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Report on an Imperial mission to Milan 1447 by Enea Silvio Piccolomini. Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 2nd version. (Reports on Five Diplomatic Missions by Enea Silvio Piccolomini; 2)

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(Reports on Five Diplomatic Missions by Enea Silvio Piccolomini; 2)

Report on an imperial mission to Milan 1447 by Enea Silvio Piccolomini. Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg

2nd version

2020

Abstract

At the death of Duke Filippo Maria Visconti of Milan in 1447, the House of Visconti became extinct. Among the pretenders to the Visconti heritage was Emperor Friedrich III who, with some justice, claimed that Milan was an imperial feud that had now reverted to the Empire. The emperor sent three successive embassies to Milan to persuade the city to accept his direct lordship, and Enea Silvio Piccolomini was a member of the first (1447) and the last (1449). Having returned to Vienna after the first embassy, Piccolomini wrote a report on the mission, of which a draft is still extant. The main issues of the negotiations as reported by Piccolomini concerned the form of government under an imperial rule, taxation and subsidies, and imperial visits.

Keywords

Enea Silvio Piccolomini; Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini; Æneas Silvius Piccolomini; Pope Pius II; Papa Pio II; Emperor Frederick III (Habsburg); Kaiser Friedrich III (Habsburg); Diplomatic reports; Renaissance diplomacy; 15th century; 1447; Duke Filippo Maria Visconti; Duke Francesco Sforza; King Alfonso V (Aragon); Milan; Milano; Venice; Venezia; Duke Charles of Orléans; Duke Louis I of Savoy; Giovanni Orlandi; Arcimboldi; Bishop Friedrich III Gren of Seckau

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Context^{1 2}

At the death of Duke Filippo Maria Visconti of Milan on 13 August 1447, the House of Visconti became extinct. A number of pretenders to the rich Visconti heritage soon presented themselves: King Alfonso V of Aragon (by virtue of testament), the condottiero Francesco Sforza (by virtue of marriage), and the Duke of Orleans (by virtue of heritage). And Venice, of course, was quite ready to conquer some of the neighbouring territories in Lombardy belonging to the Milanese state, thus solidifying their hold on the *terra ferma*. The Duke of Savoy, too, would try his luck at conquering some territories from Milan.

Also Holy Roman Emperor, Friedrich III, presented his claim to Milan.³ This claim was based on feudal law, Milan being in principle a feudal grant by earlier emperors to the Viscontis, which had now reverted to the Empire (by devolution).

The Milanese themselves would rather be an independent commune, like Venice and Florence. An agent of Sforza reported to him: *Sento da alcuni boni et notabili cittadini che la dispositione di questa citade è, dopo la morte de costui, fare consiglio generale fra loro et de proponere et invocare la libertade.*⁴

The cautious emperor, for his part, was not willing to commit himself to a military adventure in Italy. He limited himself to diplomatic action and sent three embassies to Milan, in the years 1447-1449.⁵ These missions were not hopeless, as the Milanese might possibly prefer a practically autonomous regime under the nominal direct overlordship of the emperor but when it became apparent that the emperor was not willing to use military power to protect the Milanese from other powers, the Milanese soon lost interest.

Enea Silvio Piccolomini was a member of the first and the third imperial embassy.⁶ The first embassy was headed by the imperial chancellor, Kaspar Schlick, and the other members were high-ranking

¹ This section is mainly based on my introduction to Piccolomini's oration "*Est mihi non parum*" (1447)[13]

² CO, I, 18-19 (Meserve, I, pp. 80-93); HA / 1. version (Knödler, I, pp. 48-80); Piccolomini: *De Europa*, bk. 49 (Brown, pp. 222-231); see also letters of Piccolomini, in WO, II, pp. 225-226, 265, 271, and documents concerning the Milanese situation 1447 printed in Chmel, I, pp. 255-268. See also Ady, pp. 104-105; Boulting, 182-184; Cellerino, ch. II, 3; Hufnagel, pp. 405-419; Paparelli, pp. 217-128; Reinhardt, pp. 147-149. Voigt, II, pp. 431-435

³ He first did so in a letter to the Milanese dated 1 September 1447, see Chmel, I, pp. 255-256

⁴ Cellerino, p. 605

⁵ Piccolomini: *De rebus Basiliae gestis commentarius* (Reject, p. 384): *The king of the Romans sent envoys*

among whom was Aeneas, and asked that rule devolve to him on the death of the duke of Milan. ... They [the Milanese] declared themselves subjects of the king of the Romans, but they thought nothing was due him beyond reverence and honor. ... Caesar sent twice to them afterwards. The last time, Aeneas arrived. ... But Aeneas, who had been commissioned to receive all, could not conclude these things without some compromise. This indicates that there were actually three embassies to Milan from the emperor, and that Aeneas only participated in the first (1447) and the last (1449). See also HA / 1. version (Knödler, I, pp. 48-80)

⁶ He may not have participated in the second because at that time he lived in Trieste, his new bishopric, in a semi-retirement that was probably connected with the fall of his patron, Heinrich Schlick, the imperial chancellor

court officials.¹ Piccolomini had been appointed Bishop of Trieste six months previously, so he was now bishop-elect, to be consecrated after his return to Vienna from the first mission.

His advice to the emperor in the matter had already been prepared in his *Pentalogus* of 1443, i.e., four years before, where he directly says that when the Duke of Milan dies, his duchy will revert to the Empire.²

The first imperial embassy arrived in Milan on 19 October 1447 and departed again on 10 November.

The mission report to the emperor was written up by Piccolomini, presumably in close collaboration with the chancellor.³ The report states that the royal ambassadors were received honourably by the Milanese:

The next day we took a pause to prepare what we should say so as to make a well-considered proposition. The conservators offered to come to our lodgings to hear what we had to say since they honoured us in the place of their master. But we absolutely preferred to go to them, both because it was us who had been sent to them, and because a greater crowd of people could assemble in a large place. So, on the third day, the conservators or governors came with many magnates and brought us to their residence. There, a great crowd of nobles and doctors had assembled, and the audience hall was full of distinguished men.

When all had taken their seat, and there was silence, the king's letter was presented, and after a formal greeting, we made the proposition and statement of the embassy ... [Sect. 10-11]

As the leader of the embassy, the chancellor spoke first, and afterwards the Bishop-Elect of Trieste gave a polished but frank oration, the "*Etsi mihi non parum.*"⁴

After the oration, the ambassadors returned to their lodgings, and later the Milanese representatives came to them and gave their answer in the form of a reply by Niccolò Arcimboldi.

In his *Commentarii* from 1462-1464, Piccolomini wrote about the events:

While this was happening, Duke Filippo Maria of Milan died of dysentery. He had publicly proclaimed King Alfonso of Aragon his heir, but he had no right to do so. The emperor therefore sent Aeneas to Milan together with a group of noble knights ... to claim the duchy for the empire. Thus the lordship of that powerful city came to be claimed at the same time by

¹ Hufnagel, p. 408. According to Voigt, II, p. 33, Piccolomini himself was the leader of the embassy, but that would be extremely unlikely if the imperial chancellor, Kaspar Schlick was also a member. At the first public meeting of the ambassadors with the Milanese, it was the chancellor who spoke first, and only afterwards Piccolomini

² Piccolomini: *Pentalogus* (Schिंगnitz, p. 180): *Nec dubium est quin eo mortuo, quantum jus est, ducatus ad imperium revertatur*

³ WO, II, pp. 263-278

⁴ Hufnagel, p. 409, quoting Schlick's own words embassy report: *Ego incepti, Tergestinus prosecutus est*

Emperor Frederick, Alfonso of Aragon and Duke Charles of Orléans; for this last lord was also asserting his rights to the title on the grounds of the marriage contract between Filippo's father and his own.

The people of Milan, however, wished to be free. They had elected a senate of prominent citizens and appointed magistrates to carry out the business of government. They rejected the claims of the king and the duke¹ but, after hearing Aeneas speak for the emperor, they acknowledged Frederick as their lord, though they still claimed the right to their own city. As the negotiations concluded, they were on the point of accepting Frederick's rule provided certain conditions were met; and this, though less than he deserved to accomplish, seemed to Aeneas reasonably satisfactory under the circumstances. But his German colleagues, by demanding too much, lost everything.²

Piccolomini also had the opportunity to address the Milanese governors during the subsequent negotiations, on 6 November, when he spoke for an hour, as reported to the emperor. His address seems to not have survived, neither in full nor in summary.

During the third and last imperial embassy to Milan, Piccolomini again spoke to the Milanese. The content of the oration is only known from a summary given by himself in the *Commentarii*:

After displaying the emperor's letter and reading it aloud, Aeneas made a speech along these lines: he said that at Filippo's death the emperor had sent ambassadors to take control of the city³ but, though his demands were just, he had not been heeded. Instead, the Milanese let their new liberty go to their heads; they had elected their own magistrates to run the government, an act of rebellion that persisted down to the present day. But the emperor, mild as ever, refused to be provoked despite the injustice of his rejection. In the meantime, Francesco Sforza had appeared on the scene. Once their friend, now their enemy, he had reduced the surrounding towns to his control. Milan was under siege and enduring great hardships; the troops had deserted to Francesco; food was scarce; none of the neighbouring princes would bring them aid. The emperor alone, heedless of every insult, took pity on their plight. If they would now, at last, submit to the Holy Empire and acknowledge the emperor as their lord, he was ready to help them. They should keep in mind that agreements had already been made with the emperor's cousin, Duke Sigismund, a neighbor of the Lombards; in a short time a large force would cross the Alps and descend into their territory. They could not rely on themselves alone, for that would be hopeless, but neither should they imagine that acknowledging the emperor as their sovereign would mean the loss of their freedom. To serve a legitimate and natural lord was the only true liberty; in cities ruled in the name of the people, some groups of men always emerged to subject the people to their will. Indeed, the choice lay between the imperial rule or that of Sforza, for it had got to point where, unless they submitted to the emperor, they would never escape the lordship⁴ of Francesco. If they would only acknowledge the emperor, he would shower his citizens with extraordinary favors and

¹ King Alfonso V and Duke Charles of Orléans

² CO, I, 18 (Meserve, I, p. 81)

³ The first imperial embassy to Milan

⁴ "dominatum": Meserve translates as "tyranny"

*important privileges: they would trade freely throughout Germany and make Milan a magnificent city, the capital of Italy.*¹

The imperial intervention in this matter was unsuccessful, and the diplomatic missions are barely mentioned in the Italian chronicles of the time.²

The whole issue was settled by military power when Francesco Sforza, after a lengthy siege, entered Milan with his troops on 26 February 1450.³

Remarkably, in the report, Piccolomini does not mention his patron, the imperial chancellor Heinrich Schlick, highest-ranking member of the embassy. The reason may be that when he wrote the report, he was aware of the chancellor's problems with the emperor which would soon lead to his disgrace and retirement, but this is conjecture.

2. Themes

2.1. Milan's position

After the extinction of their ruling dynasty, the Milanese – with the exception of some court cliques – did not want any new ruling dynasty to take power. They wanted their freedom and self-rule, with the status of a republic as Venice, Florence and Genoa:

When Duke Filippo Maria of Milan had closed his eyes and been buried, the Milanese began to hope for liberty: they took over the lordship and, hailing Saint Ambrose and Liberty, they elected 24 Governors, both from the Guelph and the Ghibelline party. They were entrusted, for a period of three months, with supreme authority to conduct peace and war. The supreme authority to strike coin remained, however, with the Council of Nine Hundred. Later, they decided to tear down the fortress which they had taken over from the commandant for money, even though Filippo had in his testament charged him with keeping the castle for the King of

¹ CO, I, 19 (Meserve, pp. 86-89)

² Voigt, II, p. 433

³ Gamberini, p. 158: *Following the death of Filippo Maria (1447) the major change was, clearly, that of the ruling dynasty. The main line of the Visconti dynasty had no male heirs, and from the competition for the succession the victor who emerged was the condottiero Francesco Sforza, husband of the only descendant of the late duke, Bianca Maria. With difficulty, Francesco established his control over a state that was once more fragmenting, and on 26 February 1450 he entered the capital: a Milan that, following the death of Filippo*

Maria, had experienced a republican government. However, Francesco Sforza could not obtain acknowledgement by the emperor. As the investiture of 1395 excluded the possibility of succession through the female line, Frederick III claimed the duchy to be devolved to the empire. By appealing to the right of Milan to choose its own rulers, the new prince was content with legitimation 'from below'. He obtained the title of duke by a general assembly of the people and received the symbols of the office during a public ceremony in the presence of the highest ranks of Milanese aristocracy

Aragon. So this fortress has now been razed to the ground. The same happened in Castro Cusago, which served as at hunting grounds at the duke's pleasure. [Sect. 2]

Their ambition would eventually be quashed, but in Autumn 1447, hope was still flourishing, while they were trying to fend off various ambitious princes and states desiring to rule them (the emperor, King Alfonso V, Duke Charles of Orléans) or to take some of their territories from them (Venice, Duke Louis of Savoy), or at least to clip their wings (Florence):

... never before have so many foreign parties intervened as now, when both the Germans and Italians and even the French and the Spanish are seeking the inheritance of the Duke of Milan. The reason for this is the location and fertility of this region, for Lombardy is close to other nations, and the fruitfulness and fertility of its soil is such that it attracts all. [Sect. 1]

Besides their liberty, the Milanese certainly wanted help against the Venetian expansion on the mainland (*terra ferma*), either in the form of direct military aid or in the form of effective pressure on the Venetians to cease and desist.

2.2. Imperial offer

The initial imperial offer - as expressed in the formal oration "*Est mihi non parum*"¹ by Piccolomini, delivered at the embassy's first meeting with the Milanese governors on 21 October - was that the city, if it returned to imperial rule, would be governed in the emperor's name, and that in return the Milanese would have the following advantages of imperial rule:

2.2.1. Freedom and privileges

All privileges granted to you and duly confirmed by the emperors your benevolent king will ratify. Moreover, he intends to abolish all new and extraordinary exactions as well as unusual and heavy taxes, and to keep your rights and freedoms inviolate insofar as they have developed reasonably. [Sect. 9]

2.2.2. Peace

Through the king's providence, your neighbours will be brought to or forced to peace. For as everyone knows, the power of our Most Serene Lord and King is not small: he governs his nephew, the King of Hungary and Bohemia. The illustrious House of Austria over which he presides rules far and wide, spanning Italy from the Adriatic Gulf as far as Friuli over the Etsch

¹ Oration "*Etsi mihi non parum*" (1447) [13]

and many mountains to Savoy. It is related by blood and marriage to all the princes of Germany and France. Moreover, the strength of the empire is incomparable, and great lords and powerful cities in Germany willingly support its glory and splendour. Also, in Italy there are, as you will see – God willing - princes and peoples who support the empire. With such help to support you, with the assistance of Saint Ambrose, your protector, and with the aid of justice it will not be difficult for His Royal Highness to do as he intends: to drive out your enemies, to protect your lands, to reclaim what has been taken away, and to establish a permanent peace.
[Sect. 10]

2.2.3. Glory

From these, immense glory will accrue to the people of Milan when, having been raised from ducal to imperial status, it has defended its liberty, scared the enemies away, recovered what was lost, and gained peace. It will be directly under a ruler who rules all. It will have a king born of its own blood, who loves and treasures it more than all others. It will only obey the emperor whose office, dignity and authority surpass all other secular powers, and to obey whom is to be free and to rule rather than to serve. [Sect. 11]

2.2.4. Wealth

When peace has come, your wealth will grow. Poverty is the daughter of war, and peace is the mother of wealth. In times of peace, fields are bountiful, rivers useful, and even forests are prolific. During peace, everything bears fruit. Peace will bring you many and great benefits, and the presence of His Royal Majesty will be highly advantageous. For he has decided to come to you in person, to stay with you, and to establish his residence here after the custom of the forefathers – for he knows this to be necessary. Many princes will follow him from Germany, and his court will flourish and always be full of illustrious magnates. Here you will have a gentle prince, harsh against nobody, kind towards everybody, pious, religious and just. You will always be able to talk to him and enjoy his kind and happy demeanour. Your clergy will lead a religious life under a religious prince, and it will enjoy its possessions freely. The nobility at the royal court will be more splendid. Learned and industrious men will surround the imperial tribunal. All lands and seas will be open to your merchants. The artisans will double their profits. All individuals will have better conditions of life, and when the city has grown in prosperity, power, honour, and glory, it will return to its former dignity and splendour. With the emperors residing here, Milan will be called the Second Rome. [Sect. 12]

2.3. Milanese reaction

The initial imperial proposition may not have been very tempting to the Milanese.

As for freedom and privileges, their whole ambition was then to assume their own freedom and not to accept it conditionally from any exterior power.

Peace they certainly wanted, but they quite rightly doubted the emperor's will, power and military means to enforce any peace with their belligerent and greedy neighbours.

Being Italians, they might want glory, but they would, in any case be skeptical that such could come from being governed by the weakened and ineffectual Holy Roman Empire.

And as for wealth, they were certainly able to prosper economically and financially on their own. A foreign master or even a local dynasty would presumably detract from their wealth, not increase it.

So the imperial offer, as formulated by the ambassadors, was hardly attractive in the eyes of the Milanese.

However, in case they were not able to maintain their independence, the status of an imperial domain subject to a remote and weakened imperial power, letting the Milanese rule themselves for all practical purposes, might be worth exploring, especially if the emperor should really be willing to aid Milan militarily.

2.4. Main issues of negotiation

So, they accepted to enter into negotiations, which soon came to focus on the following four issues: the form of government, taxation and subsidies, the emperor's visits to the city.

2.4.1. Form of government

Concerning the form of government, it is not easy to see what the parties' final position was, since the appendices to the report with their position statements are missing.

Basically, the Milanese claimed that they had retained their liberty by virtue of *jus postliminii* (the right of restoring a previous legal state, in casu the state of Milan before the Empire), whereas the ambassadors denied this, declaring that Milan was by nature a duchy belonging to the Empire and that the Milanese did not have the right to change this legal state. The Milanese seem to have accepted this view but on the condition of the emperor granting them their freedom anew.

However, the emperor could evidently not govern Milan in person, and some compromise might have been found concerning the appointment of a government.

Apparently, the unsolvable problem was who would bestow the feudal grants of territory and the privileges of nobility in the Lombard state. The Milanese finally offered the solution that the grants would effectively be made by the city, with the king formally confirming them, but this solution was unacceptable to the ambassadors, stating that the king must retain the right to obligate his vassals through oaths. In the end, no agreement on this issue could be found.

2.4.2. Taxation and subsidies

The Milanese initially claimed that they were free of any taxation. Pressed by the ambassadors, they offered a ridiculously small sum, which was rejected by the ambassadors. In the end, they compromised, offering to pay a yearly sum for Milan and the Lombard cities, but not as taxes, only as subsidies, to be agreed upon during later negotiations.

In return, the Milanese expected the emperor to go to war to protect the Milanese, especially from the Venetians, but the ambassadors replied that the taxes and subsidies mentioned by the Milanese could not cover the costs of such a war.

2.4.3. Emperor's visits

The Milanese wanted to be notified two months in advance when the king would come, the number of his followers, the route he would take, the reason he would come, and how long he would stay, and guarantees that he would only come with their agreement. The ambassadors were willing to compromise on one month's advance notice and a guarantee that the visits would not be prejudicial to the liberty granted to Milan, but this offer was rejected by the Milanese.

2.4.4. A lawsuit

To break this impasse, the ambassadors offered a proper lawsuit which would determine the outstanding issues, to be conducted before the pope, another Christian king, or the imperial prince-electors. The Milanese wisely declined a judicial procedure and prettily excused themselves saying – among others - that it was not proper for subjects to litigate with their lord, and that such litigation creates enmity.

Instead, they promised to send ambassadors to the imperial court to settle the thorny issues, but it was an empty promise.

Thus, the negotiations had reached an impasse.

Piccolomini apparently thought¹ that the Milanese would have accepted imperial overlordship if they could maintain a high level of autonomy and, of course, low taxes. The other ambassadors found the Milanese conditions unacceptable, but Piccolomini considered that it would be better for the emperor to have some standing in Milan rather than nothing at all, and would have compromised with the Milanese.

2.5. Two courses open to the emperor

Just as the Milanese were negotiating with various parties (including the Venetians) at the same time, so did the imperial embassy conduct negotiations with representatives of King Alfonso and Francesco Sforza at the same time as negotiating with the Milanese. These negotiations appeared to open another way for the emperor to acquire the lordship of Milan, i.e., to enter an alliance with one or both of these two other parties to acquire Milan by military force mostly provided by his partners.

King Alfonso's representative proposed that the emperor's alliance with the king could take this form:

the King of the Romans would give Toscana as a vicariate to his lord² - he is old, and thus Toscana would, at his death, return to the Empire. On his part, the King of Aragon would with all his might help the King of the Romans to acquire Milan and Lombardy, for it is in their common interest that the republics of Venice, Florence and Milan do not enter an alliance. For those three powers would, if allowed to, drive the Empire from Italy and the King of Aragon from Puglia. Therefore, he said, the princes needed to oppose them, with the King of Aragon attacking Florence by right of the [imperial] vicariate and the King of the Romans attacking Venice by right of the Empire. For when the Milanese - divided between a party wanting liberty and a party wanting the Empire - saw such [developments], they could do nothing but submit to the Empire, especially if the King of the Romans arranged for another captain to make war on the Milanese in his name. [Sect. 47]

As for an alliance with Francesco Sforza, Sforza's representative proposed

that Count Francesco be made captain-general of the Empire in Lombardy and receive the imperial standards and enter Milanese territory, which nobody can prevent him from. Then, with the support of the Visconti party and others who favour the Empire, he should acquire Milan and proclaim the Empire not only in Milan but also in the other, neighbouring territories

¹ Cf. his later comments in the *Commentarii*, see above

² King Alfonso

which had belonged to the duke [of Milan]. Also, the count should be accompanied by men who could take possession in the name of the king. Giovanni said that all this would be very easy for the count because of the divisions of the Milanese and because of his experience and popularity, especially since there is nobody in Milan who would not rather submit to the Empire than to Venice. ... In compensation for these services, the same envoy requested that Pavia and Cremona be given to the count as lawful possessions, together with one of the other cities on the other side of the river Po, to cover salaries. After Milan had come into the king's power, the count should have the status of a captain hired by His Royal Majesty, with the salary which he now gets for serving the Milanese. [Sect. 48-49]

Thus, as a result of the embassy, Piccolomini could inform the emperor that two courses were open to him with regarding to acquiring Milan:

The first one is through amicable agreement, in case it will please His Royal Majesty to accept the offers to be brought by the ambassadors of the city. One thing is sure, as openly said by the Milanese: the only lord they want is the King of the Romans, whom they know to be their supreme lord, and to whom they offer the loyalty due to him, as well as some subsidies, which they must legitimately provide whenever the emperor is in Italy, and the presentation of the crown etc. [Sect. 54]

The second way is through Count Francesco and the King of Aragon, as formulated in the abovementioned negotiations – unless they should first decide on another course than the one concerning which they would send their ambassadors here (with the prince- electors or other German princes entering Italy), in which case it would be necessary to come to an understanding with several Italian princes ... [Sect. 55]

2.6. Conduct of diplomacy

As Piccolomini was a seasoned and high-ranking diplomat who had performed a number of missions, some very important, for his imperial master, the reports on his diplomatic activities throw an interesting light on the development of the diplomatic function in the fifteenth century.

2.6.1. Choice of ambassadors

For the mission to Milan, the emperor chose a high-ranking group of ambassadors: the imperial chancellor, Kaspar Schlick; the Bishop of Seckau, Friedrich Gren; Johann, imperial chamberlain; Jacopo Landrono, imperial physician; the knight Pankraz Riutschad; and Piccolomini himself, now Bishop-Elect of Trieste.¹

¹ CO, I, 18 (Meserve, I, p. 81)

2.6.2. Mandate of ambassadors

Mandates of ambassadors were issued by their prince or his council or a minister. Sometimes, there was both a public one, given and/or read to the prince visited by the ambassadors, and a secret one with confidential instructions to ambassadors, not to be divulged to the opposite party.

In the case of the imperial embassy to Milan, Piccolomini only mentions the emperor's mandate generally, when a proposal by the other party was not foreseen by the instructions, and therefore had to be referred to the emperor:

Having considered it all, we said that it would please us much if there were friendship and good fraternal relations between the two kings, but we showed him that we could not negotiate such an arrangement since we did not have a mandate in this sense. But we advised that a royal ambassador be sent to His Royal Majesty with full powers in all such matters, for we hoped that something good would come of it. [Sect. 47]

In compensation for these services, the same envoy requested that Pavia and Cremona be given to the count as lawful possessions, together with one of the other cities on the other side of the river Po, to cover salaries. After Milan had come into the king's power, the count should have the status of a captain hired by His Royal Majesty, with the salary which he now gets for serving the Milanese. We replied that our mandate did not cover this matter, but we said it would be good if the count should send one of his men to His Royal Majesty, with full powers, for then some good decision could be made ... [Sect. 49-50]

The Milanese, too, had mandates from their government. One was instructions concerning the first Milanese response to the demands of the ambassadors.¹ Another was mentioned when the Bishop Visconti of Novara had apparently been too forthcoming with regard to the issue of taxation:

Concerning the first issue, they said that we had related all honestly and truly, but what was said about taxation, had not been in accordance with their mandate, for the city would not be bound to pay any taxes whatsoever, and the people could not be persuaded otherwise: [on this issue] the Bishop of Novara had spoken for himself. [Sect. 33]

2.6.3. Facilitation of the ambassador's travels

Different courts had different practices in this area. In the case of the imperial mission to Milan in 1447, the hosting government of Milan, apart from issuing the necessary safe-conducts, procured boats for the embassy to cross the Como Lake and provided guides for the travel to Milan.

¹ See Chmel, I, pp. 258-260

When we arrived in Chiavenna, we received a letter from the Milanese with the safe-conduct, and where the lake begins, we found ships in readiness with two commissioners, Galeazzo and Marco, waiting for us. [Sect. 8]

And when the ambassadors left Milan for Austria, the Milanese

arranged to pay for the boats on Lago di Como and for us to be accompanied to the end of the lake by the same men who had brought us [to Milan]. [Sect. 52]

The host city also provided provisions for the visiting ambassadors and presumably also the lodgings.

In some cases, the host court also provided some financial emoluments to the ambassadors, but this was not done in the present court. The previous ruler of Milan, Duke Filippo Visconti, however, treated visiting ambassadors generously, as Piccolomini had said in his oration to the council fathers of Basel, the “*Audivi*” from 1436:

You would not believe me if I told you how large sums he spends in honouring the lords, who every year pass through his realm, and the ambassadors who come to him. If you choose Pavia, the ambassadors and prelates of the princes shall have the same experience: no one will depart without a gift. [Sect. 78]

2.6.4. Ceremonies at arrival and departure

Ambassadors were greeted ceremonially on arrival and bidden farewell at departure. The level of ceremony reflected the importance of the princely master of the ambassadors. The ambassadors of the emperor, the highest-ranking prince in Christendom, were naturally received with special ceremony, including trumpet music (which the ambassadors found somewhat inappropriate given the duke’s death):

At the second milestone from the city we were met by several prelates on the part of the Cardinal of Milan, who later in Milan, out of respect for the Holy Empire, greatly honoured us with provisions and useful advice, offering [us] whatever would be useful to His Royal Majesty. After them we were met jubilantly by the governors and officials of the city, with a large following and the sound of trumpets. They accompanied us to our lodgings. Though we would have forbidden the sound of trumpets given the duke’s death, they said that the people liked the trumpets to be sounded, and especially at the arrival of their true lord. [Sect. 9]

And at the departure,

when we had finished this whole business, we informed the Milanese that we would leave the next day, i.e. Friday 10 October, the Vigil of Saint Martin. In the morning, they all honourably

came to our lodgings, and though it was raining heavily, they accompanied us outside the city gate, to the sound of trumpets. There they begged permission [to leave] and recommended themselves much to His Royal Majesty [Sect. 52]

2.6.5. Ambassadorial oration

The oration of the ambassador during the first formal audience with the host was an essential element in the ceremonial surrounding diplomatic missions. In the case of the imperial mission to Rome in 1447, the formal ambassadorial oration, the “*Est mihi non parum*”,¹ was delivered by Piccolomini.

He began with the *captatio benevolentiae* and compliments to the audience, obligatory in Renaissance rhetorics, following classical models.

Then he first explained the cause of the imperial mission, i.e., the death of the Duke of Milan and the extinction of the Visconti dynasty:

A short time ago, His Royal Highness heard that your duke and prince, Lord Filippo Maria, of indelible and noble memory, had closed his eyes and paid his due to nature. His death was a great sorrow to His Royal Majesty, knowing that he had personally lost a very dear relative, famous for many victories and great deeds, and that the Holy Empire had been deprived of a faithful and outstanding prince. As a war was raging, he feared that the death of this great lord would cause upheavals and devastation. And as he is of Milanese blood, he is greatly concerned about this city and therefore concerned about you and your state.

You already know from his letter how he has ordered the Venetians and others around you not to molest you in any way, but to let this city and this whole state enjoy honest freedom and peace, as belonging to the Holy Empire and being under the protection of His Royal Majesty, its true, natural and ordinary lord. You have also heard that His Royal Majesty decided to send his ambassadors here to explain more fully his intentions and to support your cause by all means. [Sect. 2-3]

Secondly, he stated the objective of the mission, that is the return of Milan to the imperial rule:

For you know, of course, that this city and the other regions of the country belonging to the aforesaid duke, have by his death rightfully reverted to the Holy Empire and our Most Serene Lord, the King of the Romans, as the feudal lord, and that, now, only His Royal Majesty has legitimate jurisdiction over them. Therefore, we, the ambassadors of the king, whom you see before you, have come, invested with full powers. We ask and require that Your Excellencies

¹ Oration “*Non est mihi parum*” [13]

set aside any treaties that may contravene our purpose and that you only follow His Royal Highness, your true and natural lord. [Sect. 4]

Thirdly, he presented and developed the arguments for the course desired by the emperor, being the freedom, peace, glory and wealth that would accrue to Milan if this course was followed (see above).

And finally, he summed it all up:

This realm legitimately belongs to the Empire. His Royal Majesty will and can protect you.¹ You have been given the promise of honourable freedom and the benefit of peace. Glory and great advantage will accrue to you. Undoubtedly, no state in this country can be stable without justice and imperial favour. Our Lord and Holy Emperor Friedrich, born of Milanese blood, is greatly devoted to this city, and as King of the Romans he is your natural, ordinary, true and supreme lord. For all these reasons, I ask your Magnificent Lordships to give due honour to His Majesty as your lord, and to accede to his wishes concerning the rule of this city and the government of your state and other territories, since they are just and reasonable. [Sect. 13]

Thus, the oration served as a statement of position introducing the diplomatic negotiations to follow.

Apart from this essential function of the formal ambassadorial oration, the function of such orations as “cultural gifts” has been studied by Brian Maxson,² referring to the deployment of the rich rhetorical apparatus, developed by Renaissance humanists in imitation of classical rhetorics in general and Cicero in particular, and the ornamentation of the oration with well-chosen quotations and examples from classical authors.

In the case of Piccolomini’s oration to the Milanese, the style is eloquent and elegant but simple, and with very few quotations and exempla from classical authors. The reason may be that oration was aimed at a large popular assembly not greatly appreciative of such embellishments, and also that the oration would, for the same reason, have been given not in Latin but in Italian³ which would not provide the proper linguistic setting for elegant classical, Latin ornamentation.

¹ Well-informed Milanese might have doubted the emperor’s interest in and ability to undertake a serious military intervention in Italy. It was well-known that the emperor was involved in a number of conflicts in Austria, Germany and Central Europe, and the threat of a Turkish invasion was growing all the time, especially after the decisive Turkish victory at Varna, three years

before. Moreover, by then it was known that the emperor personally was quite unwarlike and cautious

² Maxson

³ Piccolomini either wrote the Latin text first and then delivered an Italian version to the assembly, or vice versa

2.6.6. Strategy of negotiation

The strategy of the imperial negotiators aimed at persuading the Milanese to accept imperial rule using three main arguments: the legal rights of the emperor in the case of a feudal dynasty becoming extinct, the advantages to Milan under imperial rule, including protection against its adversaries, and the veiled threat of an imperial military intervention.

As none of these arguments turned out to be convincing to the Milanese, the negotiations came to focus on the imperial concessions to the Milanese concerning the central issues of the form of government, taxation and subsidies, the emperor's feudal rights, and his visits to Milan.

The ambassadors evidently negotiated for the smallest possible concessions, and the Milanese for the largest.

In the end, the negotiations did not lead to a compromise on these issues acceptable to both parties, since the ambassadors would not accept any infringement on the emperor's feudal rights, and considered the Milanese offers in the matter of taxation and subsidies as ridiculous.

Piccolomini later wrote that the embassy would have had greater success if the ambassadors had been more forthcoming, instead of taking a course that led to nothing instead of something.

2.6.7. Tactics and technique of negotiation

2.6.7.1. Interlocutors

The negotiations were mostly done in a small group consisting of the ambassadors and a few select representatives of the Milanese regime. However, the ambassadors much wanted to present their case to a larger assembly, preferably the large, popular Council of 900, since they apparently believed that their message would have greater appeal to the general public than to the small power elite.¹ They never got the large council, but they did manage to get a meeting with the 24 governors and a broader assembly notable citizens:

The conservators offered to come to our lodgings to hear what we had to say since they honoured us in the place of their master. But we absolutely preferred to go to them, both because it was us who had been sent to them, and because a greater crowd of people could

¹ The body of 24 governors was composed of both Guelphs and Ghibellines (see sect. 2). The power elite may have been dominated by Guelphs, traditionally unfriendly towards the Empire, whereas the Visconti party and the general public had greater, Ghibelline, sympathy for the Empire, cf. Piccolomini's remarks in his *De Viris Illustribus*, also written in 1447, but about

Emperor Sigismund's visit to Milan in 1432, 15 years before: *The Ghibellines [in Milan] were suspected of siding with Sigismund because of the Empire, whereas the Guelphs were in power. One night the Ghibellines came to Kaspar Schlick and Brunoro and presented many ideas for how they could give Milan to the king, for they were unhappy with the tyrant.* [Sect. 128]

assemble in a large place.¹ So, on the third day, the conservators or governors came with many magnates and brought us to their residence. There, a great crowd of nobles and doctors had assembled, and the audience hall was full of distinguished men. [Sect. 10]

Later, the ambassadors tried again, but only got a meeting with the governors:

We requested these representatives to obtain an audience with the Great Council, but they said that it should not be requested for several reasons. So we finally decided to go to the governors and that we did, and they conducted us from our lodgings to their residence, and there they gave us an audience together with many others. Thus, on Monday, on the Feast of Saint Leonard, we had a late audience and spoke for an hour. [Sect. 26]

Yet once again, towards the end, they tried to get a meeting with the Great Council:

Sixthly, we said that before leaving we should like to be heard in the Council of 900, in fulfilment of our instructions which directed us towards the governors and the people [Sect. 32]

But again the ruling elite refused, not wanting to discuss the matter in a large, less controllable body, this time adding a veiled threat of physical harm:

Concerning the last issue, they begged us to bear it with equanimity if an audience with the people was not granted, firstly because it would be a new and unusual thing, secondly because all power lay with the governors, thirdly because the nature of the matters under negotiation required confidentiality, which was impossible with the people. Fourthly, they added that the people were restless and might erupt in dishonourable acts against us which they would regret. [Sect. 37]

2.6.7.2. Oral vs written procedure

Naturally, most of the negotiations had the form of oral discussions. But at some point, it became necessary to have complete clarity in the matter of offers and counteroffers, arguments and counterarguments, and therefore it was decided to exchange written statements concerning the controversial points:

¹ That the meeting place had some significance in a diplomatic negotiation is also attested by remarks in Piccolomini's *Report on an Imperial Mission to Regensburg, 1451*, where he said about the Duke of Burgundy: *And finally the ambassadors had direct dealings with the Duke of Burgundy, whom they welcomed to the city, showing their instructions from the emperor, and letting him know that they had used*

his arrival to write to emperor and urge him to come to Regensburg. They also asked if the duke desired the meetings of the diet to be held in his lodgings, but he politely declined, saying that here he was the guest and he would gladly accommodate the representatives of his host. [Sect. 90]

A lively discussion back and forth ensued, and, finally, they agreed that the Milanese should present their demands of the king in writing. Then they left and later presented the demands which follow below, i.e. Infrascriptae sunt etc. These demands were refuted by us in many and various ways. Above all, we showed it to be untrue that the status of a duchy is inherently connected with the City of Milan. It only has this status when ruled by a duke appointed by the king. We also showed that such a demand was unacceptable, as we deduced from many dangers, and we even mentioned Wenceslaus.¹ On this position we stayed firm. And, to come to the special issues, they asked us to say under what form we thought that liberty could be granted them in the name of the king. We come here to the articles following below, i.e. Ut inter regiam majestatem etc. [Sect. 14-15]

The Milanese considered that the written statement we had given them was prejudicial to them and their liberty, and, having requested time for their answer, they came back the next day and brought a written statement. However, they first made their statement orally, and afterwards they handed it to us in writing. The written statement ran like this: Ut ea etc. and in confirmation of it they brought is the books of the city in which were registered certain privileges, copies of which are here, but which we leave for now for brevity's sake. From our answers, it may, however, be seen what they all were. To these [objections] we answered with the [articles] written below, i.e. Romanae etc. Though they are long, they merit to be heard, for on these the whole Milanese matter, now pending, turns. After we had given them the written [articles], they sent back to us [three] of their representatives: His Lordship of Novara, Lord Niccolò degli Arcimboldi, and Giovanni da Fagnano. We conferred with them for several days, without giving anything in writing, but discussing whether we could agree on any articles, and after various and many exchanges, we formulated five articles concerning the remaining problems. [Sect. 16-18]

These written statements seem not to have survived, but they were apparently appended to the original report.

2.6.8. Parallel negotiations

At some point during the negotiations, the ambassadors received information that the Milanese were at the same time negotiating for peace with the Venetians. The ambassadors let the Milanese know that they knew, with a gentle warning:

During our negotiations we heard that the Milanese were conducting other negotiations for peace and alliance with the Venetians, for their ambassadors returned and argued vehemently for peace, scorning our actions and saying that the King of the Romans was neither willing nor

¹ Emperor Wenceslaus had raised Milan to the status of a duchy in 1395. He had not consulted the prince-electors on the matter for which he was severely

criticized, and later it was cited as one of the reasons for his deposition as emperor

able to help them against the Venetians. We thus realized that they [only] kept talking to us in order to obtain better terms from the Venetians. [Sect. 25]

The ambassadors did not protest against the parallel negotiations, and indeed, they themselves conducted parallel negotiations with representatives of King Alfonso of Aragon and Francesco Sforza, who themselves held parallel negotiations with other parties. As the emperor was presumably not quite familiar with the Italian political *mores*, Piccolomini took care to explain that such parallel negotiations were not only normal, but even expedient for a prudent prince:

The king [of Aragon] has various dealings with the Milanese and also seeks his advantage there, for as a wise king he tries not just one way but several, and he does not cease before he has found one to his advantage. The same is done by the count who has dealings both with the French, the Venetians, with the Milanese, and with His Royal Majesty, as we mentioned. This is the way of prudent men, who begin many negotiations and finally bring the one to a conclusion which they find is most advantageous. One must be diligent in all matters, and it is better to anticipate than to be anticipated. The Milanese themselves are engaged in various negotiations. And the French do not sleep, as they strive for the lordship of Lombardy. [Sect. 54]

2.6.9. Diplomatic report

Upon his return to his prince or government, an ambassador had to make a report on his mission. For a long period, this report was made orally, but in the 15th century, the practice developed of delivering the report in writing.^{1 2}

The practice, in this respect, of the imperial court seems not to be as well documented as the practices at Italian courts, and it is not known to what extent Piccolomini's report on the embassy to Milan 1447 reflects current practices at the imperial court.

At any rate, Piccolomini's report was chronologically structured, with the first and last part describing the travel to and from Milan, with some emphasis on the honour shown to the embassy and through the embassy to the emperor himself.

The main text consists of a quite detailed description of the negotiations, i.e. the meetings held and the propositions of the ambassadors and the counterpropositions of the Milanese. The written statements of the two parties seem to have been appended to the report.

¹ Lazzarini

² An interim report in German had been sent by the ambassadors to the emperor on 21 October 1447, see Chmel, I, p. 257 for a Latin translation of the report

The formal oration held by Piccolomini at the opening of the negotiations was summarized in the report, the full text being available separately.

Apart from the negotiations on the principal issue, Piccolomini gave a survey of the political and military situation in Northern Italy in which the Milanese issue played out.

There are few of the maxim-like general observations of a moral or psychological nature interspersed in Piccolomini's other diplomatic reports and indeed his writings in general.

And there is almost no ornamentation of the text in the form of rhetorical ploys, quotations and exempla from classical authors.

3. Date, recipient and format

In the only extant manuscript, the text of the report is written by Piccolomini himself in a completely uniform hand. It included a description of the ambassadors' travel back to the imperial court in Austria. It may therefore reasonably be presumed to have been written at court shortly after the ambassadors' return around 1 December 1447. This is supported by the passage in which Piccolomini says that the Milanese "*would send their ambassadors here*" [Sect. 55].

In view of the many words and passages deleted or added in the margin or between lines, the text was evidently a draft. The text of the final report – with appendices – is not known to be extant.

The recipient was naturally the emperor himself.

The format was that of a - relatively – concise report, with no rhetorical ornaments.

4. Text

4.1. Manuscript

The text is only extant in one manuscript:

- **Wien / Österreichisches Staatsarchiv / Haus-, Hof-, und Staatsarchiv**
UR AUR 1447 IX 1

4.2. Editions

The text has seen two previous editions:

- Chmel, Joseph: *Materialien zur österreichischen Geschichte aus Archiven und Bibliotheken gesammelt und ausgegeben*. 2 vols. Wien, 1832-1838 / I, pp. 261-267, c. 111, h
- *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*. Ed. Rudolf Wolkan. 3 vols. Wien. (Fontes rerum austriacarum; 61-62, 67-68) / II, pp. 263-278, nr. b

4.3. Present edition

The edition is based on the only extant manuscript and Wolkan's edition. The manuscript has been collated directly from a copy made available by the Staatsarchiv, and some readings in Wolkan's edition have been corrected, as indicated in the critical apparatus.

For principles of edition (incl. orthography) and translation, see *Report on an Imperial Mission to Rome 1447 by Enea Silvio Piccolomini*, Appendix.

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¹ <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-02616962>

6. Abbreviations

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

HA = Eneas Silvius Piccolomini: *Historia Austriasis*. 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)

WO = *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*. Hrsg. von Rudolf Wolkan. 3 vols. Wien, 1909-1918. (Fontes rerum Austriacarum, 2 / 61, 62, 67, 68)

II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

[1] {1r} Relaturi tuae serenitati, Caesar invictissime, quae per hos dies in tua legatione Mediolani gessimus, attulisse felicius nuntium vellemus felicioresque novitates, quam modo sis auditurus, nec enim minus est nobis quam tuae sublimitati desiderium, ut jus atque decus imperii longe lateque conservetur. Afferimus tamen non mala nova, si rerum conditiones, naturas hominum temporaque pensamus, quae ut brevi sermone comprehendamus, relationem nostram in quatuor partes dividere instituimus. In prima referemus, quis fuerit Italiae status, cum intravimus Lombardiam. In secunda, quomodo recepti fuerimus, et quid tractaverimus cum Mediolanensibus. In tertia dicemus, quae cum aliis in Italia gesserimus. In quarta recessum nostrum et in quibus terminis Lombardiam reliquerimus, exponere mens est.

0. Introduction

[1] {1r} Unvanquished Emperor, as we are now going to report to your Serene [Highness] what we have done these days on our mission from you to Milan, we should much prefer to bring you a happier message than the one you are going to hear now, for we wish - just as much as Your Highness - to widely preserve the rights and honour of the Empire. However, our news is not bad considering the circumstances, the characters of men and the times. To give a concise report of these, we have decided to divide the report into four parts. In the first part, we shall relate the situation in Italy at our arrival in Lombardy. In the second, how we were received and what we negotiated with the Milanese. In the third, we shall say what we did in relation to others in Italy. And in the fourth, we intend to relate our departure and the situation in Lombardy when we left.

[2] Aggredimur partem primam. Cum intraremus Italiam, invenimus magnos rerum motus ex morte ducis Mediolani factos. Supposita est Italia novitatibus, nostro tamen tempore numquam tot extraneae partes illuc intrarunt, sicut hac tempestate, quando haereditatem ducis Mediolani et Germani et Itali, etiam Galli et Hispani quaerunt. Facit hoc situs regionis et bonitas, nam et proxima est nationibus aliis Lombardia, et ea ubertas est solique fecunditas, ut omnes ad se invitent. Postquam igitur cluserat oculos Philippus Maria, dux Mediolani, sepultusque fuerat, erecti Mediolanenses in spem libertatis, dominium in se receperunt et acclamantes *Sancto Ambrosio libertatique vitam* XXIV gubernatores delegerunt, Guelfos et Gibellinos, quibus summum imperium ad tres menses et pacis et belli gerendi commiserunt. Suprema tamen potestas excutiendi auri apud consilium noningentorum virorum mansit. His peractis arcem dirumpere decreverunt, quam pecunia ex manibus castellani receperant, licet illi per testamentum Philippus commisisset, ut regi Aragonum castellum conservaret, id fortitum jam terrae aequatum est. Similiter et de castro Cusagi fit, ubi venationes ad voluptatem ducis patebant.

1. Situation in Italy

1.1. Milan

[2] We now begin the first part. When we arrived in Italy, we found that the death of the Duke of Milan¹ had caused major upheavals. Italy is [always] subject to political disturbances, but never before have so many foreign parties intervened as now when both the Germans² and the Italians³ and even the French⁴ and the Spanish⁵ are seeking the inheritance of the Duke of Milan. The reason for this is the location and fertility of this region, for Lombardy is close to other nations, and the fruitfulness and fertility of its soil is such that it attracts all.

When Duke Filippo Maria of Milan had closed his eyes and been buried, the Milanese began to hope for liberty. They took over the lordship and, hailing *Saint Ambrose⁶ and Liberty*, elected 24 governors, from both the Guelph and the Ghibelline⁷ party. They were entrusted, for a period of three months, with supreme authority⁸ to conduct peace and war. The supreme authority⁹ to strike coin remained, however, with the Council of Nine Hundred¹⁰. Later, they decided to tear down the fortress that they had taken over from the commander for money, even though Filippo had in his testament charged him with keeping the castle for the King of Aragon¹¹. So, this fortress has now been razed to the ground. The same happened in Castro Cusago¹² that served as at hunting grounds at the duke's pleasure.

¹ Filippo Maria Visconti (1392-1447): Duke of Milan from 1412 to his death

² The emperor

³ Francesco Sforza and the Venetians

⁴ The Duke of Orléans

⁵ The King of Aragon and Naples

⁶ Ambrosius, Aurelius (339-397): Archbishop of Milan from 347 to his death. Patron Saint of Milan

⁷ Guelphs and Ghibellines: political factions in Italy supporting the Pope and the Holy Roman Emperor respectively during the high middle ages. After the end

of the conflict between the Papacy and the Empire, the factions continued but now as political parties motivated by local concerns

⁸ "imperium": power

⁹ "potestas": power

¹⁰ One of the governing bodies of Milan in the republican period

¹¹ Alfonso V (Trastámara) (1396-1458): King of Aragon from 1416 and of Naples from 1442 to his death

¹² Ca. 11 km from Milan. With a Visconti castle

[3] Missi exinde legati sunt ad civitates alias: Comum in deditionem Mediolanensium venit, Novaria quoque et Alexandria. Alleviatae sunt tamen compluribus gravaminibus hae civitates, ut quaelibet sibi melius cavere novit. {1v} Parma in societatem recepta est, Terdona in pendenti mansit, datis obsidibus arbitrium comitis Francisci velle se sequi. Comitem autem per annos quinque ad eorum stipendia Mediolanenses receperant cum equitibus IIII milibus, peditibus vero mille quingentis. Stipendium ejus fuit XIII milium ducatorum in menses¹ singulos. Adhuc defecerunt evestigio Papienses, qui nec Venetorum nec Mediolanensium dominio subjicere se voluerunt, comitem vero in protectorem² receperunt, cui castrum assignarunt et in annos singulos XX milia ducatorum. Hinc subortae contentiones sunt. Ajobant enim Mediolanenses injuriam fecisse sibi comitem, cum Papiam recepit, ille contra se jure potuisse contendit, communisque opinio est salvis capitulis licuisse comiti Papiam recipere, quae se sponte illi commisit. Utcumque sit, magnae suspiciones hinc inde sunt. Comes contra Placentinos profectus est cum exercitu, qui sese Venetis tradiderant, lentamque ducit obsidionem. Haec forma status Mediolani comitisque Francisci³.

[4] Dux Aurelianensis praemissis duobus milibus equitum Astensem civitatem occupavit, sed dum sui ulterius proficiscuntur occupareque Alexandriam pergunt, cujus partem trans aquam obtinuerant, apud vicum, cui nomen est Castellatium, per Mediolanenses conflicti sunt. Jactura Gallorum mille trecentorum equitum fuit. Ipse dux postea cum equis ferme centum ad civitatem Astensem sese contulit receptaque civitate et arce legatos Mediolanum misit *Ducem se Aurelianensem et Mediolanensem* scribens. Legatio ejus fuit: Inter Filippum suosque progenitores et Aurelianensem domum veteres inscriptiones fuisse, quibus invicem in ducatu succederent. Litteras prae manibus esse. Mortuo Filippo sibi ducatum deberi. Petere se jus suum. Si annuant Mediolanenses, facturum se optimam eis conditionem, in omnem vero eventum jus suum se minime dimissurum. His nondum erat responsum, prope tamen diem responderi debebat, intelleximusque Mediolanenses Gallis nullo pacto favere. Conabantur Gallici etiam comitem Franciscum cum multis promissionibus ad se trahere - illum enim esse ajebant cum patre suo, qui nomen Francorum in Italia sustinuerant - sed nihil adhuc conclusionis intercesserant.

¹ *corr. ex annos cod.*

² protectionem Wolkan

³ comitisque Francisci *in marg.* cod.

1.2. Count Francesco Sforza

[3] Then the Milanese sent legates to other cities: Como surrendered to Milan, and so did Novara and Alessandria. However, many burdens on these cities were lightened, as all cities know how to best to look after themselves. Parma became a partner in alliance. Terdona's¹ fate is still undecided: it has exchanged hostages and wants to follow Count Francesco² as leader. As for the count himself, the Milanese had engaged him as a salaried captain, with 4,000 cavalry and 1,500 cavalry. His salary was 13,000 ducats per month. Pavia defected immediately [from Milan], not wanting to submit to the lordship of either Venice or Milan, but taking as their protector the count to whom they assigned the fortress and 20,000 ducats per year. This gave rise to conflicts, for the Milanese said that the count had violated [their contract] by receiving Pavia, whereas he claimed that he could do so legitimately. According to common opinion, it was not against the terms of the contract for the count to receive Pavia since it had given itself to him freely. Whatever the case may be, the affair gave rise to great suspicions. With his army, the count marched against Piacenza which had submitted to Venice, and conducted a slow siege. This was the situation with Milan and Count Francesco.

1.3. Duke Charles of Orléans

[4] Having sent 2,000 cavalry ahead, the Duke of Orléans³ seized the city of Asti. His troops then marched on, seeking to seize Alessandria. When they had already occupied the part of the city that lies beyond the river, they were met in battle by the Milanese at a village named Castellazo⁴. The French lost 1,300 cavalry. Afterwards, the duke with about 100 horses continued to the city of Asti, and having received the city and its fortress he sent legates to Milan, styling himself as *Duke of Orléans and Milan*. The [purport of] his legation was this: Between Filippo⁵ and his ancestors on the one side and the House of Orléans on the other, there were old documents to the effect that they should succeed each other in their dukedoms.⁶ The letters were available. When Filippo died, his dukedom [therefore] fell to him. Now, he was seeking his rights. If the Milanese agreed, he would give them the best possible terms, but under no condition he would give up his rights. They had not yet replied to this, though the term for the reply was near. We have been given to understand that the Milanese in no way favour the French. The French, also, sought to draw Count Francesco to their party, with many promises, saying that he and his father were the ones who had supported the French cause in Italy - but as yet nothing had been decided.

¹ Present-day Tortona

² Francesco Sforza (1401-1466): Italian condottiero. Founder of the Milanese Sforza dynasty. Duke of Milan from 1450 to his death

³ Charles I (Valois) (1394-1465): Duke of Orleans from 1407 to his death

⁴ Present-day Castellazo Bormida?

⁵ Filippo Maria Visconti

⁶ In case of the legitimate male line dying out

[5] {2r} Rex Aragonum missis oratoribus Mediolanum significavit sese ducis Filippi testamento haeredem factum jusque sibi in ducatu competere, quod cum voluntate bona Mediolanensium nec alio modo prosequi vellet. Sive dominatum ejus sive ligam expetant, facturum se illis, quae placeant, dum se Venetis minime jungant, a quibus eos tueri¹ potens volensque sit. Quod si se eis amicitia ligent, habiturum se Mediolanenses hostium loco, nec se jus suum neglecturum. His oratoribus verba data: nulla spes dominationis permissa. Ipsi adhuc Mediolani degebant. Ipse autem rex cum exercitu VII milium tam equestrium quam pedestrium versus Florentinos tendens jam in agro Senensi constitutus dicebatur. Papa namque transitum dederat, ut communis omnibus². Is vero jam Bononiam in deditionem acceperat. Florentini absque militibus et armorum copiis pleni terrore asseverabantur et praesertim formidantes, ne regi se conjungerent Senenses³.

[6] Veneti autem Placentiam et Laudam occupaverant, quae se eis sponte commiserant, ne in deditionem Mediolanensium venirent. Ad hos missi fuerant oratores ex Mediolano, Guarnerius de Castilione et Lanzelottus Crottus, qui, cum adempta repeterent pacemque poscerent, gravibus verbis recepti sunt. Nec enim restituere quidquam Venetis mos est, nisi cogantur. Habiti sunt tamen tractatus varii. Polliciti enim sunt Veneti, quae ultra Abduam tenerent, restituros se fore excepta Lauda adjuturosque se Mediolanenses contra Franciscum comitem, cujus terrae Mediolanensibus cederent. Ac sic pacem obtulerunt, remissis oratoribus, qui rem istam in senatu Mediolanensi ferventibus animis agitarent. Ipsi autem Veneti munita Placentia, ut comiti resisteret, exercitum ultra Adduam miserunt factaque non parva prope Mediolanum praeda, etiam locum quendam munitum receperunt.⁴

¹ posse add. cod.

² omnium Wolkan

³ ipse autem rex ... Senenses in marg. cod.

⁴ hec erat Italiae facies dum devenimus add. cod.

1.4. King Alfonso V of Aragon

[5] The King of Aragon sent ambassadors to Milan declaring that he had been made heir to Duke Filippo by testament and that he, therefore, had the rights to the duchy. However, he only wanted to pursue this matter with the good will of the Milanese. Whether they should desire his lordship or an alliance, he would do as they pleased as long as they did not join up with the Venetians, from whom he was both able and willing to protect them. But if they allied themselves with Venice, he would consider the Milanese as enemies and not set aside his rights. The Milanese answered the ambassadors, saying that he should have no hope for the lordship [of the city]. The ambassadors were still in Milan, while the king himself with an army of 7,000 cavalry and infantry was moving towards Florence and was said to already be in Sienese territory. For the pope had given him free passage, as common to all. The king had already accepted the surrender of Bologna. The Florentines, having no soldiers and arms, were reported to be terrified, especially fearing that the Sienese would join up with the king.

1.5. Venice

[6] But the Venetians had occupied Piacenza and Lodi which had entrusted themselves freely to them so that they would not have to surrender to Milan. Guarnerio da Castiglione¹ and Lanzelotto Crotto² were sent to Venice as ambassadors. When they had requested the return of [the lands] taken from Milan and asked for peace,³ they were received with grave words [only], since the Venetians customarily do not return anything unless forced to. Nonetheless, they did negotiate a number of matters, for the Venetians promised to return all they held beyond the Adda [river] except Lodi, and to help the Milanese against Count Francesco, whose lands they would hand over to the Milanese. And thus they offered peace and sent back the ambassadors, who argued this matter fiercely in the Milanese senate. But the Venetians fortified Piacenza so that it could resist the count, and sent their army across the Adda, making great plunder close to Milan and even taking a fortified place.

¹ Guarnerio Castiglione (d. 1460): Counsellor of Filippo Maria Visconti

² Lanzelotto Crotto: Counsellor of Filippo Maria Visconti

³ In a letter dated 1 September 1447 to Venice, the emperor has demanded that the Venetians cease hostilities against Milan

[7] Dux autem Sabaudiae Valentiam et alia quaedam castella territorii Novariensis invaserat veneratque Verzellas sperans se vocari a civitatibus. Sed audito Gallorum conflictu, parum fidens Verzellensibus, Yporegiam retrocesserat ac de pace cum Mediolanensibus tractabat, cum quo postea treugae annales factae¹ sunt, ea, quae occupaverat, retinente omnia. Haec erat Italiae facies, et Lombardiae status hujusmodi fuit, dum intravimus.

[8] Nunc ad secundam partem transeundum est. Cum venissemus Clavennas, delatae ad nos sunt litterae Mediolanensium cum salvo conducto, et in principio lacus invenimus paratas naves cum duobus commissariis, Galeazio et Marco, qui nos expectabant, ingressique lacum biduo Comum venimus. Ibi ab episcopo pluribusque abbatibus et potestate civitatis suisque nobilibus recepti sumus. Jam civitas illa subjecerat se Mediolanensibus. Quievimus ibi per diem, ut, si fieri posset, communitatem alloqueremur. Conati sumus habere consilium civitatis, sed aperte potestas urbis locutus est non facturam se copiam populi nisi ex mandato regiminis Mediolani, dicens esse capitale, si quis se nolente de congregatione civitatis ageret. Vix impetravimus, ut litterae credentiales civitati praesentarentur. Cives libenter nos audivissent, sed non erant ausi, dixeruntque nonnulli ex eis clanculum se numquam subjecisse {2v} Mediolanensibus, si litteras regias, quas Matheus de Pisis attulerat, prius recepissent, jamque de Mediolanensibus querebantur, qui conventa non tenerent. Matheus autem citius ad eos venire non potuerat².

¹ facti Wolkan

² poterat Wolkan

1.3. Duke Louis I of Savoy

[7] The Duke of Savoy¹ had seized Valenza and some other castles in the territory of Novara and come to Vercelli hoping to receive a call from the citizens. But when he heard about the conflict with the French and had little trust in the people from Vercelli, he withdrew to Ivrea² and negotiated for peace with the Milanese with whom he later arranged a one-year truce, keeping what he had seized.

This was the situation in Italy and the state of Lombardy when we arrived.

2. Negotiations with the Milanese

2.1. Travel to Milan

[8] Now we move on to the second part. When we arrived in Chiavenna, we received a letter from the Milanese with the safe-conduct, and where the lake³ begins, we found ships in readiness with two commissioners, Galeazzo and Marco,⁴ waiting for us. We entered the lake and arrived at Como in two days. There, we were received by the bishop and several abbots, the city's *podestà* and his nobles. The city had previously submitted to the Milanese. We rested there for a day to address the community, if possible. We tried to have a discussion concerning the city, but the *podestà* said directly that he could not arrange an assembly of the people without permission from the government of Milan, and he said that it was punishable by death if anybody assembled the city against his will. We barely obtained that we could present our letters of credence to the city. The citizens would have heard us gladly, but they did not dare to, and several of them told us in secret that they would never have submitted to the Milanese if they had first received the king's letter, which Matteo da Pisa⁵ had brought. Already, they complained of the Milanese who had not kept their agreements. Matteo, however, had not been able to come more quickly to them.

¹ Louis I (1413-1465): Duke of Savoy from 1440 to his death

² Yporegia

³ Lago di Como

⁴ In a letter from the Milanese government to the ambassadors dated 12 October, the government welcomes them, informs them that Galeazzo Bernardo

and Florio de Castronovale will be their guides on their travel to Milan, and sends them their safe-conduct, cf. Chmel, I, p. 257

⁵ An imperial messenger bringing the letter of the emperor of 1. September to Milan had apparently been delayed, cf. Chmel, I, p. 257

[9] Profecti sumus die sequenti Mediolanum. Extra urbem ad secundum lapidem obviam nobis venerunt nonnulli praelati ex parte cardinalis Mediolanensis, qui postea Mediolani ob reverentiam sacri imperii nos suis esculentis egregie honoravit et utilia consilia dedit, semper se ad quaevis regiae majestati grata offerens. Post hos¹ venerunt obviam cum magna comitiva tubisque sonantibus ipsi civitatis gubernatores et officiales magnoque gaudio nos exceperunt et usque ad hospitium nos sociarunt. Et licet propter mortem ducis prohiberemus tubas sonare, ipsi tamen dixerunt populo futurum ingratum, nisi clangor audiretur tubarum et praesertim in adventu oratorum² veri domini.

[10] Supersedimus sequenti die, ut recolligeremus dicenda et melius deliberati ad proponendum veniremus. Offerebant se conservatores ad hospitium nostrum venturos ibique nos audituros, quia loco domini sui nos venerarentur. Nobis autem placuit omnino eos accedere, tum quia missi ad eos eramus, tum quia in loco amplo major haberetur populi multitudo. Accesserunt igitur die tertia nos ipsi conservatores sive gubernatores cum pluribus magnatibus nosque ad locum residentiae suae conduxerunt. Ibi magna nobilium et doctorum copia fuit, plenum erat auditorium notabilibus viris.

[11] Postquam omnes consederunt facto silentio praesentatis litteris regiis et condigna salutatione praemissa propositionem et expositionem ambassiatæ in hunc fecimus effectum:

¹ hoc Wolkan

² omit. Wolkan

2.2. Reception in Milan

[9] The next day we left for Milan. At the second milestone from the city, we were met by several prelates on the part of the Cardinal of Milan, who later in Milan, out of respect for the Holy Empire, greatly honoured us with provisions and useful advice, offering [us] whatever would be useful to His Royal Majesty. After them we were met jubilantly by the governors and officials of the city, with a large following and the sound of trumpets. They accompanied us to our lodgings. Though, given the duke's death, we would have forbidden the trumpets, they said that the people liked the trumpets to be sounded, and especially at the arrival of their true lord.¹

2.3. First round of negotiations

[10] The next day, we took a break to prepare what we should say so as to make a well-considered proposition. The conservators offered to come to our lodgings to hear what we had to say since they honoured us in the place of their master. But we absolutely preferred to go to them, both because it was us who had been sent to them, and because a greater crowd of people could assemble in a large place. So, on the third day, the conservators or governors came with many magnates and brought us to their residence. There, a great crowd of nobles and doctors had assembled, and the audience hall was full of distinguished men.

2.3.1. Oration of Piccolomini

[11] When all had taken their seat, and there was silence, the king's letter was presented, and after a formal greeting,² we made the proposition and statement of the embassy to this effect:

¹ I.e., the emperor as represented by his ambassadors

² Probably by Chancellor Schlick, who spoke first

[12] Primo exposuimus, quomodo regia majestas audiverat mortem ducis Mediolani, de qua doluerat pluribus respectibus. Secundo diximus per mortem ejus ducatum Mediolanensem ceteraque dominia quondam Filippi ad imperium sacrum pleno jure devoluta fore¹ eaque debitis modis petivimus², monstrantes³ ⁴ nullam aliam viam tenere Mediolanenses posse⁵ securam et honestam, quam viam regis, laudantes quae medio tempore Mediolanenses fecerant defendendo patriam, sperantes, quod omnia pro honore imperii fecissent.⁶ Tertio narravimus statum urbis Mediolanensis, quam varius fuerit superioribus temporibus, nunc laetus, nunc tristis, adjicientes⁷, quod nunc ad pristinam gloriam reverterentur, si sub imperio vellent degere, uti deberent⁸, exponentes⁹ quatuor principalia bona, quae ipsi Mediolanenses assequerentur, si regiae majestati debite parerent, libertatem honestam, pacem longam, gloriam {3r} ingentem et divitiarum incrementa, offerentes subsidia opportuna adversus eos, qui turbare Mediolanenses niterentur. Quarto¹⁰ fecimus de omnibus dictis brevem epilogum cum repetitione juris imperii, quae¹¹ regia majestas¹² nullatenus esset neglectura.

¹ ~~Tertio~~ *add.* cod.

² ~~ipsa imperii jura quante~~ *add.* cod.

³ *corr. ex monstravimus* cod.

⁴ ~~quod add.~~ cod.

⁵ *corr. ex poterant* cod.

⁶ laudantes quae ... fecissent *in marg.* cod.

⁷ *addicientes* cod.

⁸ *corr. ex Sexto* cod.

⁹ *corr. ex demonstravimus* cod.

¹⁰ *corr. ex Septimo* cod.

¹¹ quod Wolkan

¹² quae regia majestas *corr. ex et majestatis imperatoriae* cod.

[12] Firstly, we told how His Royal Majesty had heard about the death of the Duke of Milan, grievous to him in several regards. Secondly, we stated that by his death the Milanese duchy and his other domains had devolved upon the Holy Empire in full right, and we claimed them in the proper forms, showing that there was no other safe and honourable course for the Milanese than the king's, and moreover praising what the Milanese had done in the meantime to defend their country, hoping that all they had done had been for the honour of the Empire. Thirdly, we expounded on the state of the Milanese city, how varied it had been in former times, sometimes happy, sometimes miserable. We added that they would now return to their former glory if only they would be under the Empire, as they ought to, and we explained the four major advantages that the Milanese would gain if they duly obeyed His Royal Majesty: honourable liberty, long peace, immense glory and the growth of wealth. We also offered assistance against those who would endeavour to disturb the Milanese. Fourthly, we delivered a brief epilogue, restating the rights of the Empire which His Royal Majesty would in no way disregard.

[13] His dictis et ad longum expositis, ut extat¹ oratio ad verbum scripta, Mediolanenses deliberationem receperunt et venientes postea ad hospitium nostrum per dominum Nicolaum de Arziboldis responderi fecerunt. Primo regratiati sunt permaxime regiae majestati pro salutationibus et pro sumpto dolore ex morte principis eorum et pro congratulatione facta civitati de tutatione patriae. Secundo dixerunt non expedire patriae neque regi gubernare Mediolanum et illas terras vel per se vel per legatos, quandoquidem cives libertatem natura, jure ac honestis pactionibus sibi partam longis retro temporibus jure quodam postliminii recuperatam, ita complexi essent, uti tutari illam non vererentur, nihilominus praestaturi favoris, honoris, obsequii ac reverentiae culmini regiae majestatis, quam si per se ipsam gubernaret, parati, quo decet honore, suscipere ipsam majestatem volentem diadema, quod Mediolanum praestat, accipere et ea facere omnia, quae liber populus, Romanum recognoscens imperium, erga ipsum jure aut probatis moribus debet.

[14] Haec per nos oratores² variis modis confutata fuere, monstrantes libertatem nullam ipsis competere, nisi ab imperio daretur, nec locum habere jus *postliminii*. Cumque hinc inde magna disceptatio esset, ventum ad hoc est, ut Mediolanenses suas requisitiones, quas optarent a rege, in scriptis darent, et sic redeuntes ipsi requisitiones infrascriptas dederunt, videlicet *Infrascriptae sunt* etc.

[15] Haec variis et multis viis confutata sunt per nos, maxime autem ostendimus non esse verum, quod ducatus haereret civitati Mediolanensi nisi passive, ut regantur a duce, quem rex dederit, et ostendimus, quod talis petitio admitti non posset, deducati propter multa pericula, et fecimus etiam mentionem de Venceslao. Et sic remansimus, ut ad specialia veniremus, et petiverunt ipsi, ut nos diceremus, sub qua forma crederemus³ nomine regio libertatem eis concedi posse. Unde nos ad haec capitula devenimus, quae sequuntur, videlicet *Ut inter regiam majestatem etc.*

¹ exstat Wolkan

² ~~regios~~ add. cod.

³ corr. ex vellemus cod.

2.3.2. Reply of the Milanese

[13] When this had been said and expounded on at length – the written version of the oration is available¹ - the Milanese deliberated between them, and afterwards, they came to our lodgings and made their answer through Lord Niccolò degli Arcimboldi.² Firstly, they greatly thanked His Royal Majesty for the greetings, for having mourned the death of their prince, and for the congratulations to the city for protecting the country. Secondly, they said that it would be expedient neither for the city nor the king to [have the king] govern Milan and its lands either directly or through legates, since the citizens had long ago by *jus postliminii*³ regained the liberty which it had obtained from nature and by law and honourable treaties, and they would not fear to defend it. Nonetheless, they would show His Highness' Royal Majesty, the same favour, honour, deference and reverence as if he had governed them directly. They were also ready to welcome His Majesty with due honour if he should wish to receive the crown which Milan offers⁴ and to do all that a free people, recognizing the Roman Empire, owes him by law and accepted custom.

2.3.3. Refutation of the Milanese position and exchange of written statements

[14] This was refuted by us ambassadors in various ways, showing that the only liberty they could have must be granted by the Empire, and that there was no basis for a *jus postliminii*. A lively discussion back and forth ensued, and finally, they agreed that the Milanese should present their demands of the king in writing. Then they left and later presented the demands which follow below, i.e. *Infrascriptae sunt* etc.

[15] These demands were refuted by us in many and various ways. Above all, we showed it to be untrue that the status of a duchy is inherently connected with the City of Milan. It only has this status when ruled by a duke appointed by the king. We also showed that such a demand was unacceptable, as we deduced from many dangers, and we even mentioned Wenceslaus. On this position, we stayed firm. And, to come to the special issues, they asked us to say under what form we thought that liberty could be granted them in the name of the king. We come here to the articles following below, i.e. *Ut inter regiam majestatem* etc.

¹ Piccolomini's oration "*Est mihi non parum*" (1447) [13]

² Niccolò degli Arcimboldi (1404-1459): Counsellor of the Duke of Milan. Previously acquainted with Piccolomini

³ *jus postliminii*: In civil law, the right of postliminy, i.e. the right or claim of a person who had been restored to the possession of a thing, or to a former condition, to be considered as though he had never been deprived of

it. (Wikipedia). By this right, the Milanese claimed to have returned to the state prevailing before its integration into the Empire

⁴ The Iron Crown of Lombardy: The crown was kept in the Cathedral of Monza, near Milan. Coronation with the Crown of Lombardy was one of the rituals of imperial coronations in the Middle Ages

[16] Per haec autem, quae sic in scriptis dedimus, existimaverunt Mediolanenses, sibi suaeque libertati nimis praepjudicari, petentesque respondendi tempus ad diem sequentem revererunt et adduxerunt hujusmodi scripta. Omnia tamen prius pronuntiabant et postea in scriptis relinquebant. Scripta autem hujusmodi sunt *Ut ea* etc., et ad confirmationem illorum adduxerunt libros civitatis, ubi registrata sunt quaedam privilegia, quorum hic sunt copiae, quas dimittimus causa brevitatis. Ex responso vero poterit tamen intelligi, qualia sunt omnia.

[17] Ad haec per infrascripta respondimus videlicet *Romanae* etc., quae licet longa sunt nimis, audienda sunt tamen, quia ex his pendet totus status rerum, quae cum Mediolanensibus pendent¹.

[18] {3v} Post haec in scriptis data, remissi sunt ad nos ex deputatis dominus Novariensis, dominus Nicolaus de Arziboldis et Johannes de Fagnanao, cum quibus per plures dies contulimus, nihil tamen in scriptis dando, sed conferendo, si possemus super capitulis concordare, et post varios multosque tractatus rem ipsam ad quinque articulos deduximus, in quibus remansit difficultas.

[19] Primus articulus fuit de libertate, quam Mediolanenses dicebant sibi de jure competere et tamen pro gratia recepturos se, si regia majestas illam eis de novo concederet. In hoc dicebamus nos sperare de concordia, si cetera complanarentur, sed cum etiam in hoc reservarem imperio feuda et privilegia nobilium et cleri, ipso nullo modo hanc reservationem admittebant.²

¹ quia ex ... pendent *corr. ex* si placet omitemus. Effectus est, quod omnia dicta Mediolanensium, per quae ajunt sibi libertatem competere, manifestis rationibus refelluntur, et in fine diximus fugiendas esse disputationes, ex quo non esset iudex, qui judicaret inter nos et cessavimus in scriptis amplius dare cod.

² ~~veneruntque solum ad hoc, quod feuda per civitatem, cum tempus esset, conferrentur et regia majestas confirmaret, cui rei non prebuimus assensum, dicentes regem debere conferre et posse tamen provideri per juramenta et alias vias, quod vasalli imperii non impedirent libertatem Mediolanensium per regiam majestatem concedendam~~ *add. cod.*

[16] The Milanese considered that the written statement we had given them was prejudicial to them and their liberty. They requested time for their answer and came back the next day with a written statement. However, they first made their statement orally, and afterwards, they handed it to us in writing. The written statement ran like this: *Ut ea etc.* and in confirmation of it they brought us the books of the city, in which were registered certain privileges, copies of which are here,¹ but which we leave for now for brevity's sake. From our answers, it may, however, be seen what they all were.

[17] To these [objections] we answered with the [articles] written below, i.e. *Romanae etc.*. Though they are long, they merit to be heard, for on these the whole Milanese matter, now pending, turns.

2.4. Second round of negotiations

[18] After we had given them the written [articles], they sent back to us [three] of their representatives: His Lordship of Novara,² Lord Niccolò degli Arcimboldi, and Giovanni da Fagnano.³ We conferred with them for several days, without giving anything in writing, but discussing whether we could agree on any articles, and after various and many exchanges, we formulated five articles concerning the remaining problems.

2.4.1. Liberty

[19] The first article concerned liberty. The Milanese claimed that it belonged to them by right, but that they would accept it gracefully if His Royal Majesty would grant it to them anew. To that we said that we hoped for an agreement if the others issues were settled, but that on this point we had to reserve to the Empire the feudal possessions and the privileges of the nobility and the clergy. They on their part could in no way accept such a reservation.

¹ At the imperial court (e.g. in the archives) or appended to the report

² Bartolomeo Visconti (1402-1457): Bishop of Novara from 1429-1457. Old acquaintance, employer and friend of Piccolomini

³ Not identified

[20] Secundus articulus fuit de censu Mediolani, quia cum Mediolanenses dicerent se omnino liberos a solutione census, nosque negaremus et tandem offeremus viam juris vel coram electoribus, vel coram uno rege catholico, de quo concederetur, vel coram papa et collegio, primo dixerunt se acceptare viam juris coram papa, sed velle prius scire in eventu, quo succumberent, quantitatem¹ census. Nos utrumque diximus committendum juri, et sic secundo replicarunt², quod, antequam vellent litigare cum domino suo, potius vellent se ad censum honestum et competentem submittere, et tandem nominarunt censum unius coppae aureae annuatim dandae, quingentorum³ ducatorum et tandem usque mille. Super qua re diximus, quod nullo modo possemus concordare cum eis, quia regia majestas nihil nobis commiserat de censu, sed petebat plenam administrationem Mediolani et aliarum terrarum. Et sic diximus hunc articulum ad regiam majestatem remittendum.

[21] Tertius articulus fuit de aliis civitatibus. Nos enim illas dicebamus regiae majestati remanere debere, quae teneret eas in bona libertate sub imperio, cum amicitia tamen et bona intelligentia Mediolanensium. Ipsi vero omnino petebant omnes civitates, quas habuit dux Mediolani tempore primae guerrae, et sic comprehendebant Brixiam, Bergamum, Papiam, Cremonam, Placentiam, Laudam et Tortosam, quas nunc non habent, volentes concedi sibi facultatem acquirendi eas et concordandi cum eis, et offerebant pro illis censum. Replicavimus hoc esse nimis, nam licet destitissent a petitione ducatus, ut ajebant, tamen in effectu ducatum volebant. [4r] Subjunximus tamen libenter audituros nos, qualem vellent praestare censum⁴, quia forsitan talis esset, quod regia sublimitas se inclinaret, super quo tamen diximus nos non habere mandatum. Nominaverunt pro qualibet civitate quingentos ducatos, super quo noluimus aliquid respondere, quia ridiculum videbatur.

¹ *em.*; quantitate cod.

² se acceptare ... replicarunt *in marg.* cod.

³ ~~aut mille~~ *add.* cod.

⁴ *omit.* cod.

2.4.2. Taxation

[20] The second article concerned the taxation of Milan. The Milanese claimed that they were completely free of payment of taxes, and we denied it but did offer them a judicial procedure either before the [prince-] electors,¹ or before any catholic king on whom the parties could agree, or before the pope and the college [of cardinals]. To this, they first said that they would accept a lawsuit before the pope, but first, they would know the size of the taxes in case they lost the suit. We said that both questions² should become a matter for litigation, and they replied that rather than entering into litigation with their lord, they preferred to accept an honourable and fair tax, and in the end, they named a tax consisting of one golden bowl a year and between 500 and 1,000 ducats. We replied that we could not reach a conclusion with them on this point since His Royal Majesty had given us no instructions concerning taxation but requested the full administration of Milan and the other lands, so we declared that this article would have to be referred to His Royal Majesty.

2.4.3. Other cities in Lombardy

[21] The third article concerned the other cities. We said that these must be subject to His Royal Majesty, who would keep them in good liberty under the Empire but with friendship and good understanding with the Milanese. However, they absolutely wanted all the cities which the Duke of Milan possessed at the time of the first war, comprising Brescia, Bergamo, Pavia, Cremona, Piacenza, Lodi and Tortosa, that they do not possess now, wanting to be given the possibility to acquire them and ally themselves with them, and offering to pay taxes for them. We replied that this was too much, for though they had desisted from seeking the duchy, as they said, they effectively wanted the duchy. But we added that we would willingly hear what taxes they would pay, for maybe they would be such that His Royal Highness would accept them. We stated, however, that we did not have instructions on this matter. They mentioned a sum of 500 ducats for each city, to which we would not reply since it appeared ridiculous.

¹ I.e. the seven prince-electors of the Holy Roman Empire

² I.e., both the principle and the amount of taxation

[22] Quartus articulus fuit de adventu regiae majestatis ad Mediolanum. In hoc dicebant Mediolanenses velle suscipere majestatem suam honorifice, sed velle sibi significari per duos menses ante, quando rex venturus esset, cum quot gentibus, per quam viam, qua de causa, quamdiu mansurus, et quod cum eorum consensu veniret¹. Confutavimus haec vivacibus rationibus et obtulimus regiam majestatem, cum venire vellet, per mensem ante significaturam et assecuraturam litteris et sigillis sub verbo regio, quod libertati concedendae Mediolanensibus et eorum regimini non praejudicaret. Nec potuimus in hoc articulo concordare.

[23] Quintus articulus fuit de subsidiis praestandis. Volebant enim Mediolanenses, quod regia majestas requireret infra duos menses Venetos et alios, ut restituerent ablata et pacem tenerent², et si non facerent mox ad requisitionem Mediolanensium regia majestas deberet cum omni posse suo bellum movere Venetis. Dicebamus tempus nimis breve et indignum esse, quod regia majestas tantum belli pondus intraret pro tam modicis emolumentis, sicut erant illa, quae offerebantur. Posse tamen super hoc concordari, si Mediolanenses in aliis suum debitum facerent.

¹ et quod ... veniret *in marg.* Cod.

² ~~ali~~ *add.* cod.

2.4.4. Emperor's visits

[22] The fourth article concerned His Royal Majesty's coming to Milan. On this issue, the Milanese said that they would receive His Majesty honourably but that they wanted to be notified two months in advance when the king would come, with how many people, by what route, for what reason, how long he would stay, and that he would only come with their agreement. We refuted these [claims] with vivid arguments, offering that His Royal Majesty would notify [the Milanese] of his visits one month in advance, and that he would guarantee under royal letters and seals that this would not be prejudicial to the liberty to be granted the Milanese and to their government. On this article, too, we could not reach an agreement.

2.4.5. Subsidies

[23] The fifth article concerned the subsidies to be made. The Milanese wanted that His Royal Majesty should, within two months, demand of the Venetians and others to give back what they had taken and keep the peace, and if they did not do so, His Royal Majesty should, at the request of the Milanese, speedily and with all his might make war on the Venetians. We said that the period indicated was too short and that it would be unreasonable that His Royal Majesty should undertake such a great burden of war in return for the very limited emoluments offered by them. But we should be able to reach an agreement on this matter if the Milanese did as they ought to concerning the other matters.

[24] Haec in effectum fuerunt inter nos et illos tres deputatos, cum quibus etiam aliquando plures erant ventilata. Nec illi voluerunt amplius condescendere, nec nos.

[25] Cum hoc tractaremus, intelleximus Mediolanenses varios habere tractatus pacis et ligae cum Venetis, quia reversi erant oratores et ardentem pacem¹ promovebant, factaque nostra vilipendebant, dicentes nec velle regem Romanorum nec posse eos contra Venetos juvare, ob quam rem cognovimus dari nobis verba, ut eo melius cum Venetis tractaretur.

[26] Petivimus ab illis deputatis, ut impetrarent nobis audientiam consilii majoris, et dixerunt non esse petendam multis ex causis. Sed nos finaliter decrevimus ire ad gubernatores, et sic fecimus, qui nos de hospitio usque ad locum residentiae suae conduxerunt, et ibi cum pluribus aliis audientiam nobis dederunt. {4v} Die igitur lunae, in festo sancti Leonardi, de sero habuimus audientiam ac per horam locuti sumus.

[27] Primo exposuimus seriose omnia per nos gesta cum suis deputatis et retulimos illos articulos, in quibus remansit difficultas, ut supra continetur, ostendentes quod per nos non restabat ad conclusionem venire.

[28] Secundo². Ad finem, ne aliquis posset dicere, quod regia sublimitas nimis gravaret Mediolanenses, obtulimus ipsam majestatem staturam juri coram uno ex praenuntiatis iudicibus non solum in facto census Mediolani, sed super omnibus juribus et actionibus imperii sive³ petitionibus regiae majestatis, quas vel fecisset vel facere vellet.

¹ ~~trae~~ *add. cod.*

² ~~diximus~~ *add. cod.*

³ sine Wolkan

[24] These were the central issues negotiated between us and their three representatives, but we also discussed several other matters with them. However, they would make no more concessions and neither would we.

[25] During our negotiations we heard that the Milanese were conducting other negotiations for peace and alliance with the Venetians, for their ambassadors returned and argued vehemently for peace, scorning our actions and saying that the King of the Romans was neither willing nor able to help them against the Venetians. We thus realized that they [only] kept talking to us in order to obtain better terms from the Venetians.¹

2.5. Third round of negotiations

2.5.1. Imperial proposals to the governors of Milan

[26] We requested of their representatives to obtain an audience with the great council, but they said that it should not be requested for several reasons. So we finally decided to go to the governors and that we did, and they conducted us from our lodgings to their residence, and there they gave us an audience together with many others. So, on Monday, on the Feast of Saint Leonard, we had a late audience and spoke for an hour.

[27] Firstly, we, in all sincerity, told them what we had negotiated with their representatives and informed them of those articles where there were still problems, as described above, showing that it was not us who blocked an agreement.

[28] Secondly, to avoid that anybody could claim that His Royal Highness would overly burden the Milanese, we presented the offer that His Majesty would accept a lawsuit before one of the aforesaid judges not only concerning the taxation of Milan, but also concerning all the rights and actions of the Empire and the demands which His Royal Majesty had made or would make.

¹ If the Venetians feared a Milanese understanding with the emperor, it might make them more amenable in their negotiations with the Milanese

[29] Tertio diximus nos audisse, quod ipsi Mediolanenses haberent aliquos tractatus pacis vel ligae vel foederis cum quibusdam aliis quam cum rege Romanorum. Rogavimus et avisavimus eos, ut bene considerent¹ in omnibus, quae facerent, tria: primo seipsos et quid eis expediret. Secundo illos, cum quibus agerent et an possent in illis bene confidere. Tertio illos, quos relinquerent, ne offenderent Deum ac justitiam et illum, qui posset eis jure nocere, multumque hortati sumus eos², ut recordarentur imperiales se fore, et ostendimus ipsis nullam esse illis viam salubriorem quam majestas regia, declarantes potentiam suam et dicentes non esse credendum, quod regia majestas negligat jus suum, licet alia, quae occupantur indebite de imperio hucusque non vindicaverit, quia plus urget injuria facta in persona propria quam in aliena, narrantes, quomodo Mediolanum ad modernum regem pertinebat et sibi facit injuriam, qui occuparet tale dominium.

[30] Quarto regratiati sumus de honore nobis impenso.

[31] Quinto diximus nos velle ad majestatem regiam reverti, et obtulimus nos, si quid honeste pro eis possemus.

[32] Sexto diximus, quod, antequam recederemus, libenter vellemus audiri in consilio noningentorum, ut servaremus formam litterarum nostrarum, quae gubernatoribus et populo dirigebantur, et quod vellemus istamet eis dicere.

[33] {5r} Ipsi vero Mediolanenses nobis benigne et attente auditis per dominum Nicolaum de Arziboldis fecerunt nobis responderi, et diviserunt dicta nostra in quatuor partes. Primo dixerunt nos rem gratam exposuisse, secundo narasse de tractatibus, qui cum aliis habebantur, tertio regratiatos de honore, quarto petivisse audientiam majoris concilii.

[34] Super primo dixerunt nos omnia seriose et vere retulisse, declararunt, tamen quod quidquid de censu fuerat dictum, non erat ex mandato ipsorum dictum, quia civitas ad nullam census praestationem teneretur, nec populo aliter suaderi posset. Sed Novariensis ex se ipso locutus fuerat.

[35] Ad secundum dixerunt, quod quidquid Mediolanenses facerent aut facturi essent, semper salvum reservarent honorem imperii, cui nullatenus vellent derogare, adjicientes, quod adhuc ante recessum vellent nobiscum amplius loqui.

¹ *em.*; considerant cod.

² ~~ne~~ *add.* cod.

[29] Thirdly, we said that we had heard that the Milanese were conducting negotiations for peace or an alliance or a treaty with other parties than the King of the Romans. We asked and advised them to consider carefully three things in all they did: Firstly, themselves and what was to their advantage. Secondly, those with whom they were dealing and whether they could be trusted. Thirdly, those whom they abandoned, so that they would not offend God and justice and him, who could rightfully harm them¹. We also exhorted them to remember that they belonged to the Empire. We showed them that no way was more profitable for them than that of his His Royal Majesty, emphasizing his power and saying that it was not credible that His Royal Majesty would neglect his rights, though he had not yet claimed other imperial lands occupied unrightfully by others, for the injury done to one's own person is more compelling than any injury done to another. [Finally,] we explained how Milan belongs to the present king and that anybody who would seize this domain would be guilty of serious injury to him.

[30] Fourthly, we thanked them for the honour shown to us.

[31] Fifthly, we announced that we would return to His Royal Majesty and offered our [services] if there was anything we could honourably do for them.

[32] Sixthly, we said that before leaving we should like to be heard in the council of 900, in fulfilment of our instructions which directed us towards the governors and the people, and what we should like to tell them.

2.5.2. Milanese reply

[33] When the Milanese [governors] had heard us benignly and attentively, they let us have their answer through lord Niccolò Arcimboldi. Dividing our statement into four parts, they said that in the first, we had set forth a welcome matter, in the second, we had spoken about their negotiations with others, in the third, we had thanked them for the honour [shown to us], and in the fourth, we had asked for an audience with the great council.

[34] Concerning the first issue, they said that we had related all honestly and truly, but what was said about taxation, had not been in accordance with their mandate, for the city would not be bound to pay any taxes whatsoever, and the people could not be persuaded otherwise: [on this issue] the Bishop of Novara had spoken for himself.

[35] Concerning the second issue, they said that whatever the Milanese did or would do, they would always respect the honour of the Empire, which they would in no way neglect. They added that they wanted to speak more with us before our departure.

¹ I.e., the emperor

[36] Super tertio de honoribus dixerunt se fecisse minus, quam debuerant, et excusaverunt se.

[37] Ad ultimum supplicarunt, ut aequo animo ferremus, si non daretur audientia populi, primo quia res esset nova et insolita, secundo quia in ipsis gubernatoribus tota potestas resideret, tertio quia res istae, quas tractabamus, de sui natura taciturnitatem exposcerent, quae in populo esse non potest. Addiderunt et quarto incompositum esse populum, qui posset ad aliqua inhonesta contra nos prorumpere, de quibus ipsi dolerent. Addiderunt rogantes, ut ad bonam concordiam nos vellemus interponere inter regiam majestatem et eos.

[38] Interrogavimus post haec, quid dicerent ad juris oblationem. Responderunt et in hoc et¹ in aliis velle nobiscum latius loqui, rogantes ne cito discederemus ab his, qui libenti animo nos viderent, quia secunda post die ad nos mitterent, et sic nos omnes usque ad hospitium associarunt.

[39] Venerunt ad nos postea deputati et iterum ostenderunt velle concordare, et super primo articulo de feudis dicebant, quod posset talis modus inveniri, sicut quod civitas illa conferret et regia majestas confirmaret. Nos vero dicebamus regem debere conferre et vasallos posse astringi juramento, ne impedirent libertatem Mediolanensibus per regem concedendam. Nec concordare potuimus.

[40] Super adventu regis stabant in eo, ut cum eorum consensu iretur. Nos vero dicebamus, non debere regem astringi Mediolani, qui nullibi est astrictus.

[41] {5v} Super facto aliarum civitatum dicebant posse augeri censum. Nos vero dicebamus eos² esse valde remotos³.

[42] Super facto census Mediolani dicebant posse concordari de una summa, quam infra certos annos non pro censu, sed pro subsidio Mediolanenses darent regi. Nos diximus non habere potestatem nisi ad jus remittere censum, audituros tamen quam summam nominarent et relatores regi – nec umquam postea nominarunt summam.

[43] Super facto subsidiorum dicebant posse de tempore melius concordari⁴. Et sic remansimus in hoc, quod ipsi scriberent illa, ad quae vellent descendere, et nobis portarent. Ac sic recessimus ab invicem.

¹ ut Wolkan

² eas WO

³ *em.*; remote cod.

⁴ accordari Wolkan

[36] Concerning the third issue, the honours [shown to us], they said they had done less than they ought to and excused themselves.

[37] Concerning the last issue, they begged us to bear it with equanimity if an audience with the people was not granted, firstly, because it would be a new and unusual thing, secondly, because all power lay with the governors, thirdly, because the nature of the matters under negotiation required confidentiality, which was impossible with the people. Fourthly, they added that the people were restless and might erupt in dishonourable acts against us which they would regret. They added a request that we would intermeditate between His Royal Majesty and them in the interest of harmonious relations.

[38] Then we asked them what they said about the right of subsidy. They answered that they would speak more about this and other issues, asking us not to depart soon from those who were happy to see us, for two days later they would send someone to us. Then they accompanied us to our lodgings.

[39] Later, their representatives came to us and again showed a willingness to come to an agreement. Concerning the first article, about feudal possessions, they said that an arrangement might be found, consisting in the city conferring and His Royal Majesty confirming. But we said that the king should be the one to confer and be able to obligate vassals though oaths not to oppose the liberty to be granted the Milanese by the king. So we could not agree to [that proposal].

[40] Concerning the king's arrival, they insisted that he must [only] come with their agreement. But we said that the king should not be tied by bonds of obligations in Milan when he was tied by such bonds nowhere else.

[41] Concerning the other cities, they said that the taxes could be raised, and we said that they were very far from [what would be expected.]

[42] Concerning the taxation of Milan, they said that they could agree on a sum which the Milanese would – for a specified number of years - give the king not as taxes, but as subsidies. We said that we were only empowered to refer the matter of taxation to adjudication, but that we would hear the sum they would mention and communicate it to the king – but at no time afterwards did they mention any sum.

[43] Concerning the subsidies, they said that given time they would better be able to come to an agreement. We stayed firm on the position that they should give us in writing what they would be willing to pay, and bring it to us. And on this, we departed from each other.

[44] Postea vero, cum intelligerent, quod nos nollemus concludere cum eis, nisi ad formam prius datam, dimiserunt viam istam et decreverunt velle suos oratores ad regiam majestatem destinare, et sic significaverunt nobis per dominum episcopum Novariensem, dominum Nicolaum de Arziboldis, Alvisum Crottum et Johannem de Fagnano. Interrogavimus, quando venturi essent, ne regia majestas in suspenso teneretur¹, et qui oratores. Suasimus, ut cum majoribus rebus venirent, quam nobis obtulerant.

[45] Interrogavimus etiam, quid dicerent ad oblationem juris, factam in praesentia gubernatorum. Responderunt cito venturos oratores, sed nescire² praefinitam diem, oratores nondum nominatos, venturos, instructos, sed regem hortandum, ut inclinaret se de oblatione juris, responsum est, quia longum esset disceptare, et non deceret subditos litigare cum domino, et quia via juris parit inimicitias. Respondimus viam juris posse abbreviari, humanissimum esse principem offerre subdito justitiam, regna nihil esse sine justitia nisi magna latrocinia, et sic non odia, sed pacem dare justitiam, atque hoc modo ab invicem discessimus. Et sic finem facimus parti³ secundae de his, quae cum Mediolanensibus gesta sunt.

[46] Transimus nunc ad partem tertiam de his, quae cum aliis gessimus.⁴ Haec brevissima est et utilis. {6r} Erant Mediolani oratores regis Aragonum et comitis Francisci, milites et graves viri, qui per medium Johannis Orlandi visitaverunt nos et obtulerunt se multum, quos nos libenter vidimus et vice versa oblationes fecimus. Hi postea per Johannem Orlandi secretos habuerunt tractatus nobiscum, quos libenter audivimus videntes, quod a Mediolanensibus non habebamus illa, quae debebantur.

¹ ne regia ... teneretur *in marg. cod.*

² nesciri Wolkan

³ parte Wolkan

⁴ III. pars *in marg. Cod.*

2.5.3. Promise of ambassadors to the emperor

[44] But later, when they understood that we could only come to an agreement with them on the basis of the arrangement first proposed, they gave up that way and decided to send ambassadors to His Royal Majesty, and this they communicated to us through the Lord Bishop of Novara, Lord Niccolò Arcimboldi, Alviso Crotto¹ and Giovanni da Fagnano. We asked when the ambassadors would arrive, so that His Royal Majesty would not be kept waiting, and who they would be. We advised that they should come with larger offers than they had given us.

[45] We also asked them what they had to say concerning our offer of a judicial procedure, made in the presence of the governors. They replied that they would soon send ambassadors, but they did not know when. The ambassadors had not yet been appointed, but they would come, with instructions. However, they did answer that the king should be exhorted to yield in the matter of a judicial procedure since it would demand a protracted discussion, since it was not proper for subjects to litigate with their lord, and, finally, since litigation breeds enmity. We replied that the legal procedure could be shortened, that it was most generous of the prince to offer litigation to a subject, and that without justice kingdoms are nothing but great robberies, and that thus justice breeds peace, not hate. On this note, we departed from each other.

And here we end the second part, the one concerning our doings with the Milanese.

3. Negotiations with other parties

[46] We now move on to the third part, which concerns our actions in relation to other parties. This part is very short but not unimportant. Present in Milan were the ambassadors of the King of Aragon and of Count Francesco, soldiers and serious men. They made a visit to us, arranged by Giovanni Orlando. They visited us often, and we received them gladly and visited them in return. Afterwards, they negotiated secretly with us through Giovanni Orlandi – which was very welcome to us since the Milanese did not give us what they ought to.

¹ Not identified

[47] Orator regis Aragonum dicebat ligam esse faciendam inter dominum nostrum Romanorum regem et dominum suum, ita videlicet quod rex Romanorum daret Tusciam in vicariatu domino suo, qui tamen antiquus est, et per ejus mortem ad imperium Tuscia reverteretur, quodque rex Aragonum juvaret regem Romanorum cum omni posse suo ad acquirendum Mediolanum et Lombardiam, quia multum interest utriusque providere, ne communitas Venetiarum, Florentinorum et Mediolanensium ad invicem communitatem gerentur¹. Nam istae tres potentiae, si sic permetterentur, excluderent imperium de Italia et regem Aragonum de Apulia, et sic dicebat obstandum² esse principibus³, videlicet quod rex Aragonum invaderet Florentinos cum jure vicariatus et rex Romanorum Venetos cum jure imperii. Nam tunc Mediolanenses, qui inter se sunt divisi, et pars vult libertatem, pars imperium, quando viderent talia, non possent facere, quin se subderent imperio et maxime, si rex Romanorum provideret, quod aliquis suo nomine capitaneus Mediolanenses⁴ infestaret, multumque requirebat idem orator per Johannem Orlandi, ut ad talem ligam attenderemus. Nos consideratis omnibus dicebamus placere nobis multum, quod amicitia et bona fraternitas esset inter ipsos reges, sed ostendimus, quia non poteramus talia praticare non habentes commissionem, suasimusque, ut ad majestatem regiam mitteretur aliquis orator regius cum pleno mandato super omnibus talibus, quia speraremus aliquid boni fieri posse. Et sic orator regis Aragonum promisit se curaturum apud regem, cui jam omnia per zifram significasse se dixerat, et sic speramus venturum unum cum pleno mandato.

[48] Orator vero comitis Francisci cum talibus praticis veniebat per medium Johannis Orlandi {6v} videlicet, quod comes Franciscus fieret capitaneus generalis imperii in Lombardia et reciperet vexilla imperialia veniretque in agrum Mediolanensem, quem nullus potest sibi prohibere, et cum favore⁵ Vicecomitum et aliorum, qui favent imperio, et sibi acquireret Mediolanum et faceret acclamari imperium, non solum in Mediolano, sed etiam in aliis terris vicinis, quae fuerunt ducales, et essent cum comite aliqui, qui nomine regio reciperent possessionem, dicebatque hoc esse valde facile comiti propter divisionem Mediolanensium et propter peritiam suam et favorem, quem habet, et maxime, quia nullus in Mediolano est, qui non potius imperio quam Venetis subesse velit. Veneti autem non caperent pugnam pro Mediolanensibus contra imperium nisi cum maximis conditionibus, quae non fierent per Mediolanenses. Et ulterius dicebat, quod si Veneti se intromitterent, regia majestas a dorso posset eos invadere et cogere ad revocandum subsidia, et sic infallanter Mediolanum cum aliis terris in potestatem veniret domini nostri regis, dicebatque idem orator licere comiti hoc facere, quia Mediolanenses non dant sibi stipendia debita et ipse in pactis habet, quod quando Mediolanenses cessant a solutione per certum tempus, tunc ipse non est eis obligatus.

¹ gerantur Wolkan

² *em.*; ostandum cod.

³ *em.*; principibus cod.

⁴ Mediolanensis WO

⁵ ~~Mediolanensium~~ *add.* cod.

3.1. King of Aragon

[47] The ambassador of the King of Aragon said that it would be desirable to have an alliance between our lord, the King of the Romans, and his own lord: the King of the Romans would give Toscana as a vicariate to his lord - he is old, and thus Toscana would at his death return to the Empire. On his part, the King of Aragon would, with all his might, help the King of the Romans to acquire Milan and Lombardy, for it is in their common interest that the republics of Venice, Florence and Milan do not enter an alliance. These three powers would, if allowed to, drive the Empire from Italy and the King of Aragon from Puglia, and therefore, he said, the princes needed to oppose them, with the King of Aragon attacking Florence by right of the [imperial] vicariate and the King of the Romans attacking Venice by right of the Empire. For when the Milanese - divided between a party wanting liberty and a party wanting the Empire¹ – saw such [developments], they could do nothing but submit to the Empire, especially if the King of the Romans arranged for another captain to make war on the Milanese in his name. Giovanni Orlandi vehemently urged us to work for such an alliance. Having considered it all, we said that it would please us much if there were friendship and good fraternal relations between the two kings, but we showed him that we could not negotiate such an arrangement since we did not have a mandate in this sense. But we advised that a royal ambassador be sent to His Royal Majesty with full powers in all such matters, for we hoped that something good could come of it. And this the ambassador of the King of Aragon promised to work for with his king, saying that he had already informed him in a ciphered letter. And thus we hope that someone will come with full powers.

3.2. Francesco Sforza

[48] But, through Giovanni Orlandi, the envoy of Count Francesco made the following proposals: Count Francesco should be made captain-general of the Empire in Lombardy and receive the imperial standards and enter Milanese territory, which nobody can prevent him from. With the support of the Visconti party and others who favour the Empire he would then acquire Milan and proclaim the Empire not only in Milan but also in the other, neighbouring territories that had belonged to the Duke [of Milan]. Also, the count should be accompanied by men who could take possession in the name of the king.² Giovanni said that all this would be very easy for the count because of the divisions of the Milanese and because of his experience and popularity, especially since there is nobody in Milan who would not rather submit to the Empire than to Venice. The Venetians would only go to war for the Milanese against the Empire on strict conditions that would be unacceptable to the Milanese. He said, moreover, that if the Venetians intervened, His Royal Majesty could attack them from the rear and force them to recall their troops. Thus, Milan would unflinchingly come into the power of Our Lord King together with the other territories. The envoy also said that the count was free to do this since the Milanese had not paid him the salary due to him by contract, the count ceasing to be obliged to the Milanese when they did not pay him for a certain time.

¹¹ The Ghibelline party

² The emperor

[49] In praemium autem istarum rerum petebat idem orator Papiam et Cremonam in titulum dari comiti et unam ex aliis civitatibus ultra Paduam pro stipendiis et quod, postquam Mediolanum esset in potestate regis, tunc comes intelligeretur conductus a majestate regia cum illis stipendiis, cum quibus nunc servit Mediolanensibus.

[50] Nos diximus ad hoc non habere mandatum. Laudavimus¹ tamen, ut cum pleno mandato mitteret comes unum de suis ad regiam majestatem, quia posset aliqua bona fieri conclusio, et sic orator promisit se curaturum per medium Johannis Orlandi, qui omnibus in istis rebus fideliter laboravit, unde majestas vestra debet eum habere recommendatum, sicut suo tempore dicemus.

[51] Intelleximus praeterea vicecomites Crivellos et illos de Lampognano uno excepto Oldrado, videlicet plures alios nobiles invicem colligatos esse et nullum velle alium dominum quam majestatem regiam, qui sine dubio aperirent multa loca exercitui, qui ex parte regis intraret potens. Et sic finis est tertiae partis relationis nostrae. Nunc ultima brevissime expediatur.

¹ Error for suasimus?

[49] In compensation for these services,¹ the envoy requested that Pavia and Cremona be given to the count as lawful possessions,² together with one of the other cities on the other side of the river Po, to cover salaries. After Milan had come into the king's power, the count should have the status of a captain hired by His Royal Majesty, with the salary which he now gets for serving the Milanese.

³

[50] We replied that our mandate did not cover this matter but said it would be excellent if the count should send one of his men to His Royal Majesty, with full powers, for then some good decision could be made, and this the ambassador, through Giovanni Orlando, promised to arrange. The said Giovanni worked loyally in all these matters, wherefore Your Majesty should extend Your favour to him⁴, as we will say more about at the proper time.

[51] Apart from this, we learnt that of the Visconti party the Crivelli and the Lampognano⁵ (except Oldrado) and many other nobles had bound themselves mutually to not accept any other lord than His Royal Majesty. These men would undoubtedly open up many places to a strong invading army of the king.

Thus we finish the third part of our report, and we shall now very briefly deal with the last part.

¹ "rerum"

² "in titulum"

³ But which had seemingly not been paid, see above

⁴ "eum habere recommendatum"

⁵ Noble Milanese families that had served the Viscontis

[52] {7r} His omnibus peractis significavimus Mediolanensibus recessum nostrum esse in crastinum, die videlicet Veneris X. Octobris in vigilia Martini, qui venerunt de mane omnes honorifice ad hospitium nostrum et, licet esset ingens pluvia, associarunt nos usque extram portam tubis sonantibus, et ibi petita licentia recommendarunt se multum regiae majestati et provideri nobis fecerunt suis sumptibus in Como de navibus, facientes nos associari per eosdem, qui nos conduxerant, usque ad finem lacus.

[53] In Como misit ad nos secreto unus castellanus Clavennarum, qui libenter nobis castrum dedisset, quod est fortissimum, si recipere voluissemus. Sed pendentibus tractatibus cum Mediolanensibus non videbatur nobis res facienda nec etiam pro parva tam re, licet castrum sit bonum, videbatur incipienda guerra. Sed diximus illi, ut toleraret, quo melius posset. Rursus petivit consilium, an deberet cum episcopo Curiensi concordare, et an ille esset fidelis regi. Diximus nescire sibi consulere, episcopum tamen illum esse imperii principem, nec nos aliud scire quam bonum de eo. Et sic recessus noster ex Italia fuit.

4. Travel home

4.1. Departure

[52] When we had finished the whole business, we informed the Milanese that we would leave the next day, i.e. Friday 10 October, the Vigil of Saint Martin. In the morning, they all honourably came to our lodgings, and though it was raining heavily, they accompanied us outside the city gate, to the sound of trumpets. There they begged permission [to leave], recommended themselves much to His Royal Majesty, and arranged to pay for the boats on Lago di Como and for us to be accompanied to the end of the lake by the same men who had brought us [to Milan].

4.2. Como

[53] While we were in Como, a commandant of the fortress in Chiavenna sent a secret message to us that he would willingly hand over the very strong fortress to us if we wanted it. But since the negotiations with the Milanese were still going on, we considered that this would not be proper, and, moreover, though the fortress was an excellent one, it was not worth starting a war on account of such a small matter. So we told him to tolerate the situation as best he could. Then he asked for advice on whether to reach an agreement with the Bishop of Chur,¹ and whether that bishop was loyal to the king. We said that we could not advise him [in the matter], but that the bishop was a prince of the Empire, and that we only knew good things about him. And thus we left Italy.

¹ Heinrich IV Freiherr von Hewen (ca. 1398-1462):
Administrator 1441-1456

[54] Italia vero in eisdem ferme terminis remansit, in quibus erat tempore introitus nostri, sed Veneti prope Mediolanum ad XII miliaria lucreti noviter fuerunt Meltium locum, non multum tamen munitum, et magnam praedam fecerant, ob quam rem fortius de pace tractabatur. Ferebatur etiam Venetos magnam classem parare, ut succurrerent Placentiae per Paduam. Rex Aragonum in agro Senensi est minaturque Florentinis. Habet varias praticas hic rex cum Mediolanensibus et etiam quaerit ibi facta sua, quia ut sapiens princeps non solum unam viam, sed plures temptat et non concludit, donec unam sibi utilem reperiat. Similiter etiam comes facit, qui cum Gallicis, cum Venetis, cum Mediolanensibus et cum majestate regia habet praticas, quas diximus, et sic moris est prudentum virorum, qui multas incipiunt praticas et tandem illam concludunt, quam reperiunt meliorem. Oportet itaque in omnibus diligentiam habere et praevenire potius quam praeveniri. Ipsi Mediolanenses etiam in diversis sunt praticis. Gallici quoque non dormiunt, quaerentes dominium Lombardiae.

[55] Ex his omnibus effectus ambassiatæ nostræ patet, videlicet quod duæ sunt viæ habendi Mediolanum, una per modum concordiae, si majestati¹ regiae² placebit acceptare, quæ portabunt oratores civitatis. Illud autem certum est et palam dicunt Mediolanenses, quia nullum {7v} volunt alium dominum quam Romanorum regem, quem sciunt³ esse suum supremum dominum, offerentes sibi debitam fidelitatem et alia subsidia, quæ de jure præstare tenentur, quando imperator est in Italia et dare coronam etc.

¹ majestas Wolkan

² regia Wolkan

³ scium Wolkan

4.3. Situation in Italy

[54] The situation in Italy was almost the same as when we arrived, except that the Venetians had recently gained Melzo, located about twelve miles from Milan, but not much fortified. They had taken great booty, for which reason the peace negotiations had been intensified. It was also reported that the Venetians were preparing a large fleet to come to the assistance of Piacenza via the Po river. The King of Aragon is in Siennese territory and threatens the Florentine. He has various dealings with the Milanese and also seeks his advantage there, for as a wise king he tries not just one way, but several, and he does not cease before he has found one to his advantage. The same is done by the count, who has dealings both with the French, the Venetians, with the Milanese, and with His Royal Majesty, as we mentioned. This is, indeed, the way of prudent men, who begin many negotiations and finally bring the one to a conclusion which they find is most advantageous. One must be diligent in all matters, and it is better to anticipate than to be anticipated. The Milanese themselves are engaged in various negotiations. And the French do not sleep, as they strive for the lordship of Lombardy.

4.4. Two possible courses for the emperor

[55] The present account¹ makes clear the result of our embassy, i.e., that there are two ways to gain Milan.

The first one is through amicable agreement, in case it will please His Royal Majesty to accept the offers to be brought by the ambassadors of the city. One thing is sure, as openly said by the Milanese: the only lord they want is the King of the Romans, whom they know to be their supreme lord, and to whom they offer the loyalty due to him, as well as some subsidies, which they must legitimately provide whenever the emperor is in Italy, and the presentation of the crown etc.

¹ "Ex his omnibus"

[56] Secunda via est per comitem Franciscum et per regem Aragonum, tenendo illas praticas, de quibus supra dictum est, nisi illi viam aliam prius concludant, quam huc mittant¹, vel cum electoribus et aliis Alamaniae principibus intrando Italiam, in quo etiam casu esset tenenda intelligentia cum nonnullis Italiae principibus, ut suo tempore dicemus latius.

[57] Haec sunt per nos gesta Mediolani, in quibus, si non est secutus effectus, quem² majestas vestra desiderasset, fides tamen nostra et diligentia non defuit. Omnes diligentes³ et fideliter laboravimus, quoad potuimus et scivimus, et praesertim reverendus pater episcopus Secoviensis, qui abest, qui sua prudentia et scientia in rebus omnibus, quae occurebant, gravia et matura consilia praebuit et multum fideliter servivit majestati regiae. Non tamen plus obtineri a Mediolanensibus potuit, quam supra dictum est. Nec mirum pro prima vice. Proverbium enim est uno ictu non cadere arborem. Illi sunt novi in sua libertate, experti sunt mala regimina suorum principum, adhuc sunt recentia vulnera, timent semper priora⁴. Utcumque sit, majestas vestra debitum suum fecit eos requirendo et debitum faciet, nisi aliter se habuerint ad oboedientiam cogendo, in qua re non deerunt modi, cum vestra majestas ad res illas intenderit. Nos supplicamus haberi excusatos, si qua negleximus in agendis, ut non dubitamus, quia per ignorantiam potius quam per malitiam potuimus aliquid praetermisisse. Et sic relationis finis. Laus Deo.

¹ nisi illi ... mittant *in marg.* cod.

² quam Wolkan

³ Probably author's own error for diligenter

⁴ pejora Wolkan

[56] The second way is through Count Francesco and the King of Aragon, as established in the abovementioned negotiations – unless they should first decide on another course than the one concerning which they would send their ambassadors here,¹ either with the [prince] electors or other German princes entering Italy. In such a case, it would be necessary to come to an understanding with several Italian princes, as we shall explain in greater detail at the proper time.

4.5. Conclusion

[57] This is what we did in Milan. If we did not obtain the results desired by Your Majesty, it is not because our loyalty and diligence failed. We all, diligently and loyally, did as much as we could and knew, especially the Bishop of Seckau,² who is not here³ at present, and who prudently and expertly gave important and mature advice in all the matters that came up and served His Royal Majesty most faithfully. But he could not obtain more from the Milanese than what is mentioned above.⁴ This is not surprising in a first attempt. The proverb says that the tree does not fall at the first blow. The Milanese are new to their liberty, they have experienced the bad government of their princes, the wounds are still fresh, and they always fear the former conditions. In any case, Your Majesty has done what you should by making demands of them, and you will continue to do so unless their behaviour makes it necessary to use force. In that case, there will not lack ways if Your Majesty so desire. We beg to be excused if there is anything we have failed to do since if we missed something it was out of ignorance rather than ill will. And this is the end of the report. Thanks be to God.

¹ This passage seems to indicate that Piccolomini wrote his report after returning to Vienna

² Friedrich III Gren (bef. 1399-1452): Bishop of Seckau from 1446 to his death

³ At the imperial court, at the time of writing the report

⁴ It is unclear what role the Bishop of Seckau had in the negotiations since he is not otherwise mentioned by Piccolomini. Possibly, he did not play a great role but was warmly recommended by Piccolomini as a matter of form or court politics