</sup>: illud horreo, illud abhominor capta civitate, positis armis, coniectis in vincula civibus, tum maxime saevitum est, tum filii ante ora parentum occisi, tum viri nobiles instar hostiarum mactati, tum sacerdotes laniati, tum monachi excarnificati, tum sacrae virgines incestatae, tum matres atque nurus ludibrio habitae. O miseram urbis faciem! O infelicem populum! O sceleratum Mahumetum! *Quis talia fando temperet a lacrimis?* Omnia luctu plena, caede, cruore, cadaveribus erat<sup>15</sup> cernere<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> induxit P2\*

<sup>2</sup> ubi KO

<sup>3</sup> et vite *add.* P2

<sup>4</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>5</sup> dederunt P2

<sup>6</sup> hec P2\*

<sup>7</sup> capta civitate : captivitate P2

<sup>8</sup> insanitum P2

<sup>9</sup> hostie P2

<sup>10</sup> et P2\*

<sup>11</sup> indixit *corr. ex* induxit C

<sup>12</sup> sit B

<sup>13</sup> magni hoc : hoc magni D

<sup>14</sup> qui plurimos B, E

<sup>15</sup> erant C [*corr. from* erat]

<sup>16</sup> erat cernere : cernere erat B,

D

[9] [FV] Without any provocation whatsoever, Mehmed<sup>1</sup> (as the ruler of the Turks is called) went to war against the Greeks and besieged and conquered the poorly defended Constantinople. There, in the final peril of his fatherland, Emperor Constantine<sup>2</sup> was killed, fighting desperately against the Turks as they entered the city. His head was set on a spear and carried around for all to see. The Greeks were slaughtered miserably. Not only those who tried to defend themselves, but also those who had thrown down their weapons and surrendered were killed. I accept that many were killed in the first furious assault. But I find it horrible and revolting that when the city had been conquered,<sup>3</sup> the arms laid down, and the citizens enchained, then the worst atrocities took place, then sons were killed before the eyes of their parents, then noblemen were butchered like cattle, then priests were tormented and monks tortured,<sup>4</sup> then holy virgins were ravished, then matrons and daughters-in-law were abused. Oh, miserable city! Oh, unhappy people! Oh, accursed Mehmed! *Who can tell this without shedding tears?*<sup>5</sup> Everywhere, you would see mourning, murder, blood and corpses.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mehmed II (1432-1481): [Otto-man sultan](#) who ruled first for a short time from August 1444 to September 1446, and later from February 1451 to his death

<sup>2</sup> Constantine XI Dragases Palaeologus (1405-1453): Emperor from

1449 to his death. The last reigning Byzantine emperor

<sup>3</sup> Concerning the description of the *urbs capta*, Piccolomini may have been inspired by Quintilian: *Institutio oratoria*, 8.3.67-70

<sup>4</sup> From Piccolomini: Letter to Pope Nicolaus V of 12 July 1453 (EPI, 6:

340) and Letter to Cardinal Nikolaus of Kues of 21 July 1453 (EPI, 6: 341), slightly revised <sup>4</sup> Vergilius: *Aeneis*

<sup>5</sup> Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 2.361-362: *quis funera fando explicet aut possit lacrimis aequare labores?*

[10] [EV] Mahumetus ipse, terribili<sup>1</sup> facie, taetris oculis, horribili<sup>2</sup> voce, crudelibus verbis, nefandis nutibus<sup>3</sup> homicidia mandat, nunc istum, nunc illum<sup>4</sup> ad caedem<sup>5</sup> poscit, manus in sanguine Christianorum lavat; omnia foedat<sup>6</sup>, omnia polluit. Tempa Dei nostri pseudo-prophetae traduntur, divina altaria proteruntur<sup>7</sup>, ossa martyrum et aliorum sanctorum jam cum Christo {47v} regnantium aut porcis aut canibus objiciuntur, franguntur statuae, picturae delentur. Nec matris<sup>8</sup> domini, reginae caelorum, gloriosae Mariae virginis imagini<sup>9</sup> parcitur; quin et ipsum salvatoris Christi<sup>10</sup> crucifixi simulacrum cum magno clamore, majori irrisione, praecedentibus tympanis ac tubis in castra defertur, huc atque illuc ludibrio<sup>11</sup> rapitur, conspuitur, luto provolvitur. O nefas inexpiandum! O ignominiam<sup>12</sup> Christianae gentis! O dedecus nostri nominis sempiternum! Huic signo, in quo redempti et salvati sumus, Turcorum foetidum genus<sup>13</sup> illudit, et quasi nos signum non signatum colamus: “Hic est,” inquit, “Christianorum deus.”

[10] [FV] Mahumetus ipse, facie horribili, taetris oculis, voce terribili, crudelibus verbis, nefandis nutibus homicidia mandat, nunc istum, nunc illum ad caedem poscit, manus in sanguine Christianorum lavat; omnia foedat, omnia polluit. Tempa Dei nostri pseudoprophetae traduntur, divina altaria proteruntur, ossa martyrum et aliorum sanctorum jam cum Christo regnantium aut *porcis* aut *canibus* objiciuntur, franguntur statuae, picturae delentur. Nec matris domini, reginae caelorum, gloriosae Mariae virginis imagini parcitur; quin et ipsum salvatoris Christi crucifixi simulacrum cum clamore magno, irrisione majori, praecedentibus tympanis ac tubis in castra defertur, huc atque illuc ludibrio rapitur, conspuitur, luto provolvitur. O nefas inexpiandum! O ignominia<sup>14</sup> Christianae gentis! O dedecus nostri nominis sempiternum! Huic signo, in quo redempti ac salvati sumus, Turcorum foetidum genus illudit, et quasi nos signum non<sup>15</sup> signatum<sup>16</sup> colamus: “Hic est”, inquit, “Christianorum Deus.”

---

<sup>1</sup> terribilis P1

<sup>2</sup> terribili KO

<sup>3</sup> militibus P2

<sup>4</sup> istum nunc illum : illum nunc istum P2

<sup>5</sup> omit. P1 [with blank space]

<sup>6</sup> omnia foedat omit. P1\*

<sup>7</sup> prosternuntur P2

<sup>8</sup> matri P2

<sup>9</sup> Mariae virginis imagini : virgini Marie P2

<sup>10</sup> omit. P2\*

<sup>11</sup> omit. P1, KO

<sup>12</sup> ignominia P2\*

<sup>13</sup> foetidum genus : genus fetidum P1

<sup>14</sup> ignominiam D

<sup>15</sup> non corr. ex nos A, C

<sup>16</sup> Signum signatum in marg. C; Quasi nos signatum non signatum in marg. D

[10] [FV] Mehmed himself - with fearsome face, wild eyes, terrible voice, cruel words, and horrible gestures - demands murder, and now he orders this one, now that one, to be killed. He washes his hands in the blood of Christians. He defiles everything. He pollutes all. The temples of our God are given over to the false prophet,<sup>1</sup> the divine altars are torn down, the bones of martyrs and other saints now reigning with Christ *are thrown to pigs and dogs*,<sup>2</sup> the statues are smashed, and the paintings destroyed. Not even the icon of the Mother of God, the Queen of Heaven, the glorious Virgin Mary, is spared. A crucifix is brought to the camp with much shouting and scornful laughter, to the accompaniment of drums and trumpets. There it is mocked, spat upon, and soiled. Oh, unatonable crime! Oh, dishonour to the Christian people! Oh, eternal shame to our name: the sign under which we have been redeemed and saved was mocked by the rotten people of the Turks, [putting up a sign saying]: "This is the God of the Christians!"<sup>3</sup> in order to show that what we are venerating is an empty symbol.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Apocalypse, 19, 20. "Pseudo-prophet" was often used about Muhammad in Christian polemics against Islam

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Matthew, 7, 6. Cf. Otto von Freising: *Gesta Friderici*, I, 44 (Schmidt, p. 214): *dabitur sanctum canibus et margaritas porcis?* From a letter of Bernard of Clairvaux sent to the East Frankish people, read to an imperial diet in Bavaria on 4 or 6 April 1147

<sup>3</sup> An allusion to the inscription on the cross of Christ, cf. Luke, 23, 38: *erat autem et superscriptio in-*

*scripta super illum litteris graecis et latinis et hebraicis hic est rex iudaeorum*

<sup>4</sup> Passages in sect. 9-10 may have been inspired, directly or indirectly, by Leonardo of Chios' eyewitness account of the Fall of Constantinople to Pope Nicolaus V of 16 August 1453, cf. Pertusi, I, p. 164-166: *Cruces ex templorum apicibus parietibusque evulsae pedibus conculcantur; violantur mulieres, virgines deflorantur, mare juvenes in turpitudine maculantur, sanctimoniales reli-*

*quae et quae apparentes fuerant luxu foedantur. ... Sacras Dei et sanctorum effigies humo prosterunt, quibus super non modo crapulam, sed luxuriam complent. Crucifixum posthac per castra praevis tympanis deludendo deportant: sputis, blasphemis, obprobriis iterum processionaliter crucifigunt, pileum heucrale, quod zarchula vocant, capiti superponentes deridendo clamabant: "Hic est Deus Christianorum"*



[11] [EV] Sentio quia commovemini, principes, dum salvatoris injuriam refero, dum tantae civitatis damna commemoro: {48r} sed quis cladem illius urbis, quis funera fando explicet, aut possit lacrimis aequare labores? Horret animus talia meminisse, luctumque refugit. O nobilis Graecia, ecce nunc tuum finem. Nunc demum mortua es, nunc sepulta jaces<sup>1</sup>. Heu, quot olim urbes fama rebusque potentes in Graecia<sup>2</sup> sunt extinctae. Ubi nunc Thebae, ubi Athenae, ubi Mycenae<sup>3</sup>, ubi Larissa, ubi Lacedaemon, ubi Corinthiorum civitas, ubi alia memoranda oppida, quorum si muros<sup>4</sup> quaeras, nec ruinam<sup>5</sup> invenias? Nemo solum, in quo jacuerunt, queat ostendere. Graeciam saepe nostri in ipsa Graecia requirunt. Sola ex tot cadaveribus civitatum Constantinopolis superat<sup>6</sup>, quae<sup>7</sup> de<sup>8</sup> parvo ambitu Bizantii a Pausania quondam edita<sup>9</sup>, per Constantinum primum imperatorem ejus {48v} nominis<sup>10</sup> in aemulatione<sup>11</sup> Romanae urbis<sup>12</sup> erecta, tantum mirabilium operum<sup>13</sup>, tantum armorum, tantum litterarum, tantum gloriae habuit, ut omnium civitatum damna haec sola urbs recompensare ac resarcire videretur.

[11] [FV] Sentio quia commovemini, principes, dum salvatoris injurias refero, dum tantae civitatis damna commemoro: sed *quis cladem* totius urbis, *quis funera fando explicet, aut possit lacrimis aequare labores?* Horret animus meus talia meminisse luctumque refugit. Heu, quot olim urbes fama rebusque potentes in Graecia<sup>14</sup> sunt {100v} extinctae. Ubi nunc Thebae, ubi Athenae, ubi Mycenae<sup>15</sup>, ubi Corinthiorum civitas, ubi Lacedaemon, ubi aliae memorabiles urbes? Nemo jam solum, in quo jacuerunt, queat ostendere. Saepe Graeciam nostri in ipsa Graecia requirunt. Sola ex tot cadaveribus civitatum Constantinopolis superabat, quae de parvo ambitu Bizantii a Pausania quondam edito, per Constantinum primum ejus nominis imperatorem, in aemulationem Romanae urbis erecta, tantum mirabilium operum, tantum armorum, tantum litterarum, tantum gloriae habuit, ut omnium civitatum damna haec sola urbs recompensare ac resarcire videretur.

<sup>1</sup> nunc sepulta jaces *omit.* P1, KO

<sup>2</sup> in Graecia *omit.* KO

<sup>3</sup> Nicenae P2, KO

<sup>4</sup> murum P2

<sup>5</sup> ruinas KO

<sup>6</sup> supererat P2

<sup>7</sup> quem KO

<sup>8</sup> *omit.* KO

<sup>9</sup> editi P2\*

<sup>10</sup> imperatorem ejus nominis :

eius nominis imperatorem P2\*

<sup>11</sup> emulationem P2

<sup>12</sup> Romanae urbis : urbis

Romanae P2

<sup>13</sup> tantum operum mirabilium :

tantum mirabilium operum P2\*,

KO

<sup>14</sup> Graeciae urbes *in marg.* D

<sup>15</sup> Nicenae B

[11] I feel how moved you are<sup>1</sup>, Princes, as I speak about the insult to Our Savior and as I relate the harm done to this great city. *Who could unfold in speech the fall of that city, and the carnage? Who could match the toils with tears?*<sup>2</sup> *My mind shudders to remember these things and recoils in pain.*<sup>3</sup> Alas, how many Greek cities, once rich and famous, have now disappeared? Where now is Thebes, where is Athens, where is Mycene, where is the city of the Corinthians, Sparta, and all those other once famous cities? Nobody can point to the place where they were in former times.<sup>4</sup> Often, our people are searching for Greece in Greece itself. Out of so many of cities,<sup>5</sup> now corpses, only Constantinople survived. In the very old days, it was a small settlement founded by Pausanias.<sup>6</sup> Then Constantine, first emperor of that name, raised it in imitation of the city of Rome.<sup>7</sup> Constantinople had so many wonderful works, so many armaments, and so much learning and literature<sup>8</sup> that it could, on its own, compensate for and mend the loss of all the other cities.

---

<sup>1</sup> In his Turkish orations and other orations like the “*Advenisti tandem*” [67], delivered at the reception of Saint’ Andrew’s Head in Rome in April 1462, Piccolomini/Pius played heavily on the emotions of the listeners, following classical rhetorical models, cf. Hack, p. 359

<sup>2</sup> Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 2.361-362. On the fall of Troy

<sup>3</sup> Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 2.12: ... *animus meminisse horret luctuque refugit*

<sup>4</sup> The passage “*memorabiles urbes ... videretur*” is an almost verbatim quote from Piccolomini’s letter to Cardinal Nikolaus of Kues of 21 July 1453 (EPI, 6: 341)

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Cicero: *Ad familiares*, 248.4: *tot oppidum cadavera projecta jacent*

<sup>6</sup> 478 BCE

<sup>7</sup> 330 CE

<sup>8</sup> The topos of *arma* and *litterae* was dear to the humanists

[12] [EV] Hinc<sup>1</sup> post pacem cum Gratiano factam et a Theodosio confirmatam, veniens Constantinopolim rex Gothorum Athanaricus, cum regiae urbis amplitudinem<sup>2</sup> splendoremque contemplatus esset, veluti stupens dixisse fertur: “Vere Deus terrenus est imperator hic habitans; et quisquis adversus eum manus moverit, ipse sui sanguinis reus<sup>3</sup> existit<sup>4</sup>”. Et quamvis post imperium ad vos, o Germani<sup>5</sup>, translatum, saepe Constantinopolis capta direptaque<sup>6</sup> fuerit, numquam tamen in potestatem Christi hostium,<sup>7</sup> nisi modo, {49r} devenit; numquam basilicae sanctorum diruptae<sup>8</sup>, numquam bibliothecae combustae, numquam monasteria desolata, numquam sacra nostra ex toto, nisi nunc, deleta fuere. Itaque mansit apud Constantinopolim usque ad nostrum tempus vetustae sapientiae monumentum ac velut ibi domicilium esset litterarum<sup>9</sup> et arx<sup>10</sup> summa<sup>11</sup> philosophiae, nemo Latinorum satis doctus videri poterat, nisi Constantinopoli aliquamdiu studuisset, quodque florente Roma doctrinarum nomen habuerunt Athenae, hac<sup>12</sup> tempestate nostra Constantinopolis obtinebat; unde et multa veterum<sup>13</sup> sapientum volumina susceperamus et in futurum suscipere sperabamus. At nunc vincentibus Turcis et omnia possidentibus, quae Graeca potentia tenuit, vereor, ne de litteris Graecis omnino sit actum.

[12] [FV] Hinc<sup>14</sup> post pacem cum Gratiano factam et a Theodosio Caesare confirmatam, veniens Constantinopolim rex Gothorum, Athanaricus, cum regiae urbis amplitudinem splendoremque contemplatus esset, veluti stupens dixisse fertur<sup>15</sup>: “Vere Deus terrenus est imperator, cui tanta civitas paret; et quisquis in eum manus moverit, ipse sui sanguinis reus existit.” Et quamvis post imperium ad vos, o Germani, translatum, saepe Constantinopolis capta direptaque fuerit, numquam tamen in potestatem Christi hostium devenit, numquam basilicae sanctorum dirutae, numquam bibliothecae combustae, numquam sacra nostra violata nisi nunc fuere. Itaque mansit apud Constantinopolim usque in hanc diem vetustae sapientiae monumentum ac velut ibi domicilium esset<sup>16</sup> litterarum et arx summa philosophiae, nemo Latinorum satis videri doctus poterat, nisi per tempus Constantinopoli studuisset, quodque florente Roma litterarum nomen habuerunt Athenae, hoc tempestate nostra Constantinopolis obtinebat. Unde et multa veterum sapientum volumina sanctitatis et doctrinae plena suscepimus et in futurum suscipere spes erat. At nunc vincentibus Turcis et omnia possidentibus, quae Graeca potentia tenuit, vereor ne de Graecis litteris omnino sit actum.

<sup>1</sup> huic P1\*

<sup>2</sup> magnitudinem P1\*

<sup>3</sup> sui sanguinis reus : reus sui sanguinis P1

<sup>4</sup> existet P2\*

<sup>5</sup> a Romanis add. P2

<sup>6</sup> diruptaque P2\*

<sup>7</sup> Piccolomini: Letter to Pope Nicolaus V of 12 July (EPI, 6: 340):

*urbs, que post Constantinopolim in annos 1100 et ultra duraverat neque unquam in potestatem venerat infidelium, spurcissimum Turchorum*

<sup>8</sup> dirutae KO

<sup>9</sup> esset litterarum : litterarum esset P1, P2\*, KO

<sup>10</sup> ars P2

<sup>11</sup> summae KO

<sup>12</sup> hoc KO

<sup>13</sup> virorum P2\*

<sup>14</sup> Laudes Constantinopolis in marg. D

<sup>15</sup> Gotorum regis verba in marg.

D

<sup>16</sup> domicilium esset : esset domicilium D

[12] [FV] After peace had been concluded with Gratian and confirmed by Emperor Theodosius, Athanaricus, King of the Goths, [came to visit Constantinople].<sup>1</sup> When he had seen the size and splendour of the royal city, he was deeply impressed and reportedly said, “*Truly, the emperor is God on earth since he is obeyed by such a great city. And whoever raises his hand against him is guilty of his own blood.*”<sup>2</sup> And though Constantinople was conquered and pillaged several times<sup>3</sup> after the empire had been transferred to you,<sup>4</sup> oh, Germans, it never before fell into the power of the enemies of Christ, never were the basilicas destroyed, never were the libraries burned, and never were our holy things profaned. Thus, to this day, Constantinople has remained a monument to the old wisdom, and since it was like a home to letters and a high citadel of philosophy, none of the Latins appeared to be truly learned if he had not studied for some time in Constantinople. For the reputation of learning that Athens had when Rome flourished<sup>5</sup> was taken over, in our age, by Constantinople. From there, we received many volumes written by the wise men of old, full of holiness and learning, and we hoped to receive more in the future.<sup>6</sup> But now that the Turks are victorious and possess everything that mighty Greece possessed, I fear that the days of Greek letters are over.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> 778 AD

<sup>2</sup> Jordanes: *De origine actibusque Getarum*, 28: *Deus, inquit, sine dubio terrenus est imperator et quisquis adversus eum manu moverit, ipse sui sanguinis reus existit*

<sup>3</sup> During the infamous 4<sup>th</sup> crusade, in 1203 and 1204

<sup>4</sup> In Piccolomini’s political thinking Piccolomini, the Roman Empire had been translated from the Greeks to the Germans, cf. his *De ortu et auctoritate imperii*

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Aethicus Ister: *Cosmographia*, 72a, 2

<sup>6</sup> The threat to the transmission of Greek literature had actually been

felt so keenly by Pope Nicholas V that, during his last years, he accelerated his collecting of Greek manuscripts, see Manetti, p. LIX

<sup>7</sup> This whole section is a somewhat revised quote from Piccolomini’s letter to Cardinal Nikolaus of Kues of 21 July 1453 (EPI, 6: 341)

[13] [EV] Neque enim, ut {49v} plerique arbitrantur, Asiani sunt ab origine Turci, quos vocant Teucros, ex quibus est Romanorum origo<sup>1</sup>, et<sup>2</sup> quibus litterae non essent odio. Scytharum genus est ex media barbaria profectum, quod ultra<sup>3</sup> Euxinum Pirrichiosque montes, ut Aethico philosopho placet, ad septentrionalem<sup>4</sup> oceanum sedes habuit: gens immunda et ignominiosa, fornicaria in cunctis stuprorum generibus, quae, ut tradit vester Otto, Frisingensis episcopus, non futilis auctor, regnante apud Francos Pipino, montes Caspios exivit ac longo itinere in Asiam se recepit, ibique posthac morata est. Et quamvis sub miti<sup>5</sup> caelo et mundiori terra per tot saecula parumper excultam se praebuerit<sup>6</sup>, sapit tamen adhuc multum pristinae deformitatis, neque omne barbariem<sup>7</sup> {50r} deterisit. Carnes adhuc equorum, vesontium vulturumque<sup>8</sup> comedit, libidini servit<sup>9</sup>, crudelitati succumbit, litteras odit, humanitatis studia persequitur. In cujus manus venisse nunc doctam eloquentemque Graeciam, nescio quis satis deflare queat.

[13] [FV] Neque enim, ut plerique arbitrantur, Asiani ab origine Turci sunt, quos vocant Teucros<sup>10</sup>, quibus litterae non essent odio, sed Scytharum genus est ex media barbaria profectum, quod ultra Euxinum Pirrichiosque montes, ut Aethico philosopho placet, ad oceanum septentrionalem sedes habuit: gens immunda et ignominiosa<sup>11</sup>, fornicaria in cunctis stuprorum generibus, quae, ut tradit vester Otto, Frisingensis episcopus, regnante apud Francos Pipino, ex montibus Caspiis egressa longo itinere in Asiam se recepit, ibique posthac morata est. Et quamvis sub miti caelo et mundiori terra per tot saecula parumper excultam se praebuerit, sapit tamen adhuc multum pristinae deformitatis, neque omnem barbariem tersit. Carnes adhuc equorum, vesontium vulturumque comedit, libidini servit, crudelitati succumbit, litteras odit, humanitatis studia persequitur. In cujus manus venisse doctam eloquentemque {101r} Graeciam, nescio quis satis deflare queat.

---

<sup>1</sup> omit. P1

<sup>2</sup> omit. KO

<sup>3</sup> ex add. KO

<sup>4</sup> septentrionale P2

<sup>5</sup> sub miti : submitti KO

<sup>6</sup> prebuit P2

<sup>7</sup> barbariam P1

<sup>8</sup> vesontium vulturumque :  
recentium multumque P2

<sup>9</sup> inservit P2

<sup>10</sup> Turci non Theucrici *in marg.* D

<sup>11</sup> ignominiosa A, B, D

[13] [FV] Many believe that the Turks come from Asia Minor and call them Teucrians (though the Teucrians certainly did not hate letters).<sup>1</sup> But [this is not so:] the Turks are a Scythian people that have come from the middle of Barbary.<sup>2</sup> According to the philosopher Aethicus,<sup>3</sup> they dwelled beyond Euxinum<sup>4</sup> and the Pirrichian Mountains<sup>5</sup> by the Northern Sea. It was an unclean, inglorious people, debauched and practicing all kinds of sexual excesses. According to your Otto, Bishop of Freising,<sup>6</sup> the Turkish people came out of the Caspian Mountains at the time when Pippin ruled the Franks,<sup>7</sup> set off on the long road to Asia Minor, and stayed there ever since. Having lived for many centuries under a pleasant sky and in a gentler country, they have acquired some culture, but still they reek of their former uncouthness, and they have not completely put off their barbarous manners. They still eat the flesh of horses, bisons, and vultures;<sup>8</sup> they are slaves of lust; they indulge in cruelty; they hate letters, and they persecute the studies of humanity. Now, learned and eloquent Greece has fallen into their hands. How anybody can deplore this enough, I do not know.<sup>9 10</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Actually, Piccolomini himself was one of them, e.g., his oration "Audivi" [1] of 1436 and later orations, as late as 1447, where he directly used the term Teucri for the Turks

<sup>2</sup> Meuthen: *Fall*, p. 13

<sup>3</sup> Aethicus Ister: *Cosmographia*, 32. Helmroth: *German*, n. 76: *Enea scheint den Ister-Text unmittelbar zu kennen, vermutlich aus einem Handschriftenfund in Österreich*

<sup>4</sup> The Black Sea

<sup>5</sup> It is uncertain which mountains are meant, but possibly the Caucasus. In a note Mansi refers to Piccolomini's work *De Asia*, c. 100, where he uses the term Birichian Mountains located, together with the isle of Taraconta, close to the Black Sea

<sup>6</sup> Otto von Freising: *Chronica*, 5, 25

<sup>7</sup> On the notion of the Caspian Gates, see Meserve: *Empires*, pp. 249-256

<sup>8</sup> Aethicus Ister: *Cosmographia*, 32

<sup>9</sup> The passage "Et quamvis ... queat" is a heavily revised quote from Piccolomini's letter to Cardinal Nikolaus of Kues of 21 July 1453 (EPI, 6: 341)

<sup>10</sup> Meuthen: *Fall*, p. 7: Die Humanisten akzentuierten dann gerne noch die Kulturlosigkeit und den Bildungshass den Türken. So Enea Silvio in seiner grossen Rede auf dem Frankfurter Türkenreichstag im Oktober 1454

[14] [EV] **Sed dicitis, milites: Quid tu nobis litterarum detrimenta<sup>1</sup> commemoras? Quid nobis et<sup>2</sup> litteris? Nos hastas gladiosque versamus. Vos, genus ignavum, tecto gaudetis et umbra. Immo vero, fortissimi equites, nullius quam vestri magis<sup>3</sup> interest studia litterarum esse quam florentissima. Quid enim vos, viri excellentes, aliud quaeritis, cum praestanti animo et alto corde proelium committitis, ac nunc viribus hostem, nunc ingenio superatis, quid, inquam, aliud quaeritis<sup>4</sup> quam famae dulcedinem? Laudari<sup>5</sup> vultis, scio, et gaudetis, {50v} cum de vobis bonos esse rumores<sup>6</sup>auditis. Trahimur omnes studio laudis, et optimus quisque gloria ducitur, inquit Cicero. Sed quae laus vestra diuturna esse potest, nisi litteris consecretur? Brevissima est fama<sup>7</sup>, quae humanae vitae<sup>8</sup> spatio terminatur. Vivunt nomine perenni, quos litterae insertos habent:**

**Fortunati ambo, si quid<sup>9</sup> mea carmina possunt.  
Nulla dies umquam memori vos eximet aevo,**

in Euryalum<sup>10</sup> et Nisum inquit Maro.

[14] [FV] **Sed dicitis, milites: "Quid tu nobis litterarum detrimenta connumerat? Nos hastas gladiosque versamus. Nil nobis et litteris." Immo vero, fortissimi equites, nullius quam vestra magis interest studia litterarum esse quam florentissima. Quid enim, viri magnanimi, vos aliud quaeritis, cum praesenti animo et alto corde proelium committitis, ac nunc viribus hostem, nunc ingenio superatis, quid aliud, inquam, quaeritis quam famae dulcedinem? Laudari vultis, scio, et gaudetis, cum de vobis rumores esse bonos auditis. Trahimur omnes studio laudis, et optimus quisque gloria ducitur. Sed quae laus vestra diuturna esse potest, nisi litteris consecretur<sup>11</sup>? Eripiunt quemvis a mortis dente camoenae. Vivunt fama perenni, quos litterae insertos habent.**

**O fortunati ambo, si quid mea carmina possunt.  
Nulla dies umquam memori vos eximet aevo,<sup>12</sup>**

in Euryalum et Nisum inquit Maro.

<sup>1</sup> omit. P2\*

<sup>2</sup> ex P2; de KO

<sup>3</sup> quam vestri magis : magis quam vestri P2

<sup>4</sup> ac nunc... quaeritis omit. KO

<sup>5</sup> laudare KO

<sup>6</sup> rumores esse bonos : esse rumores bonos P2

<sup>7</sup> nisi litteris ... fama omit. P2

<sup>8</sup> humanae vitae : vite humane P2

<sup>9</sup> que P2\*

<sup>10</sup> Curialum KO

<sup>11</sup> consecretur A, B; consecretur corr. ex consecretur C;

consecretur corr. ex. consecretur D

<sup>12</sup> This verse is also quoted in Piccolomini: Letter to Cardinal Nikolaus of Kues of 21 July 1453 (WO, III, 1, p. 210)

[14] [FV] But, soldiers, here you say, “Why do you talk so much about the losses to letters? We fight with spears and swords. We have no interest in letters.” Not so, Mighty Knights, for you are actually those who have the greatest need for flourishing letters. When you rush into battle, courageously and daringly, and overcome the enemy with your physical and mental strength, what are you seeking, my brave men, other than sweet fame? You want to be praised – I know - and you are happy when you hear that people speak well of you. *Ambition is a universal factor in life, and the nobler a man is, the more susceptible is he to the sweets of fame.*<sup>1</sup> But your glory will not last long if it is not consecrated by letters. *The muses can free anybody from the tooth of death.*<sup>2</sup> Men’s fame is eternal if it is written in letters:

*Happy! If my poetry has any power,  
no day shall ever blot you from the memory of time,*

said Maro<sup>3</sup> to Euryalus and Nisus.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Cicero: *Pro Archia*, 9.26: *trahimur omnes studio laudis et optimus quisque maxime gloria ducitur*

<sup>2</sup> Quotation not identified. Possibly a loan from a poem by Antonio Beccadelli (Il Panormita)

<sup>3</sup> Vergilius Maro, Publius (70-19 BCE): Roman poet

<sup>4</sup> Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 9.446-447



[15] [EV] Nec<sup>1</sup> nos<sup>2</sup> aut Samsonis, aut Gedeonis, aut Jeptae, aut aliorum iudicum fortitudinem regumque magna gesta sciremus, nisi litteris edocti essemus. **Quanto ergo quisque vestrum, nobilissimi equites, aut industrius est aut fortior, aut<sup>3</sup> animosior, tanto favere ingenii ac litteris magis debet. Haec sunt enim, quae** progenitores vestros {51r} virtute praestantes, quamvis iamdudum mortuos, memoriae tamen hominum **quasi viventes** exhibent, **et quae<sup>4</sup> vestrum nomen,** si viriles fueritis, **ad posterum deferre** cum laude **queant<sup>5</sup>**. Senserat hoc<sup>6</sup> **Alexander Macedo, qui cum in Sigaeo sepulchrum vidisset Achillis: O fortunate, inquit, adolescens, qui tuae virtutis praeconem Homerum inveneris. Et vere, inquit orator, nam nisi illi ars illa fuisset, idem tumulus, qui corpus<sup>7</sup> ejus contexerat, nomen etiam obruisset. Themistocles<sup>8</sup> autem<sup>9</sup> ille,** summus Athenis vir, cum ex eo quaereretur, **cujus vocem libentissime audiret: A quo summa virtus, inquit, optime laudatur. Quo dicto nimirum<sup>10</sup> humanitatis et eloquentiae<sup>11</sup> studia<sup>12</sup> magnopere<sup>13</sup> commendavit<sup>14</sup>.**

[15] [FV] **Quanto ergo quisque vestrum, nobilissimi equites, fortior est, animosior, industrius, tanto favere ingenii ac litteris magis debet. Haec sunt enim, quae majores vestros, clarissimos viros, iamdudum mortuos, quasi viventes et quae vestrum nomen ad posterum deferre queunt. Noverat Alexander Macedo, quantus inesset litteris vigor ad praebendam famam, qui cum in Sigaeo sepulchrum vidisset Achillis O fortunate, inquit, adolescens, qui tuae virtutis praeconem Homerum inveneris. Et vere, inquit Cicero, nam nisi illi ars illa extitisset, idem tumulus, qui corpus ejus contexerat, nomen etiam obruisset. Themistocles autem, clarus ille Athenis vir, cum ex eo quaereretur, cujus vocem libentissime audiret: A quo summa virtus, inquit, optime praedicatur. Quo dicto nimirum humanitatis et eloquentiae studia magnopere commendavit.**

---

<sup>1</sup> hec P1

<sup>2</sup> non P2

<sup>3</sup> omit. KO

<sup>4</sup> omit. P2

<sup>5</sup> queunt P2

<sup>6</sup> hec P1\*, KO

<sup>7</sup> omit. KO

<sup>8</sup> Themistodes P1, P2;

Themoscenes KO

<sup>9</sup> omit. P1

<sup>10</sup> omit. P2\*

<sup>11</sup> et eloquentiae omit. P2

<sup>12</sup> studiis quam P2

<sup>13</sup> magno opere P2

<sup>14</sup> omit. P2

[15] [FV] The stronger, the braver, and the more active you are, Noble Knights, the more each of you will benefit from intellect and letters. For it is those that can make your forefathers, famous men, though dead for many years, stay alive - so to speak - and transmit your name to posterity. Alexander of Macedonia<sup>1</sup> knew the power of letters to ensure fame, for when he saw the tomb of Achilles<sup>2</sup> in Sigeum,<sup>3</sup> he said: *Fortunate youth, to have found in Homer a herald of thy valour!*<sup>4</sup> Cicero<sup>5</sup> adds that *well might he so exclaim, for if that art had never existed, the same mound which covered Achilles' bones would also have overwhelmed his memory.*<sup>6</sup> And Themistocles,<sup>7</sup> the famous Athenian, when asked what voice he loved best to hear, replied, *That which bears most eloquent testimony to supreme prowess.*<sup>8</sup> In these words, he highly recommended the study of humanities and eloquence.

---

<sup>1</sup> Alexander III the Great (356-323 BCE): King of the Greek kingdom of Macedon. Created one of the largest empires of the ancient world, stretching from Greece to Egypt and into present-day Pakistan

<sup>2</sup> Achilles: (Greek myth.) Hero of the Trojan War and the central character and greatest warrior of Homer's *Iliad*

<sup>3</sup> Sigeum: ancient Greek city in the north-west of the Troad region of Anatolia, located at the mouth of the Scamander (the modern Karamenderes River)

<sup>4</sup> Cicero: *Pro Archia*, 10.24

<sup>5</sup> Cicero, Marcus Tullius (106-43 BCE): Roman statesman and author

<sup>6</sup> Cicero: *Pro Archia*, 10.24: *Et vere. Nam nisi Ilias illa exstitisset, idem tumulus, qui corpus eius contexerat, nomen etiam obruisset*

<sup>7</sup> Themistocles (ca. 524–459 BCE): Athenian politician and general

<sup>8</sup> Cicero: *Pro Archia*, 9.20. *Themistoclem illum, summum Athenis virum, dixisse aiunt, cum ex eo quaereretur, quod acroama aut cuius vocem libentissime audiret, eius, a quo sua virtus optime praedicaretur.* Note that Piccolomini omitted “sua”, i.e. ,“his own”

[16] [EV] **At contrita** nunc<sup>1</sup> deletaque **Graecia**, quanta<sup>2</sup> sit facta<sup>3</sup> litterarum {51v} jactura cuncti cognoscitis, qui Latinorum omnem doctrinam<sup>4</sup> **ex Graecorum fontibus** derivatam non ignoratis. **Quid ergo in tanto damno, in tanta injuria dicemus, principes?** An de justitia **belli adversus haec monstra hominum dubitabimus, qui** nulla humanitatis studia<sup>5</sup> colunt, **qui foedera nulla custodiunt, qui sanguinem nostrum<sup>6</sup> sitiunt, qui caedibus saturari non possunt, qui sacra** Dei nostri omnia **polluunt et exterminant?** **Fortitudo, inquit Ambrosius** in Officiis, **quae bello tuetur a barbaris patriam, vel domi<sup>7</sup> defendit infirmos, vel a latronibus socios<sup>8</sup>, plena justitia est.**

[16] [FV] **At contrita Graecia** aut mortua sunt aut certe plurimum diminuta eloquentiae bonarumque omnium artium studia. Fateor multis in locis apud Latinos vigere studia litterarum, sed rivuli sunt **ex Graecorum fontibus derivati**, quos fonte siccato necessarium est non parum arescere. **Quid ergo in tanto damno, in tanta injuria dicemus, principes?** **Bellum** ne justum esse **dubitabimus adversus haec monstra hominum, qui** litteras odiunt, **qui foedera nulla custodiunt**, qui tantam nobis<sup>9</sup> civitatem abstulerunt, **qui sanguinem vestrum sitiunt, qui caedibus saturari non possunt, qui sacra vestra polluunt<sup>10</sup> et exterminant**, qui omnibus Christianis ultima supplicia minitantur? **Fortitudo, inquit Ambrosius, quae bello tuetur a barbaris patriam, vel domi defendit infirmos, vel a latronibus socios, plena justitia est.** Quid hic putandum est, ubi non solum patria, socii, vel infirmi, sed fides, sed religio, sed honor Dei nostri in defensionem veniunt?

---

<sup>1</sup> contrita nunc : nunc contrita  
KO

<sup>2</sup> at contrita ... quanta *omit.* P2

<sup>3</sup> factura P2

<sup>4</sup> omnium P2

<sup>5</sup> humanitatis studia : studia  
humanitatis P2

<sup>6</sup> vestrum P2

<sup>7</sup> domum P2

<sup>8</sup> sacros P2

<sup>9</sup> vobis C

<sup>10</sup> pollunt C

[16] [FV] But now that Greece has been overrun, the studies of eloquence and all the good arts are either dead or have been greatly reduced. I admit that such studies exist in many places in the Latin world, but they are rivulets flowing from Greek springs.<sup>1 2</sup> Now that the spring has dried out, these studies will, to some extent, dry up too. What, Princes, shall we say about such a great loss, such great damage? Will we doubt that it is just to wage war against these human monsters who hate letters, who do not respect treaties, who have taken that great city from us, who are thirsting for your blood, who cannot get enough slaughter, who profane and destroy our holy things, and who threaten all Christians with the direst punishments? Ambrose<sup>3</sup> says that *the use of force in a war to protect one's country from the barbarians, the weak at home, or allies from robbers is absolutely legitimate*.<sup>4</sup> So what shall we think in this case where you come to the defence not only of the fatherland, the weak, and the allies, but also of Faith, religion, and the honour of our God?

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Cicero: *Tusculanae disputationes*, 1.1-4

<sup>2</sup> The passage "Fateor multis ... a-rescere" is a heavily revised quote from Piccolomini's letter to Cardi-

nal Nikolaus of Kues of 21 July 1453 (EPI, 6: 341)

<sup>3</sup> Ambrosius, Aurelius (ca. 340-397). Archbishop of Milan. Doctor of the Church. Saint

<sup>4</sup> Ambrosius: *De officiis ministrorum*, 1, 27, 129. MPL XVI, col. 61

[17] [EV] **Quod si ordo ille naturalis paci accomodatus, Augustino teste, id poscit<sup>1</sup>, ut suscipiendi belli auctoritas atque consilium penes principes sit, neque bellum alioquin justum existimetur, videte {52r} quanta est<sup>2</sup> hujus belli justitia, cujus non solum papa et<sup>3</sup> imperator, duo maxima luminaria, duo primi in terra principes, sed ipse rector orbis, mundique fabricator Deus est auctor, qui sponsam suam<sup>4</sup> ecclesiam, matrem nostram, ut pupillam oculi nobis tuendam commendat. Montravimus belli justitiam fortasse<sup>5</sup> pluribus verbis, quam necesse fuit, sed<sup>6</sup> traxit me injuriarum acerbitas. Parcite subirato, date veniam laeso.**

[17] [FV] **Quod si ordo ille naturalis paci accomodatus, {101r} teste Augustino, id poscit, ut suscipiendi belli auctoritas atque consilium penes principes sit, neque bellum alioquin justum existimatur, videte quanta est hujus belli justitia, cujus non solum Romanus pontifex et imperator, sed ipse rector orbis mundique fabricator Deus est auctor, qui vobis sponsam suam ecclesiam ut pupillam oculi tuendam commendat. Montravimus belli justitiam fortasse pluribus verbis, quam necesse fuit.**

---

<sup>1</sup> id poscit : deposcit P2

<sup>2</sup> sit P2\*

<sup>3</sup> omit. P2

<sup>4</sup> sub KO

<sup>5</sup> forte sed P2\*

<sup>6</sup> omit. P2\*

[17] [FV] According to Augustine,<sup>1</sup> *the natural order which seeks the peace of mankind, ordains that the monarch should have the power of undertaking war,*<sup>2</sup> and a war can only be considered just, when this is the case. You see, then, how great is the justice of this war, whose author is not just the Roman pontiff and the emperor but God himself, the ruler and creator of this world. To you, He entrusts his spouse, the Church, to be cared for as the *apple of the eye*<sup>3</sup>.

We have now demonstrated the justice of the war – though maybe with more words than necessary.

---

<sup>1</sup> Augustinus, Aurelius (Augustine) (354 – 430): Bishop of Hippo. Theologian. Doctor of the Church. Saint

<sup>2</sup> Augustinus: *Contra Faustum*, 22, 75. Translation quoted after the New Advent ed.

<sup>3</sup> Deuteronomy, 32, 10; Psalms, 16, 8

[18] [EV] **Nunc ex bello, quae sequatur<sup>1</sup>, utilitas breviter exponendum est. Cur enim se bello quisquam immisceat<sup>2</sup>, nisi et bellasse<sup>3</sup> juret<sup>4</sup>? Vos igitur, principes, si fructum hujus belli contra Turcos suscipiendi cognoscere cupitis, damna quae toti Christianismo<sup>5</sup> imminet, nisi Turcorum frangatur impetus, pensitate. Audivistis, quae passi sunt Constantinopolitani. {52v} Idem nunc multae civitates expectant, nisi<sup>6</sup>, dum tempus est<sup>7</sup>, opitulamini. Serpit in dies hoc virus magis ac magis; nunc una provincia, nunc alia nobis deficit. Rascia jam novissime occupata est. Dispotus ejus provinciae cum conjuge et liberis in Hungariam se recepit.**

[18] [FV] **Nunc ex eo, quae sequatur, utilitas<sup>8</sup> exponendum est. Quis enim bello se implicet, nisi bellasse juret? Vos igitur, principes, si fructum hujus belli contra Turcos gerendi cognoscere cupitis, damna quae imminet toti Christianismo, nisi Turcorum frangatur impetus, pensitate. Audistis, quae passi sunt Constantinopolitani. Idem nunc multae civitates expectant, nisi, dum tempus est, opitulamini. Serpit in dies hoc virus magis ac magis; nunc una provincia, nunc altera nobis deficit. Rascia jam novissime occupata refertur. Despotus relicta patria in Hungariam se recepit.**

---

<sup>1</sup> sequitur P2

<sup>2</sup> immiscet P2

<sup>3</sup> debellasse P2\*; bello se KO

<sup>4</sup> juvat P1, KO

<sup>5</sup> cetui Christianissimo P2\*

<sup>6</sup> ubi P2

<sup>7</sup> omit. P2\*

<sup>8</sup> Utilitas *in marg.* D

### 3. Benefits of the war (Utilitas)

[18] [FV] Now, I shall make clear the benefits<sup>1</sup> of the war. Who wants to go to war if there is no benefit to it? Princes, if you want to know the benefits of a war against the Turks, then consider carefully the losses that threaten all of Christianity if the assault of the Turks is not broken. You have heard what the Constantinopolitans have suffered. The same [destiny] now awaits many other cities if you do not bring them help in time. This virus is spreading from day to day; one region after another is lost to us. There are reports that Serbia has recently been occupied and that the ruler has left his country and gone to Hungary.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> "utilitas"

<sup>2</sup> Spring 1454



[19] [EV] **Hungari, qui hactenus fidei nostrae<sup>1</sup> clipeus, nostrae<sup>2</sup> religionis murus fuere, bis victi bello post mortem Alberti regis, bis capti a Turcis sunt, centum milia hominum aut eo plus, duobus<sup>3</sup> proeliis amisere. Non tulerunt integri Turcorum vires; quomodo fracti ferent? Succubuerunt auxiliantibus Polonis, quomodo vincent<sup>4</sup> soli? Magna est Turcorum potentia et in Asia et in Graecia. Tartarorum ferocem gentem foedere junctam habent. Ducenta et trecenta<sup>5</sup> milia pugnatorum, ne dicam plura, in armis {53r} cogere possunt. Quamvis sint Hungari strenui et potentes viri atque omni laude digni, non tamen tantis viribus pares habentur. Sive vincitur Hungaria, sive coacta jungitur Turcis, neque Italia neque Germania tuta erit, neque satis Rhenus Gallos securos reddet.**

[19] [FV] **Hungari bis victi bello post mortem Alberti regis, bis capti a Turcis sunt, plus centum millia hominum duobus proeliis amisere. Non tulerunt integri Turcorum vires; quomodo fracti ferent? Succubuerunt auxiliantibus Polonis, quomodo vincent soli? Magna est Turcorum potentia et in Asia et in Graecia. Tartarorum ferocem gentem foedere junctam habent. Ducenta et trecenta millia pugnatorum in armis cogere possunt. Quamvis sunt Hungari strenui et potentes viri, non tamen tantis viribus pares habentur. Sive vincitur Hungaria, siva jungitur Turcis, neque Germania neque Italia tuta erit, neque Rhenus tuebitur Gallos.**

---

<sup>1</sup> fidei nostrae : nostrae fidei  
P2\*, KO

<sup>2</sup> omit. P2  
<sup>3</sup> in add. P2

<sup>4</sup> vincerent P2  
<sup>5</sup> tercenta KO

[19] [FV] After the death of King Albrecht,<sup>1</sup> the Hungarians have been defeated twice in war; twice they have been overcome by the Turks, losing more than 100,000 men just in these two battles.<sup>2</sup> Even when the Hungarians were at full strength, they could not stand against the forces of Turks. How can they resist them now that they are beaten? Even when they had help from the Poles, they were broken.<sup>3</sup> How can they now win on their own? Great is the power of the Turks<sup>4</sup> both in Asia Minor and in Greece, and they now have an alliance with the savage Tartar people. They can mobilise an army of 200,000 to 300,000 soldiers.<sup>5</sup> Though the Hungarians are vigorous and strong, they cannot equal forces of that size. And if Hungary is defeated or joins up with the Turks, neither Germany nor Italy will be safe, and the Rhine will not protect the French.

---

<sup>1</sup> Albrecht II, King of the Romans, King of Hungary and Bohemia, 1438-1439. Piccolomini himself had attended the event of Albrecht's acceptance of his election to the Roman Empire, see the oration "*Quid est*" [3], written by him for the bishop of Novara, representing the Duke of Milan

<sup>2</sup> Varna 1444 and Amselfeld 1448

<sup>3</sup> At the battle of Varna, 1444, where a Polish/Hungarian army was commanded by Wladislaw, King of Poland and Hungary

<sup>4</sup> Oration "*Audivi*" [1] (1436), sect. 21: *Magnum est imperium Turcorum*

<sup>5</sup> Francesco Filelfo's crusade letter to Charles VII of France in Filelfo: *Collected*, I, pp. 437: *Nam quod audiamus ducenta et trecenta millia hominum complere Turcorum exercitus*

[20] [EV] **At nonnulli, quia suis diebus non videre<sup>1</sup> similia, nec<sup>2</sup> fieri posse confidunt. Nos saepe Tartaros<sup>3</sup> protrita Hungaria Germaniae fines ingressos ad Rhenum usque<sup>4</sup> debacchatos novimus. Hungari, priusquam Christum colerent, saepe Austriam, Bavariam, Sueviam<sup>5</sup>, Franconiam, Saxoniam percurrerunt<sup>6</sup>. Attila, rex Hunnorum, ab Hungaria, quae tunc Pannonia dicebatur, digressus, quantas Italiae, quantas Germaniae, quantas remotiori Galliae atque Hispaniae turbas intulerit, non ignoramus. Quid {53v} Gothos, quid Vandalos, quid Gepidas, quid Herulos, quid Longobardos, quid Burgundiones referam<sup>7</sup>? Omnes hi populi per Hungariam ab ulteriori Scythia venientes, hanc nostram Christianitatem miris affligerunt modis.**

[20] [FV] **At nonnulli, quia suis diebus non videre similia, nec fieri posse confidunt. Nos saepe Tartaros protrita Hungaria Germaniae fines ingressos ad Rhenum usque novimus pervagatos. Hungari saepe Austriam, Baioariam, Sueviam, Franconiam, Saxoniam percurrerunt. Attila, rex Hunnorum, ab Hungaria digressus, quantas Italiae, quantas Germaniae, quantas remotiori Galliae atque Hispaniae turbas intulerit, non ignoramus. Quid Gothos, quid Vandalos<sup>8</sup>, quid Gepidas, quid Longobardos<sup>9</sup> referam? Omnes hi populi per Hungariam venientes nunc Germaniam, nunc Italiam, nunc ceteras nationes horrendis affligerunt modis.**

---

<sup>1</sup> viderunt P2

<sup>2</sup> neque P2\*

<sup>3</sup> Barbarorum incursiones *in marg.* D

<sup>4</sup> usque ad P2

<sup>5</sup> Suetiam P2

<sup>6</sup> preterierunt P2

<sup>7</sup> referatur KO

<sup>8</sup> Vandales C, D, F

<sup>9</sup> Longobarbos C

[20] [FV] But since they have not seen anything like it in our own time, many do not think that this is possible. We do know, however, that often the Tartars overran Hungary, entered Germany, and pushed forward as far as the Rhine. And often the Hungarians themselves raided Austria, Bavaria, Swabia, Francony, and Saxony. We know how large forces King Attila<sup>1</sup> of the Huns brought to Italy, Germany, and the *farther regions of France*<sup>2</sup> and Spain when he came out of Hungary. And what about the Goths, the Vandals, the Gepids, and the Longobards? All these peoples, passing through Hungary, inflicted terrible sufferings upon Germany, Italy, and the other nations.

---

<sup>1</sup> Attila (-453): ruler of the Huns from 434 until his death 453. Leader of the Hunnic Empire, which stretched from the Ural River to the Rhine River and from the Danube River to the Baltic Sea

<sup>2</sup> Flavio Biondo: *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades*, II, 3 [Im.74]: *nisi forte vos Galli remotiores haec non sentitis* (from the oration “*Existimatis*

*forte*”, put into the mouth of Pope Urban II by Biondo)

[21] [EV] Expectabimus igitur et nunc venire Turcos atque accersitis Tartaris nobilem atque<sup>1</sup> potentem Hungariam sui juris efficere, ac deinde reliquam Christianitatem locustarum more corrodere? Pugnandum est vobis omnino, principes, si liberi, si Christiani vitam ducere cupitis. Existimatote nunc, an salvis et integris sociis, an fractis atque amissis<sup>2</sup> id<sup>3</sup> agere magis expediat. Romani, quos fama<sup>4</sup> sapientissimos fuisse<sup>5</sup> praedicat, sociorum tutelam semper suam salutem esse ducebant<sup>6</sup>, atque<sup>7</sup> foris quam domi pugnare malebant. Nam foris, si qua fuerit accepta calamitas, {54r} emendari potest; quae domi excipiuntur clades, exitiales habentur. Hinc<sup>8</sup> Hannibal, maximus ille Poenorum imperator, cum regi Syriae Antiocho adversus Romanos bellum suaderet, non in Asia sive in Graecia, sed in Italia pugnandum esse dicebat.

[21] [FV] Expectabimus igitur et nunc venire Turcos atque accersitis Tartaris Hungariam sui juris efficere, ac deinde Christianitatem reliquam locustarum more corrodere? Pugnandum est omnino, principes, si Christiani, si liberi vitam ducere cupitis. Existimatote nunc, an salvis atque integris {102r} sociis, an fractis atque amissis id agere magis expediat. Romani, quos fama sapientissimos fuisse praedicat, sociorum tutelam suam esse salutem ducebant, ac foris quam domi pugnare malebant. Nam foris, si qua fuerit accepta calamitas, emendari potest; quae domi suscipiuntur clades, exitiales habentur. Atque hinc Hannibal, maximus ille Poenorum imperator, regi Syriae Antiocho suadebat ne in Asia neve in Graecia, sed in Italia bellum Romanis inferret.

---

<sup>1</sup> et P2\*

<sup>2</sup> admissis P2; dimissis KO

<sup>3</sup> vel P2

<sup>4</sup> omit. P1

<sup>5</sup> fama sapientissimos fuisse :

sapientissimos fuisse fama P2\*

<sup>6</sup> dicebant P2

<sup>7</sup> ac P2

<sup>8</sup> nunc P1\*

[21] [FV] So, shall we now just wait for the Turks to summon the Tartars and then come upon us as a swarm of locusts<sup>1</sup> to overwhelm Hungary and afterwards subdue the rest of Christendom? [No!] We must fight, Princes, if you want to live as Christians and as free men. Consider now if it will be more useful to do so with your allies safe and unbroken rather than destroyed and lost. The Romans, reputed to have been rather wise, regarded the protection of their allies as vital to their own security,<sup>2</sup> and they preferred to fight abroad rather than at home. For if something goes wrong abroad, it can be set right, whereas defeats suffered at home are disastrous. This is why the great Carthaginian general, Hannibal,<sup>3</sup> persuaded King Antiochus<sup>4</sup> of Syria to fight the Romans not in Asia Minor nor in Greece, but in Italy.<sup>5 6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> *Judges*, 6, 5

<sup>2</sup> *Cicero: Pro lege Manilia*, 2, 6

<sup>3</sup> *Hannibal Barca* (247-ca. 183 BCE): Punic Carthaginian military commander

<sup>4</sup> *Antiochus III the Great* (ca. 241-187 BCE): from 222 BC to his death. 6th ruler of the Seleucid

*Empire* (the region of Syria and large parts of the rest of western Asia)

<sup>5</sup> *Livius*, 34, 60

<sup>6</sup> *Flavio Biondo had touched upon this theme in his crusade memorandum of 1 August 1453 to King*

Alfonso V, quoting Scipio and Themistocles (Flavio Biondo: *Scritti*, p. 43)

[22] [EV] Et vos<sup>1</sup> ergo, Theutones, si – quemadmodum spero – sapientes eritis, majores vestros imitiabimini, qui remota semper a domo bella gerere ac vicinorum fines non minus quam suos tueri consueverunt. Quod si vos, Germani, hoc tempore Hungaros neglexeritis, non erit denique, cur vos ex Gallis auxilia praestolemini<sup>2</sup>, nec rursus illi apud Hispanos opem invenient. Atque ita fiet, ut cum singulis semper gentibus pugnaturi<sup>3</sup> hostes facile, quod cupiunt, orbis imperium assequantur<sup>4</sup>. Quod si acceptis armis et Hungaris, et Rascianis, {54v} et aliis Christianis, qui vicini sunt Turcorum potentiae<sup>5</sup>, opem tuleritis, non solum vicinos vestros tuebimini, sed vos ipsos, uxores ac liberos vestros ex maximo periculo liberabitis. Atque haec<sup>6</sup> est – ut mihi videtur – maxima utilitas belli gerendi. Cum exploratum sit ad vos<sup>7</sup> diem Turcos properare, prius occurrere<sup>8</sup> quam vestros fines<sup>9</sup> ingrediantur<sup>10</sup>, et auxilia vicinis afferte<sup>11</sup>. Nam

**tunc tua res agitur, ut ille ait<sup>12</sup>, paries cum<sup>13</sup> proximus ardet.**

[22] [FV] Vos quoque, Theutones, majores vestros imitiabimini, qui remota semper a domo bella gerere nec minus sociorum quam suos agros tueri studuerunt. Quod si vos Hungaros neglexeritis, non erit denique, cur vos Gallorum auxilia praestolemini, nec rursus illi apud Hispanos opem invenient. Atque ita fiet, ut semper cum singulis gentibus pugnaturi hostes facile, quod quaerunt, orbis imperium assequantur. At si receptis armis et Hungaris et Albanis et Rascianis et ceteris, qui vicini sunt potentiae Turcorum, nostrae fidei participes, auxilium tuleritis, non solum socios tuebimini, sed vos ipsos, uxores ac liberos vestros ex maximo periculo liberabitis. Haec est, principes, ut mihi videtur, non parva utilitas belli gerendi. Cum Turcos in dies magis ad vos properare sit exploratum, prius occurrere quam fines vestros ingrediantur, et opem ferre vicinis. Certum est ille Horatii:

***Tunc tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet.***

<sup>1</sup> nos WY

<sup>2</sup> praestolamini KO

<sup>3</sup> cum singulis semper pugnaturi :

pugnaturi semper cum singulis

P2

<sup>4</sup> assequantur P2, KO

<sup>5</sup> Turcorum potentiae : potentie

Turcorum P2

<sup>6</sup> hoc P1

<sup>7</sup> nos P2, KO

<sup>8</sup> occurrere P2

<sup>9</sup> fratres P2\*

<sup>10</sup> ingrediuntur KO

<sup>11</sup> afferre P2

<sup>12</sup> ut KO

<sup>13</sup> dum P2

[22] [FV] You, Germans, should imitate your forefathers, who always endeavoured to fight their wars far from home and to protect the territories of their allies as much as their own. And if you do not help the Hungarians, there is no reason why you should, in your turn, expect help from the French or why the French, in their turn, should get help from the Spaniards.<sup>1</sup> Thus, it will happen that our enemies always fight each people separately and thus easily obtain the lordship over the whole world they desire. But if you take up arms in defence of the Hungarians, the Albanians, the Serbians, and the other peoples who are neighbours of the powerful Turks and who share our faith,<sup>2</sup> then you will protect not only your allies but also yourselves, your wives, and your children<sup>3</sup> from this terrible danger.

This, Princes, is the great benefit of the war, as I see it. When we hear that the Turks are marching towards you with all speed, you should go to oppose them before they enter your region, and help your neighbours. The words of Horace<sup>4</sup> certainly apply here:

*Tis your own safety that is at stake, when your neighbour's wall is in flames*<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> A Renaissance domino theory!

<sup>2</sup> Galatians, 6, 10: *domesticos fidei*

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Flavio Biondo: *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades*, II, 3 [Im.75]: *Matronas a*

*complexu vestro, vestras virgines ab earum sinu, pueros et adolentes vestros in servitute vobiscum rapti dolentes maestique videbitis* (from the oration "Existi-

*matris forte*", put into the mouth of Pope Urban II by Biondo)

<sup>4</sup> Horatius Flaccus, Quintus (65-8 BC): Roman poet

<sup>5</sup> Horatius: *Epistulae*, 1.18.84. Horace has "nam" instead of "tunc"



[23] [EV] **Quod si certissimi essetis, numquam illos ad vos esse venturos, pro debito tamen baptismi vestri<sup>1</sup>, quo estis initiati, pro maximis beneficiis, quibus vos divina pietas<sup>2</sup> cumulavit, adversus hos evangelii corruptores et Christi perfidos inimicos, ejusque<sup>3</sup> crucis osores<sup>4</sup> bellum gerere deberetis. Equidem, prastantissimi principes, cum omnibus virtutibus affecti sitis, nihil tamen arbitror vos magis velle quam gratos esse atque<sup>5</sup> {55r} videri. Haec est enim una virtus, non solum maxima, sed mater omnium reliquarum virtutum<sup>6</sup>. Quid est enim pietas, nisi voluntas grata erga parentes? Qui sunt, qui libenti animo pro patria pugnant, nisi qui patriae beneficia meminerunt<sup>7</sup>? Qui sunt, qui fidem erga principes inviolatam custodiunt, nisi qui eos in se beneficos recordantur? Qui sunt, qui praeceptores honorant, nisi qui se doctrinam ab his accepisse non sunt obliti? Qui sunt, qui amicos omni<sup>8</sup> studio prosequuntur, nisi qui fructum amicitiae tenaci memoria tenent?**

[23] [FV] **Quod si certi essetis, numquam illos ad vos esse venturos, tamen pro debito baptismi vestri, quo estis initiati, pro maximis beneficiis, quibus divina pietas vos cumulavit, ad vindicandas injurias Dei vestri bellum gerere deberetis. Equidem, praestantissimi proceres, cum omnibus virtutibus sitis affecti, nihil tamen arbitror vos magis velle quam gratos esse atque videri. Haec est enim una virtus non solum maxima, sed etiam mater virtutum omnium reliquarum. Quid est enim pietas, nisi voluntas grata in parentes? Qui sunt, qui pro patria libenti animo pugnant, nisi qui patriae beneficia meminerunt? Qui sunt, qui fidem erga principes inviolatam custodiunt, nisi qui eos in se fuisse beneficos non obliviscuntur? Qui sunt, qui praeceptores honorant, amicis inserviunt, nisi qui fructuum praeceptorum memoriam indelibilem gerunt?**

---

<sup>1</sup> nostri P1\*

<sup>2</sup> vos divina pietas : pietas divina vos P2

<sup>3</sup> omit. P2

<sup>4</sup> derisores KO

<sup>5</sup> gratos esse atque : esse gratos et P2

<sup>6</sup> reliquarum virtutum : virtutum reliquarum P2, KO

<sup>7</sup> meruerunt P1, KO

<sup>8</sup> omnium P1

[23] [FV] Even if you could be certain that the Turks would never come to you, you still ought to fight for the sake of the baptism through which you were initiated, for the great gifts that Pious God has granted you in abundance, and to avenge the insults against your God. Indeed, Eminent Nobles, though you are endowed with all virtues, I believe that the thing you want most is to be and to be seen as grateful. For the virtue of gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues; it is also the mother of all the others. What, indeed, is piety other than a grateful disposition towards parents? Who will fight willingly for their country other than those who remember the benefits received from it? Who will keep their oaths to their princes unfailingly other than those who remember the favours received? Who will honour their teachers and help their friends other than those who have a lasting memory of the benefits received from them?

[24] [EV] **Quod si erga patriam, erga parentes<sup>1</sup>, principes, praeceptores, amicos grati esse debemus, quanto magis erga Deum nostrum? Et cuius, obsecro, pinguiora<sup>2</sup>, quam Dei nostri beneficia sumus experti? Ille, cum nihil essemus, nos in esse produxit; neque lapides, aut arbores, aut equos, {55v} sed homines rationis participes nos creavit. Nobis ingenium, sermonem, virtutem, vires corporis atque animi dedit. Et cum primi parentis culpa inferni mancipia<sup>3 4</sup> facti essemus, ut nos redimeret, descendit de caelo, exinanivit semetipsum<sup>5</sup>, formam servi accepit, hominem induit<sup>6</sup>, factus<sup>7</sup> oboediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis, inquit Apostolus.**

[24] [FV] **Quod si erga patriam, erga parentes, erga principes, praeceptores, amicos grati esse debemus, quanto magis erga Deum nostrum? Et cuius, obsecro, pinguiora in nos quam Dei nostri beneficia sumus experti? Ipse<sup>8</sup>, cum nihil essemus, neque lapidem, neque plantam, neque brutum animal, sed homines rationis participes nos<sup>9</sup> creavit. Nobis ingenium, sermonem, virtutem, vires praebuit. Et cum primi parentis culpa inferni mancipia {102v} facti essemus, *ut nos redimeret, de caelo descendit, exinanivit semetipsum, formam servi accepit, hominem induit, factus oboediens usque ad mortem, mortem autem crucis, inquit Apostolus.***

---

<sup>1</sup> parentes *omit.* P1

<sup>2</sup> *majora pignora* P2\*; *pignora*

KO

<sup>3</sup> *mancipium* P1, KO

<sup>4</sup> *inferni mancipia* : *mancipia inferni* P2\*

<sup>5</sup> *seipsum* P1, KO

<sup>6</sup> *et add.* P2\*

<sup>7</sup> *est add.* P2

<sup>8</sup> *Quales nos Deus creavit in marg.* D

<sup>9</sup> *nos corr. ex non* A, C; *non* B

[24] [FV] And if we should be grateful towards our country, parents, princes, teachers, and friends, then how much more should we not be grateful towards our God? For who has bestowed greater benefits on us than our God? When we were still nothing, He created us not as stones, or plants, or dumb animals but as men partaking in reason. He gave us intelligence, speech, virtue, and strength. And when we had become the servants of Hell through the fault of our first parent,<sup>1</sup> *he came down from Heaven<sup>2</sup> that he might redeem us.<sup>3</sup> But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man. He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross,<sup>4</sup>* the Apostle says.

---

<sup>1</sup> Genesis, 1

<sup>2</sup> Nicene Creed: *descendit de caelo*

<sup>3</sup> Galatians 4, 5

<sup>4</sup> Philippians, 2, 7-8

[25] [EV] Sub ipsa autem passione et cruce, priusquam ad crudelitatem necis et effusionem sanguinis perveniretur<sup>1</sup>, quae convitiarum probra, quae contumeliarum ludibria tulit? Sputamina insultantium excepit<sup>2</sup>, qui sputo suo caeci oculos aperuerat. Flagellatus est, qui potestatem flagellandi daemones habet. Spinis coronatus est, qui sanctos suos floribus coronat aeternis. Palmis in faciem caesus est, qui veras palmas mundum {56r} vincentibus<sup>3</sup> tribuit. Spoliatus est terrena et caduca veste, qui caelesti atque immarcessibili candidas animas vestit. Cibatus est felle, qui se cibum homini<sup>4</sup> praebuit. Potatus est aceto, qui populo suo nectaria pocula repromittit. Agnus ille innocens<sup>5</sup>, immo ipsa innocentia, ipsa justitia inter facinorosos computata est. Pependit inter latrones Deus noster. **Viderunt faciem ejus, et non erat species, neque decor: a vertice capitis usque ad plantam pedis non erat in eo sanitas. Sed passus est, ut nos redderet impassibiles. Mortuus est, ut nos redderet<sup>6</sup> immortales. Passus est<sup>7</sup>, quia ipse voluit. Iniquitates nostras ipse portavit. O bonitatem! O clementiam magni Dei! O<sup>8</sup> miserationes divinae pietatis incredibiles! Quam maxima et inextimabilia sunt<sup>9</sup> Christiano populo praestita beneficia!**

[25] [FV] Sub ipsa autem passione et cruce, priusquam ad crudelitatem necis et effusionem sanguinis veniretur, quae convitiarum probra, quae contumeliarum ludibria tulit? Sputamina insultantium excepit, qui sputo suo caeci oculos aperuerat. Flagellatus est, qui potestatem flagellandi daemones habet. Spinis coronatus est, qui sanctos suos floribus coronat aeternis. Palmis in faciem caesus est, qui veras palmas mundum vincentibus tribuit. Spoliatus est terrena et caduca veste, qui pios omnes caelesti et immarcescibili vestit. Cibatus est felle, qui se cibum homini dedit. Potatus est aceto, qui populo suo nectarea pocula repromittit. Innocens ille agnus, immo ipsa innocentia, ipsa justitia inter facinorosos deputata est. *Viderunt faciem ejus, et non erat species, neque decor: a vertice usque ad plantam pedis non erat in eo sanitas. Sed passus est, ut redderet nos impassibiles. Passus est, quia ipse voluit. Iniquitates nostras ipse portavit. O bonitatem! O clementiam magni Dei! O miserationes divinae pietatis incredibiles! Quam maxima sunt haec et inextimabilia populo Christiano concessa beneficia!*

---

<sup>1</sup> perveniret P2

<sup>2</sup> accepit P2

<sup>3</sup> mundum vincentibus : munde  
viventibus P2

<sup>4</sup> hominum P1, P2

<sup>5</sup> agnus ille innocens : innocens

ille agnus P2

<sup>6</sup> impassibiles mortuus ...

redderet *omit.* P1

<sup>7</sup> *omit.* P1, KO

<sup>8</sup> *omit.* KO

<sup>9</sup> sint KO

[25] [FV] During his passion and crucifixion, before the cruel killing and shedding of blood, what abuse and mockery did he not suffer from the attendants? He, who had opened the eyes of the blind man with his own spit, was spit upon himself.<sup>1</sup> He was scourged, who has the power of scourging demons. He was crowned with thorns, who crowns his saints with eternal flowers. He was beaten with palms of hand, who gives true palms to those who conquer the world. He was robbed of his earthly and frail clothing, who dresses all the pious with heavenly and imperishable clothing. He ate gall, who gave himself as food to man. He drank vinegar, who promises cups of nectar to his people.<sup>2</sup> He, the innocent lamb, innocence and justice itself, was placed among thieves.<sup>3</sup> *They saw his face, and there was no beauty in him, nor comeliness.*<sup>4</sup> *From the sole of the foot unto the top of the head, there was no soundness therein.*<sup>5</sup> But he suffered in order to free us from suffering. He suffered because he himself chose to. He *bore our iniquities.*<sup>6</sup> Oh, the goodness of our Great God! Oh, the clemency! Oh, the incredible mercy of Pious God! How great and immeasurable are his favours towards the Christian people.

---

<sup>1</sup> Matthew, 26, 67 *et al.*

<sup>2</sup> Matthew, 27, 34

<sup>3</sup> Luke 23, 33

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah, 53, 2

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah, 1, 6

<sup>6</sup> Isaiah, 53, 11

[26] [EV] Sed communia<sup>1</sup> sunt haec in omnes fideles {56v} dona Dei. Vos autem, o<sup>2</sup> Germani, peculiarior quaedam honoris ratio reddit obnoxiores. Nam qui vobis imperium dedit, is vos<sup>3</sup> omnibus populis, gentibus<sup>4</sup>, nationibus praetulit. Haec est enim prima in saeculo dignitas, cui omnes principes, omnes reges cedunt, quam salvator dominus<sup>5</sup> secundum carnem<sup>6</sup> nascendo, peregrinando, moriendo dignam censuit quovis honore. Quae in prophetis promissa, in evangelio comprobata, in apostolorum scriptis<sup>7</sup> magnifice commendata existit. Haec est illa excellentissima dignitas, qua stante non est, cur Antichristi formidemus adventum, quemadmodum et Tertullianus, et Cyprianus, et Augustinus, et multi veterum ex verbis doctoris gentium Pauli colligere videntur. Hinc<sup>8</sup> antiqui nostri spiritu sancto pleni, quamvis adhuc idola colerent {57r} imperatores prosequerenturque<sup>9</sup> Christianos, vitam tamen illis<sup>10</sup> prolixam, imperium securum, domum tutam, exercitum fortem, senatum fidelem, populum probum, orbem quietum<sup>11</sup> optabant.

[26] [FV] Sed communia haec inter omnes fideles dona Dei. Vos autem Germanos praeter haec peculiarior quaedam honoris ratio reddit obnoxiores. Nam qui vobis imperium dedit, is vos omnibus populis, gentibus, nationibus praetulit. Est enim haec dignitas prima in saeculo, cui omnes principes, reges cedunt, quam salvator dominus secundum carnem nascendo, peregrinando, moriendo dignam censuit quovis honore. Quae in prophetis promissa, in evangelio comprobata, in apostolorum scriptis magnifice commendata existit. Haec est illa excellentissima dignitas, qua stante non est, cur Antichristi formidemus adventum, quemadmodum Tertullianus, Cyprianus, Augustinus, et multi veterum ex verbis Pauli, doctoris gentium, colligere videntur. Hinc nostri veteres spiritu sancto pleni, quamvis adhuc imperatores idola colerent, vitam<sup>12</sup> tamen illis prolixam, imperium securum, domum tutam, exercitum fortem, senatum fidelem, populum probum, orbem quietum optabant.

---

<sup>1</sup> coram KO

<sup>2</sup> omit. P1

<sup>3</sup> vos corr. ex vobis P1\*

<sup>4</sup> gentilibus P1\*

<sup>5</sup> omit. KO

<sup>6</sup> secundum carnem : similiter  
carnem assumendo P2

<sup>7</sup> scripturis P2

<sup>8</sup> huic P1

<sup>9</sup> persequerenturque P2

<sup>10</sup> omit. P2

<sup>11</sup> quietem KO

<sup>12</sup> Oratio pro imperatoribus in  
marg. D

[26] [FV] These gifts of God are shared by all the faithful. But you, oh, Germans, have a greater obligation towards God because He has shown you a special honour. For in giving you the empire, He raised you above all the other peoples and nations. This dignity is the first in the world, and all princes and kings bow to it. Even Our Saviour, when he was born, travelled around, and died according to the flesh, considered it worthy of every honour.<sup>1</sup> It was promised by the prophets, approved in the Gospel, and magnificently recommended in the writings of the apostles. This is the supreme dignity, and so long as it stands firm, we need not fear the coming of Antichrist, as Tertullian,<sup>2</sup> Cyprian,<sup>3</sup> Augustine, and many of the ancients seem to gather from the words of Paul, Doctor of the Gentiles. Therefore, our forefathers, filled with the Holy Spirit, wished *a long life, a secure empire, a safe home, a strong army, a loyal senate, an honest people, and a quiet world*<sup>4</sup> to the emperors, even when these still worshipped pagan idols.

---

<sup>1</sup> E.g., Matthew, 22, 21

<sup>2</sup> Tertullianus, Quintus Septimius Florens (ca. 160-ca. 225): early Christian author from Carthage

<sup>3</sup> Cyprianus, Thascius Caecilius (ca. 200-258): Bishop of Carthage

and an important early Christian writer

<sup>4</sup> Tertullianus: *Liber apologeticus*, 30. *Denique, inquit ille, sine monitore pro omnibus semper<sup>A</sup> imperatoribus Deum precantes sumus.*

*Vitam illis prolixam, imperium securum, domum tutam, exercitus fortes, senatum fidelem, populum probum orbem quietum optamus*



[27] [EV] **Vos igitur magni, vos incliti, o Germani, quibus tanta dignitas credita<sup>1</sup> est, curare prae ceteris debetis, ne vobis imperantibus Christianae religionis majestas intereat. Sed quid<sup>2</sup> vos ad haec Deo<sup>3</sup> reponditis<sup>4</sup>? Immo quid nos omnes Christiani pro tantis beneficiis agimus? Ubi<sup>5</sup> tantorum bonorum<sup>6</sup> memoria est, principes? Ubi gratitudo vestra<sup>7</sup> est, viri potentes? Terram illam<sup>8</sup> sacratissimam<sup>9</sup>, in qua visus est Deus noster et annis supra triginta homo cum hominibus conversatus, Agareni occupant. Officinas nostrae salutis Mahumetus obtinet, sacrosanctum<sup>10</sup> domini sepulchrum lectumque {57v} illum veneratu dignissimum, in quo propter nos vita nostra obdormivit in domino, Saracenorum impuratae manus obtrectant; loca illa sancta, loca benedicta, loca pretiosa, et agni immaculati purpurata cruore, dum nos silemus, hostes fidei nostrae conculcant<sup>11</sup>.**

[27] [FV] **Vos ergo, magni ac sublimes Germani, quibus tanta dignitas credita est, curare prae ceteris oportet, ne vobis imperantibus Christianae religionis majestas intereat. Sed quid vos aut nos omnes Christiani pro tantis beneficiis agimus? Ubi tantorum donorum memoria est, principes? Ubi gratitudo nostra, viri potentes? Terram illam sacratissimam, in qua visus est Deus noster, et annis supra triginta homo cum hominibus conversatus, occupant {103r} Saraceni. Officinam nostrae salutis Mahumetus obtinet, sacrosanctum sepulchrum, lectum illum veneratu dignissimum, in quo propter nos vita nostra obdormivit in domino, loca illa sancta et benedicta, agni immaculati purpurata cruore, immundissimae manus Agarenorum tractant, sceleratissimi calcant pede.**

---

<sup>1</sup> tradita P2

<sup>2</sup> qui P1

<sup>3</sup> duo P2\*

<sup>4</sup> respondetis P2

<sup>5</sup> ut P1\*

<sup>6</sup> donorum P2

<sup>7</sup> omit. P1, KO; nostra P2\*

<sup>8</sup> omit. KO

<sup>9</sup> sanctissimam P1

<sup>10</sup> sanctissimum P2

<sup>11</sup> calcant P2\*

[27] [FV] Thus, you, Great and Exalted Germans, to whom so grand a dignity has been entrusted, should above all take care that the majesty of the Christian religion does not perish while you have charge of the empire. What should you and all of us Christians do in return for such great favours? Where is our memory of these great gifts, Princes? Where is our gratitude, Mighty Men? *The Holy Land, where our God appeared and lived as a man among men for more than 30 years,*<sup>1</sup> is occupied by the Saracens. *The workshop of our salvation* is held by Muhammad. The Holy Sepulchre, that glorious *bed where He who is our life slept in the Lord, the holy and blessed places, made purple by the blood of the immaculate lamb,*<sup>2</sup> are held by the filthy hands of the Agarenes and trodden underfoot by villains.<sup>3 4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Otto von Freising: *Gesta Fride-rici*, I, 44 (Schmidt, p. 212). From a letter of Bernard of Clairvaux, cf. above. Baruch, 3, 38

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem. Cf. 1. Peter, 1, 19

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Flavio Biondo: *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades*, II, 3 [Im.75]: *Si nunc ea*

*inspiciatis consideratisque sola, quae ante oculos sunt, si irrituro brevi Turco et Sarraceno obsistere non pergetis, qui sacrum domini sepulchrum, sacram Jesu Christi pedibus calcatam terram a spurcissima gente tot annos inquinari neglexistis* (from the oration “*Exi-*

*stimatis forte*”, put into the mouth of Pope Urban II by Biondo)

<sup>4</sup> The passage “*Terram illam ... pede*” is a heavily revised quote from Piccolomini’s letter to Cardinal Nikolaus of Kues of 21 July 1453 (EPI, 6: 341)

[28] [EV] Et quid ad haec aitis, principes? Cur haec<sup>1</sup> accidisse putatis? *Abbreuiatamne manum domini creditis aut impotentem factum, qui est omnipotens? Numquid non potest mittere plusquam XII legiones angelorum, qui Saracenos, Turcos, et<sup>2</sup> Tartaros se blasphemantes exterminent? Aut certe tantum verbo dicere, et fiat<sup>3</sup>, quod voluerit? An qui ferocientem<sup>4</sup> Sennacherib angelo dimicante contrivit, qui furibundum Holofernem in manum<sup>5</sup> mulieris viduae dedit, qui percussit reges magnos et {58r} occidit reges fortes, qui clausit Aegyptiis mare, qui Sodomitis sulphur pluit<sup>6</sup> et ignem, qui ventis imperat et mari, qui fecit caelos in<sup>7</sup> intellectu<sup>8</sup>, Mahumeti superbiam frenare<sup>9</sup> non<sup>10</sup> poterit? Omnino<sup>11</sup> subest ei, cum voluerit, posse. Quid igitur opinamini? Quid creditis, principes? *Temptat vos dominus Deus noster, experiri vult, an se diligatis, an virtute praestetis, an religiosi, an grati sitis<sup>12</sup>. Quaerit<sup>13</sup> inter vos<sup>14</sup>, si sit aliquis, qui sapiat, et intelligat<sup>15</sup>, ac requirat haec et indoleat vicem ejus.**

[28] [FV] Et quid ad haec aitis, principes? Cur haec accidisse putatis? *Abbreuiatamne manum domini creditis aut impotentem factum, qui omnia potest? Numquid non potest mittere plusquam duodecim legiones angelorum, qui Saracenos et Turcos se blasphemantes exterminent? Aut certe tantum verbo dicere, et fiet, quod voluerit? An qui mare clausit Aegyptiis, qui Sodomitis<sup>16</sup> sulphur pluit et ignem, qui ferocientem Sennacherib<sup>17</sup> angelo dimicante contrivit, qui furentem Holofernem in manum viduae dedit, qui *percussit reges magnos et occidit reges fortes, qui ventis imperat et mari, qui fecit caelos in intellectu*, Mahumeti superbiam frenare non<sup>18</sup> poterit? *Omnino subest ei, cum voluerit, posse. Quid igitur opinamur? Quid credimus? Temptat<sup>19</sup> vos Deus vester, experiri vult, an se diligatis, an virtute praestetis, an religiosi, an grati sitis. Quaerit inter nos<sup>20</sup>, si sit aliquis, qui sapiat, qui intelligat, ac requirat haec, et doleat vicem ejus.**

---

<sup>1</sup> hoc P1

<sup>2</sup> aut P2

<sup>3</sup> fiet P2

<sup>4</sup> ferocem P2; ferocitatem KO

<sup>5</sup> manu P2

<sup>6</sup> qui clausit ... sulphur *omit.* P2\*

<sup>7</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>8</sup> et *add.* P2

<sup>9</sup> refrenare P2

<sup>10</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>11</sup> omne KO

<sup>12</sup> sicut P2

<sup>13</sup> convenit P2; quid KO

<sup>14</sup> an *add.* P1; nos KO

<sup>15</sup> et intelligat *omit.* P2

<sup>16</sup> Sogdomitis B; Sobdomitis D

<sup>17</sup> Sennecharib A, C, D;

Sennacharib B

<sup>18</sup> *omit.* B

<sup>19</sup> tentat C

<sup>20</sup> vos *corr.* ex nos D

[28] [FV] What do you say to this, Princes? Why do you think it happened? Do you believe that *the arm of the almighty Lord has been shortened or lost its power*.<sup>1</sup> *Can he not send more than 12 legions of angels*<sup>2</sup> to destroy the Saracens and the Turks blaspheming against him? Or *just say a word*, and his will shall be done? He closed the sea to the Egyptians;<sup>3</sup> He rained sulphur and fire on the Sodomites; He crushed savage Sennacherib through a fighting angel;<sup>4</sup> He gave ferocious Holofernes into the hand of a widow;<sup>5</sup> He *smote great kings*<sup>6</sup> and *slew mighty kings*;<sup>7</sup> *He commands the winds and the sea*<sup>8</sup>; He *made the heavens in understanding*.<sup>9</sup> Then, should He not be able to curb the arrogance of Mehmed, *He who is able to do anything he wants to*.<sup>10</sup> So what shall we think? What shall we believe? *The Lord your God trieth you*. He wants to see *whether you love him*,<sup>11</sup> excel in virtue, revere religion, and are grateful. He is looking to see *if there is anyone* among us who is wise and *understanding and seeks to do this, and who is sorrowful on his behalf*.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Otto von Freising: *Gesta Friderici*, I, 44 (Schmidt, 214): *Numquid abbreviata est manus Domini au impotens facta*. From a letter of Bernard of Clairvaux, cf. above. Cf. Isaiah, 50, 2

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Cf. Matthew, 26, 53

<sup>3</sup> Exodus, 14, 22-31

<sup>4</sup> 4. Kings, 19, 35 ff

<sup>5</sup> Judith, 10-13; 16, 7

<sup>6</sup> Psalms, 135, 17

<sup>7</sup> Psalms, 134, 10

<sup>8</sup> Matthew, 8, 26

<sup>9</sup> Psalms, 135, 5: *qui fecit caelos in sapientia* (Vulgata)

<sup>10</sup> Wisdom, 12, 18. Otto von Freising: *Gesta Friderici*, I, 44 (Schmidt, 214). From a letter of Bernard of Clairvaux, cf. above

<sup>11</sup> Deuteronomy, 13, 3 - also in Bernhard

<sup>12</sup> Otto von Freising: *Gesta Friderici*, I, 44 (Schmidt, p. 214): *Temptat vos dominus Deus vester. Respicit super filios hominum, ut, si forte sit qui intelligat et requirat et doleat vicem ejus*. From a letter of Bernard of Clairvaux, cf. above

[29] [EV] **Quid ergo moramini? Quid statis? An non est hic maximus bellandi fructus, maxima utilitas vestra? Si proelium adversus inimicos crucis committentes<sup>1</sup> vos accepti<sup>2</sup> beneficii memores ostenditis, Deo<sup>3</sup> nostro<sup>4</sup> placetis, animas vestras lucrifacitis, et habitaturi<sup>5</sup> cum angelis, triumphaturi {58v} cum sanctis martyribus<sup>6</sup>, regnaturi cum Christo caelum acquiritis<sup>7</sup>? Omitto hic, principes, id emolumentum<sup>8</sup>, quod plerique omnes milites nostri temporis ex bello quaerunt: aurum et argentum, theuromata<sup>9</sup>, pictas tabulas, equos, vestes, servos<sup>10</sup>, ancillas. Nam quamvis multa hujusmodi<sup>11</sup> haec expeditio repromittit, nolo tamen vos, Christi milites, haec ambire, nolo vos rapinas quaerere, nolo vos spoliis gaudere. Pusilli est animi lucris inhiare terrenis. Mens generosa et alta caelestes aspirat in<sup>12</sup> thesauros.**

[29] [FV] **Quid moramini ergo, principes? An non erit haec maxima vestra utilitas, si bellum gerentes adversus Christi blasphemos vos accepti beneficii memores ostenditis, Deo vestro placetis, animas vestras lucrifacitis, et triumphaturi cum sanctis, habitaturi cum angelis, regnaturi cum Christo caelum acquiritis. Omitto hic, principes, id emolumentum<sup>13</sup>, quod plerique omnes milites hoc tempore ex bello quaerunt: aurum, argentum, theuromata, pictas tabulas, vestes, equos, servos, ancillas. Nam quamvis haec expeditio multa hujusmodi repromittit, nolo tamen vos, Christi milites, haec ambire, nolo vos rapinas quaerere, nolo vos spoliis gaudere. Pusilli animi est lucris inhiare terrenis. Mens celsa<sup>14</sup> et generosa caelestes aspirat in thesauros.**

---

<sup>1</sup> committetis KO

<sup>2</sup> *omit.* KO

<sup>3</sup> enim *add.* P1

<sup>4</sup> vestro P2\*

<sup>5</sup> habituri P1\*

<sup>6</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>7</sup> acquiritis P1

<sup>8</sup> emolumentum P2; emolimenti KO

<sup>9</sup> theuromata P1, P2; teuromata KO

<sup>10</sup> vestes servos : servos vestes

P2\*

<sup>11</sup> hujusmodi P2, KO

<sup>12</sup> *omit.* P1

<sup>13</sup> Emolumentum militum *in marg.* D

<sup>14</sup> alta B

[29] [FV] So why do you hesitate, Princes? Will it not be greatly worthwhile to go to war against those who blaspheme against Christ?<sup>1</sup> Thus, you will show that you remember the favour done to you, you please God, your souls benefit, and you gain Heaven, where you will triumph together with the saints, live together with the angels, and reign together with Christ.

Here, I pass over, Princes, the gains that most soldiers today seek in war: gold, silver, tapestries, paintings, clothes, horses, slaves, and slave girls. For though this expedition promises much of that, I do not want you, as soldiers of Christ, to desire such things. I do not want you to wish for plunder. I do not want you to rejoice in the spoils of war. It is the small mind that covets earthly gains. The great and noble mind aims at treasures in Heaven.

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Moudarres, pp. 42-53

[30] [EV] Brevis est vita hominis super terram. Fugiunt anni<sup>1</sup> nostri; litium<sup>2</sup> vitae nostrae<sup>3</sup> sicut<sup>4</sup> araneorum tela cito dirumpitur. Festinat enim decurrere<sup>5</sup> velox flosculus, angustae miseraeque brevissimae<sup>6</sup> vitae portio<sup>7</sup>, dum vina<sup>8</sup>, cibos, somnosque<sup>9</sup> poscimus, obrepit non intellecta senectus. Nemo scit, quid {59r} vesper<sup>10</sup> vehat. Curriculum aevi<sup>11</sup> nostri<sup>12</sup> incertum est. Peregrini in terra sumus. Spes nostra in caelum tendenda<sup>13</sup> est, ubi, evangelio teste, nec fures<sup>14</sup> fodiunt, nec tineae rodunt. Multae sunt viae, quae nos eo deducunt, sed hoc profecto tempore, principes, nullum iter certius, nullum securius, nullum expeditius, nullum gloriosius est, quo possumus<sup>15</sup> caelum scandere, quam si contra Turcos caelestis patriae nostrae et<sup>16</sup> aeternae<sup>17</sup> civitatis, supernae<sup>18</sup> Jerusalem, perfidos<sup>19</sup> inimicos arma sumentes puris et constantibus animis bellum geramus. Cognoscitis, ut arbitror, jam, principes, hujus belli, quod suademus, non honestatem modo, verum etiam<sup>20</sup> utilitatem.

[30] [FV] *Brevis est vita hominis super terram. Fugiunt anni nostri. Spatium vitae nostrae sicut araneorum tela cito dirumpitur. Festinat enim decurrere velox flosculus, angustae miseraeque brevissima vitae portio, dum vina, cibos, somnosque poscimus, obrepit non intellecta senectus. Nemo scit, quid vesper vehat. Curriculum aevi nostri incertum est. Peregrini in terra<sup>21</sup> sumus. Spes nostra in caelum tendenda est, ubi neque fures fodiunt, neque tineae rodunt. Multae sunt viae, quae nos eo deducunt, sed hoc profecto tempore, principes, nullum iter certius, nullum securius, nullum expeditius, nullum gloriosius est, quo possumus in caelum tendere, quam si contra Turcos caelestis patriae nostrae, aeternae civitatis, supernae Jerusalem perfidos inimicos arma et scutum sumentes puris et constantibus animis bellum geramus. Cognoscitis, ut arbitror, jam, principes, {103r} hujus belli, quod suademus, non honestatem modo, verum etiam utilitatem.*

<sup>1</sup> animi KO

<sup>2</sup> lituri P2\*

<sup>3</sup> finem *add.* P2

<sup>4</sup> sunt KO

<sup>5</sup> defficere P2

<sup>6</sup> brevissima P2\*

<sup>7</sup> pretio KO

<sup>8</sup> manu P2; una KO

<sup>9</sup> ciphosque P2; somniaque KO

<sup>10</sup> vespere KO

<sup>11</sup> enim P2

<sup>12</sup> nostrum P2

<sup>13</sup> tenenda P2

<sup>14</sup> fores P2

<sup>15</sup> possumus P1, KO

<sup>16</sup> *omit.* P1\*

<sup>17</sup> et aeternae *omit.* KO

<sup>18</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>19</sup> perfidissimos P2

<sup>20</sup> et P2

<sup>21</sup> terras D

[30] [FV] Short is the life of man on earth.<sup>1</sup> Our years are fleeing away. *Quickly, the fabric of our life will be torn apart, as a web of spiders.*<sup>2</sup> *Swiftly the flower passes away. Short is the allotted period of a lowly and miserable life. While we call for wine, food, and sleep, old age is creeping on us unperceived.*<sup>3</sup> Nobody knows what evening will bring. Uncertain is the course of our life. *We are strangers on earth,*<sup>4</sup> and our hopes should be turned towards Heaven, *where thieves do not break through and moth do not consume.*<sup>5</sup> Many are the ways leading to Heaven, but today, Princes, the most certain, the most safe, the most easy, the most glorious way to go to Heaven is to take up arms and shield against the Turks, the infidel enemies of our celestial fatherland, the eternal city, Jerusalem on high, and to make war with pure and constant hearts.

I believe that now you understand, Princes, that the war I am advocating is not only just but also useful.

---

<sup>1</sup> General maxim

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Job, 8, 14

<sup>3</sup> Juvenalis, 9.126-129

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hebrews, 11, 13

<sup>5</sup> Matthew, 6, 20



[31] [EV] Nunc de facultate<sup>1</sup> gerendi belli<sup>2</sup> pauca subnectam. Hoc est enim, de quo tertio loco dicturum me promisi. Frustra enim justum bellum<sup>3</sup>, frustra {59v} commodosum<sup>4</sup> probaverimus, nisi etiam<sup>5</sup> factu facile, ne dicam possibile, demonstramus. In hac parte illud<sup>6</sup> meo iudicio animadvertendum est, optimi proceres, ne major hostibus quam vobis<sup>7</sup> sit scientia<sup>8</sup> rei militaris, ne frequentior usus, ne pecunia copiosior, ne<sup>9</sup> potentia superior, ne Deus ipse faventior; quinimmo<sup>10</sup> neque, si pares utrimque<sup>11</sup> vires fuerint, bellum suaserim. Nam, teste Octaviano Caesare, qui proelium sine certa praerogativa committit, similis ei est<sup>12</sup>, qui hamo piscatur aureo; facile namque plus amittere<sup>13</sup> quam lucrari potest.

[31] [FV] Nunc de facultate gerendi belli pauca subnectam. Hoc est enim, de quo loco ultimo dicturum me promisi. Frustra enim justum bellum, frustra commodosum probaverimus, nisi<sup>14</sup> et factu facile, ne dicam possibile, demonstramus<sup>15</sup>. In hac parte illud meo iudicio animadvertendum est, optimi proceres, ne major hostibus quam vobis sit scientia rei militaris, ne frequentior usus, ne pecunia copiosior, ne potentia major, ne Deus ipse propitior; neque, si pares utrimque vires fuerint, bellum suaserim. Nam teste Octaviano Caesare, qui proelium sine certa praerogativa committit, similis ei est, qui *hamo piscatur aureo*; facile namque plus amittere quam lucrari potest.

---

<sup>1</sup> facilitate KO

<sup>2</sup> bellum P2

<sup>3</sup> frustra enim ... bellum : sed ne P2

<sup>4</sup> commodum P2

<sup>5</sup> et P2

<sup>6</sup> in hac parte illud : illud in hac parte P2

<sup>7</sup> nobis KO

<sup>8</sup> sit scientia : scientia sit P1\*

<sup>9</sup> copiosior ne : ne copiosior KO

<sup>10</sup> omit. P2

<sup>11</sup> utriusque P2

<sup>12</sup> ei est : est ei P2\*, KO

<sup>13</sup> amittetur P1\*

<sup>14</sup> Da facilitate belli *in marg.* D

<sup>15</sup> monstremus D

#### 4. Feasibility of the war (Facilitas)

[31] [FV] Now I shall say something about the feasibility of the war,<sup>1</sup> for that is what I promised to speak of last. In vain would I have shown you that the war is just and useful if I cannot also show that it is feasible, not to say possible. Excellent Nobles, I believe that here we must consider whether the military skills, experience in war, funds, and strength of our enemies are greater than yours and whether God favours them more than you. If the two sides had equal resources, I would not counsel war. For according to Octavian Caesar<sup>2</sup> anyone who goes to battle without a sure advantage is like a man who *fishes with a golden hook*<sup>3</sup>: it is easy to lose more than you can gain.

---

<sup>1</sup> Flavio Biondo had touched upon the theme of *facilitas* in his oration “*Jucundum hoc loco*” (Naples, April 1452) to King Alfonso V and Emperor Friedrich III: *Adest vero, serenissimi reges, nedum facultas, sed maximi conficiendi facilitas, si*

*modo curas in id vestras cogitationesque omnes, sicut debetis, conferre volueritis.* However, he did not develop the theme concretely (Flavio Biondo: *Scritti*, p. 110-111)

<sup>2</sup> Augustus, Gajus Octavianus (63 BCE - 14 CE): Adoptive son of

Julius Caesar. Founder of the Roman Empire and its first emperor, ruling from 27 BCE until his death

<sup>3</sup> Suetonius: *De vitis Caesarum / Augustus*, 25

[32] [EV] At mihi seu nova consideranti, seu vetera mente repetenti inter omnes nationes, quas bello idoneas judicant<sup>1</sup>, nulla expeditior, nulla fortior, nulla peritior, nulla audatior<sup>2</sup> quam vestra videtur<sup>3</sup>. Vobis homines, vobis equi, {60} vobis arma, vobis pecuniae sunt. Nulla natio tam grandis sub caelo est, quae habeat deos appropinquantes sibi, sicut adest vobis dominus Deus noster. Et<sup>4</sup> ubi, obsecro, tot clarissimi principes? Tot generosi proceres? Tot equites fortissimi<sup>5</sup>? Tot potentes civitates? Tot divitiae? Tot auri? Tot argenti? Tot ferri minerae<sup>6</sup>? Ubi tanta populi multitudo? Tanta juvenus? Tantum<sup>7</sup> animi? Tantum roboris? [cont.]

[32] [FV] At mihi seu nova consideranti seu vetera mente repetenti inter omnes nationes, quas bello idoneas judicant, nulla mihi expeditior, nulla fortior, nulla peritior, nulla audentior quam vestra videtur. Vobis homines, vobis equi, vobis arma, vobis pecuniae sunt. Nulla *natio tam grandis* sub caelo est, *quae habeat deos appropinquantes sibi, sicut adest vobis dominus Deus vester*. Ubi, obsecro, tot clarissimi principes? Tot generosi proceres? Tot fortissimi equites? Tot potentes civitates? Tot divitiae? Tot auri, argenti, cupri, ferri minerae? Ubi tanta populi multitudo? Tanta juvenus? Tantum animi? Tantum roboris? [cont.]

---

<sup>1</sup> indicant P1

<sup>2</sup> audentior KO

<sup>3</sup> omit. P2

<sup>4</sup> omit. P2

<sup>5</sup> equites fortissimi : fortissimi  
equites P2, KO

<sup>6</sup> mine P2

<sup>7</sup> tanti P2\*

[32] [FV] But whether I consider the new state of things or ponder the old, it seems to me that among all the nations considered to be warlike, none is more ready, none is more powerful, none is more skilled, and none is more daring than yours. You have men, horses, weapons, and money. There *is no grander nation* under the sky *that hath gods so nigh them, as your Lord God is with you.*<sup>1</sup> Where - I ask - are there so many famous princes? Where so many eminent noblemen? Where so many strong knights? Where so many powerful cities? Where so much wealth? Where so much gold, silver, copper, and iron? Where so large a population? Where so many youths? Where so much courage? Where so great strength? *[cont.]*

---

<sup>1</sup> Deuteronomy, 4, 7

[32] [EV] [cont.] Germaniae fines, ut veteres tradunt, ab oriente<sup>1</sup> Viscela<sup>2</sup> fluvius<sup>3</sup> et Hungariae limes fuere, ab occidente<sup>4</sup> Rhenus, a meridie Danubius, a septentrione Oceanus<sup>5</sup> et mare Balteum, quod Prutenicum vocare possumus. Nunc quantum extra hos terminos possideatis, ipsi videtis. Vos Angliam pulsas Britannis occupavistis<sup>6</sup>, vos Belgarum Helvetiorumque {60v} fines<sup>7</sup> ejectis Gallis obtinuistis. Vos Retiam et Noricum invasistis. Vos usque in<sup>8</sup> Italiam pedem<sup>9</sup> extendistis. Vos Hulmerigos, qui nunc Pruteni vocantur, ex manibus infidelium detraxistis. Soli<sup>10</sup> ex<sup>11</sup> alienis in vestro solo Bohemi sedent, potentissimi et nobilissimi populi. Sed et<sup>12</sup> illi vestro imperio parere<sup>13</sup> se ajunt, regemque habent<sup>14</sup> vestri sanguinis, nobilissimum Ladislaum<sup>15</sup>.

[32] [FV] [cont.] Germaniae fines<sup>16</sup>, ut veteres tradunt, ab orienti Viscela fluvius et Hungariae limes fuere, ab occidenti Rhenus, a meridie Danubius, a septentrione Oceanus et mare Balteum. Nunc quantum extra hos terminos possideatis, ipsi videtis. Vos Angliam pulsas Britannis occupavistis, vos Belgarum Helvetiorumque fines ejectis Gallis obtinuistis. Vos Retiam ac<sup>17</sup> Noricum invasistis et usque in Italiam manus extendistis. Vos Hulmerigos, qui nunc Pruteni vocantur, ex manibus infidelium detraxistis. Soli Bohemi ex alienis in vestro solo sedent, sed illi patriam incultam acceperere, ut eorum historiae probant, non Germanos expulere.

---

<sup>1</sup> orienti P2

<sup>2</sup> in stella P2

<sup>3</sup> flumen P2

<sup>4</sup> occidenti P2\*

<sup>5</sup> Oceanum P2\*

<sup>6</sup> occupastis P1, KO

<sup>7</sup> omit. P2

<sup>8</sup> ad P1

<sup>9</sup> pedes P1\*

<sup>10</sup> solis P2

<sup>11</sup> in P2

<sup>12</sup> omit. P2

<sup>13</sup> pares P2

<sup>14</sup> omit. P1

<sup>15</sup> nobilissimum Ladislaum *omit.*

P2

<sup>16</sup> Germanie termini *in marg.* A;  
Germaniae fines D

<sup>17</sup> et C

[32] [FV] [cont.] The old ones tell us that these were the borders of Germany: to the east the river Veisel and the land of Hungary, to the west the Rhine, to the south the Danube, and to the north the Ocean and the Baltic Sea. You can see for yourselves how much territory outside these limits you possess now. You have expelled the Britons and occupied England. You have expelled the Gauls and gained the lands of the Belgae and the Helvetii. You have invaded Rhetia and Noricum and reached out towards Italy. You have wrested the Ulmerigi, now called the Prussians, from the hands of the infidels. Of foreign peoples, only the Bohemians are now living in your country, but according to their own history books, they took over lands that had not been settled yet; they did not expel any Germans.

[33] [EV] Vos igitur magni, vos bellicosi, vos potentissimi, vos fortunatissimi<sup>1</sup> ac<sup>2</sup> Deo accepti Germani estis, quibus adeo fines extendisse licuit, et super<sup>3</sup> omnes mortales Romanae<sup>4</sup> potentiae datum fuit obsistere. Nam terrarum ille calcator omnium et orbis domitor<sup>5</sup>, Julius Caesar, quamvis subactis Gallis saepe<sup>6</sup> Rhenum transiverit resque maximas in Germania gesserit, bellicosam tamen et asperam Suevorum {61r} gentem dimisit indomitam. Augustus Octavianus, cui et Parthorum et Indorum reges munera miserunt, qui unus omnium Romanorum fortunatissimus creditus est, de quo illa sunt metra: Augustus Caesar, divum genus, aurea condet<sup>7</sup> / Saecula, qui rursus<sup>8</sup> Latio regnata<sup>9</sup> per arva / Saturno quondam, superat<sup>10</sup> Garamantas et Indos. / Proferet imperium, jacet extra sidera tellus / Extra anni solisque vias, ubi caelifer Atlas / Axem humero premit<sup>11</sup> stellis ardentibus aptum,

Ille, inquam<sup>12</sup>, felicissimus imperator<sup>13</sup>, nullibi umquam nisi apud Germanos succubuit; nam Lollianam et Varianam cladem in Germania perpessus est, Lollianam majoris infamiae quam detrimenti, Varianam paene exitialem, tribus legionibus cum duce, legatis et auxiliis omnibus caesis.

[33] [FV] Magna est vestra potentia, vestra virtus, vestra experientia, vestra gloria, Germani, quibus adeo fines extendisse licuit, ut supra omnes mortales Romanae potentiae obsistere datum fuerit. Nam terrarum ille calcator omnium et orbis domitor, Julius Caesar, quamvis subactis Gallis saepe Rhenum transiverit, bellicosam tamen et asperam Suevorum gentem dimisit indomitam. Augustus Octavianus, cui et Parthi et Indi munera miserunt, qui unus omnium Romanorum fortunatissimus<sup>14</sup> creditus est, de quo illa sunt metra: *Augustus Caesar, divum genus, aurea condet / Saecula, qui rursus Latio regnata per arva / Saturno quondam, superet Garamantas et Indos. / Proferet imperium, jacet<sup>15</sup> extra {104r} sidera tellus / Extra anni solisque vias, ubi caelifer Atlas / Axem humero premit stellis ardentibus aptum,*

ille inquam, felicissimus imperator, nullibi umquam nisi apud Germanos succubuit; nam *Lollianam et Varianam* cladem in Germania<sup>16</sup> perpessus est, Lollianam majoris infamiae *quam detrimenti, Varianam paene exitialem<sup>17</sup>, tribus legionibus cum duce, legatis, et auxiliis omnibus caesis.*

<sup>1</sup> fortunati P2

<sup>2</sup> vos P1

<sup>3</sup> supra P2\*

<sup>4</sup> ratione P2

<sup>5</sup> dominator P2

<sup>6</sup> se P2

<sup>7</sup> condit P2\*

<sup>8</sup> reversus KO

<sup>9</sup> renata P2

<sup>10</sup> super et P2

<sup>11</sup> torquet P1

<sup>12</sup> quisquam P2

<sup>13</sup> felicissimus imperator :

imperator felicissimus P2\*

<sup>14</sup> fortissimus C

<sup>15</sup> latet B, D

<sup>16</sup> Clades in Germania *in marg.* D

<sup>17</sup> exitiabilem A, D

[33] Great is your power, Germans, great is your courage, your experience, and your glory. Because of them, you were able to extend your frontiers so much that you could resist Roman power better than any other people. Even Julius Caesar,<sup>1</sup> who defeated all other countries and conquered the whole world, subdued the Gauls, and often crossed the Rhine, had to leave the warlike and fierce tribe of the Swabians undefeated.<sup>2</sup>

Augustus Octavian, who received gifts from the Parthians and the Indians, was considered to be the most fortunate of all Romans, as said in these verses:

*Augustus Caesar, son of a god<sup>3</sup>, who will again establish a Golden age in Latium amid fields once ruled by Saturn; he will advance his empire beyond the Garamants and Indians to a land which lies beyond our Stars, beyond the path of year and sun, where sky-bearing Atlas wheels on his shoulders the blazing star-studded sphere.<sup>4</sup>*

But even he, the most fortunate of emperors, was defeated nowhere else but in Germany. For he suffered the *defeats of Lollius<sup>5</sup> and Varus<sup>6</sup> in Germany*. Of these, that of Lollius was more humiliating than serious, but that of Varus was almost fatal, since three legions were cut to pieces with their general, his lieutenants, and all the auxiliaries.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Julius Caesar, Gaius (100-44 BCE): Roman general and statesman

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Julius Caesar: *De Bello Gallico*, 4.1.3; 6.10

<sup>3</sup> Julius Caesar adopted Augustus. He was deified after his death

<sup>4</sup> Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 6.792-797. With some variants in the Latin text

<sup>5</sup> Marcus Lollius (ca. 55 BC - 2 CE): Roman politician, military officer and supporter of the first Roman emperor Augustus

<sup>6</sup> Publius Quinctilius Varus (46 BC- 9 CE): Roman general and politician under the first Roman emperor Augustus. Lost the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest and took his own life

<sup>7</sup> Suetonius: *De vitis Caesarum / Augustus*, 23: *Graves ignominias cladesque duas omnino nec alibi quam in Germania accepit Lollianam et Varianam, sed Lollianam maioris infamiae quam detrimenti, Varianam paene exitiabilem tribus legionibus cum duce legatisque et auxiliis omnibus caesis*



[34] [EV] Longum esset referre, {61v} quas intulerunt Romanae reipublicae molestias Germani, qui etsi Romanorum fortunae aliquando cesserunt, postea tamen et ipsi de Romanis, de Gallis, de Hispanis, de Hungaris, deque aliis diversis gentibus saepenumero<sup>1</sup> triumpharunt<sup>2</sup>. Nec Romani, cum rerum potirentur, res magnas sine Germanis auxiliantibus peregerunt<sup>3</sup>, quorum tanta in bello virtus, tanta in domo fides fuit, ut Caesarei<sup>4</sup> corporis custos cohors ex Germanis potissime legeretur.

[34] [FV] Longum esset referre, quas intulerint<sup>5</sup> Romanae reipublicae molestias Germani, qui etsi Romanorum fortunae aliquando cesserunt, postea tamen sub Carolo, sub Ludovico, sub Ottonibus, sub Henricis, sub Fridericis de Romanis ipsi, de Gallis, de Hispanis, de Hungaris saepenumero triumpharunt. Nec Romani, cum rerum potirentur, res magnas sine Germanis auxiliaribus egerunt, quorum tanta in bello virtus, tanta in domo fides fuit, ut Caesarei corporis custos legio ex Germanis potissime legeretur.

---

<sup>1</sup> omit. P2

<sup>2</sup> triumpharunt P2\*

<sup>3</sup> omit. P1; egerunt P2\*

<sup>4</sup> Cesari P1

<sup>5</sup> intulerunt D

[34] [FV] It would, indeed, take too long to relate the troubles inflicted on the Roman state by the Germans. For a period, they had to give way to Roman fortune, but later, under emperors like Charles, Ludwig, Otto, Heinrich, and Friedrich, they often triumphed over the Romans, the Gauls, the Spaniards, and the Hungarians. And even when the Romans were the lords, they performed their great feats with the help of German auxiliary troops. So great was the Germans' courage in war and their loyalty at home that the legion guarding the emperor's body was mostly chosen from among the Germans.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Suetonius: *De vitis Caesarum*  
/ *Augustus*, 79

[35] [EV] Conferamus nunc Turcos ac vos invicem, et quid sperandum sit, si cum illis<sup>1</sup> pugnetis, examinemus. Vos nati ad arma, illi tracti. Vos armati, illi inermes. Vos gladios versatis, illi cultris utuntur. Vos balistas tenditis, illi arcus trahunt. Vos loricae thoracesque protegunt, illos culcitra<sup>2</sup> tegit. Vos equos regitis, illi ab equis reguntur. Vos nobiles in bellum {62r} ducitis, illi servos aut artifices cogunt. Vestri milites nati atque nutriti in armis sunt<sup>3</sup>, illi copias suas, exceptis quindecim milibus pugnatorum, quos expeditos habent, ex agris<sup>4</sup> atque<sup>5</sup> officinis eruunt<sup>6</sup>. Vobis flectere ludus<sup>7</sup> equos et tendere spicula<sup>8</sup> cornu, vos omne aevum ferro<sup>9</sup> teritis, vestra juvenus aut<sup>10</sup> torneamentis<sup>11</sup> intenta est aut quatit oppida bello, nec tarda senectus vestras vires debilitat mutatque<sup>12</sup> vigorem. Canitiem galea premitis, semperque recentes bellorum habere causas cupitis<sup>13</sup> et vivere in armis<sup>14</sup>. Illis picta<sup>15</sup> croco et fulgenti murice<sup>16</sup> vestis desidiaeque cordi sunt; summa voluptas<sup>17</sup> est indulgere choreis.

[35] [FV] Conferamus nunc Turcos ac vos invicem, et quid sperandum sit, si manus conferatis, examinemus. Vos nati ad arma, illi tracti. Vos armati, illi inermes. Vos gladios versatis, illi cultris utuntur. Vos balistas tenditis, illi arcus trahunt. Vos loricae thoracesque protegunt, illos culcitrae tegunt. Vos equos regitis, illi ab equis reguntur. Vos nobiles in bellum ducitis, illi servos aut artifices cogunt. Vestri milites nati atque nutriti in armis, illi copias suas, exceptis quindecim milibus, quos expeditos habent, ex agris atque officinis eruunt. Vobis *flectere ludus equos et spicula tendere cornu*, vestra juvenus aut torneamentis intenta est aut *quatit oppida bello*. Vos *omne aevum ferro teritis*, nec *tarda senectus vestras vires debilitat mutatque vigorem*. *Canitiem galea premitis*, semperque recentes bellorum habere causas *juvat et vivere in armis*. *Illis picta croco et fulgenti murice vestis desidiaeque cordi sunt*; *summa voluptas est indulgere choreis*.

<sup>1</sup> illo P1

<sup>2</sup> calcitra KO

<sup>3</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>4</sup> aquis P2

<sup>5</sup> et P2

<sup>6</sup> erunt KO

<sup>7</sup> ludos KO

<sup>8</sup> tendere spicula : spicula  
tendere P2

<sup>9</sup> ferore KU

<sup>10</sup> *omit.* KU

<sup>11</sup> tormentis P1

<sup>12</sup> nec mutat P2

<sup>13</sup> juvat P2

<sup>14</sup> et vivere in armis *omit.* P2

<sup>15</sup> pictis KO

<sup>16</sup> miricae KO

<sup>17</sup> voluntas KO

[35] [FV] Let us now compare you with the Turks to see what we may hope for in a battle between you. You are born to weapons; they are forced to them. You are armed; they are unarmed. You use swords; they use knives. You draw crossbows; they use simple bows. You are protected by coats of mail and cuirasses; they are covered by padded doublets. You master your horses; they are mastered by theirs. You are led to war by generals; they force servants and artisans to go to war. Your soldiers are born and raised in arms; they draw their troops from the fields and the workshops – except for a standing army of 15,000 soldiers whom they always have at the ready.<sup>1</sup> Your *sport is to rein the steed and shoot arrows from the bow*. Your young men wish for tournaments or *shake cities in battle*. *All your life is worn down with iron's use, and sluggish age does not weaken your hearts' strength or change your vigour*. *On to white hair you press the helmet*, and you are content when you have fresh causes for war and live under arms. *But they wear embroidered saffron and gleaming purple; sloth is their joy, and their greatest pleasure is the dance.*<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> The Janitshars

<sup>2</sup> The last passages of this section, from *Vobis flectere ludos* to

*indulgere choreis* are based on Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 9.606-616

[36] [EV] Solus Mahumetus et quos dixi quindecim milia expediti sunt<sup>1</sup>, quos sonus delectat armorum<sup>2</sup>, et animus in bella paratus exhibet audaces. Ceteros inexpertos, timidos, {62v} effeminatos<sup>3</sup> nullius pretii judicetis. Quod si manus cum illis conferatis, nihil est, quod de victoria dubitetis, si modo, quam gesturi estis pro Deo pugnam, adversus Deum non convertatis<sup>4</sup>, mala mente procedentes. Cum ergo majores vestri<sup>5</sup>, principes, omnes vicinos ac longe positos populos armorum gloria superaverint, cum timentes ipsi nullos omnibus terrori fuerint, cum vos ipsi nihilo minores vestris progenitoribus sitis, cum omnibus his rebus abundetis, quas bello necessarias putant, cum vobis fortissimi milites, peritissimi duces ac satis fortunati sint, cum Deum in sua causa<sup>6</sup> propitium sperare par sit, cum vestri hostes longe inferiores vobis existant, non est, cur tam honestum tamque utile bellum pro Deo vestro gerendum detractare<sup>7</sup> quoquo modo debeatis.

[36] [FV] Solus Mahumetus et quos dixi XV milia expediti sunt, quos sonus delectat armorum, et animus in bella paratus exhibet audaces. Ceteros inexpertos, timidos, effeminatos nullius pretii judicetis. Quod si manus cum illis conferatis, nihil est, quod de victoria dubitetis, si modo quam gesturi estis pro Deo pugnam, adversus Deum non convertatis. Cum ergo majores vestri, principes, omnes vicinos ac longe positos populos armorum gloria superaverint, cum timentes ipsi nullos omnibus terrori fuerint, cum vos ipsi nihilo minores vestris progenitoribus sitis, cum omnibus his rebus abundetis, quas bello necessarias putant, cum vobis fortissimi milites, duces peritissimi ac satis fortunati sint, cum Deum in sua causa propitium sperare par sit, cum vestri hostes longe inferiores vobis existant, non est, cur tam honestum {104v} tamque utile bellum detractare quoquo modo debeatis.

---

<sup>1</sup> omit. P1

<sup>2</sup> omit. P2

<sup>3</sup> effrenatos KO

<sup>4</sup> committatis P1

<sup>5</sup> nostri P1

<sup>6</sup> causa sua KO

<sup>7</sup> detractare P1

[36] [FV] Only Mehmed and those fifteen thousand I mentioned before delight in the din of weapons,<sup>1</sup> and their warlike spirit makes them fearless in battle. The others, as you will see, are inexperienced, timid, effeminate,<sup>2</sup> and worthless. When you fight these people, you will undoubtedly win, if only you do not turn your fight for God into a fight against God. Your forefathers, Princes, conquered all peoples, both those living close by and those living far away, in glorious war, and fearing nobody, they were feared by everybody. You yourselves are in no way inferior to your forefathers; you have an abundance of all things considered necessary for war; you have strong soldiers and experienced leaders, fortunate in war. Moreover, it is reasonable to hope that God will favour his own cause. Since your enemies are so greatly inferior to you, there is absolutely no reason for you to shy away from a war that is so just and so advantageous.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Vergilius: *Georgica*, 3, 83

<sup>2</sup> Piccolomini: Letter to Pope Nicolaus V of 12 July (EPI, 6: 340): *proh*

*pudor, ab effeminatis Turcis incli-  
tam urbem Constantinopolim capi  
permittimus*

<sup>3</sup> "utile"

[37] [EV] Dicat hic fortasse quispiam rem non esse cum Turcis tantum, {63r} sed cum Tartaris simul ac<sup>1</sup> Saracenis cumque omnibus gentibus, quas illi<sup>2</sup> subjectas habent. Huic<sup>3</sup> ego contra insto<sup>4</sup>: nec<sup>5</sup> vos soli, Theutones, inquam, pugnabitis. Ex Italia, ex Gallia<sup>6</sup>, ex Hispania multi concurrent<sup>7</sup>, nec Hungari deerunt, nec Bohemi<sup>8</sup>, fortissimae gentes. Rasciani, Bulgari<sup>9</sup>, omnes Illyrienses, omnes Graeci sumpta occasione consurgent. Vicini quoque in Asia dabunt manus. Nolite existimare, principes, ita omnem Asiam Mahumeto parere<sup>10</sup>, ut non multi sint<sup>11</sup> Christo servientes: multi in Cilicia<sup>12</sup>, Bithynia, Cappadocia, Ponto, Syria Christiani sunt<sup>13</sup>, quamvis iugo servitutis oppressi. Hiberi<sup>14</sup>, qui et Georgiani vocantur, Trapezuntii, Armeni Christum colunt, nec cunctabuntur arma sumere, si vos viderint audentes.

[37] [OV] Dicat hic fortasse quispiam rem non esse cum Turcis tantum, sed cum Tartaris simul ac Saracenis, cum omnibus gentibus, quas illi subjectas habent. Huic ego contra insto: nec vos soli, Theutones, inquam, pugnabitis. Ex Italia, ex Gallia, ex Hispania multi concurrent, nec Hungari deerunt, nec Bohemi. Rasciani, Bulgari, omnes Illyrienses, omnes Graeci sumpta occasione consurgent. Vicini quoque in Asia dabunt manus. Nolite existimare, principes, ita omnem Asiam Mahumeto parere, ut non multi<sup>15</sup> sint Christo servientes, multi in Cilicia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, Ponto, Syria Christiani sunt, quamvis iugo servitutis oppressi. Georgiani, Trapezuntii, Armeni Christum colunt, nec tardabunt arma sumere, si vos viderint audentes.

---

<sup>1</sup> atque P2\*; et KO

<sup>2</sup> ibi P2

<sup>3</sup> hinc KO

<sup>4</sup> insisto P2

<sup>5</sup> ego *add.* KO

<sup>6</sup> ex Gallia *omit.* P2

<sup>7</sup> corruent P2

<sup>8</sup> vestrae P2

<sup>9</sup> vulgari P2

<sup>10</sup> patere P1

<sup>11</sup> multi sint : sint multi P1

<sup>12</sup> Sicilia P1; Scithia P2

<sup>13</sup> similiter P1

<sup>14</sup> haberi P1; Hyuni P2

<sup>15</sup> multa D

[37] [FV] Here somebody may object that “we shall not only have to do with the Turks but also with the Tartars, the Saracens, and all the peoples they have subjugated.” My reply is that neither will you Germans be fighting alone. Many men from Italy, France, and Spain will join you, and the Hungarians and the Bohemians will not be missing. The Serbians, the Bulgarians, all the Illyrians,<sup>1</sup> and all the Greeks will seize the moment and rise against the Turks. And even the neighbours [of the Turks<sup>2</sup>] in Asia Minor will come to our help.<sup>3</sup> Do not think, Princes, that the whole of Asia Minor obeys Mehmed; many people there serve Christ, and in Cilicia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, Pontus, and Syria there are many Christians, though they live under the yoke of slavery. The Georgians, the Trapezuntians, and the Armenians worship Christ, and they will not hesitate to take up arms if they see your daring courage.

---

<sup>1</sup> i.e., the other peoples in the Balkans

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Turkish principedom of Caraman, potential allies of the West against the dominant Osman Turks, cf. (Flavio Biondo: *Scritti*, p. 45

<sup>3</sup> Flavio Biondo had touched upon this theme in his crusade memorandum of 1 August 1453 to King Alfonso V: ... *quanta erit apud oppressos prostratos et conculcatos a Turchis in Europa populos christianos laetitia! Quanta ani-*

*morum erectio! Ruent, non venient, miserrimi illi in nostrorum amplexus, et vexilla cruce salutifera insignita gaudentes exultantesque sequentur.* (Flavio Biondo: *Scritti*, p. 43)



[38] [EV] Veneti quoque et Januenses, potentes populi, quamvis pacem cum Turcis habent<sup>1</sup>, {63v} partes tamen vestras<sup>2</sup> classibus adjuvabunt. Coacti namque, ne civitates orientis amitterent<sup>3</sup>, pacem fecere<sup>4</sup>. At quod<sup>5</sup> homines inviti ac<sup>6</sup> necessario faciunt, neque diu, neque diligenter facere possunt. Veneti certe<sup>7</sup> fidem imperatori dedere facturos se, quod deceat Christianos, si bellum communi fidelium consilio contra Turcos decernatur. Ego, etsi certe scio, proceres, vobis arma sumentibus ex tota Christianitate affutura praesidia, nihilominus et illis domi manentibus, huic bello solam Germaniam sufficere non dubitaverim. Scio enim Gothfridum, qui fuit Lotharingiae dux, cum solis transrhenanis Theutonibus et aliquibus Gallicis, paucis<sup>8</sup> Italis<sup>9</sup> Hungariam percurrisse<sup>10</sup>, Graeciam penetrasse, Hellespontum transisse, Asiam permeasse, Jerusalem {64r} ex potestate infidelium vindicasse<sup>11</sup>, victis ac prostratis omnibus, quae occurrerent in medio, gentibus, quamvis et Turci et Saraceni numerosi resistere conarentur. In ejus exercitu ducenta milia pugnatorum fuisse traduntur, atque multo majores copias sola Germania cogere potest.

[38] [FV] Veneti quoque et Genuenses, potentes populi, quamvis pacem cum Turcis habent, partes vestras classibus adjuvabunt. Coacti namque, ne civitates orientis amitterent, pacem fecere. At quod homines inviti ac necessario faciunt, neque<sup>12</sup> diu, neque diligenter facere possunt. Veneti certe fidem imperatori dedere<sup>13</sup> facturos se, quod deceat Christianos, si bellum communi fidelium consilio contra Turcos decernatur. Ego, etsi certe scio, proceres, vobis arma sumentibus ex tota Christianitate affutura praesidia, nihilominus et illis domi manentibus, huic bello solam Germaniam sufficere non dubitaverim. Scio enim Gothfridum<sup>14</sup>, qui fuit Lothoringiae dux, cum solis Transrhenanis Theutonibus et aliquibus Gallicis, paucis Italis<sup>15</sup> Hungariam percurrisse, Graeciam penetrasse, Hellespontum transisse, Asiam permeasse, Jerosolymam pervenisse, victis ac prostratis omnibus, quae occurrerunt in medio, gentibus, quamvis et Turci et Saraceni numerosi resistere conarentur. In ejus exercitu ducenta millia pugnatorum fuisse traduntur, atqui multo majores copias sola Germania cogere potest.

---

<sup>1</sup> habeant P1

<sup>2</sup> partes tamen vestras : pares classes vestris P2

<sup>3</sup> perderent P2; admitterent KO

<sup>4</sup> facere KO

<sup>5</sup> atque P1\*

<sup>6</sup> et P2

<sup>7</sup> Veneti certe : certe Veneti P2

<sup>8</sup> pariter P2

<sup>9</sup> Italicis P1; Italiam P2

<sup>10</sup> percussisse KO

<sup>11</sup> vindicasse P1\*

<sup>12</sup> nec C

<sup>13</sup> dederunt B

<sup>14</sup> Gothfridus *in marg.* A

<sup>15</sup> Italicis C

[38] [FV] Also the Venetians and the Genoese,<sup>1</sup> those mighty peoples, will help you with fleets, though they are presently at peace with the Turks.<sup>2</sup> But they were forced to make peace, lest they lose their Eastern cities, and what people do unwillingly and out of necessity, they cannot do for long and diligently. The Venetians have made a sure promise to the emperor that they will act as Christians should if the believers decide on a common war against the Turks. I am quite certain, Nobles, that if you take up arms, then all Christianity will support you. But should they stay at home, I do not doubt that Germany is strong enough to undertake this war on its own. For I know that Duke Godefroy of Lorraine<sup>3</sup> together with a force consisting only of the Germans from across the Rhine and some French and a few Italians passed through Hungary, entered Greece, crossed the Hellespont, went through Asia Minor, and reached Jerusalem.<sup>4</sup> On the way, they defeated and crushed all the peoples who came against them, though many Turks and Saracens tried to oppose them. His army is reported to have had 200,000 soldiers – and Germany can muster much greater forces than that.

---

<sup>1</sup> The two great seapowers of the Mediterranean, having extensive possessions in that area and therefore being highly dependent on Turkish goodwill

<sup>2</sup> Peace treaty of 21 April 1454

<sup>3</sup> Godefroy de Bouillon (ca. 1060-1100): one of the leaders of the first crusade and first Latin king of Jerusalem

<sup>4</sup> Note that in the Final Version, as edited in 1462 for the Collected Orations of Pius II, the text says that they reached Jerusalem (*pervenerint*), not – as in the Early Version – that they reclaimed Jerusalem (*vendicasse*). This change may be due to the fact that by 1462 any ambition of recovering Jerusalem was deemed complete-

ly illusory and had disappeared from Pius' crusade rhetoric. This development actually happened between the beginning of the Congress of Mantua in September 1459 (see oration "*Cum bellum hodie*" [45], sect. 7) and the end of the congress in January 1460 (see oration "*Septimo jam exacto mense*" [54], sect. 2)

[39] [EV] Sed dicitis, ut existimo: "Quomodo foris bellum geremus, qui domi contendimus? Nec portio est<sup>1</sup> Germaniae ulla quieta! Sit pax intus, non recusabimus extra bellare." Prius Turci Rhenum attingant, quam lites omnes vestrae provinciae<sup>2 3 4</sup> extirpentur. Idcirco sapientes illi, qui Ratisponae fuerunt, indicendas<sup>5</sup> tota Germania quinquennales indutias putaverunt; id nunc explendum est. Omnes<sup>6</sup>, qui contendunt<sup>7</sup> imperii principes ac vasalli aut subditi sunt. Nisi Caesaris mandata custodiant<sup>8</sup>, fidem frangunt, honorem maculant, rempublicam {64r} laedunt, sibi ipsis nocent: quod ego de tanta nobilitate minime putaverim. Nam quis erit adeo durus, adeo obstinatus, adeo<sup>9</sup> bonis<sup>10</sup> aversus moribus, ut treugas pro communi Christianorum salute indictas<sup>11</sup> praesumat infringere? Est hic legatus apostolicus, qui censuras ecclesiasticas interponet. Legati Caesaris imperiale bannum et alias poenas adjicient<sup>12</sup>.

[39] [FV] Sed dicitis, ut existimo: "Quomodo foris bellum geremus, qui domi contendimus? Nec portio est Germaniae ulla quieta! Sit pax intus, non recusabimus extra bellare." Prius Turci Rhenum attingant, quam lites omnes vestrae, principes, extirpentur. Idcirco sapientes illi, qui Ratisponae fuerunt, indicendas tota Germania quinquennales indutias putaverunt. Id nunc explendum est. Omnes, qui contendunt, aut imperii principes aut vassalli aut subditi sunt. Nisi Caesaris mandata custodiunt, fidem frangunt, honorem maculant, rempublicam laedunt, sibi ipsis nocent: quod ego de tanta nobilitate minime putaverim. Nam quis erit adeo durus, adeo obstinatus, adeo bonis aversus<sup>13</sup> moribus, ut treugas pro communi Christianorum salute indictas praesumat infringere? Est hic legatus apostolicus, qui censuras ecclesiasticas interponet. {105r} Legati Caesaris imperiale bannum et alias poenas adjicient.

<sup>1</sup> portio est : est portio P1\*

<sup>2</sup> omnes vestrae provinciae :  
nostrae P1

<sup>3</sup> vestrae provinciae : nostre  
patrie P2

<sup>4</sup> vestrae provinciae *omit.* KO

<sup>5</sup> in *add.* KO

<sup>6</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>7</sup> aut *add.* P2

<sup>8</sup> custodiunt P1, P2\*

<sup>9</sup> ac P2\*

<sup>10</sup> adeo bonis : bonis adeo KO

<sup>11</sup> indutas P2\*

<sup>12</sup> adiment KO

<sup>13</sup> adversus B

[39] [EV] Here you will say, I presume, “How can we make war abroad, when we are fighting at home and no part of Germany is quiet? Let there be peace at home, then we can fight abroad.” Princes, the Turks will reach the Rhine before all your conflicts have been solved. Therefore, the wise men who were in Regensburg considered it necessary to declare a five-year armistice in all of Germany; this should now be put into effect. All those who are warring are either princes, vassals, or subjects of the empire. If they do not obey the commands of the emperor, they break faith, sully their honour, damage the state, and harm themselves. I will absolutely not believe that of such great nobles. For who will be so hard, so obstinate, and so averse to proper conduct that he will presume to break a truce instituted for the common salvation of the Christians? The apostolic legate<sup>1</sup> is present; he will intervene with ecclesiastical censures. And the imperial legates will add the ban of the empire and other punishments.

---

<sup>1</sup> Giovanni Castiglione (1420-1460): Bishop of Pavia, later a cardinal

[40] [EV] Proh<sup>1</sup>, Germani nobiles, gens bellicosa, gens alti cordis! An modo in tanta et vestra<sup>2</sup> et omnium Christianorum necessitate deficietis? Eritisne adeo incauti, adeo caeci, ut ranae murisque fabulam in vobis<sup>3</sup> impleri sinatis, qui dum invicem se<sup>4</sup> morderent<sup>5</sup>, praeda milvi fuere? Nonne cernitis, dum simul contenditis, venientem Turcum et omnia rapientem, quae vos litigare compellunt? Expellite<sup>6</sup> prius {65r} communem<sup>7</sup> hostem; tum, si pacem tenere nequitis, de terra, de dominio, de ceteris bonis pugnate, quae non Turcis, sed vestris filiis relinquere valeatis.

[40] [FV] Proh, Germani nobiles, gens bellicosa, gens alti cordis, an modo in tanta et<sup>8</sup> vestra et omnium Christianorum necessitate deficietis? Eritisne adeo incauti, adeo caeci, ut ranae murisque fabulam in vobis impleri sinatis, qui dum se invicem mordent, praeda milvi fuere? Nonne cernitis, dum simul contenditis, venientem Turcum et omnia rapientem, quae vos litigare compellunt? Expellite prius communem hostem; tum, si pacem tenere nequitis, de terra, de dominio, de ceteris bonis pugnate, quae non Turcis, sed vestris filiis relinquere valeatis.

---

<sup>1</sup> propterea P2

<sup>2</sup> nostra P1

<sup>3</sup> nobis P1

<sup>4</sup> invicem se : se invicem P2

<sup>5</sup> mordent P2

<sup>6</sup> compellite P2

<sup>7</sup> domesticum P2

<sup>8</sup> *omit.* D

[40] [FV] Will you, Nobles of Germany, a warlike people, a courageous people, fail in this great crisis, which is not only your own but also that of all Christians? Will you be so incautious and so blind that you will do as the frog and the mouse in the fable, who, while fighting each other, became the prey of the kite?<sup>1</sup> Don't you see that while you are fighting each other, the Turk is coming to rob you of all that you are fighting about? First expel the common enemy; then, if you cannot keep peace, fight about land, lordship, and what other property you may be strong enough to leave to your sons - and not to the Turks.

---

<sup>1</sup> This fable was well-known in Antiquity, but it did not belong to the

Aesop collection. Piccolomini used it in a letter to Pietro da Noce-

to af September 18, 1453 (EPI, 6: 367)

[41] [EV] Equidem, si has indutias amplectimini, principes, non est mihi dubium, quin validissimum et copiosum exercitum comparare possitis, quo educto pacem in Alania necessario relinquetis: latrones enim<sup>1</sup> et raptores omnes<sup>2</sup> exhibunt, agricolae<sup>3</sup> et artifices domi<sup>4</sup> manebunt, pacatum<sup>5</sup> genus hominum, quemadmodum tempore Conradi Caesaris evenisse constat, cum ille copias adversus Saracenos et<sup>6</sup> Turcos eduxit. Et fortasse haec una est pacandae Germaniae via: nescio, an vos alias habeatis.

[41] [FV] Equidem, si has indutias amplectimini, principes, non est mihi dubium, quin validissimum et copiosum exercitum comparare possitis, quo educto pacem in Alania necessario relinquetis: latrones enim et raptores omnes exhibunt, agricolae et artifices domi manebunt, pacatum genus hominum, quemadmodum tempore Conradi Caesaris evenisse constat, cum ille copias adversus Saracenos ac Turcos eduxit. Et fortasse haec una est pacandae Germaniae via: nescio, an vos alias habeatis.

---

<sup>1</sup> omnes P2

<sup>2</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>3</sup> agricola KO

<sup>4</sup> omnes *add.* P2

<sup>5</sup> paratum KO

<sup>6</sup> ac P2\*

[41] [FV] Indeed, Princes, if you accept this truce, I do not doubt that you can muster a very strong and numerous army and that when you bring it out of Germany, you will leave the country at peace. For all thieves and robbers will leave, while the peasants and artisans, a peaceful kind of people, will stay at home. This is what happened at the time of Emperor Konrad, when he led his troops against the Saracens and the Turks. And maybe this is the only way to bring peace to Germany. I do not know if you can think of any other.



[42] [EV] **Sed dicitis: "Quid cum Prutenis agemus, qui rebellantes suis dominis, relicta religione<sup>1</sup> Theutonica, ad magnum {65v} regem Poloniae defecerunt<sup>2</sup>?" Tria hic remedia sunt: duo dicam, tertium in aliud tempus retinebo. Aut serventur<sup>3</sup> hic<sup>4</sup> indutiae, sicut<sup>5</sup> in ceteris<sup>6</sup> Germaniae litibus, aut si hoc durum religioni videtur, sinite fratres religiosos<sup>7</sup> cum Saxonibus, Bohemis, et aliis, quos possunt allicere, suam provinciam vindicare<sup>8</sup>. Neque enim propterea vester exercitus magnopere impediatur<sup>9</sup>. Nam et imperante Conrado, de quo paulo<sup>10</sup> ante dixi, cum tertius<sup>11</sup> Eugenius, Romanus pontifex, Christianos excitaret pro tutela terrae sanctae<sup>12</sup>, quam Saraceni evertere conabantur, Pruteni cum ceteris ulterioribus idola colebant ac crebris excursionibus nunc Saxoniam, nunc alios vicinos Christi cultores infestabant. Conradus autem, dimissis Saxonibus et<sup>13</sup> ceteris vicinis, qui domi cum Prutenis ac reliquis barbaris decertarent, ipse cum Rhenanis<sup>14</sup>, Suevis, Franconibus<sup>15</sup>, Bavaris Jerusalem penetravit. Idem et<sup>16</sup> nunc vobis agere licet.**

[42] [FV] **"Sed quid cum Prutenis agemus, qui rebellantes suis dominis, relicta religione Theutonica, ad regem Poloniae defecerunt?" Tria hic remedia<sup>17</sup> sunt: duo dicam, tertium in aliud tempus retinebo. Aut serventur hic indutiae, sicut in ceteris Germaniae litibus, aut si hoc durum religioni videtur, sinite fratres cum Saxonibus, Bohemis, et aliis, quos possunt allicere, suam provinciam vindicare<sup>18</sup>. Neque enim propterea vester exercitus magnopere impediatur. Nam et imperante Conrado, de quo paulo ante dixi, cum Eugenius, Romanus pontifex, Christianos excitaret pro tutela terrae sanctae, quam Saraceni evertere conabantur, Pruteni cum ceteris ulterioribus idola colebant ac crebris excursionibus nunc Saxoniam, nunc alios vicinos Christi cultores infestabant. Conradus autem, dimissis Saxonibus et ceteris vicinis, qui domi cum Prutenis ac reliquis barbaris decertarent, ipse cum Rhenanis, Suevis, Franconibus, ac Baioariis Jerosolymam penetravit. Idem et nunc vobis agere licet.**

---

<sup>1</sup> regione P2

<sup>2</sup> desciverunt P2\*; destinerent

KO

<sup>3</sup> struentur P2

<sup>4</sup> he P1\*

<sup>5</sup> ut P1

<sup>6</sup> terrarum P2

<sup>7</sup> omit. P1

<sup>8</sup> vindicare P2\*

<sup>9</sup> impediretur P1; impeditur P2\*

<sup>10</sup> paulum P2

<sup>11</sup> omit. P2

<sup>12</sup> terrae sanctae omit. P2

<sup>13</sup> aut KO

<sup>14</sup> Renensibus KO

<sup>15</sup> ac add. P1\*

<sup>16</sup> omit. P1

<sup>17</sup> Remedia pro Pru. reli. *in marg.*

D

<sup>18</sup> vindicare B

[42] [FV] “But what shall we do about the Prussians who have rebelled against their lords and defected from the German Order to the King of Poland?”<sup>1</sup> There are three remedies to this: two I shall speak about now, the third one I shall keep for later. Either our truce will be kept there, too, as in the other German conflicts, or – if this is unacceptable to the order – then allow the brethren to fight for their province together with the Saxons, Bohemians, and whoever else they may be able to attract to their cause. This will not be a great problem with regard to your army, for when Konrad, whom I spoke of a moment ago, was emperor and the Roman Pontiff, Eugenius,<sup>2</sup> urged the Christians to protect the Holy Land that the Saracens were striving to conquer, the Prussians, like other peoples living beyond them, were worshipping idols. Frequently, they attacked now Saxony, now their other neighbours who worshipped Christ. Therefore, Konrad let the Saxons and other neighbours stay at home so that they could fight the Prussians and other barbarians while he himself went to Jerusalem together with the Rhinish, the Swabians, the Franconians, and the Bavarians.<sup>3</sup> The same you can do now.

---

<sup>1</sup> Piccolomini here refers to the standing conflict between the Prussian population and the Ger-

man Order, which had possession of their territory

<sup>2</sup> Pope Eugenius III (-d. 1153): Pope from 1153 to his death

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Otto von Freising: *Gesta Friderici*, I, 47 ff

[43] [EV] Ceterum, quia nonnullos esse audio, qui Mahumetum deinceps<sup>1</sup> quieturum existimant, neque, ut ego dico, tantopere festinandum censent<sup>2</sup>, reserabo vobis aliqua de consuetudine et natura<sup>3</sup> hujus hominis, quae mihi per eos nota sunt, qui secum aliquando<sup>4</sup> conversati fuere, ut quid sperandum, quidve<sup>5</sup> timendum sit<sup>6</sup> eo certius habeatis. Est autem Mahumetus adolescens annos natus<sup>7</sup> XXIV<sup>8</sup>, animo truci et gloriae cupido, robusto corpore ac laboris<sup>9</sup> patiente, neque vino neque cenis<sup>10</sup> indulget, et<sup>11</sup> quamvis more gentis libidinosus, non tamen inter uxores ritu paterno<sup>12</sup> languescit, choreas fugitat, unguenta devitat, raro induitur mollibus, {66v} non cantu, non sono delinitur, non canes alit, non aves nutrit: una ei voluptas est arma tractare. [cont.]

[43] [FV] Ceterum, quia nonnullos esse audio, qui Mahumetum deinceps quieturum existimant, neque, ut ego dico, tantopere festinandum censent, reserabo<sup>13</sup> vobis aliqua de consuetudine ac natura hujus hominis<sup>14</sup>, quae mihi per eos nota sunt, qui secum aliquando conversati fuere, ut quid sperandum, quidve timendum sit certius habeatis. Est autem Mahumetus adolescens annos natus quattuor et viginti, animo truci et gloriae cupido, robusto corpore ac laboris patiente. Neque vino neque cenis indulget. Quamvis more gentis libidinosus, non tamen {105v} inter uxores ritu paterno languescit, choreas fugitat, unguenta devitat, non induitur mollibus, non cantu, non sono delinitur, non canes alit, non aves nutrit: una ei<sup>15</sup> voluptas est arma tractare. [cont.]

---

<sup>1</sup> Mahumetum deinceps :  
deinceps Maumethum P1\*

<sup>2</sup> cessent KO

<sup>3</sup> consuetudine et natura : natura  
et consuetudine P2

<sup>4</sup> aliquandiu KO

<sup>5</sup> vel P2

<sup>6</sup> de *add.* P2

<sup>7</sup> nactus P2\*

<sup>8</sup> et *add.* P2

<sup>9</sup> laborem P2

<sup>10</sup> indiget KO

<sup>11</sup> *omit.* P1\*

<sup>12</sup> *omit.* KO

<sup>13</sup> resarabo A, D

<sup>14</sup> Maumeti mores *in marg.* D

<sup>15</sup> *omit.* B

[43] [FV] Moreover, I hear many people express the belief that Mehmed will now take a period of rest and not move forward as quickly as I have said. I shall therefore tell you something about the habits and character of this man, as I have heard from people who had dealings with him.<sup>1</sup> Then you will better know what to hope for and what to fear.

Mehmed is a young man of 24 years. He is fierce and desires glory, robust of body and enduring of labour, and he does not indulge in wine and banquets. Though, like all his people, he is given to sexual pleasure, he does not, as his forefathers, spend his time among his wives. He avoids dancing<sup>2</sup> and balms, and he does not wear soft clothes. He is not fond of singing or music, and he does not raise dogs or birds.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, he has only one pleasure: all things military. [cont.]

---

<sup>1</sup> E.g., Niccolò Sagundino

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Horatius: *Carmina*, 2.3.13

<sup>3</sup> Niccolò Sagundino: *Oratio* (Casselli, p. 5): *non luxu neque lascivia admodum delectari videtur, non*

*ventri deditus ... non epulis et ebrietati pro more gentis indulget*

[43] [EV] [cont.] Honorat<sup>1</sup> milites<sup>2</sup>, equos amat; naves, currus<sup>3</sup>, machinas bellicas formosis mulieribus praefert. Et quamvis est natura barbarus abhorretque litteras, gesta tamen majorum cupide audit ac Julium Caesarem et Alexandrum magnum omnibus anteponit, quorum illustria facta superare posse confidit atque contendit, nec se minus aptum ad subjugandum<sup>4</sup> orbem dicit, quam illi fuerunt, cum sua sint longe<sup>5</sup> majora principia, quam illorum referantur. Et quoniam falso prophetae suo Mahumeto, ex quo nomen habet<sup>6</sup>, Constantinopolim<sup>7</sup> subjecit, non dubitat, quin et<sup>8</sup> Romam submittere<sup>9</sup> possit, barbara temeritate et Asiana superbia plenus. Hic est vester<sup>10</sup> hostis, proceres. Existimatote<sup>11</sup> {67r} nunc<sup>12</sup>, an talem naturam quiescere sit verisimile.

[43] [FV] [cont.] Honorat miltes, equos amat; naves, currus, machinas bellicas formosis mulieribus praefert. Et quamvis est natura barbarus abhorretque litteras, gesta tamen majorum cupide audit, ac Julium Caesarem et Alexandrum magnum omnibus anteponit, quorum illustria facta superare posse confidit atque contendit, nec se minus aptum ad subigendum orbem dicit, quam illi fuerunt, cum sua sint longe majora principia, quam illorum referuntur. Et quoniam falso prophetae Mahumeto, ex quo nomen habet, Constantinopolim subjecit, non dubitat quin et Romam submittere possit, barbara temeritate et Asiana superbia plenus. Hic est vester hostis, proceres. Existimate nunc, an talem naturam quiescere sit verisimile.

---

<sup>1</sup> honorem ac P2

<sup>2</sup> et *add.* P2

<sup>3</sup> curros KO

<sup>4</sup> subiendum KO

<sup>5</sup> multa P1

<sup>6</sup> nomen habet *omit.* KO

<sup>7</sup> Constantino KO

<sup>8</sup> ad KO

<sup>9</sup> subjicere P2

<sup>10</sup> noster P1

<sup>11</sup> estimate P2\*

<sup>12</sup> et *add.* P2

[43] [FV] [cont.] He honours soldiers, he loves horses, and he prefers ships, wagons, and war machines to beautiful women. Though he is a barbarian by nature and abhors letters, he avidly hears about the deeds of great men, and he puts Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great above all.<sup>1</sup> He is confident that he will be able to surpass their illustrious deeds and is striving to do so. And he claims that he is just as capable of conquering the world as they were since he starts from a much more advantageous position than they reportedly did.<sup>2</sup> And since he has won Constantinople for the false prophet, Muhammad, after whom he was named, he does not doubt that he shall be able to do the same with Rome,<sup>3</sup> full, as he is, of barbarian audacity and Asian arrogance.<sup>4</sup> Such is your enemy, Nobles! Consider now if such a character is likely to rest.

---

<sup>1</sup> Niccolò Sagundino: *Oratio* (Caselli, p. 6): *Alexandrum Macedonem et C. Caesarem praecipue sibi imitandos delegit*

<sup>2</sup> Mehmed's supposed fascination with Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great was frequently commented upon in contemporary Western writings, but the present passage may likely have been adapted from Jacopo Tedaldi's eyewitness account of the Fall of Constantinople to Pope Nicolaus V of 16 August 1453, in Pertusi, I, p. 186-187: *Si sa da coloro che sono scampati dal Turco e che sono a conoscenza delle sue con-*

*dizioni e della sua Potenza che egli ha ventitré o ventiquattro anni ... pieno di coraggio e dedideroso di signorreggiare e di convertire tutto il mondo, assai più che Alessandro o Cesare o altro potente che viene ricordato, poichè egli stima dio avere una Potenza ed una signoria assai più grande di quell'ache sia mai stata posseduta da altri. E si faceva sempre leggere le loro storie ...* See also Setton, II, p. 137

<sup>3</sup> Niccolò Sagundino: *Oratio* (Caselli, p. 57): *ubi ...Constantinopolitana potitus est Victoria ... ita insolescere coepit et in nomen in-*

*saevire Christianum ... principes tandem Christianos extinguere putat et imperium orbis vindicare sibi audeat somnietque ... innixus vaticiniis et praedictionibus quibusdam quam sibi regnum Italiae et Urbis Romae expugnationem promittunt*

<sup>4</sup> See Leonardo of Chios' eyewitness account of the Fall of Constantinople to Pope Nicolaus V of 16 August 1453, in Pertusi, I, p. 168: *Alias scito in tantam iam hostem superlatam pompam, ut non erubescat dicere sinum Adriaticum penetrare Romamque venturum.* Cf. Setton, II, p. 137

[44] [EV] Sed quid conjecturis aut argumentis in rebus utimur<sup>1</sup> manifestis<sup>2</sup>? Nonne hic victa Constantinopoli mox Peram delevit, propinquas civitates oppressit, Cyclades insulas maris Aegei magna ex parte diripuit<sup>3</sup>, despotum ex Rascia pepulit? Et quamvis essent cum Hungaris indutiae, eorum tamen fines ingressus, nonnullos agros depopulatus est. Ecce pacem Turcorum, optimi principes<sup>4</sup>, ecce quietem, quam sperare potestis! Nolite confidere<sup>5</sup>! Nolite differre<sup>6</sup>! Consulite vobis ipsis et utilitati libertatique vestrae, dum tempus habetis<sup>7</sup>. Causa belli, ut intelligitis, et justa est et necessaria et maxima: vobis ad pugnam omnia quam Turcis meliora supersunt.

[44] [FV] Sed quid conjecturis aut argumentis in rebus utimur manifestis? Nonne hic victa Constantinopoli mox Peram delevit, propinquas civitates oppressit, Cyclades insulas maris Aegei magna ex parte diripuit, despotum ex Rascia pepulit? Et quamvis essent cum Hungaris indutiae, eorum fines ingressus agros depopulatus est. Ecce pacem Turcorum, proceres, ecce quietem, quam sperare potestis! Nolite confidere! Nolite differre! Consulite vobis ipsis et utilitati libertatique vestrae, dum tempus habetis. Causa belli, ut intelligitis, et justa est et necessaria et maxima; vobis ad pugnam omnia quam Turcis meliora supersunt.

---

<sup>1</sup> veterum P2

<sup>2</sup> opus est *add.* P2

<sup>3</sup> disrupt P2

<sup>4</sup> optimi principes : proceres P2

<sup>5</sup> confideri P1

<sup>6</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>7</sup> adest P2

[44] [FV] Yet why should we rely on conjecture and arguments in matters that are evident? When this man had conquered Constantinople, did he not immediately destroy Pera,<sup>1</sup> fall upon the cities in the area, lay waste to the Cycladean Isles in the Aegaeon Sea, and expel the ruler from Serbia? And though the Turks had a truce with the Hungarians, they entered their lands and wasted their fields.<sup>2</sup> This is the peace of the Turks, Noble Men, this is the quiet that you can hope for! Do not be confident! Do not procrastinate! See to your own affairs, your advantage, and your liberty while you still have time.

As you see, the cause of the war is just, necessary, and great, and you are in all ways better prepared for war than the Turks.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Genoese colony of Pera surrendered to Mehmed shortly af-

ter the Fall of Constantinople. It was not destroyed

<sup>2</sup> Actually, at the instigation of a papal legate, Hungary itself had broken a truce with the Turks



[45] [EV] Orat vos Caesar, ne Christianae reipublicae, ne<sup>1</sup> vobis ipsis<sup>2</sup> hoc tempore desitis, sed, quemadmodum {67v} Ratisponae condictum<sup>3</sup> est, quos potestis milites, equos, arma, currus<sup>4</sup>, instrumenta bellica, commeatus praeparetis, nam et ipse, quae sunt in sua potestate, ad hoc opus omnia promittit. Quaecumque sibi ut imperatori<sup>5</sup> Romanorum, ut<sup>6</sup> Austriae duci, ut religioso principi, ut homini Christiano incumbunt, exequi<sup>7</sup> praesto est et volens<sup>8</sup>, tantum vos, principes, in hoc loco de bello gerendo concordēs sitis. Nam si umquam pugnandi tempus<sup>9</sup> fuit, profecto nunc<sup>10</sup> est, quando non solum honor et status vester<sup>11</sup>, sed ipsa libertas vestra, ipsa fides, ipsa vita in dubio ponitur. Neque enim, si Turcos progredi ad vos<sup>12</sup> sinitis, quaerendum erit, in quo statu, in qua fide vivere, sed utrum<sup>13</sup> vivere debeatis.

[45] [FV] Orat vos Caesar, ne Christianae reipublicae, ne vobis ipsis hoc tempore desitis, sed, quemadmodum Ratisponae condictum est, quos potestis milites, equos, arma, currus, instrumenta bellica, commeatus praeparetis, nam et ipse, quae sunt in sua potestate, ad hoc opus omnia promittit. Quaecumque sibi ut imperatori, ut Austriae duci, ut religioso principi, ut homini Christiano incumbunt, exequi praesto est<sup>14</sup> et volens, tantum vos, principes, in hoc loco de bello gerendo concordēs sitis. Nam si umquam pugnandi tempus fuit, nunc profecto est, quando non solum honor et status vester, sed ipsa libertas vestra, ipsa fides, ipsa vita in dubio ponitur. Neque enim, si Turcos progredi ad vos sinitis, quaerendum erit, in quo statu, in qua fide vivere, sed utrum vivere debeatis.

---

<sup>1</sup> nec P2\*

<sup>2</sup> *omit.* P1

<sup>3</sup> indictum P2

<sup>4</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>5</sup> imperator P1

<sup>6</sup> et P1

<sup>7</sup> et eque P2

<sup>8</sup> valens KO

<sup>9</sup> pugnandi tempus : tempus

pugnandi P1

<sup>10</sup> profecto nunc : nunc profecto

*omit.* P2

<sup>11</sup> status vester : vester status P2

<sup>12</sup> progredi ad vos : ad vos

progredi P2

<sup>13</sup> *omit.* KO

<sup>14</sup> *omit.* B

## 5. Conclusion

[45] The emperor asks you not to fail the Christian commonwealth and yourselves. Instead, you should, as much as you are able to and as decided in Regensburg, mobilise soldiers, horses, weapons, wagons, war machines, and provisions. On his part, the emperor promises all the resources at his disposal for this purpose. Whatever is incumbent upon him as emperor, as Duke of Austria, as a God-fearing prince, and as a Christian, he will do promptly and gladly, provided that you, Princes, now come to an agreement on waging the war. For if ever there was a time for fighting, it is indeed now, when not only your honour and state but even your very liberty, faith, and life are at stake. And if you let the Turks come to you, we shall not have to ask in what state or faith you live, but whether you will be allowed to live at all.

[46] [EV] **Mementote patrum vestrorum, generosi proceres<sup>1</sup>! Ponite ante oculos illustria facta majorum! Recolite quotiens progenitores vestri cum magnis exercitibus Alpes Italiae {68r} transiere<sup>2</sup>. Astulfum<sup>3</sup>, Longobardorum regem<sup>4</sup>, Stephano papae molestum, Pipinus coercuit. Desiderium, ejus<sup>5</sup> provinciae regem Hadriano insultantem Carolus magnus compescuit. Romanos Formoso pontifici rebelles Arnolfus<sup>6</sup> edomuit. Berengarium, qui se regem Italiae jactitabat, vocatu Johannis papae Otto primus magno bello contrivit. Longum esset referre<sup>7</sup>, quotiens vestri antecessores pro Romana ecclesia, pro fide catholica, pro salute communi decertaverunt. Illi quidem, dum parato et forti animo Christianam religionem tuerentur<sup>8</sup>, Romanum imperium ad se traxere.**

[46] [FV] **Mementote patrum vestrorum, generosi proceres! Ponite ante oculos illustria facta majorum! Recolite<sup>9</sup> quotiens progenitores vestri cum magnis exercitibus Alpes Italiae transiere Romanam ecclesiam defensuri. Aystulfum, regem Longobardorum, {106r} Stephano papae molestum, Pipinus coercuit. Desiderium Hadriano insultantem Carolus magnus compescuit. Romanos Formoso pontifici rebelles Arnolfus edomuit. Berengarium, qui se regem Italiae jactitabat, vocatu Johannis papae Otto primus bello contrivit. Longum esset referre, quotiens vestri antecessores pro Romana ecclesia, pro fide catholica, pro salute communi decertaverunt.**

---

<sup>1</sup> principes P2

<sup>2</sup> Romanam ecclesiam defensuri  
*add.* P2\*

<sup>3</sup> Alfonsum KO

<sup>4</sup> Longobardorum regem : regem  
Longobardorum P2

<sup>5</sup> eiusdem P2

<sup>6</sup> Arnoldus P2

<sup>7</sup> longum ... referre : referre  
gravius fueri P1\*; referre quidem  
gravius fuerit KO

<sup>8</sup> tuentur P1

<sup>9</sup> Germanorum in Italiam  
expeditiones *in marg.* D

[46] [FV] Remember your forefathers, Nobles, and consider their glorious achievements! Think of how often they crossed the Italian Alps with great armies in order to defend the Roman Church. Pippin<sup>1</sup> restrained<sup>2</sup> Aistulf, King of the Longobards,<sup>3</sup> when he was causing trouble for Pope Stephen.<sup>4</sup> Charlemagne<sup>5</sup> checked Desiderius<sup>6</sup> when he abused Adrian.<sup>7</sup> <sup>8</sup> Arnulf<sup>9</sup> subdued the Romans,<sup>10</sup> who rebelled against Pope Formosus.<sup>11</sup> At the call of John,<sup>12</sup> Otto I.<sup>13</sup> defeated Berengarius,<sup>14</sup> who bragged of being King of Italy. It would take too long to relate how often your predecessors fought for the Roman Church, for the Catholic Faith, and for the salvation of all.<sup>15</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Pippin the Short (ca. 714 - 768):

King of the Franks from 751 until his death. Father of Charlemagne

<sup>2</sup> 754 and 756

<sup>3</sup> Aistulf (-756): Duke of Friuli from 744, King of the Lombards from 749, and Duke of Spoleto from 751

<sup>4</sup> 756 and 756 AD

<sup>5</sup> Stephanus II (715-757): Pope from 752 to his death

<sup>6</sup> Desiderius (-ca. 786): last king of the Lombard Kingdom of northern Italy, ruling from 756 to 774

<sup>7</sup> Hadrianus I (ca. 700-795): Pope from 772 to his death

<sup>8</sup> Charlemagne fought the Lombards in a series of campaigns stretching from 757-773, in 773 in aid of Pope Hadrian

<sup>9</sup> Arnulf of Carinthia (850-899): Carolingian King of East Francia from 887, disputed King of Italy from 894, and disputed Holy Roman Emperor from 896 until his death

<sup>10</sup> 894 and 896

<sup>11</sup> Formosus (ca. 816-896): Pope from 891 to his death

<sup>12</sup> Johannes XII (ca. 930/937-964): Pope from 955 until his death

<sup>13</sup> Otto I the Great (912 -973): German king from 936 and emperor of the Holy Roman Empire from 962 until his death

<sup>14</sup> Berengar II (ca. 900-966): King of Italy from 950 until his deposition in 961

<sup>15</sup> The events related in this section would be known to Piccolomini from his study of Otto von Freising: *Chronica*, 5-6, also used by him in his *Pentalogus* from 1444

[47] [EV] Videte<sup>1</sup> nunc, quem vobis animum suscipiendum<sup>2</sup> esse putetis. Patres vestri pro suis non dicam civibus, sed agricolis paulo contumeliosius tractatis saepe bella gesserunt. Vos<sup>3</sup> uno imperatore cum tota Graeciae<sup>4</sup> nobilitate crudelissime necato non putabitis esse pugnandum? {68v} Illi frequenter suis ministris parum reverenter compellatis non dubitarunt arma recipere<sup>5</sup>. Vos Deo vestro probrose contempto non armabimini<sup>6</sup>? Illi pro ampliandis<sup>7</sup> Christianorum finibus durissimis<sup>8</sup> se proeliis commiserunt; vos pro tuenda religione<sup>9</sup> fideque vestra recusabitis arma capessere? Non est de rebus levioribus hoc bellum: pro patria, pro liberis, pro uxoribus, pro focus<sup>10</sup>, pro libertate, pro vita, pro fide, pro religione, pro sanctis martyribus, pro magnis apostolis, pro gloriosa matre Dei, advocata nostra, regina caeli, Maria, pro filio Dei, pro redemptore, pro salvatore, pro maximo et<sup>11</sup> certissimo Deo vestro<sup>12</sup>, pro spiritu sancto direttore, pro patre aeterno, pro divinissima trinitate, quam spurcidus ille Mahumetus persequitur, committendum est proelium. Cogitate<sup>13</sup>, principes, quo redacta est Christiana religio, quantum in oriente<sup>14</sup>, quantum in meridie diminuta est nostra fides. Sumite alta corda, induite fortes animos! Defendite matrem vestram ecclesiam, quae vos Christo regeneravit! {69r} Accingimini gladio super femora vestra, potentissimi<sup>15</sup>, occurrите inimicis Christi<sup>16</sup>!

[47] [FV] Videte nunc, quem vobis animum suscipiendum esse putetis. Patres vestri pro suis non dicam civibus, sed agricolis paulo contumeliosius tractatis saepe bella gesserunt. Vos uno imperatore cum tota Graeciae nobilitate crudelissime necato non putabitis esse pugnandum? Illi frequenter suis ministris inreverenter compellatis non dubitarunt arma recipere. Vos Deo vestro probrose contempto non armabimini? Illi pro tuendis agris durissimis se proeliis commiserunt; vos pro tuenda religione fideque vestra recusabitis arma capescere? Non est de rebus levioribus hoc bellum: pro patria, pro liberis, pro uxoribus, pro focus, pro libertate, pro vita, pro fide, pro religione, pro sanctis martyribus, pro magnis apostolis, pro gloriosa matre Dei, advocata nostra, regina caeli, Maria, pro filio Dei, pro redemptore, pro salvatore, pro maximo et certissimo Deo vestro, pro spiritu sancto direttore, pro divinissima trinitate, quam spurcidus ille Mahumetus persequitur, committendum est proelium. Cogitate, principes, quo redacta est Christiana religio, quantum in orienti, quantum in meridie diminuta est nostra fides. Sumite alta corda, induite fortes animos! Defendite matrem vestram ecclesiam, quae vos Christo regeneravit! Accingimini gladio super femora vestra, potentissimi, occurrите inimicis Christi!

<sup>1</sup> videtis P2

<sup>2</sup> animum suscipiendum :  
suscipiendum animum P2

<sup>3</sup> pro *add.* P2\*

<sup>4</sup> Graecia KO

<sup>5</sup> suscipere P1

<sup>6</sup> illi frequenter ... armabimini

*omit.* P2

<sup>7</sup> amplectendis KO

<sup>8</sup> diversissimis P2

<sup>9</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>10</sup> sociis KO

<sup>11</sup> ac P1\*

<sup>12</sup> nostro P1

<sup>13</sup> cogitare KO

<sup>14</sup> orienti P2

<sup>15</sup> potentissima P2

<sup>16</sup> *omit.* P1

[47] [FV] See now in what spirit you should act. Your fathers went to war not just for their citizens but even for their peasants if they had just been treated rudely. So, should you not consider it worth fighting when an emperor has been killed cruelly, together with all the nobility of Greece? Your fathers did not hesitate to take up weapons if their officials had been treated insultingly. So, should you not arm yourselves when your God has been shamefully scorned? Your fathers entered savage battles in order to protect their lands. So, should you refuse to take up arms in order to protect your religion and faith? This war is not about trifles. You must go to war for your country, for your children, for your wives, for your homes, for your liberty, for your life, for your faith, for your religion, for the holy martyrs, for the great apostles, for Mary, glorious Mother of God, our patron, Queen of Heaven, for the Son of God, for the Saviour, for your great and undoubted God, for the Holy Spirit who leads us, and for the divine Trinity, persecuted by that filthy Muhammad.<sup>1</sup> Consider, Princes, to what state the Christian religion has been brought, and how greatly our Faith has been reduced in the East and the South. Take courage! Be brave! Defend your mother, the Church through whom you were reborn in Christ. *Gird your swords upon your thighs, o Mighty Men,*<sup>2</sup> go to meet the enemies of Christ!

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Moudarres, p. 43: ... in book 2 of his Commentaries, Pius II underscores Muhammad's tendencies towards Nestorianism and Ari-

anism, heresies that called into question the divine nature of Christ and the doctrine of the Tri-

nity: "The Turkish nation despises the Trinity..."

<sup>2</sup> Psalms, 44, 4

[48] [EV] Nolite ultimi<sup>1</sup> esse<sup>2</sup>, quos imperii dignitas jubet exire priores! Carolus, rex Francorum<sup>3</sup> nobilissimus et potentissimus, pugnaturum se dicit, si vos armamini<sup>4</sup>. Quae sit mens inclyti Ladislai, regis Hungariae et<sup>5</sup> Bohemiae, ex suis<sup>6</sup> oratoribus audietis. Regis Daciae, Sueciae<sup>7</sup>, ac<sup>8</sup> Norvegiae litteras habemus, quae<sup>9</sup> mentem illius optimam exponunt. Alfonsus, rex Aragonum et Siciliae, nostri saeculi clarissimum sidus, etiam silentibus ceteris, hoc magnificum bellum, hanc gloriosam expeditionem pro Christi nomine ultro suscepturum se pollicetur. Philippus, Burgundiae dux, non minus animo quam sanguine clarus, potentatu ac dominatu<sup>10</sup> par magnis regibus, non modo se<sup>11</sup> <sup>12</sup> iturum ad hoc bellum<sup>13</sup> promittit, sed alios quoque, ut se accingant, magnopere adhortatur<sup>14</sup>.

[48] [FV] Nolite ultimi esse, quos imperii dignitas jubet exire priores! Carolus, rex Francorum et nobilissimus ac potentissimus, pugnaturum se dicit, si vos armamini. Alfonsus, rex Aragonum et Siciliae, nostri saeculi clarissimum sidus, etiam silentibus ceteris, hoc magnificum bellum, hanc gloriosam expeditionem pro Christi nomine ultro suscepturum se pollicetur. Philippus, Burgundiae dux, non minus animo quam sanguine clarus, potentatu ac dominatu par magnis regibus, non modo se iturum ad hoc bellum promittit, sed alios quoque, ut se accingant, magnopere adhortatur.

---

<sup>1</sup> ultiores P2

<sup>2</sup> ultimi esse : esse ultimi KO

<sup>3</sup> rex *add.* P1; et *add.* KO

<sup>4</sup> armemini KO

<sup>5</sup> ex P1; ac P2

<sup>6</sup> ex suis *omit.* P1

<sup>7</sup> Sareciae P1\*

<sup>8</sup> et P1\*

<sup>9</sup> qui P2\*

<sup>10</sup> dominatione P1

<sup>11</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>12</sup> modo se : se modo P1

<sup>13</sup> se *add.* P2\*

<sup>14</sup> hortatur P2\*

[48] [FV] Do not be the last whom imperial dignity requires to leave as the first. The noble and puissant King Charles of France<sup>1</sup> says that he will fight if you go to war.<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup> King Alfonso of Aragon and Sicily,<sup>4</sup> brilliant star of our time, promises to take up this magnificent war and this glorious crusade for the name of Christ, even if others remain passive. Duke Philippe of Burgundy,<sup>5</sup> renowned both for his courage and for his line and equal to great kings in might and power, not only promises to go to war himself, but he also urges others to prepare for war.

---

<sup>1</sup> Charles VII (1403-1461): King of France from 1422 to his death

<sup>2</sup> King Charles' attitude towards the war against the Turks was actually quite ambiguous, if not directly negative

<sup>3</sup> In the original version of the oration held in 1454 Piccolomini also mentions the positive attitude of King Ladislas of Hungary and of King Christian of Denmark/Nor-

way/Sweden, but when the final version was prepared *under his own* supervision, as pope, King Ladislas had died and the promises of the Danish King had turned out to be quite empty. King Christian was represented at the diet by Archbishop Heinrich Kalteisen

<sup>4</sup> Alfonso V the Magnanimous (1396-1458): King of Aragon, Va-

lencia, Majorca, Sardinia and Corsica, Sicily, and Count of Barcelona from 1416, and King of Naples (as Alfonso I) from 1442 until his death

<sup>5</sup> Philippe III le Bon (1396 -1467): Duke of Burgundy from 1419 until his death



[49] [EV] Intueamini<sup>1</sup> hos duos principes, Alfonsum et<sup>2</sup> Philippum, maximos dominos, terra marique potentes: {69v} ambo aetate profecti<sup>3</sup> sunt, ambo sexagesimum annum transiere. Ambo tamen certamini sese offerunt neque in propriis personis pro Deo suo pugnare recusant. Quid vos faciatis<sup>4</sup>, lectissimi<sup>5</sup> principes, quibus aetas florida est, quibus ebullit sanguis, quibus Martius labor jucundus quidam<sup>6</sup> ludus videri debet<sup>7</sup>? En milites! En duces<sup>8</sup>! En robustissimi juvenes! Sinetisne senibus majorem quam vobis animum<sup>9</sup> esse? Dormietisne domi, dum<sup>10</sup> illi foris<sup>11</sup> militent? Marcebitisne otio, dum illi in negotio vigent<sup>12</sup>? Minime de vobis talia suspicor. Degeneres animos timor arguit, vos autem erecto animo alacres intueor. Incipio bene sperare. Sentio jam titillare<sup>13</sup> pectora vestra ac flagrare amore bellandi. Nec miror vos aetate integra militiae sectatores hujus belli cupidos esse.

[49] [FV] Intueamini hos duos principes, Alfonsum ac Philippum, maximos dominos, terra marique potentes. Ambo aetate profecti sunt, ambo sexagesimum annum transiere. Ambo tamen certamini sese offerunt neque in propriis corporibus pro Deo suo pugnare recusant. Quid vos faciatis, lectissimi principes, quibus aetas florida est, quibus ebullit sanguis, quibus {106v} Martius labor jocundus quidam ludus videri debet? En milites! En duces! En robustissimi juvenes! Sinetisne senibus majorem quam vobis animum esse? Dormietisne domi, cum illi foris militent? Marcebitisne otio, dum illi vigent in negotio? Minime talia de vobis suspicor. *Degeneres animos timor arguit*, vos autem erectos alacresque intueor. Incipio bene sperare. Sentio jam titillare pectora vestra ac fragrare amore bellandi. Nec miror vos aetate integra militiae sectatores hujus belli cupidos esse.

---

<sup>1</sup> imitamini P2

<sup>2</sup> ac P2\*

<sup>3</sup> profecti KO, WY

<sup>4</sup> facietis P2

<sup>5</sup> letissimi P2; electissimi KO

<sup>6</sup> quidem P1, KO

<sup>7</sup> deberetur P2

<sup>8</sup> en duces *omit.* P2

<sup>9</sup> quam vobis animum : animum

quam vobis P2

<sup>10</sup> cum P1, P2, KO

<sup>11</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>12</sup> in negotio vigent : vigent in negotio P2\*

<sup>13</sup> corda vestra *add.* P2\*

[49] [FV] Look to those two princes, Alfonso and Philippe, great lords, powerful on land and at sea. Both are ageing and more than sixty years old, but nonetheless, they offer to go to war, and they do not refuse to fight in person for their God. So, what should you do, Excellent Princes? Your age is perfect<sup>1</sup>, your blood is young, and martial labours seem like a joyful sport to you. Behold, Soldiers! Behold, Leaders! Behold, strong Youths! Will you allow old men to have greater courage than you? Will you sleep at home when they fight abroad? Will you be feeble and inert while they are strong and active? No, I certainly do not believe this about you: *It is fear that proves souls base-born.*<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, I see that you are attentive and eager. I begin to hope for the best. I already feel your hearts quicken and burn with the love of battle. And I do not wonder that, at your youthful age, you delight in military matters and are enthused by this war.

---

<sup>1</sup> "florida"

<sup>2</sup> Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 4, 13

[50] [EV] Nam et ego ipse, quamvis senio gravis, quamvis ecclesiae deditus, incendor et aestuo nimio fervore talis visendae pugnae. Veteribus {70r} illis, ex quibus vobis origo est, principes, cum essent adhuc gentiles, nullum fuit grave bellum, quod pro patria suscepissent, nullam illi mortem miseram putavere, quae pro republica subiretur. Sed quae respublica major aut melior quam nostra Christiana? Quae patria dulcior aut nobilior quam nostra illa caelestis, ad quam cuncti aspiramus, formosa Jerusalem? Illi, cum pro patria morerentur<sup>1</sup>, tamen<sup>2</sup> maxime exulabant<sup>3</sup>; nos, cum morimur, tum<sup>4</sup> finimus exilium, tum patriam ingredimur. O felix mors, quae vitam finit<sup>5</sup> temporalem, concedit aeternam! O faustum ac desiderabile bellum, in quo, si vincis, in terra, si vinceris, in caelo triumphas! Quidni ergo ardenti pugnemus animo, quibus tanta<sup>6</sup> promittuntur emolumenta?

[50] [FV] Nam et ego ipse, quamvis senio gravis, quamvis ecclesiae deditus, incendor et aestuo nimio fervore talis belli. Veteribus illis, ex quibus vobis origo est, principes, cum essent adhuc gentiles, nullum fuit grave bellum, quod pro patria suscepissent, nullam illi mortem miseram putavere, quae pro republica subiretur. Sed quae respublica major aut melior quam nostra Christiana? Quae patria dulcior aut nobilior quam nostra illa caelestis, ad quam cuncti aspiramus, formosa Jerusalem? At illi, cum pro patria morerentur, tum maxime exulabant; nos, cum morimur, tum finimus exilium, tum patriam ingredimur. O felix mors, quae vitam finit temporalem, concedit aeternam! O faustum ac desiderabile bellum, in quo, si vincis, in terra, si vinceris, in caelo triumphas! Quidni ergo ardenti pugnemus animo, quibus tanta promittuntur emolumenta?

---

<sup>1</sup> morerentur P2\*

<sup>2</sup> tum P2

<sup>3</sup> exultabant P2\*

<sup>4</sup> cum P2

<sup>5</sup> premit KO

<sup>6</sup> tot P2

[50] [FV] For I myself, though burdened with age and dedicated to the Church, am burning and enflamed with enthusiasm for this war. Those peoples of old from whom you descend, Princes, when they were still pagan, considered no war as a burden if they fought for their country, and no death as misery if they died for their state. And what state is greater or better than our Christian Commonwealth? What country is more sweet or noble than our fatherland in Heaven, the beautiful Jerusalem, where we all want to go? When your forefathers died for their country, they really went into exile. But when we die, our exile ends, and we enter our own country. Oh, happy death that ends earthly life and gives us eternal life instead. Oh, happy and desirable war in which you triumph on Earth if you win and in Heaven if you lose.<sup>1</sup> Should we not fight with burning courage when we are promised such rewards?

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Flavio Biondo: *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades*, II, 3 [Im.76]: *Quid quod cadentes in proelio et ab hoste caesi aequae ac vincentes opima de*

*hoste ferent spolia ad ad paratam in caelis, in aeterno regno cum sanctis gloriam perducti cum nostro hujus expeditionis imperatore Jesu Christo triumphabunt.*

(From the oration “*Existimatis forte*”, put into the mouth of Pope Urban II by Biondo)

[51] [EV] **Ecce dominus noster sanctissimus, Christianorum summus pater, Nicolaus papa V., ovium Christi pastor, Romanorum<sup>1</sup> pontifex, successor beati Petri, Christi Dei nostri vicarius, omnibus, qui hanc expeditionem sequentur<sup>2</sup>, delicta remittit, culpas abluit, {70v} veniam praebet, caelum promittit. Nec de promisso est dubium, quoniam hic<sup>3</sup> est, qui potestatem habet ligandi et<sup>4</sup> solvendi, qui locum illius tenet, cui datae sunt claves regni caelorum. Ecce nunc caeli aperti sunt. Ecce nunc iter in<sup>5</sup> patriam! Ecce<sup>6</sup> scalam, qua super omnes planetarum orbis scandere valeatis atque ad ipsam galaxiam pervenire, quae nos<sup>7</sup> ad regiam magni Dei recto tramite ducat. Quod si omnibus, ut inquit orator, qui patriam auxerint<sup>8</sup>, juverint, defenderint, certum est in caelo esse<sup>9</sup> diffinitum locum, in quo beati aevo *aeterno* fruuntur, quid de vobis putandum est, principes, qui non<sup>10</sup> pro terrena<sup>11</sup>, sed pro caelesti patria pugnaturi estis?**

[51] [FV] **Ecce dominus noster sanctissimus, Christianorum summus pater, Nicolaus papa V., ovium Christi pastor, Romanus pontifex, successor Petri, Christi Dei nostri vicarius, omnibus, qui hanc expeditionem sequuntur, delicta remittit, culpas abluit, veniam praebet, caelum promittit. Nec de promisso est dubium, quando hic est, qui potestatem habet *ligandi ac solvendi*, qui locum illius tenet, cui datae sunt *claves regni caelorum*. Ecce, nunc *caeli aperti sunt*. Ecce nunc iter in patriam! Ecce scalam, qua cunctas planetarum orbis transire atque ad ipsam galaxiam, quae vos in ultimum caelum ducat, pervenire possitis. Etsi enim *omnibus, ut inquit orator, qui rempublicam auxerint, juverint, defenderint, certum est esse in caelo diffinitum locum, in quo beati aevo sempiterno<sup>12</sup> fruuntur, quid de vobis putandum est, principes, qui religionem Christianam matremque omnium fidelium ecclesiam tueri et augere conabimini?***

---

<sup>1</sup> Romanus summus P2

<sup>2</sup> sequuntur P2\*

<sup>3</sup> is KO

<sup>4</sup> ac P2, KO

<sup>5</sup> ad P2

<sup>6</sup> nunc *add.* P2

<sup>7</sup> vos P2

<sup>8</sup> allegerint KO

<sup>9</sup> in caelo esse : esse in caelo P2

<sup>10</sup> qui non : non qui KO

<sup>11</sup> eterna P1

<sup>12</sup> sempiterno *corr. ex eterno* A, C

[51] [FV] To all who go on this crusade, our Most Holy Lord, Pope Nicolaus V, supreme father of the Christians, pastor of the sheep of Christ, Roman Pontiff, successor of Peter, vicar of Christ our God, forgives their sins, cleanses their guilt, offers forgiveness, and promises Heaven.<sup>1</sup> There can be no doubt concerning this promise, for it is he who has the power *to bind and to loose*,<sup>2</sup> and who holds the place of him to whom were given *the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*.<sup>3</sup> See, *the Heavens are opened!*<sup>4</sup> Here is the way to your fatherland! Here is the ladder by which you can cross the spheres of the planets and reach the galaxy that takes you to Heaven. The Orator says that *all those who have preserved, aided, or enlarged their fatherland have a special place prepared for them in the heavens, where they may enjoy an eternal life of happiness*.<sup>5</sup> So what should we think about you, Princes, when you will be striving to protect and extend the Christian religion and the mother church of all the faithful?

---

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Pope Nicolaus' crusade bull of 30 September 1453

<sup>2</sup> Matthew, 18, 18

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Matthew, 16, 19

<sup>4</sup> Ezekiel, 1, 1

<sup>5</sup> Cicero: *De re publica*, 6.9.13 (Somnium Scipionis): *omnibus, qui patriam conservaverint, adiu-*

*verint, auxerint, certum esse in caelo definitum locum, ubi beati aevo sempiterno fruuntur*

[52] [EV] **Quid dicam?** Multa dicere possum, sed hoc tempore **apostoli** Pauli, doctoris gentium, **verba**<sup>1</sup> commemorasse sat erit: **Quia**<sup>2</sup> **neque**<sup>3</sup> **oculus vidit neque**<sup>4</sup> **auris audivit, neque**<sup>5</sup> **in cor hominis ascendit**<sup>6</sup>, **quae promisit dominus diligentibus se. Quales vos** futuros esse, o<sup>7</sup> **Germani nobiles, nemo dubitaverit, si hoc bellum, ut imperator admonet, papa petit, Christus jubet, pro divino honore atque amore suscipietis. Amen.**<sup>8 9</sup>

[52] {FV} **Quid dicam?** *Apostoli verba commemorasse sat erit. Quia neque oculus vidit neque auris audivit, neque in cor hominis ascendit, quae promisit dominus diligentibus se. Quales vos esse, Germani nobiles, nemo dubitaverit, si hoc bellum, ut imperator admonet, papa petit, Christus jubet, pro divino honore atque amore suscipietis.*

---

<sup>1</sup> *omit.* P2\*

<sup>2</sup> *quae* P2

<sup>3</sup> *nec* P2\*

<sup>4</sup> *nec* P2\*

<sup>5</sup> *nec* P2\*

<sup>6</sup> *descendit* P2

<sup>7</sup> *omit.* P2

<sup>8</sup> *Amen omit.* P1, P2, KO

<sup>9</sup> *Finis. Explicit add.* P1; *Finis add.* P2\*

[52] [FV] What shall I say? It is enough to remember the words of the Apostle: *That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard: neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love Him.*<sup>1</sup> Germans Nobles, no one will doubt your worth, if for the sake of God's honour and out of love for Him you take on this war that the emperor requests, the pope desires, and Christ commands.

---

<sup>1</sup> 1. Corinthians, 2, 9