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Oration “Flentem et admodum dolentem” of Pope Pius II (1 October 1460, Viterbo). Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 4th version. (Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pope Pius II; 60)

Michael Cotta-Schønberg

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(Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pope Pius II; 60)

**Oration “*Flentem et admodum dolentem*” of Pope Pius II
(1 October 1460, Viterbo). Edited and translated by
Michael von Cotta-Schönberg**

Fourth version

2019

Abstract

On his way back to Rome in September/October 1460, after the Congress of Mantua and a protracted stay in Siena, Pope Pius II was met in Viterbo by envoys from Rome begging him to return to Rome as quickly as possible. In his response to the envoys, the oration "*Flentem et admodum dolentem*", the pope promised to return as soon as possible, underlining some positive results of the Congress – otherwise a failure - as well as the advantages to the Romans accruing from the papacy, and the reasons for his protracted stay in Siena.

Keywords

Enea Silvio Piccolomini; Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini; Pope Pius II; Papa Pio II; Congress of Mantua, 1459; Rome; Siena; Viterbo; Renaissance orations; Rome; Roma; Papacy; Renaissance oratory; Responses to ambassadors; Renaissance rhetorics; 15th century; 1460

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Foreword

In 2007, I undertook a project of publishing the Latin texts with English translations of the orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pope Pius II. Altogether 80¹ orations (including papal responses to ambassadorial addresses) are extant today, though more may still be held, unrecognized, in libraries and archives.

At a later stage the project was expanded to include ambassadors' orations to the pope, of which about 40 are presently known.

I do not, actually, plan to publish further versions of the present volume, but I do reserve the option in case I – during my future studies - come across other manuscripts containing interesting versions of the oration or if important new research data on the subject matter are published, making it appropriate to modify or expand the present text. It will therefore always be useful to check if a later version than the one the reader may have previously found via the Internet is available.

I shall much appreciate to be notified by readers who discover errors and problems in the text and translation or unrecognized quotations.

12 September 2019

MCS

¹ 81 orations, if the "*Cum animadverto*" is counted as a Piccolomini-oration, see oration "*Quam laetus*" [18], Appendix

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II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Context¹

Having left Rome in January 1459, in order to go to the Congress of Mantua, Pope Pius II was absent from the City for almost two years. When he finally returned, after a protracted stay in his beloved Siena, he returned to a city plagued by rebellious youths and the attacks of the Roman barons allied with the condottiero Jacopo Piccinino, who was in the service of the Angevins trying to reconquer the Kingdom of Naples.

The pope left Siena on 10 September 1460 and arrived in Viterbo on 30 September.

In Viterbo he was met by envoys from Rome, begging him to return to the city as quickly as possible. In response the pope delivered the oration "*Flentem et admodum dolentem*".

Four days afterwards he left Viterbo and arrived back in Rome on 6 October.

In his *Commentarii* the pope wrote about the event:

At Viterbo the pope gave audience to the Roman envoys in the presence of the college of cardinals. Since they were all almost equally eloquent, they each took turns in speaking, lest any one seem superior to the next. They described how Rome grieved at Pius's absence, the many troubles that had arisen, the reluctance of the Romans to see him depart, their resentment at his tarrying among strangers, the joy with which they now anticipated his return. The walls of the houses, they very walls of the city rejoiced to hear that Pius was on his way home. They applauded the pope's acts at the Congress of Mantua – his speeches, his arguments, judgments, and replies. They commended to his care both the city, the capital of the world, and its citizens; they begged him to forget the sins that the youth of the city had committed. The Romans would be at peace, and would lead better lives, if only Father Pius returned to see his sons as soon as he could.

When the pope had spoken,

The envoys received the pope's reply with enthusiasm and communicated it to the Conservators of the city. The people of Rome were overjoyed at the thought that the Curia would soon be back with them.²

Pius' 19th century biographer, Georg Voigt, had this comment on the oration:

¹ CO, IV, 39; Pastor, II, p. 76; Voigt, IV, pp. 150-151

² CO, IV, 39 (Meserve, II, pp. 354-355)

Die längere, zum Teil strafende Rede, die er ihnen seinen Commentarien gemäss gehalten haben will, is so unpassend, dass wir sie für eines der oratorischen Kunststücke erklären müssen, mit denen er faule Flecke zu verhüllen pflegt.¹

However, the text of the oration contained in the *Commentarii* appears to be neither negative nor severe towards the Romans at all, and the judgment of Voigt seems not to be well founded.

2. Themes

2.1. Usefulness of the Congress of Mantua

By autumn 1460, it had become abundantly clear that the Congress of Mantua had been a failure in terms of organizing a crusade against the Turks. This was, of course, a bitter disappointment to the pope, as he himself states, since the European and in particular the Italian princes and powers – for various reasons - did not wish to engage in a war against the Turks.

However, it would also have been made clear to the world that the pope had honestly and energetically endeavoured to fulfil his oath – and the electoral capitulation at the conclave which elected him in 1458 – to make the crusade against the Turks his highest priority.² The responsibility for European inactivity versus the Turks was squarely and manifestly placed on the European princes and states.

In his oration Pius said:

Though We did not achieve the results We had hoped for, We do not regret the idea and the efforts spent on it. The whole world now knows that what We lacked was not courage, but resources. Now, nobody can accuse Us of staying comfortably in Rome while letting the true faith be destroyed, for though We are old and burdened with illness, We feared neither cold, nor snow, nor rain. We travelled far and visited foreign regions. We summoned the princes, admonished the peoples, waited long, and did everything We could to provide for the common good. Very few came; and even fewer treasured religion higher than their own comfort. So what can anybody criticize Us for, now?

¹ Voigt, IV, p. 150

² See oration “*Ut apertum vobis*” [29]

It is the princes of this world who must be blamed for their indifference: they did not want to hear the Vicar of Christ when he came to take counsel for the Commonwealth. So We returned as victors, not over the Turks, but over all the Christian princes. We may not have gone [to war] against the enemies, as We had wished to, but We do hope that a seed has been sown whose grain we may later harvest. Sweet is the memory of Our labours: God will not deprive Us of their reward. [Sect. 3-4]

It was a bitter consolation, but somehow a consolation, not the least to a man who held the honour of the papal office as dear as Pius did.

2.2. Advantages to the Romans accruing from the papacy

Another theme, and one Pius would take up again and develop in his later oration to the Roman citizens, the *“Ingentes vobis gratias”* [61], was the advantages to the Romans accruing from the papacy, not only in terms of the supreme status and prestige of the papacy, but also in terms of economic benefits:

In the oration he said:

You are wise, men of Rome, to respect, revere, and venerate your lord for it is he who gives you fame and wealth and who brings you riches from the whole world. Indeed, the Roman Curia which you nourish nourishes you in return and brings you gold from all countries. [Sect. 6]

3. Date, place, audience, and format

The date of the oration is probably 1 October 1460, and the place Viterbo.

The audience consisted of the Roman ambassadors and their retinues, and the cardinals and curials present.

The format was a papal response to representatives of his Roman subjects.

4. Text¹

This oration was not included in the official compilation of Pope Pius II's orations, but only in his *Commentarii*, book 4, ch. 39,² where it forms part of the description of the pope's return to Rome after the Congress of Mantua and a prolonged stay in Siena.

4.1. Manuscripts

The two main manuscripts containing the *Commentarii*, are:

- **Roma / Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Lincei**
Corsinianus 147, ff. 143r-144r **(S)**
- **Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana**
Reginensis Latinus 1995, ff. 218v-220r **(R)**

Of these, the Reginensis contains the first version of the *Commentarii* and the Corsinianus the Final Version, both made under Pius' personal supervision.

4.2. Editions

For the main editions and translations of the *Commentarii*, see *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*, vol. 1, ch. 11: General Bibliography.

The text was also published in:

- Müller, Johann Joachim: *Des Heil. Römischen Reichs Teutscher Nation ReichsTags Theatrum wie selbiges unter Keyser Friedrichs V. Allerhöchsten Regierung von Anno MCCCCXL bis MCCCCXCIII gestanden ...* Theil I. Jena, 1713, pp. 665-666

¹ For the textual transmission of Pius II's, see *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*, vol. 1, ch. 5

² For orations included in Pius II's *Commentarii* (1462-1463), see *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*, vol. 1, sect. 5.1.4.

4.3. Present edition

For principles of edition (incl. orthography) and translation, see *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*, vol. 1, ch. 9-10.

Text:

Though the *Commentarii* have already been edited a number of times, the text of the oration has – as a matter of principle - been collated directly from both manuscripts, with the Corsinianus as the lead manuscript.

Pagination:

Pagination is from both the lead manuscript.

5. Sources¹

In this oration 5 direct and indirect quotations from various sources have been identified, all from the Bible.

Biblical: 5

Classical: 0

Patristic and medieval: 0

Contemporary: 0

All: 5

Biblical sources: 5

Old Testament: 3

- Deuteronomy: 2
- Daniel: 1

¹ On Piccolomini's use of sources in general, see *Collected orations of Pope Pius II*, ch. 8.

New Testament: 2

- Luke: 1
- 1. Peter: 1

Classical sources: 0

Patristic and medieval sources: 0

Contemporary sources: 0

6. Bibliography

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[English translation]

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- *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*. Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 12 vols. 2019-2020

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

7. Sigla and abbreviations

R = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Reginensis Latinus 1995

S = Roma / Biblioteca dell'Accademia dei Lincei / Corsinianus 147

Abbreviations

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

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)

MA = Pius II: *Orationes politicae et ecclesiasticae*. Ed. Giovanni Domenico Mansi. 3 vols. Lucca: Benedini, 1755-1759

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

RTA = Deutsche Reichstagsakten

WO = *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*. Hrsg. von Rudolf Wolkan. 3 vols. Wien, 1909-1918

Decretum = *Decretum magistri Gratiani*. Ed. Lipsiensis secunda. Eds. A.L. Richter & A. Friedberg. 2 vols. Leipzig, 1879

Epistolarium = Enee Silvii Piccolominei *Epistolarium Seculare*. Ed. A. van Heck. Città del Vaticano, 2007

Rainaldus = *Annales ecclesiastici ab anno MCXCVIII ubi Card. Baronius desinit*. Auct. Odoricus Raynaldus. Tom. XVIII-XIX. Roma: Varesius, 1659-1663

Reject = *Reject Aeneas, accept Pius : Selected letters of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II)*. Intr. and transl. by T.M. Izbicki *et al.* Washington, D.C., 2006

II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Pii responsum¹

[1] {143r} Flentem et admodum dolentem flentes ipsi et vehementer dolentes urbem reliquimus, quae patria nostra est non minus quam Senae. Nam domus Piccolominea, quae nos peperit, olim ex Romana Senas migravit, sicut Aeneadum nomen ac Silviorum in familia nostra frequens ostendit. Nos Romae cardinalatum accepimus, et in ea urbe ad summum pontificatum evecti sumus. Vidimus quanta fuit Romanorum alacritas, cum auditum est cardinalem Senensem Calixto successorem datum. Vos mihi testes estis numquam memoria hominum tam laetos fuisse quirites.

[2] Erat igitur molestissimum ex ea urbe recedere, quae tam merita de nobis esset, et jam animus praesagiebat, quae postea inter vos emergerunt mala. At volentes animo necessitatem ecclesiae ac fidei catholicae, quam Turci conculcare nituntur, et quod unum erat remedium Christianae salutis, si cum principibus conveniremus tuendamque religionem communibus opibus ac consiliis acciperemus, inviti ac volentes iter ingressi sumus: inviti reliquebamus dilectam sponsam, volentes studebamus matri nostrae amantissimae subvenire.

[3] Quod si non successit, ut speravimus, non tamen consilii laborisque poenitet. Intellexit universus orbis vires nobis, non animum defuisse. Nemo jam nos accusaverit, quod Romae in deliciis agentes fidem orthodoxam perire sinamus, qui senio atque infirmitate gravati nec frigora nec pluvias neque nives horruimus. Per aliena auspicia² longam ivimus viam. Vocavimus principes, admonuimus populos, expectavimus, omnia fecimus, ut communi consilio publicae consuleremus utilitati. Advenere perpauci³; pauciores {143v} fuere, quibus religio potior quam voluptas videretur. Et quid est quod jam nobis valeat imputari?

¹ *In marg.* R

² hospitia R

³ quam pauci R

Pius' response

1. Introduction

[1] When We left the City,¹ the people was desolate and crying, and so were We, for the City is Our fatherland just as much as Siena. Indeed the House of the Piccolomini, from which We descend, in former times migrated from Rome to Siena - as witnessed by the frequent occurrence of the names Enea and Silvio in our family. In Rome We were created cardinal and in that City We were raised to the Supreme Pontificate. We saw how greatly the Romans rejoiced when they heard that the Cardinal of Siena had succeeded Calixtus: you are my² witnesses that never, within living memory, had the citizens been so happy.³

[2] Therefore it was extremely hard for Us to leave the City to which We owed so much, especially since We had forebodings of your later troubles. But We had to consider the urgent needs of the Church and the Catholic Faith, which the Turks are aiming to destroy, as well as the fact that the only way to save Christianity was to meet with the princes and plan for defending religion with joint resources and minds. Therefore We set off both unwillingly and willingly: unwillingly because We had to leave Our beloved spouse,⁴ and willingly because We were eager to come to the aid of our beloved mother.⁵

2. Congress of Mantua at least proved the pope's dedication to the defense of Christianity

[3] Though We did not achieve the results We had hoped for, We do not regret the idea and the efforts spent on it. The whole world now knows that what We lacked was not courage, but resources. Now, nobody can accuse Us of staying comfortably in Rome while letting the true Faith be destroyed, for though We are old and burdened with illness, We feared neither cold, nor snow, nor rain. We travelled far and stayed under foreign roofs.⁶ We summoned the princes, admonished the peoples, waited long, and did everything We could to provide for the common good. Very few came, and even fewer treasured religion higher than their own comfort. So what can anybody criticize Us for now?

¹ To go to the Congress of Mantua

² Pius almost always used the plural of majesty in his orations as pope, but not here – probably a lapsus

³ CO, I, 37 (Meserve, II, p. 203): *Old men said they had never seen such delight among the people of Rome*

⁴ Rome

⁵ The Church

⁶ "hospitia"

[4] Ipsi saeculi principibus tota imputanda est negligentia, qui venientem ad se Christi vicarium de republica consulturum audire noluerunt. Revertimus igitur domum, si non Turcorum, at Christianorum omnium principum¹ victores. Si non itum est, ut optavimus, in hostes, speramus tamen tale semen in terram jactum, cuius aliquando secabimus segetem. Dulcis est nobis memoria laborum, qui apud Deum sua mercede non fraudabuntur.

[5] Illud vero excoquit mentem nostram, quod inter vos factum accepimus. Dolemus furta, homicidia, adulteria, sacrilegia juventutem vestram tam multa, ut fama est, perpetrasse, nec vos arguimus, qui punire crimina parati eratis, si nostri magistratus praesto fuissent. Illos accusamus, qui per ignaviam ac desidiam tantopere debacchari adolescentes permisere. Fidem vestram probamus, qui temptati modis compluribus² ab officio non recessistis. Viri sane et probi et prudentes estis, qui vestri domino constanter servitis, quamvis vestra servitus regnum est.

[6] Et quae civitas invenitur Roma liberior? Vos sine ullo vectigali estis, vobis nulla imponuntur onera, vos magistratus in urbe geritis honestissimos. Vina vestra, frumenta vestra quanti vultis venditis. Domus vestrae pensiones vobis uberes pendent. Et quis praeterea vester dominus est? Forsitan comes, marchio, dux, rex, imperator? Major his omnibus est³, cui paratis: Romanus praesul, beati Petri successor, Jesu Christi vicarius, cuius pedes cuncti reges osculari desiderant; recte hic *rex regum* et *dominus dominantium* pro Christi reverentia dicitur, cuius vices in terris gerit. Sapitis, viri Romani, qui hunc vestrum dominum observatis, colitis, veneramini, nam is est, qui vos praeclaros efficit, qui vos ditat, qui tote ex orbe ad vos divitias affert, siquidem Romana curia, quam pascitis, ipsa vos pascit et aurum ex omni regione ad vos portat.

¹ *supralin.* R; *omit.* S

² *quampluribus* S

³ *omit.* S

[4] It is the princes of this world who must be blamed for their indifference: they did not want to hear the Vicar of Christ when he came to take counsel for the commonwealth. So We returned victorious, not over the Turks, but over all the Christian princes. We may not have gone [to war] against the enemies as We wished to, but We do hope that a seed has been sown whose grain we may later harvest. Sweet is the memory of Our labours: God will not deprive Us of their reward.

3. Troubles in Rome

[5] But We were greatly worried by the news from Rome. We are grieved at the reports of the many plunders, killings, rapes, and sacrileges perpetrated by your young men. We do not blame you, for you were ready to punish the crimes if only Our own magistrates had been willing. No, We blame those who out of cowardice and indolence let the young men run wild. We commend your loyalty, for though you received many tempting offers, you did not fail in your duties. Indeed you are honest and prudent men, for you staunchly serve your lord, to serve whom is lordship.

4. Advantages to the Romans accruing from the papacy

[6] And what city has greater freedom than Rome? You do not pay taxes, no burdens are imposed on you, and you have honourable offices in the City. You can sell as much of your wine and grain as you wish to. Renting out your houses is most profitable. And who is your lord? Is it maybe a count, a marquess, a duke, a king, or an emperor? No, the one whom you obey is greater than them all: it is the Bishop of Rome, the successor of Saint Peter, the Vicar of Christ, whose feet all kings desire to kiss. Out of reverence for Christ, whom he represents on Earth, he is justly called *King of Kings*¹ and *Lord of Lords*.² You are wise, men of Rome, to respect, revere, and venerate your lord for he it is who gives you fame and wealth and who brings you riches from the whole world. Indeed, the Roman Curia which you nourish nourishes you in return and brings you gold from all countries.

¹ Daniel, 2, 37

² Deuteronomy, 10, 17

[7] Gaudemus quia bonum vestrum et cognoscitis et conservatis, gaudemus nos expectare laetam urbem, quando et laeti pergimus {144r} illuc. Hora nobis annus est prae cupiditate revisendi sacra urbis moenia et sancta martyrum atque apostolorum ossa et terram illam pio sanguine rigatam, et caros quirites, quos veluti filios amamus. Nulla gens carior nobis est quam Romana. *Desiderio desideramus* quam primum esse cum familia nostra et cum *peculiari populo* nostro in sede nostra.

[8] Quod si Mantuano peracto conventu non statim huc advolavimus et Senis¹ remorati sumus, tres fuere causae: prima ut apud balneas valitudini consuleremus. Altera ne per aestatem Romam ingrederemur, quo tempore ex Gallia mitique caelo redeuntibus noxius ac pestifer est aer. Tertia ut Senenses civili et externo bello jam pridem exhaustos curiae nostrae mora paululum reficeremus, quibus consulentes Romae consulimus, nam Senae occidentem versus urbis est murus. Nec nos vobis aut alteri cuiquam mentiti sumus: quo tempore promisimus reditum, eo revertimur. Non tam cupide nos expectatis quam libenter ad vos pergimus. Morabimur hic brevissimo tempore, dum quae sunt ad securitatem itineris necessaria praeparantur, nam ultra progredi absque praesidio non est tutum. Diem profectionis cum fratrum consilio statuemus, statutum mox intelligetis.

¹ *omit. S*

5. Pius' return to Rome

[7] We are happy that you acknowledge and care for your advantages, and We are happy to be expected by a joyous City since that is where We are going now – and with joy. An hour seems like a year to Us, so intensely do We desire to see the holy walls of the City again, the shrines of the martyrs, the bones of the apostles, the soil irrigated with pious blood, and the dear citizens whom We love as sons. No people is more dear to Us than the Roman people. *With desire We desire*¹ to be with Our family and *peculiar people*,² in Our own See – and the sooner the better.

6. Reasons for the delay

[8] There are three reasons that We did not come straight back here after the Congress of Mantua, but stayed for a time in Siena: firstly, We took the baths for reasons of health. Secondly, We did not want to come to Rome during the summer when the climate is harmful and dangerous to people coming from the milder climate in Northern Italy. Thirdly, We wanted to give some relief to the Sienese, exhausted by civil and foreign war, by Our Curia staying there for some time. To assist them is to assist Rome, too, for Siena is the western wall of Rome. And We have not lied to you or to anybody else, for We are returning when We promised to. Our eagerness to return is even greater than your eagerness to receive Us. We are only staying here³ for a short period while the necessary preparations for a safe travel are made - for it is unsafe to travel further without a guard.⁴ We shall decide the day of departure on the advice of Our brethren,⁵ and you will be informed as soon as the decision has been made.

¹ Luke, 22, 15

² Deuteronomy, 7, 6

³ In Viterbo

⁴ The rebellious barons around Rome made it unsafe for the pope to travel without a strong military guard. Indeed, Pius' ally, the Duke of Milan, sent the pope an escort of 500 horse soldiers as his escort to Rome, cf. Voigt, III, IV, 2, p. 151

⁵ The cardinals