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**Report on an Imperial Mission to Regensburg, 1454
(Historia de Ratisponensi Dieta) 4th preliminary
version. (Reports on Five Diplomatic Missions by Enea
Silvio Piccolomini; 4)**

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(Reports on Five Diplomatic Missions, 1447-1455, by Enea Silvio Piccolomini)

**Report on an Imperial Mission to Regensburg, 1454
(History of the Diet of Regensburg) by Enea Silvio
Piccolomini. Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-
Schönberg.**

4th version

2021

Abstract

The Fall of Constantinople, lingering capital of the Byzantine Empire, to the Ottoman Turks in May 1453 created widespread and justified fear in Europe. It might reasonably be assumed that the young Turkish sultan, Mehmed II, would pursue his war of expansion and move further into European territories. The two international institutions of Europe, the Holy Roman Empire and the Papacy, were compelled to react, although both incumbents, Emperor Friedrich III and Pope Nicolaus V, were peaceful men, averse to risk taking. After some procrastination, the emperor convened a conference of the European rulers and German princes in the city of Regensburg in May 1454. The driving force at this meeting was his counsellor and senior diplomat, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Bishop of Siena. Piccolomini gave a grand speech in which he dramatically described the damage inflicted upon Europe by the Turks and made a rousing appeal for a joint European war against them. The aim of the war would be twofold: first, to avenge the injuries suffered by the Europeans and regain the territories lost to the Turks and the Arabs, and second, to protect Europe against a Turkish invasion. Although the audience was moved, caution prevailed, and the only result of the diet was to agree on war in principle and propose another diet to further discuss the matter. Besides the crusade matter, two other issues were discussed at the diet: the need for a reform of the Holy Roman Empire, and the conflict between the Prussians and the German Order.

Keywords

Enea Silvio Piccolomini; Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini; Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini; Pope Pius II; Papa Pio II; Kaiser Friedrich III (Habsburg); Emperor Frederick III (Habsburg); Sultan Mehmed II; Sultan Mehmet II; Pope Nicolaus V; Pope Nicholas V; Papa Niccolò V; Crusades; Crusade against the Turks; Diet of Regensburg 1454; Reichstag in Regensburg 1454; Fall of Constantinople 1453; 1454; 15th century; Prussia; The German Order; The Teutonic Knights; Bohemia; The Holy Roman Empire; Duke Philippe III of Burgundy; Duc Philippe III de Bourgogne; Cardinal Nikolaus von Kues; Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa; Duke Ludwig IX of Bavaria-Landshut; Herzog Ludwig IX von Bayern-Landshut; Albrecht III Achilles von Brandenburg; Guillaume Fillastre Jr.; Johann Lysura

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4. Report on an Imperial Mission to Regensburg 1454 (History of the Diet of Regensburg)
5. Report on an Imperial Mission to Rome 1455. With Indices

Note to the readers

In this the 4th version, the manuscript Ottob. lat. 1563 has been collated.

Michael von Cotta-Schönberg
10 January 2021

Foreword to the present volume

Enea Silvio Piccolomini participated in the imperial diet of Regensburg 1454 as one of the emperor's ambassadors and representatives and afterwards wrote a report of the diet. This report transcends the format of a proper diplomatic report, being really a history of the diet (often called *Historia de Ratisponensi dieta*) as seen by an eye witness and central actor at the diet, and it has a clear political purpose, being addressed to the Hungarian chancellor.

The report has been published twice previously: the first time in 1759 by Mansi, and the second time Wolkan in 1918.

According to Mansi himself, his edition was based on a manuscript in the collection of his predecessor as bishop of Lucca, Felino Sandei, a learned author like himself, to which he had access. The manuscript has a number of omissions and other scribal errors, probably "inherited" from a previous manuscript in the line of transmission.

Wolkan mainly used the Vat. lat. 3888 for his edition.

Since neither edition is properly critical, after modern standards, I have found it worthwhile to produce such an edition based on five manuscripts and the texts published by Mansi and Wolkan.

A translation of the text has not been published previously

Michael Cotta-Schönberg
30 December 2020

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Context^{1 2}

During the first half of the fifteenth century, it had become quite clear that the Ottoman military expansion constituted a serious threat not only to the Byzantine Empire (or the Greek Empire, as it was called then) but also to Europe as a whole. The Italian humanists had caught on quickly, and their anti-Turkish works in the form of orations, public letters to European rulers, treatises, poems and other writings soon developed into a literary genre.³

Already in his first oration, the “*Audivi*”,⁴ delivered to the Fathers of the Council of Basel in November 1436, Piccolomini had addressed the Turkish issue, saying, among other things about the Turks, that

... great is the realm of the Turks, immense is the power of the Asians and enormous their riches. They have extended their empire from Asia to Europe, and they have occupied the whole of Greece as if they were the avengers of the destruction of Troy. To expel them from Greece would not be the task of a single city or state but of the entire Christian world.

In his oration to Emperor-Elect Albrecht II, the “*Quid est*”, of April 1438, he had designated the Turks as one of the enemies of the Holy Roman Empire, whom the new emperor would have to fight.⁵

In his oration “*Si Putarem*” to Emperor Friedrich III, of April 1444, he referred to Pope Eugenius IV’s crusade against the Turks as one of the great merits of this pope.⁶

In his oration “*Et breviter me hodie*” to Pope Eugenius IV in July 1446, he, again, mentioned the pope’s meritorious fight against the Turks:

Often help has been sent against the Sultan; you are preparing a fleet against the Turks; and you are spending great sums to protect the Hungarians, who are like a wall protecting the Christian faith, and to expel the Turks from Europe and free the miserable Greeks from their hands, those who were once the masters of the East but now appear to be slaves.

His first full oration on the Turks was the “*Quamvis in hoc senatu*”, in August 1451, to the ambassadors of the Duke of Burgundy at the imperial court. Here, he developed some of the

¹ CO, I, 26; RTA 19, 1, esp. pp. 1-3; Ady, pp. 126-129; Bisaha; Boulting, pp. 204-209; Helmrath: *Pius*; Helmrath: *German*; Meuthen; Mitchell, pp. 113-114; Nowak, pp. 130-131; Reinhardt, p. 162-165; Schwoebel, p. 32-33; Setton, II, ch. 3 and pp. 151-153; Stolf, pp. 282-284; Toews, pp. 261-251; Voigt, II, pp. 105-119

² This section is based on my introduction to Piccolomini’s oration “*Quamvis omnibus*” (1454) [21]

³ See Hankins

⁴ Oration “*Audivi*” (1436) [1], sect. 21

⁵ Oration “*Quid est*” (1438) [3], sect. 3-4

⁶ Oration “*Si putarem*” (1444) [5], sect. 38

themes he would use in later Turkish orations, e.g. the emperor's pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the Turkish and Saracens atrocities, their attacks on Christianity, and – not the least – the need for a concerted European military response to the Turkish expansion.

And at the occasion of the imperial coronation in Rome in 1452, Piccolomini had, on behalf of the emperor, held the oration "*Moyses vir Dei*", in which he formally and officially petitioned Pope Nicolaus V for a crusade with the aim of regaining the territories lost to the Turks and the Arabs, including Jerusalem.

All to no avail. The two leaders of Christian Europe, the emperor and the pope, were both quite unwarlike and averse to risk-taking. And the other kings and princes were engaged in their own wars, both external and internal, and the most important of them, King Charles VII of France, moreover considered the Turkish venture as an unrealistic dream not to be seriously pursued. The only ruler who truly desired a crusade against the Turks was Duke Philippe III of Burgundy.¹

In May 1453, Constantinople fell to the onslaught of the Ottoman army under the leadership of the young sultan, Mehmed II. Though the Byzantine Empire lingered on for some years more at Trebizond, the Fall of Constantinople and the killing of its emperor, Constantine XI Dragases Palaeologus, was generally considered to be the end of the Byzantine Empire and the opening of a new phase in the Turkish expansion towards Europe.

The Fall of Constantinople shocked Europe and created a flurry of activity in the chancelleries.² As the nominal political head of Europe and the champion (advocatus) and protector of the Church, the emperor evidently had to do something – though he really much preferred for the pope to take responsibility, and vice versa!

After mature reflection and some procrastination, as was his wont, he decided to call a conference on the matter that would be both a pan-European conference of princes and a German imperial diet. He thus set into motion procedural machinery that would if successful result in a common European military response to Ottoman aggression. In this endeavour, he was ably assisted by his counsellor and senior diplomat, the Bishop of Siena, Enea Silvio Piccolomini.³

Though the Ottoman threat was in itself quite real and did require a concerted European military response, a number of other issues actually made the Turkish venture an interesting undertaking both for the Empire and the Papacy⁴ as well as for Piccolomini personally. Politically, both the Empire and the Papacy would gain from a great and successful enterprise conducted under their auspices. Financially, they might profit from the financing of the crusade. And as for Piccolomini

¹ Paviot; Meuthen, pp. 21-23

² Schwoebel, ch. 1

³ Meuthen, p. 16; Toews, p. 242: *The imperial-papal response to the Turkish menace was largely due to the activities of Aeneas Sylvius*

⁴ Toews, p. 242

himself, he had an overriding urge to be engaged in important affairs of state, and, moreover, a great cause like a crusade might further his own ecclesiastical ambitions and bring him the cardinal's hat.

These motives have been unmercifully described by Piccolomini's 19th century German, protestant biographer, Georg Voigt.¹ As concerns Piccolomini, Voigt's analysis, however, tends to overlook two things: Firstly, Piccolomini's geopolitical assessment of the enormous Turkish military threat to Europe was, in fact, correct and would shortly be proven to be so.² And secondly, Voigt's personal – and quite bigoted – aversion to Piccolomini made him blind to the complexity of his character and the genuineness of his religious development, in which the crusade became a guiding theme of faith, devotion, generosity and courage – all other motives notwithstanding, though they were undoubtedly there.

At any rate, after the Fall of Constantinople, the crusade against the Turks became the main focus of Piccolomini's activities, first in his remaining period as a top imperial advisor and diplomat (1453-1456), later as a cardinal of Pope Calixtus III (1457-1458), whose mind was firmly fixed on the crusade, and finally as pope (1458-1464).

The imperial diet summoned by the emperor to discuss a military response to the Turkish war of expansion met in Regensburg in May 1454. At the beginning, it as was not well-attended, mostly because the emperor did not participate personally. However, when the Duke of Burgundy arrived,³ the conference gained in status, and for Piccolomini personally the ducal presence gave birth to the illusion of having the duke as a strong European partner in the Turkish venture. This illusion would last for a decade, even forming the basis for his later, papal crusading strategy, until it was shattered, painfully, during the last year of his own pontificate.

By Spring 1454, the general scare caused by the Fall of Constantinople almost a year before had abated considerably. The Europeans were back at their political bickering, their regional conflicts and wars, their discouragement caused by former defeats at the hands of Turks. Some, e.g., the emperor, even nurtured some secret satisfaction that buffer states like Hungary would have to deal with the Turks before these became an imminent threat to themselves.

In his letters from before the diet, Piccolomini himself was quite aware that it would not be an easy matter to mobilize the Europeans in a joint military venture against the Turks.⁴ But this was the task he wanted and one which the emperor had assigned to him. And if oratorical arts and diplomatic skills could clinch the matter, he was definitely the right person to try to.

¹ Voigt III, pp. 98-118

² Setton, II, p. 149

³ Du Fresne de Beaucourt, V, 398-399: *Le duc de Bourgogne ne voulut pas perdre l'occasion de manifester hautement ses intentions au sujet de la Croisade: il déclara qu'il était prêt à entrer en campagne à la tête de soixante mille hommes si les autres princes voulaient faire comme lui*

⁴ E.g., his letter to Cardinal Carval of 11 April 1454 (WO, III, 1, nr. 272, pp. 459-272)

As he had been during the preparations of the diet, Piccolomini was also the driving force during the diet itself. Partly due to the wholehearted support of the Duke of Burgundy, Piccolomini managed to whip up some enthusiasm for the crusade, and the Diet in Regensburg actually agreed to the war in principle. However, when the next diet assembled in Frankfurt to deal with the practical organization of the crusade, the enthusiasm had evaporated again. After the death of Pope Nicolaus in 1455, the crusade project would fall apart.

After the diet in Regensburg, Piccolomini wrote a report about it which he addressed and sent to the Hungarian chancellor, János Vitéz. It is inconceivable that he would have done so without the knowledge of the emperor since the emperor's relations with Hungary were at the time quite inimical due to his longstanding conflicts with the Hungarian governor, János Hunyadi,¹ and the relations with his cousin, King Ladislaus of Hungary, poisoned by the events surrounding the ending of the emperor's wardship over him.²

Piccolomini's gesture had the purpose of demonstrating two things to the Hungarian chancellor. The first was that the emperor's absence from Regensburg – which did certainly not help the cause of the crusade and military support for Hungary against the Turks - was due to the Hungarian governor Hunyadi's own threats against the emperor:

The second was that the absence of ambassadors from Hungary at the diet was detrimental to the Hungarian cause.

Piccolomini's contemporary biographer, Campano, had this to say about the Diet in Regensburg:

*... qua de causa peregit et conventum Ratisponae, ubi progressum in contionem omnibus qui aderant excusisse lacrimas constat, deploratis Graecorum calamitatibus et recenti clade Constantinopolitana in medium exposita.*³

And his other biographer, Platina, commented:

*Aeneas non multo post ad conventum Ratisponensem mictitur, ubi imperatorias vices gerens, presente Philippo, Burgundionum duce, et Ludovico Baiovariae, de immanitate Turchorum et de calamitate christiane reipublice tanta contentione dixit, ut omnibus gemitum et lacrimas excusserit.*⁴

Concerning the veracity of the text, Piccolomini's report is correct in the main substance. This is why it is used – also by the editors of the Reichstagsakten – as an important source on the diet of Regensburg. However, as always, Piccolomini's does his best to make the emperor appear as a

¹ See oration "*Tritum est sermone*" (1447) [12]

² See oration "*Sentio*" (1452) [20]

³ Zimolo, p. 23

⁴ Zimolo, p. 103

wise ruler and himself as an important, competent mover of things. The report is also coloured by his political purposes, to convince the Germans to go on a crusade against the Turks and the Hungarians to join them.

2. Themes

The main themes at the diet were the crusade, the state and reform of the Empire, the conflict between the Teutonic Order and the Prussians and Poles, and the politically important subtheme of the emperor's absence from the conference. Another subtheme - though it was not treated as such – is the conduct of diplomacy. Noteworthy are also Piccolomini's sketches of the personalities of some of the main actors.

2.1. Crusade

The main question was: would it be possible for the imperial ambassadors to make the sceptical Germans approve of a crusade and support a concrete plan for a military expedition against the Turks.

The primary instrument for gaining approval was to be oratory, i.e. the orations of Piccolomini himself, cardinal Nikolaus von Kues, the apostolic legate and the representative of the Duke of Burgundy.

In his grand crusade oration to the diet, the *"Quamvis omnibus"*, Piccolomini declared that the emperor had two motives for proposing a crusade against the Turks, one being revenge for the loss of Christian lands to the Mohammedans, and the other the Turkish threat of invading Europe:

Two reasons have moved the emperor to summon the present diet. The first one is the great, nay enormous injury that the Turkish leader, Mehmed, inflicted upon the Christian cause last summer, at Constantinople. The second is the reported intensive Turkish military build-up, aiming at the complete destruction of the Christian people. The injury inflicted by the Turks he considers as belonging to the past, whereas the build-up means future risk and danger. In a moment I shall speak of both so that all may understand how serious is the injury, which we claim should be avenged, and how great is the danger which we urge you to prepare for.
[Sect. 108]

Expounding on the past losses to the Mohammedans and especially the Turks was a delicate matter: firstly, the present day rulers of Europe might not be terribly interested in remediating the failures of their forefathers, and secondly, it would remind them of the overwhelming force of the

Turkish military which had triumphed decisively over large European armies at Nicopolis in 1396 and Varna in 1444. But the recent Fall of Constantinople gave the orators the opportunity to engage in arousing speechmaking on the atrocities of the Turks, hoping to whip up an enthusiastic response of the audience, as had happened in Clermont in 1396, leading to the First Crusade:

Then, having gathered great forces by land and sea, he [Mehmed II] declared war on the emperor, besieged Constantinople, deployed his war machines, broke down the walls, made a ferocious attack on the city, captured it and plundered it. There Emperor Constantine fell. How wondrous are the judgments of God and how mysterious his ways! About 1,000 men were killed during the attack itself, and afterwards a general slaughter took place throughout the city. All the nobles were killed, and the priests put to the sword. Virgins and matrons suffered the pleasure of the victors. Boys were killed in the arms of their parents, and an infinite number of people were carried off to captivity and permanent slavery. Oh, the miserable and tearful destiny of that city: everywhere you saw plunder, fire, debauchery, blood and corpses. The temples dedicated to the divine name were profaned in unspeakable ways and turned into taverns and – oh, what shame - brothels. The icons of the Great God, of His Mother, of the Precursor and of all the saints were destroyed. The precious relics of martyrs and other saints now reigning with Christ, that were kept in the temples, were thrown to pigs and dogs. A crucifix was carried into the [Turkish] camp, preceded by trumpets. They made a game of throwing it back and forth, mocked it and dragged it through the filth. Does this [outrage] seem small and insignificant? Who can talk about such things without tears? I shudder even as I tell them. Oh, what great and intolerable shame on the Christian people! I believe that the heart of every Christian who hears about this will be moved and burn with anger. Is there any believer who will not cry in sorrow? ... This is the city, so memorable and so glorious, which the Turks without any provocation whatsoever have now conquered and taken from the Christians' hands, shedding the blood of harmless people, burning libraries and important books, polluting the holy places and committing sacrileges against Christ, Our God, which I shudder to relate. ... These [events] have shocked the emperor profoundly. His Majesty believes that such crimes and shameful acts must be avenged: this enormous injury, this flagrant abuse must not be left unavenged. It is not only the Greeks who have been scorned. Indeed, all Christendom has been grievously wounded and mocked. And not only have mortals, but even the immortal beings in Heaven been mocked and provoked. Our God has been scorned in an unspeakable fashion. [Sect. 111-114]

Mobilizing the Europeans for revenge might have been difficult, but - in the light of the Fall of Constantinople and subsequent Turkish forays into the Greek heartland and islands - mobilizing them for a joint defence against the threatening Turkish invasion appeared eminently sensible. It was also an altogether more realistic project than a crusade to regain not only Constantinople but also the Holy Land and Jerusalem:

The emperor, however, is not just moved by the motive of avenging this injury, though it is, of course, quite serious. For he sees a great danger threatening us and considers that we must take care to avoid that one injury leads to another. Mehmed has now conquered Constantinople. There he has a large harbour and a site very suitable for ships, which can hold not just one or some ships, but almost immense fleets. No other place on the Mediterranean is more convenient for dominating the whole sea, for Constantinople lies above Propontis, so that you cannot, against the will of the Turks, sail from the Pontus Euxinus (which today is called the Great Sea) to the Euboan, Jonian and Cretan seas, which may considered as one sea (today called the Archipelage), nor the opposite way. The narrow straits through Thracian Bosphorus and through the Hellespont (that our people call The Arm of Saint George) being now in the power of the Turks, no commercial goods can come from Tanais to our regions against their will. And it will now be possible for the Turks to prepare a fleet in the port of Constantinople with which to lay waste to all the islands of the Archipelage – actually they are already said to have attacked and plundered a number of them.

But men, who know Mehmed's character and life well and who come to us from those regions, report that Mehmed has grown bolder and will certainly not want peace and quiet: one victory is the means for the next. He is gathering large armies and strong fleets in order to further assail Christianity. Night and day, he only thinks about how to completely destroy the Christian cause and to destroy the memory of Jesus, Our Lord. Indeed, it is not to be wondered that his mind swells and raves when he considers his father's and his own victories. Only a few years ago, his father, Murad, twice destroyed large and strong Christian armies, causing the death of Vladislaus, the young and noble king of Poland, and Giuliano, Cardinal of Sant'Angelo, one of the most outstanding men of his time. Proud of his victory at Constantinople and the killing of the Greek Emperor, Mehmed now boasts that he is greater than his father. And since he carries the same name as the false and lying prophet Muhammad, who enlarged and strengthened the sect of the Agarenes, he is tormented by his burning desire to destroy the Christian name.

The Christian Faith was solidly rooted in four patriarchal sees, from where it once spread over the whole Earth, like vine sprouts. Of these the Agarenes have now taken three: Alexandria, Antiochia and Constantinople. Therefore Mehmed has no doubt that he can also win the Roman patriarchate from us. Indeed, among his intimates he often says: "Why should I not be able to conquer and possess the whole of the West since I am already lord of Asia, Thracia, Macedonia and all of Greece? After all, Alexander, son of Philip, was only lord of Macedonia when he dared to invade the East with [just] 32.000 soldiers and reach as far as India." He actually compares himself to Julius Cesar, Hannibal of Carthage, Pyrrhus of Epirus and other illustrious men, and he claims to surpass them all.

He claims that he can arm and lead countless forces into war. This is not a lie, for it is evident that he can bring more than 200,000 soldiers into battle. And if the tartars join him, as the

legate of the Polish King reports and the Governor of Hungary confirms, then he will be able to mobilize an almost innumerable army. But why dwell on something that is common knowledge? Though his forefathers did not have any land over the sea, they often brought great forces over to Europe. What would he do now when his empire reaches from the frontiers of Hungary to Dalmatia? We should certainly not despise this mighty enemy! His mind is set on war. He is young and hot-blooded. He loves glory. He is determined to pursue Christians - with a kind of natural hate born of ingrained and innate malignity and cruelty. He has many renegades from our people with him who encourage him and from whom he learns of all our plans. He is our immediate neighbour, with easy access to Italy and Germany through the neighbouring regions of Dalmatia and Croatia – for most Albanians and Bosnians have surrendered to him and have become his clients. Do you really believe that this man, enticed by so many advantages, will settle down after his victories? Those who well know the man and his intentions are quite certain that next year he will assault the Christians with all his might and do all he can to vanquish his neighbours. [Sect. 115-118]

In order to counter the Turkish threat, it would be necessary for the Europeans to mobilize a joint defence:

Princes, now it is time to take up weapons and to attack the enemies of the Cross in their own dwellings, and to wage war with brave hearts and united forces. Certain victory will be in our hands, if only we go to battle with a pure mind, for the honour of God and for the salvation of the Christian people, and with reformed minds seek not what is our own, but what is Jesus Christ's. Though Mehmed is - as I said before - a most ferocious and powerful enemy, he does not equal German strength, nor can he be compared to the German name. There is no reason for you, Nobles, to fear him if only you decide for war unanimously, for you are lacking neither in men nor horses, weapons, wagons and ships: in all these things you are superior to your enemies. If you think back on the deeds of our forefathers, you will find that the Turks never equalled them in battles at sea or on land if only the Christians acted in concert against them. Just think of the great victories over the Turks and other infidels won by the Roman emperors Charlemagne, Konrad III, Friedrich I, Friedrich II and by Godefroy, Duke of Lorraine. [Sect. 126]

Except for the main strategy of a combined German-led land army and an Italian navy [Sect. 131], the emperor did not want to propose a plan of action but instead exhorted the participants in the diet to consult between them and make concrete proposals, to which he would then give his assent:

Our [the imperial ambassadors'] most important task is to demand of Your Excellencies not to depart from here before you have made a unanimous decision to not only defend what remains of Christianity but also to reclaim, as far as possible, what is now in the hands of the enemies. We have not received specific instructions concerning the manner and the order in which this should be done. Rather, we have been ordered to receive your counsel, to hear

your views, to follow your serious and enlightened judgment, to discuss with you what would be useful and necessary, and to reach a common agreement on the best course to follow. [Sect. 120]

The lengthy address of Cardinal Nikolaus von Kues was summarized by Piccolomini in a few words:

After him, the Cardinal of San Pietro who had personally visited Constantinople several times and seen almost all of Greece, spoke gravely and at length about the site of the lost city, the character of the peoples, the power of the Turks, and how to conduct the war. And though he declared that the Greeks had merited their sufferings since they had not wanted to follow the Roman Church and had fraudulently feigned the union, he did much urge the Christians to avenge the injury to the Saviour. [Sect. 133]

On the oration of the apostolic legate, Giovanni Castiglione, the “*Gravi totiens*”, Piccolomini wrote:

Afterwards, Bishop Giovanni of Pavia, the apostolic legate, held an oration of great refinement and with vivid and elegant expressions. The purport of the oration was this: since the beginning of time the devil has hated truth and fostered divisions, errors and schisms, and he has stirred up innumerable heretical movements against the light of truth. The bishop declared the sect of Muhammad to be the most malignant and abominable of them all - all know how much it has grown and spread. The bishop also mentioned the evil deeds perpetrated by the Saracens and the Turks in the memory of our fathers. Then, coming to our own times, he put the Fall of Constantinople before our eyes, showing how great dangers threaten our religion if the savage Turks are not resisted. He told us how the Roman Pontiff was concerned about protecting Christianity and had contemplated many and great things, and how he himself had been sent by him first to the emperor, and then to the King of Hungary and to the barons of that kingdom, in order to rouse them and stir them up to come to the aid of the Christian commonwealth, mentioning the main points in each of the orations he had delivered to those princes. Finally he urged all who were present to take up arms against the Turks, saying that from the apostolic throne they would get all they considered necessary for this undertaking. [Sect. 134]

The imperial ambassadors did not want to submit a concrete plan of action to the diet and exhorted the participants to put forward their ideas and proposals. Instead, they were met with an insistent demand for specific proposals from the emperor, and after some days of hard thinking, they produced a note for the assembly containing an explicit and detailed proposal for joint defence of Europe against the Turks:

The imperial legates several times and urgently requested the princes to present their opinions [on the matter], but when all wanted to hear the emperor's ideas, the legates discussed the matter for a while and then put in writing what they thought would be

appropriate, and presented this note to the assembly, saying that it represented the emperor's thinking. [Sect. 140] [Here follows the text of the note, see sect. 141-146]

The ambassadors knew that the proposals would have to be discussed by the German princes at home before a decision could be reached. They, therefore, proposed that a new diet should be held later the same year to decide upon the practical organization of the crusade.

With some amendments, the imperial proposals were accepted by Albrecht of Brandenburg, who spoke in the name of the assembly including the Duke of Burgundy. The text of Albrecht's German address is only known in Piccolomini's Latin version, but apparently its substance was rendered faithfully:

Distinguished ambassadors, we have heard what you said about the intentions of Holy Emperor Friedrich in the matter of the protection of the Christian religion. We consider that His Majesty is acting wisely and prudently in this great matter. The dukes Philippe of Burgundy and Ludwig of Bavaria and the ambassadors of the King of Poland and of the electors and other princes require me to say some words on this matter, and I shall do so briefly. We all commend the objectives of our emperor and thank the Best and Greatest God that he has, at this time, given us a prince who is concerned about the common good. We wish that he be kept safe and unharmed for the commonwealth for a long time. We praise and approve of his intentions. We pray and beg that he may persist with all his might in this holy endeavour, both for the common welfare of the Christians and for the praise and eternal name of our illustrious nation.

Concerning the articles you have presented, there is not much to say, since you yourselves have decided that they should be discussed more closely in another diet to be held later. We are sure that many others will meet there who have better knowledge than us about the Turkish and Greek matters and the geographical conditions. Maybe the counts Ulrich of Cilly and János of Bistríta¹ will be present. From them we shall hear how many soldiers to bring, where and when the Turks should be attacked, what kind of battle, what machines to use, by what route the provisions should be transported, and which advice to accept and which to reject. We shall also learn what the Italians, the French, and other nations will do. If the Hungarians, the Bohemians, the Poles and other Christians join up, it will hardly be necessary to contribute so many soldiers from our nation as your articles stipulate, for then the army will become too big to be fed, and – as told about Xerxes – will not only lack food to eat but even rivers to drink. The other articles we consider to have been thought out with great acumen and a divine mind, and especially what you stated about ordaining a five-year peace. Would that it could be permanent! For it is certain that no army can be brought forth from our nation if we do not achieve peace between us. We are sorry that you are uncertain about the emperor's attendance at the next diet, for we know that many things require the

¹ The governor of Hungary

emperor's presence and especially what was said about peace. So, if the emperor wishes for the matter [of an expedition] against Turks to succeed, you must persuade him to come to the diet. This is our considered opinion, and this is the advice we give His Majesty as his loyal princes and obedient vassals. [Sect. 154-155]

Compliments, compliments, and a certain willingness to entertain the concrete proposals, but also a direct warning that the emperor's presence at the future diet was essential to the crusade project.

The crusade plans were thus given a quite reluctant welcome by the Germans, but at the end of the congress they gained serious momentum when the Bishop of Toul delivered an oration on behalf of the Duke of Burgundy. Again the text is only known in Piccolomini's version, but the substance would have been rendered faithfully. The bishop echoed the description of the Turkish atrocities and threats in the previous orations, summarized the duke's initiatives in the Turkish matter, and proceeded to a clear and concrete commitment to the crusade, thus pushing the vacillating Germans to move forward in the matter:

Since there is going to be a delay and you will hold another diet, and Philippe may not be able to participate in that meeting, he prefers to state his intentions already now, for he does not require time for further thought since he came to you having already considered the matter and with his mind made up. What he was going to say in the emperor's presence, he says now. Possibly it will prove an advantage if he makes known his intentions already now.

Concerning the imperial propositions, Philippe would add nothing and take nothing away from what Margrave Albrecht said in the name of all. If this way is accepted, then Philippe will follow what is ordained. If not, he promises (as his intentions have already been made known everywhere) this before God and you, in unshakeable good faith: If His Imperial Majesty accepts the leadership of an army against the Turks and participates personally in the expedition, Philippe will serve in his own person under the imperial banner, with the largest and strongest possible following. If the emperor declines this charge, but King Ladislaus of Hungary and Bohemia, though still a boy, wishes to fight in the army for the Catholic Faith, Philippe will be in his camp. And if neither the emperor nor Ladislaus decides to fight against the Turks, but other Christian princes take weapons and make preparations worthy of such a great war, then Philippe will join them and in no way be absent unless he is prevented for a reason which the whole of Christianity would consider a valid excuse. In that case, he will send a prince of his blood, with cavalry and infantry worthy of the Duke of Burgundy. This Philippe has commanded me to declare so that you shall not be ignorant of his intentions. [Sect. 162-163]

This declaration moved Albrecht of Brandenburg to express a more positive support for the crusade project, and the diet ended in a state of some enthusiasm, although it would prove to be short-lived:

Philippe, Illustrious Duke, you fill all of us here today with great consolation and joy, as you declare how far you are willing and ready to protect the Christian religion. We have eagerly heard your address and consider you worthy of eternal praise. We, too, shall not fail you in this

so praiseworthy endeavour, and we shall not leave you alone. We, too, desire to protect the Faith of Christ with all our might, since we must – if we do not wish to be unworthy of our ancestors – come to the aid of the Christian religion as much as we are able to. Let there be no doubt that we, too, who are present and many of the princes of our nation who are absent will go to war against the Turkish people, fighting in person, and that we shall show the Christian people how much we care about the catholic and orthodox Faith.”

After these addresses, great enthusiasm rose among all ... [Sect. 173-174]

2.2. The Empire

The state and need of a reform of the Empire was treated in two important addresses reported by Piccolomini, one by himself in the imperial council, and one by his friend Johann Lysura at the diet. Piccolomini wrote both texts after the events, and they may be coloured by his perception of the issue at the time of writing.

His own intervention took place at a meeting in the imperial council, before the diet. Piccolomini argued that the emperor's presence was necessary not only for the success of the crusade project, but also for another urgent need: the reform of the Empire. On this issue, he exhorted the emperor to confront the princes and cities with their criticism of his infrequent stays visit to Germany: he should make clear to them that they were themselves responsible for the Empire's lack of resources and thence the emperor's inability to come often to Germany and his lack of coercive means to fulfil justice, enforce obedience, and to settle armed conflict. Furthermore, the princes should not expect the financial needs of the Empire to be covered by the House of Austria:

Right now, we are discussing whether you should go there. If I was in your place. I would go there and show myself to the princes. I would make such arguments for the [defence of the] Christian faith which I find compelling. Then I would add: 'I hear that you, princes and cities, are exasperated because I do not come often to you, because I do not end conflicts and wars, do not punish the guilty, and do not force all to follow justice. You appear not to realize that the imperial office is drained and has no resources to make these things happen. Just coming once here, I would easily spend more funds than I could collect from the Empire in ten years. If I pronounce a judgement, nobody executes it. If I write or command anything, you only obey if you wish to. So, why do you criticize me? Should I spend my own inherited property to save yours? Certainly not! It is enough if I offer and dedicate my cares, my zeal, my labour, my work, and my person to you. If you grant me [an income which allows me] to live among you and dispense justice to everyone and to perform the office of a king and emperor, then I shall never fail you nor the state. If you are concerned about the poverty of the Empire, then stop criticizing, and do not blame me if you all lose your power and liberty because each of you wants to rule.' I am convinced, emperor, that if the princes hear you speaking like this, it will benefit both yourself and the Empire. The princes will realize how shameful it is that the kings of other nations are amazingly rich, while their own king is poor. They are also tired of daily and unceasing conflicts, and they know that these go on and on because you have neither [your subjects'] obedience nor soldiers to enforce it. But they do know that soldiers cannot be hired or maintained without money, the most important muscle of the republic. If the Germans want peace and justice among them, they must provide for you and the empire. This you have already been promised by Jakob, Bishop of the Church of Trier, the most clear-sighted and clever of your [prince] electors, as you were told last year by Johann Lysura, an intelligent and wise man. So, you will deal with two matters at the Diet of Regensburg: you will organize an army against the Turk, and you will restore the Empire to its former glory. If you just achieve one of these, you will gain honour and a great name. If you achieve

neither, the peoples will [at least] praise you for pursuing honourable and great matters.
[Sect. 15-16]

At the diet, Johann Lysura took up the issue of the Empire in an address reported by Piccolomini and which closely echoed Piccolomini's address in the imperial council. Piccolomini probably reported the substance of the address loyally, but shaped it to fit his own conceptions and strategic aims:

"I did not want to hear the emperor's plans against the Turks in order to criticize them, for I understand that this is very great matter which cannot be touched by unwashed hands, though it would really be a small matter for the German name, if our Empire was governed as it should be. But you all see our Germany being mauled and scourged from all sides and falling apart everywhere. Here the cities have unending conflicts with the princes, there the princes are at war with other princes, and the cities with other cities. Nobody is so abject that he will not dare to declare war on his neighbour on his own authority. No corner of our nation is at peace. Wherever you turn, you must fear robbers, ambush, plundering and death. The clergy has no peace and the nobles no honour. Everything lies wide open to robbers. We fulfil this verse of Ovid: Men lived on plunder. Guest was not safe from host, nor father-in-law from son-in-law. Our wickedness is complete. Nobody lives peacefully in his home. What can you do when people behave like that? How can we go to war against the Turks, when we fear each other at home. We are ashamed of our name, we are ashamed of this state of things.

Our forefathers had neither our means nor our soldiers, but still they took over the Roman Empire, which was in the hands of the Greeks. How could they do that? Because they cultivated peace at home, made wars abroad, with their armies protected the Roman Church against aggressors, brought help to neighbours who were being molested, did not rob each other, and did not allow others to be robbed unjustly. Thus – and it is not so long ago – they extended the Empire from the Pyrenean Mountains to Hungary, had the obedience of the Italians, and gave kings to the Spanish, the English, the Hungarians, the Bohemians, and the Poles. Nowadays, some German-speaking people are not part of the Empire. Whereto has our apathy brought us? Whereto do our divisions drive us? All the neighbouring nations scorn and despise us: we are powerful and noble at home, we have an abundance of rich and populous cities and all good things, but that which is the greatest good for men, keeping peace at home, we cannot have, and among us we leave no place for justice which begets and preserves peace.

When I say this, you imperial ambassadors may think that I am blaming yours and our prince for failing to give us justice and peace, but nothing is further from my mind. I do not reproach His Majesty that he does not strive to give peace to Germany, and there is no need for his personal resources. All know what little power he has, all know what tax revenues he has. From his own paternal lands he only gets what is fitting for an honourable prince. From the Empire he barely gets enough to sustain the legates he sends here and there. Styria and

Carinthia cannot sustain the burden of the Empire, and even if it could, it would not be reasonable to expect the emperor to cover the costs of the Empire out of his own paternal inheritance and to rob his own children of their inheritance to care for the common good. For even though exalted and praiseworthy princes sometimes have done so, today such charity would be preposterous. It is enough if the emperor makes himself available and works for the common good, as I remember hearing from his own mouth last year when I came to Wiener Neustadt on a mission from the Archbishop of Trier. You bishops of Siena and Gurk were there.

So who do I blame? Who do I consider responsible for our evils? I blame all, indeed, who carry the name of German. We are all passive and indolent, we all merit to be punished for not respecting our king and not caring for our state. As if the Empire had nothing to do with us, we are letting all fall apart and allow the light in our hands to be extinguished for which our forefathers gave their lives. How do we believe that the members can be strong if the head is weak. What do we give to our head, to our king? He gets nothing from us except the name of emperor. Do we really consider this to suffice? What country under the heaven – I ask – does not feed its own king? We all want peace, we hate war, we denounce conflict and plunder, but we are not searching for a way to have peace. You will never find peace without justice. A peaceful realm delivers justice. Here someone may object: “It is the emperor’s responsibility to deliver justice. If he does not do that, then he is at fault.” But – I ask you – from where can he get the funds to pay the judges?

Take away the soldiers, and let the lawmen deliver judgments regularly: who forces those to obey who will not? Very recently a judgment was delivered against the Prussians, but instead of obeying as ordered to they intensify their attacks against the Order, they drive their old masters from their homes, and they fear neither the censures of the Apostolic See nor the decrees of the Empire. I could point to many decisions of the emperors Sigismund, Albrecht and Friedrich that we remember to have remained without effect. For many years we have seen the See of Utrecht being occupied by someone against the orders of the Roman Pontiff and the emperor’s command. And now, too, you know with what right the Church of Münster is being held. What shall I say about the people of Soest and the scandalous defeat of the Church of Cologne. Did those people of Soest fear the curse of the Supreme Pontiff or the ban of the Empire? In vain we make laws, keep justice, render judgments if there is no armed arm to coerce defiant subjects. You blame the emperor for not censuring the effrontery of the disobedient, for not preventing plundering, and for not resisting powerful transgressors. But what can he do when he is unarmed? Who bothers about words when they are not followed by whips? The emperors of old had armed legions with which they could easily punish stiff-necked and criminal men. Now our emperor is on his own and without means. “But let him arm legions,” someone may say. And how shall he feed them”, I say. How can anybody without money sustain an army? We contribute nothing to the Empire. With us, the name of king is an empty title. We have a realm without a treasure, and therefore we only obey it

when we want to. Everybody considers himself a king, and therefore we have those unending conflicts.

If we want peace, we must have one prince who can both give orders and enforce them. This will happen if we do not allow our king to be lacking in means and if we make it possible for him to mobilize an army to suppress the defiance of the disobedient whenever needful. Indeed, I think that nobody who loves the German name will consider this to be preposterous, for our Germany is not so poor that it cannot provide for its king magnificently. I have often been in France, and when I compared our nation with the French, all said that we would be greatly superior if we obeyed our king. But since there is no obedience among us, and everybody wants to be his own emperor, the French say about us, that what once happened to the Greek cities also applies to us: each of them wanted to govern, and therefore they all together lost the government. They say that Germany is a great province, rich, full of men, horses and weapons, strong by virtue of its nature, but with a weak government, and in my opinion they are not wrong. But I do believe that there is no grander nation under the sky that hath gods so nigh them, as your Lord God is with you. If we would only be kind to ourselves and let us live like other nations, honour our head, submit to the king, bow to justice, and preserve order! But if we go living as we have now begun to, then I would say that our nation is finished. Others will come and take the kingdom and the people from us, and we who do not wish to serve an emperor of our own blood will be forced to carry a foreign yoke.

I believe that you noble and powerful men are already aware of this and that you have often been thinking about the reform of the nation and the Empire, and I do not believe it will be a difficult thing if only the emperor would meet with his princes. For though many disagree with these ideas, they will be persuaded by reason itself and will not be able to fight against synderesis, which is innate in all men and carry the seeds of seeking what is virtuous and good. But – to return to my point of departure – I believe that we should absolutely not go to war against the Turks unless we have first restored the Empire to its proper state. And I do not see how we can reform the Empire, if the emperor does not come and take counsel with his princes on reforming the state. But if the Empire is set in order, we shall not only be able to resist the Turks with ease, but also to bridle the other nations, as we did in the past, and raise up high the German name which is now considered as vile and worthless. [Sect. 95-101]

It was difficult for the imperial ambassadors to disagree on the substance, but they would not accept that a discussion of the reform of the Empire should precede the crusade since they well knew that then there would be no crusade.¹

The issue of the Empire surfaced later in the proceedings of the diet, occasioning a short address of Cardinal Nikolaus von Kues in support of the reform of the Empire.²

¹ Sect. 102

² Sect. 105-106

2.3. The Teutonic Knights and Prussia/Poland

It may not have been planned that way, but still one of the main issues at the Diet of Regensburg became the conflict between the Teutonic Knights on one side and the Prussian cities and Poland on the other. Piccolomini's account of this matter fell into three parts: the development of the conflict, the lawsuit in the imperial court, and events at the diet itself.

From this account, it would appear that though Piccolomini did not favour the Prussian cities, whose revolt offended his aristocratic mindset, he did not sympathize either with the Teutonic Knights, and in general he wanted a peaceful settlement of the conflict, which – like all the other conflicts in Germany – would be an impediment to the grand crusade project.

Concerning the development of the conflict itself, he gave a broad historical outline, weak on details and timeline, but fair in substance. Recently, Piccolomini wrote, the Prussians

had made a sordid pact between them against the Order, but though they had been ordered both by the Apostolic See and the Emperor to annul it, they had scorned the Two Swords,¹ taken up arms against their lords and driven them out of the whole of Prussia. Now the Order's power only comprised Marienburg and some unimportant cities, but these were under siege by the Prussians, and the Grand Master of the Order was himself beleaguered and could barely defend himself. [Sect. 55]

The “sordid” pact between the cities had actually been made following an initiative of a Grand Master, beset with the internal rivalries of the Order:

... when peace had brought wealth, and wealth arrogance and luxurious living, fortune began to rage and throw all into disorder. During the administration of Paul, the Order broke into two factions, each pursuing its own policies, loathing and plotting against each other. The Knights had endured great hardships and dangers of war, but they could not bear tranquillity and wealth. Thus the majority of the Brethren deserted the Master. Fearing that the cities, too, would become divided and that some would follow him and others his rivals, he summoned the cities' leaders and bade them unite, in the belief that once united they would side with him. The cities seized upon the opportunity to do what they so ardently desired: they summoned the noble and the military leaders of the province and presented a bitter indictment of the injuries inflicted over many years on the people by the prelates and the Order. Their government, they said, was the worst in the world and would destroy their country if unopposed. They all agreed that they should now, while they had the opportunity, join forces to aid their country and not give up on their own salvation. With the Master's

¹ I.e., the religious and the secular power with their different means of coercion

permission they held a meeting in which it was decided to set up a board of 16 men to meet once a year in a certain place and on a certain date and settle conflicts between private people, correct abuses, and not allow anyone to be harmed. If anyone should disregard the decisions of this board, public measures would be taken against him, be he a bishop or even the Grand Master himself. As presidents of this board they decided to appoint four prelates and four Knights, and the other eight from the nobles and the cities. Paul approved everything, in order to keep the cities on his side. [Sect. 61]

Concerning the lawsuit at the imperial court, Piccolomini took some pleasure in describing the lively confrontation of two German top lawyers at the time, Peter Knorr and Martin Mair, with both of whom he entertained friendly relations. At the end of the day, the matter was decided by a majority of princely counsellors. They had rushed to the imperial court and participated in the proceedings to defend their masters' interest in the case by preventing an imperial ruling in favour of the democratically governed cities against their aristocratic masters, with dire consequences for the princes' domination of their subjects:

Many legates from the princes were present, for when these heard that there would be a trial before the emperor of the Prussian cities against the Order, and that subjects would vindicate their rights against their superiors (servants against their lords, as they said), then they hastened to come, not in obedience to the emperor who summoned them, but in order to protect their own interests and extinguish a fire threatening them all. [Sect. 70]

Piccolomini's main interest in the matter was to prevent an imperial ruling which would be disregarded by the Prussians and not end the conflict, thus – further - diminishing the emperor's prestige and legal authority:

“As far as I can see, this conflict, Excellent Emperor, which agitates the Order and the cities, is neither small nor insignificant. It is not the question of a field in Arpinum or Tusculum, but of a great province and a powerful realm. The Order is endeavouring to keep the cities as subjects obeying all commands, while the cities are striving to become free and owe as little as possible to the Order. If I am not mistaken, 55 cities have made a pact between them which the Order now rejects. Breaking it or approving it is a grave matter, to be undertaken with wide-open eyes and – so to say - with the tips of the fingers. ... Conflicts about kingdoms are settled by friends and good men, or by the sword. Laws are silent when kings speak, as it is said both truly and elegantly. Laws are like the webs of spiders: they may catch unimportant men like flies, but when powerful men pass through they are torn apart as by eagles. ‘But what is your intention with this?’ someone may ask. It is that you should not, Emperor, believe that your judgments will be accepted whatever you decide; that you should not make a judgment precipitously; that you should not pass a sentence that is laughed at. I would rather try everything to make peace rather than to pass a sentence which the parties will not obey.

You ask us whether the requested postponement should be granted. No, Peter says, for why should we want proof of something which even when proven is not relevant to the case? That is Peter's opinion. I, on the contrary, believe as follows: if the cities prove that the Grand Master and a great part of the Knights accepted the pact, and that the Order has ruled the province abusively, ignored the cities' privileges, and allowed access neither to the pope's nor the emperor's law courts, then – even if one of the statutes is incompatible with ecclesiastical liberty - there is no reason for us to fine the cities heavily as perjurers and infamous, and to annul the whole pact when it may to a great extent be preserved. I therefore consider that the requested postponement should be granted not only in order to examine the objections of the cities, but also that peace may be negotiated repeatedly. The principal parties with full powers to [make] peace and war will be there, while their representatives, bound to carefully respect the limits of their mandate, will be here. Who knows whether the peace that is refused here, may be found there? So, in my opinion, Emperor, you should grant the requested postponement, and send eminent men as legates to Prussia, and do everything you can to draw the parties towards peace. If they assent, you will have performed an almost divine thing. If there is no room for peace there, either, you should ask for the documentation they can deliver, summon the parties to appear on another day, and pass sentence with the advice of the princes. But if you deny the petition now and continue the proceedings, I fear that the cities will claim to have been tricked and molested, and refuse to obey your sentence as prejudiced and one-sided. [Sect. 71-72]

Eventually, a sentence was passed in favour of the Teutonic Knights and against the Prussian cities. The result was exactly as foreseen by Piccolomini:

The sentence was passed, to this effect: the cities did not have the right to make a pact between them; the pact they had made was not valid, but null and void. Nothing was said about penalties, for before the sentence was passed, the Order had made such dependent on the emperor's will. Both parties received a letter with the judgment, the cities so that they might be blamed, and the Order so that they might be helped.

The legates of the cities went home and said that they had been scorned and mocked before the emperor, that the sentence passed was based on hate and envy, that the compromise had been violated, that the princes' counsellors, partial and bribed men, had come, sat with the emperor, and not allowed fair and good justice to be done. They had denied the due postponement and the adjudication of the counterclaim which had been agreed upon, they had condemned the league with unheard-of reasons, they had declared all the cities to be infamous, they had wanted to impose an incredible fine, they had ignored the [cities'] privileges and liberties, they had wanted the death penalty for the high-ranking citizens and to make the rest of the people permanent slaves of the maddened Knights

Enraged by this report the people took to arms. They stormed the walled cities and fortresses of the prelates and the Order, pulled them down and destroyed them. They threw many

brothers [of the Order] in chains. They killed the opponents, and in a few days they subdued all of Prussia. Only the city called Marienburg and a few others remained in the power of the Order, a city reported to be much fortified, surrounded with a triple moat, built with high walls and towers, and abundantly provided with food supplies, weapons and war machines of every kind. All the Knights took refuge there, hoping to be able to reconquer all of the lost province from there – as had happened before. But the people were not deterred by the strength of this city: they brought their forces there and mounted a siege, but were driven back suffering large losses. [Sect. 76-78]

Piccolomini wrote his account after these events, and the concerns expressed in his statement to the court may have been coloured by the factual outcome. On the other hand, one of Piccolomini's strengths as diplomat, counsellor and problem fixer was his realism and sense of Realpolitik, and there seems to be little reason to doubt that his own account of his advice to the emperor at the trial was substantially correct.

Incidentally, his report of the trial shows an understanding and enjoyment of legal affairs and arguments which has not always been appreciated by scholars considering him as inimical towards lawyers and the legal system.¹

It also shows that Piccolomini had sufficient German to be able to follow intricate and convoluted deliberations at the imperial court – as well as at a large meeting like the Diet of Regensburg.

At the Diet in Regensburg, the matter was raised by the Order's master of Germany, arousing much sympathy among the German aristocrats:

Much was said about this great injury: all expressed their regret at the plight of the Order and denounced the actions of the cities. The matter was given special importance by the ambassadors of the Margraves of Brandenburg, who wish to be seen as the first among the friends of the Order. Also the Cardinal of San Pietro spoke indignantly about this rebellion, admonishing at length the German nation not to lose its honour and pride, for Prussia was the only foreign country the Germans had conquered by arms. They should take care not to

¹ See Kirsch for a balanced view of Piccolomini's attitude to the science and practice of law. See also Piccolomini's address to the University of Vienna in 1445, the "*Nisi satis Exploratum*" where, on the subject of law he said: ... *who is so eminently eloquent that he can praise these disciplines [civil and canon law] as they merit? Through them, indeed, the life of all men is being constantly developed and improved through salutary and divine precepts, and through them cities, peoples and nations are being ruled, protected and multiplied, united by law. Indeed, distinguished men, I often consider and ponder how cities were formed in the beginning, how they were preserved afterwards, and how they developed the structure we see today. I can see no other reason why this happened than the force of justice itself or fear of justice or respect for it. For what other virtues or what other arts could make men scattered in forests and living like wild animals come together in one place and make them prefer to obey and submit to those who excelled in virtue and wisdom rather than to live like animals? Indeed, this could only happen because reason itself and wisdom consistent with justice could bring them away from their customs and incite them to live a cultured life based on rules.* [Sect. 12-13]

lose this glory if the cities reclaimed their liberty or took a new king from another nation. The papal and imperial legates declared that what the cities were trying to do was unacceptable both to the Empire and the Apostolic See, and both powers would undoubtedly come to the support of the Order. It would be necessary to obtain both the pope's and the emperor's assent to selling the possessions [of the Order]. The Order should as quickly as possible consult with well-wishers and friends about mobilizing an army and march to Marienburg before it would be conquered. However, the cardinal did not reject peace negotiations if possible, for any wise man knows that diplomacy should always be tried before arms. [Sect. 80]

And when the Polish ambassador warned against any German reprisals against the Prussian cities now having accepted the lordship and protection of the Polish king, the Germans became furious, almost to the point of violence:

When he had spoken, all the Germans began to rage and curse the man and almost attacked him with their nails. But the Master of Germany said: "It is only a few years ago that we made a perpetual pact with you king, confirmed with oaths, letters and seals, and we do not believe that so great a king will fail his oath. We tore Prussia from the hands of the infidels with arms and bought it with our blood. Now – if what you say is true – it is astounding and monstrous that the king, the bishops and all the nobility of Poland should disregard their oaths. But that shall not prevent us from reclaiming our province." Then they quarrelled violently, and finally this day's meeting was ended. [Sect. 83]

Later, reports were received at the diet, that Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg had negotiated an agreement for Bohemian military aid to the Teutonic Knights, but the price was so great that the Order could not accept it. In the end, a proposal by Piccolomini to try for a diplomatic resolution of the matter was accepted:

Then the Bishop of Siena said: "If you listen to me, you will send two or more legates in your name to the King of Bohemia. They shall inform him that this assembly considers the Prussian rebellion to be damaging and harmful to the Christian Commonwealth. They shall beg him to send his counsellors to the King of Poland to ask him to accept a truce with the Order in his own name and in the name of the Prussian cities and to agree to holding a meeting in Vratislava or another place where common friends can settle all the conflicts which the Prussians and the Poles have with the Order. Also the Roman Pontiff should send a legate de latere, and the emperor together with the electors should send eminent ambassadors. In the meantime you will beg the pope to entrust this task to the Cardinal of San Pietro." Margrave Albrecht agreed with this proposal and immediately translated it into German. All the others assented. Then they wrote to the Roman Pontiff and chose legates who would meet in Prague on the Feast of the Lord's Ascension. [Sect. 152]

2.4. Emperor's absence

The issue of the emperor's absence from the Diet of Regensburg was a highly political and sensitive matter.

The matter was discussed in a restricted meeting of the imperial council at which Piccolomini was asked, as the first, to give his opinion:

When the time of the diet approached, the emperor summoned his senators and asked them whom to send to Regensburg as his representatives. The matter was discussed in secret and with only a few people. First, Aeneas, Bishop of Siena, was asked to give his opinion [Sect. 12-13]

He was not in doubt: the emperor had to go to the meeting for two reasons. Firstly, only with him present would it be possible for the diet to reach a decision to go to war against the Turks. And secondly, only by being present he could persuade the princes of the Empire to accept and ensure a proper financial basis for the functioning of the Empire as guarantor and executor of justice and laws.

Concerning the war against the Turks, he said that it would be to the emperor's glory and advantage, and he even dared to raise the spectre of a coup against the emperor if he failed to do his duty:

... unless you go yourself, neither the prince-electors nor the other nobles will attend or send ambassadors qualified for such an important matter. The diet will become a laughing matter, and nothing worthwhile will be done there. If you stay away, all will criticise your indifference, since you attach so little importance to this great matter, the defence of Christianity. ... if you do not undertake this voyage, then you will disregard both your honour and your advantage. Attacking the Turks is incumbent on you for many reasons, not just because you are emperor of the Romans and champion and protector of the Church, but also because you are the closest relative to Ladislaus, King of Hungary, whose kingdom – situated so close to the Turks – begs for help from the Christians: indeed, it would be both impious and cruel not to help him. Also, your own territory is threatened, if you consider the Slavonic March and Carniola, also very close to the Turks. Moreover, you are of flourishing age and healthy body, robust and in good condition for war. The eyes of all are now turned to you, and they believe that you more than any other have the responsibility of conducting this war. If you do not attend the diet and show yourself eager to defend the state, you will be called an uncaring deserter of the Empire, and your own territory will not be safe. But God will not desert his own Church, he will raise up someone else, from another people and another family, to save his people, to dedicate himself to the common salvation, and to harvest the glory which should have been yours. ... Besides, there are the pecuniary benefits which such a war will bring you if the armed people have you as their leader. Will they not greatly contribute to your fame? Many spoils from opulent princes and rich cities will be brought to

you. And you do not even have to fear the cost of spending your own money on the war: yours and your army's salaries will be covered through tithes from the clergy and contributions from the people, and you will easily receive more than you spend. [Sect. 13-14]

Concerning the state and finances of the Empire, Piccolomini strongly advised the emperor to meet with the princes personally and use the Turkish crisis to persuade them to restore the financial basis and the power of the Empire, as seen above.

The other imperial counsellors agreed with Piccolomini, but the emperor did not. He understood, of course, that a successful campaign against the Turks would raise his own and the Empire's prestige immensely as well as avert the deadly peril of a Turkish invasion against Europe. But he was sceptical about its success against the powerful Turkish war machine and about the support he would receive from the German princes and the European rulers. He would have preferred for the pope to take the lead in this venture, but the pope realized that the Papacy was no longer in a position to do so nor to repeat the performance of Pope Urban II in Clermont in 1096.¹ He, therefore, placed the responsibility for the crusade squarely on the shoulders of the emperor, more or less forcing him, with the enthusiastic help of Piccolomini, to summon the meeting in Regensburg.

But the emperor had at least four motives for not going to Regensburg and ensuring the success of the crusading enterprise at the present time:

Firstly, as the other European princes, he feared the military superiority of the Turks and did not wish to see and even be responsible for a repetition of the military disasters of Nicopolis in 1396 and Varna in 1444.

Secondly, at the time, Hungary and King Ladislaus himself were his enemies, and the emperor might not be dissatisfied at all that the Hungarians were pressed and threatened from the East by the Turks, thus relieving the Hungarian pressure on himself.

Thirdly, the troop movements of the Hungarian governor, János Hunyadi, constituted a clear and present danger against the Habsburg territories, and the emperor well remembered what had happened last time he was absent from Austria, two years before, in 1452, on his coronation voyage to Rome when the Austrians had rebelled and inflicted a humiliating defeat upon him.

And fourthly, he had reasons to fear the great princes of Germany, their lack of real support of the imperial institution, and the concessions they might wring from him in a meeting face to face. From the beginning, as a Habsburg prince with a limited "Hausmacht", he was quite aware that he was playing from a position of weakness, and he generally distrusted the princes, except his few supporters among them.

¹ Piccolomini himself, as Pope Pius II, would try to do it five years afterwards in Mantua five years – and fail miserably

He said it very well himself, in the words of Piccolomini:

When he had heard them, the emperor remained silent for a short while, and then he said, visibly agitated: "Each of you – being generous with another man's affairs - advises me to go to the diet. But if this country was your own, you would judge otherwise. Gilles and Nankenreuter are camping close to our borders, and we do not know how they are minded towards us. But we do know that they are robbers and greedy for other people's possessions. János, Governor of Hungary, is leading an army against them, but he is our enemy, and who knows if he is preparing threats against them, but whips against us? As for Ulrich, Count of Cilly, you know how little he loves us. Nothing would please him more than our ruin. The Austrians are plotting night and day to destroy us. And you think that it would be to my advantage to go to Regensburg? You want me to be the good shepherd who flees his sheep when surrounded by wolves! But for me it is not a small thing to lose my inherited lands. I know the ways and the schemes of the enemies. They are only waiting for me to leave my home empty to take it in their possession. I should certainly wish to attend the diet, since nothing is closer to my heart than the common good. But it is hard to care for the common good at your own peril. I admit that we should all assist the commonwealth, but I see nobody who cares more for others' benefit than for one's own. Why do you mention my [prince] electors? I well know how little they care about the common good. If I go to Regensburg, they will stay at home, or if they come to the diet it will be because they are moved by some private interest. So, think rather on how the diet may be conducted without Us and who should represent Us there." [Sect. 21]

At the proposal of Johann Ungnad, it was resolved to send a diplomatic mission to governor János Hunyadi to assess the danger from Hungary. The governor's reply left no doubt about the danger he represented to Austria and moved the imperial counsellors to advise the emperor to stay at home and not go to Regensburg.

If Piccolomini still had his doubts, he remained silent at that point. Later, however, in his account of the proceedings at Regensburg, he returned to the matter several times, but in the words of others, thus expressing an indirect criticism of the emperor's absence and a strong exhortation not to miss the next diet, which would eventually be held in Frankfurt.

In the report, he lets the Duke of Burgundy clearly express his concerns at the emperor's absence:

The imperial legates visited him in his lodgings. They praised his coming from afar. They said that what he had done was most pleasing to the emperor. They explained the reasons that had kept the emperor at home. They said that they had informed His Imperial Majesty about the duke's arrival and recommended that the emperor come to the diet, and they thought he would if his own and the public interest made it possible. They were expecting a reply any day. ... To this Philippe answered something like this: He had received the emperor's letter

summoning him to the diet while he was in Flanders making war on the English who had broken their pact and laid waste to his territory. The inhabitants had asked him to stay and defend their country, but the emperor's command was more important to him than the requests of his subjects. So, putting the greater things above the smaller and the public above the private, he had come to Regensburg – but not without loss to his lands. He had hoped that the emperor would be present as he had written he would be. He still wished he would come so that the affairs of the Catholic Faith might be better taken care of. [Sect. 90]

Moreover, in his oration at the end of the diet, the duke's representative, the Bishop of Toul, told the assembly:

But coming here at the call of the emperor, he [the Duke of Burgundy] seeks nothing but the honour of God and the salvation of the Christian people. He hoped that both the emperor and the princes would have come here to decide on war against the haughty Turks. He was – as you have seen – both willing and ready to [undertake] God's work, and he completely accepted your counsel. [Sect. 162]

Johann Lysura, too, considered the emperor's absence a problem, saying – in Piccolomini's words:

I believe that you noble and powerful men are already aware of this and have often been thinking about the reform of the nation and the Empire, and I do not believe it will be a difficult thing if only the emperor would meet with his princes. ... But – to return to my point of departure – I believe that we should absolutely not go to war against the Turks unless we have first restored the Empire to its proper state. And I do not see how we can reform the Empire, if the emperor does not come and take counsel with his princes on reforming the state. But if the Empire is set in order, we shall not only be able to resist the Turks with ease, but also to bridle the other nations, as we did in the past, and raise up high the German name which is now considered as vile and worthless. [Sect. 101]

Even the emperor's staunch supporter, Albrecht of Brandenburg, said in his farewell address to the assembly – again in Piccolomini's words:

It is certain that no army can be brought forth from our nation if we do not achieve peace between us. We are sorry that you are uncertain about the emperor's attendance at the next diet, for we know that many things require the emperor's presence and especially what was said about peace. So, if the emperor wishes for the matter [of an expedition] against Turks to succeed, you must persuade him to come to the diet. This is our considered opinion, and this is the advice we give His Majesty as his loyal princes and obedient vassals. [Sect. 155]

One may ask why Piccolomini would keep returning to this issue in a report about a diet that had already ended. It may reasonably be assumed that a copy of the text would be given to the emperor in the place of a proper diplomatic report. The repeated references to what important

personages like the Duke of Burgundy and Margrave Albrecht thought about the emperor's absence aimed at impressing him with the need of attending the next conference on the matter.

2.5. Hungary's absence

Also the absence of Hungarian representatives from the diet was a highly sensitive and political issue. The emperor's problems with Hungary have been mentioned, which undoubtedly explained the lack of representatives. However, as Piccolomini well perceived and said in several orations and other texts, the Hungarians were and had for many years been Europe's first line of defence against the Turks. The immediate effect of the mobilisation of a German-led army against the Turks would be to strengthen Hungary. The Hungarians were quite aware of this and even threatened the Europeans with dire consequences should they fail to come to the assistance of Hungary. Indeed, the Hungarian governor, János Hunyadi, had told the emperor's envoy:

As for the Turks, if the Christian kings mobilize an army against them, the Hungarians will not be missing. And I myself shall not spare neither my resources nor my life if only I see that the fight benefits Christianity. But if we are deserted by the Christian people, we do not intend to bear the Turkish attacks alone, since we are not their equals. The Turks are demanding free passage [through our territories] with no harm to us. If Christianity sleeps, as we plainly see, then we shall grant it. Mehmed who rules the Turks, holds court in Adrianopolis, while his generals gather their troops in Sophia. The Tartars have made an alliance with them. There will be peace this year, but thereafter they will attack the Christians with all their might. Tell this to the emperor whose responsibility it is to counter such evils. [Sect. 24]

The Hungarians' absence from the Diet of Regensburg did certainly not help the crusade project nor gain sympathy for their own cause, as Piccolomini told the Hungarian chancellor:

... most shameful of all was the absence of ambassadors from King Ladislaus. As King of Bohemia, a noble and preeminent member of the Holy Empire, he was obliged to obey the emperor, and as King of Hungary he most certainly ought not to ignore this diet which aimed at ensuring his own subjects' welfare and peace. Among the Christians, no people has greater interest than Hungary in destroying the Turkish people, a hostile neighbour for many centuries. For if the Turks wish to march against the Germans, they must first overrun the Hungarians and their subject peoples, like the Dalmatians and the Croatians. This is in no way a criticism of that noble adolescent, who is ready and eager to do good, but who because of his age does not govern, but is governed. Indeed, it is his governors who should take care not to disregard this diet, which above all was to deal with the affairs of this great king. Here I would vehemently accuse the Hungarian prelates and barons of obstinacy or slothfulness since they did not deign to send even one representative to this important diet, if I did not fear your counterattack since with your brilliant intellect you are very good at shooting arrows back your enemies. [Sect. 10]

The Diet of Regensburg left the concrete planning of the crusade to another diet, which would eventually be held in Frankfurt in the autumn. So, as one of the means to ensure its success, Piccolomini considered it necessary to have the Hungarians be present and commit themselves to a joint military venture.

As mentioned above, Piccolomini had possibly written an earlier report to the emperor on the mission to Regensburg (as he did after his missions to Rome and Milan in 1447) and soon afterwards developed it into a history of the diet. In so doing, he was to some extent moved by his penchant for writing on history and especially contemporary history.¹ And sending the report to János Vitez, he was probably also motivated by an urge to share his humanist writings with fellow humanists who could appreciate them.

Still, it may reasonably be argued that his main reason for developing his diplomatic report into a history of the diet of Regensburg and for sending it to the Hungarian chancellor was political. He clearly wanted to make one of the highest-ranking servants of the Hungarian crown aware of the importance of the German crusade project for Hungary itself and to demonstrate that the Hungarian governor's threatening stance towards the emperor was a serious impediment to the project. In sending the report to the chancellor, Piccolomini was trying to create a counterbalance at the Hungarian court to the influence of the Hungarian governor, and incidentally also to the governors of the boy king, including the Count of Cilly. His initiative was undoubtedly known and approved by the emperor, who would not take kindly to his counsellor having - without his knowledge - political dealings with an inimical foreign court and even reporting on confidential meetings in his own privy council. Piccolomini's report on the Diet of Regensburg was thus - and intentionally so - an instrument of high politics.

2.6. Personalities

Piccolomini mastered the art of describing personalities, often in few words or in revealing side remarks.

2.6.1. Duke Philippe III of Burgundy

The main personality described in his report on Regensburg is Duke Philippe III the Good of Burgundy.

Piccolomini gives much space to the duke's previous engagement in the cause of the crusade. It was well-known to Piccolomini, who only two years before had delivered an oration to the duke's

¹ He said about himself in his *De Gestis* (Hay), Preface, p. 3: *It is a misfortune of mine and a fate by which I am plagued that I cannot steal away from history and use my time more profitably.*

ambassadors in the crusade matter to the imperial court.¹ He even included a description of the famous Feast of the Pheasant and could not resist the temptation to give his own version of the duke's address to his courtiers. Furthermore, he gave much space to the duke's travel to Regensburg and his participation in the diet.²

He also included this description of the duke's personality:

Philippe had a noble physique, large and brilliant eyes, a curved, so-called aquiline nose, straight chest, slender limbs, modest mien, pleasant manners, graceful conversation. He ate and drank with moderation. He was more than 60 years old and did not conceal his age. It was his habit to rise shortly before noon and to hear mass. Then he met with his council to discuss affairs of state. Afterwards, he had lunch and spent time with friends. After a short nap, he relaxed with games and sports until evening. Finally, he dined until late at night, hearing songs and dancing. Then he met again with his counsellors, and afterwards he went to bed. However, people who know of his private life, have told us that he does not sleep until noon, but gets up earlier than people, even his household, know, having chosen to spend some hours with his family and dealing with private affairs, for since he has a courteous nature and does not refuse to see anybody, he would not have time he could call his own if he did not arrange his life in this way. [Sect. 89]

In the conflict of precedence with the ambassadors of the prince-electors, thought up by invidious Germans, the duke showed himself to be an accomodating and personally modest prince:

For some time this matter agitated the nobles, but when it was referred to Philippe, he said: "This evil spirit shall not have the power to obstruct the enterprise of Christ. I did not come here out of ambition, and I shall not leave out of arrogance. I do not mind speaking in the last place if only religion is well provided for." [Sect. 153]

The world might be greatly impressed by his highminded engagement in God's crusade cause, but many considered that the duke was also a prince skilled in advancing his own political interests and that his attendance at Regensburg had ulterior motives. This is revealed – probably quite intentionally – by Piccolomini, when he reported such criticisms of the duke:

But there were also hateful and malicious critics who kept saying that this prince had come to serve his own private interests and not the common good. Some claimed that he is man greedy for power who only pretends to hate the Turks and love religion, and who is chasing popularity only to be judged worthy of ruling. Some say that he has occupied Brabant, Holland and Zeeland unjustly and now comes to the emperer to make him raise these provinces to the status of a kingdom: since he has the power befitting a great king, he would

¹ In the oration "*Quamvis in hoc senatu*" (23 August 1451, Wiener Neustadt) [17]

² Sect. 2.13 and 2.15, 5, 9.2, 9.5, 10.2, 10.6

also have the title of king, and if he cannot not have that, he would at least wrest the title of feudal lord [of these provinces from the emperor. These insolent and vile cynics claim that the duke cannot possibly have come to support Christ's cause since he loves pleasures and refinement, rules large areas and great peoples, abounds in wealth and comfort, and there is nothing that can delay the satisfactions of this ageing man. But men measure others after their own standards. We judge our neighbours according to our own character. To a thief nothing is more suspect than other thieves. To a criminal mind piety seems unbelievable, and the timid soul does not believe in great ventures. Everyone calmly accepts what is easy for him to do; what is hard, he considers to be a fraud. Many were actually jealous: seeing that their own princes ignored the public good, they could not bear Philippe's glory. They found it unworthy and intolerable that the French should earn the praise which the Germans ought to merit. As for ourselves, we previously believed that the duke's soul is unblemished, and now we know it for a fact. [Sect. 47]

Despite Piccolomini's fervent condemnation of the criticism of the duke's motives, he was not a naïve person, and neither was Janos Vitez nor the emperor, who would very well have understood the oblique message and warning.

2.6.2. Other personalities

Some other personalities are given attention in Piccolomini's report.

2.6.2.1. Emperor Friedrich III

As the great absentee from the Diet in Regensburg, the emperor was naturally not much present in Piccolomini's report.

But some passages do throw light upon his personality.

He sought his counsellors' advice, and they apparently felt sufficiently safe with him to give him frank advice they knew might displease him:

"For these reasons - as far as my puny intellect understands - I advise you not to perform a marriage by procurator,¹ but to drop all talk of ambassadors and go to the diet with all your court. If what I say is not to your advantage, your own wisdom, Emperor, or the eminent good sense of these senators will judge [the merits] of my advice." When Aeneas had said this and it had been translated into German, all the others were asked to give their opinion in turn. They all, unanimously, held and advised that nothing good could be hoped [to come]

¹ Princely weddings were sometimes conducted with procurators representing one or both of the spouses. Here it means that the emperor should not participate in the diet through representatives, but be personally present

from the diet, unless the emperor participated in person, and nobody argued for sending representatives. [Sect. 19-20]

The emperor has often been described as a phlegmatic and unemotional type, but in a crisis he could show some degree of exasperation, not to say anger, in the face of his counsellors' insufficient appreciation of danger and peril to the emperor and his house. It had happened during the crisis in Austria, after the emperor's return and confrontation with the Austrian rebels. It happened again during the deliberations in the imperial council on whether, in the face of perilous Hungarian troop movements, the emperor should leave Austria for Regensburg. Faced with the counsellors' advice to calmly turn his back on the danger, the emperor told them, visibly agitated (*vultu parum sereno*):

When he had heard them, the emperor remained silent for a short while, and then he said, visibly agitated: "Each of you – being generous with another man's affairs - advises me to go to the diet. But if this country was your own, you would judge otherwise. [Sect. 21]

But he was not a naïve, emotional ruler. On the contrary, he understood very well the complex game of imperial rule and his weak position as emperor. He was certainly not willing to use the resources of his ducal domains to finance the running of the empire and its wars, and at any rate the Habsburg "Hausmacht" did not outweigh the power of the electoral princes and the great German dukes - permanent rivals of the Habsburg dukes - and his other, local competitors and enemies, as he plainly told his counsellors (see above, sect. 4.2).

Nonetheless, his failure to show leadership in the crusade matter would damage his reputation, as indirectly shown in Piccolomini's remarks on the enthusiasm of the participants in the diet at its closure:

After these addresses, great enthusiasm rose among all. The whole assembly rejoiced and praised and wished the best for Philippe and Albrecht, comparing them and extolling Philippe, who though he could have stayed in great peace, enjoying exquisite pleasures, wanted to take on hardship and danger for the sake of the common good. They also praised Albrecht to whom nothing seemed to be difficult, and who appeared to be the most hardworking and prudent of all. They declared both of them to be worthy of praise and glory and to be the only ones, in our time, who [truly] cared about the Christian commonwealth. [Sect. 174]

Here, remarkably, the emperor was not considered to be one who truly cared about the Christian commonwealth. Piccolomini, presumably, shared this view of the emperor, whose court he would leave next year to pursue his own career under more germane conditions, in Rome.

Also, the emperor's soft dealings with the German princes transpire clearly and unflatteringly in Piccolomini's description of the lawsuit at the imperial court of the Teutonic Knights vs the

Prussian cities. Fearful of an imperial judgment in favour of cities opposing their prince, *in casu* the Order, the German princes had sent so many counsellors to advise the emperor in the legal proceedings that they outnumbered the emperor's own advisers and were able to ensure several decisions favouring the Order. Piccolomini has this acerbic comment, indirectly criticizing the emperor's weak stance:

Then the counsellors of the emperor were asked for their opinion. With few exceptions, they all agreed with Enea. The legates of the princes were 18, and the counsellors of the emperor 14, of whom two were uncertain. Though the rest agreed with Aeneas, they were defeated by numbers. The emperor, as is the custom, followed the majority. It is bad, though, when opinions are counted, not weighed. [Sect. 73]

2.6.2.2. King Ladislaus

At that time, Ladislaus, King of Bohemia and Hungary and Duke of Austria, was 14 years old and resided in Prague. Piccolomini takes pleasure in quoting the report of the Burgundian ambassadors who had recently been in Prague, of two episodes involving the king:

Among others, we heard two noteworthy things from the Burgundian ambassadors. They told [of an episode where] Rokycana had gone in a procession with clergy and laypeople, carrying the holy sacrament of the eucharist before the royal palace. The king had been looking at the square through a window and had not bowed his head nor his neck and had shown no sign of reverence. The other young men who were with him had followed his example. When he was asked why he had done so and was rebuked for not honouring the Saviour, he replied that he knew the Lord's body was worthy of every honour, but since it was being carried by Rokycana, an enemy of the true religion, he had feared that if showed honour to the sacrament, the foolish people would think that he had also shown honour to the priest and that the king accepted his views which he actually detested.

On another occasion shortly afterwards, Ladislaus ordered his priest to celebrate mass in a chapel close to the palace. When he wanted to carry out the order, he was prevented from doing so by the priest who was in charge of the chapel, saying that he himself wanted to celebrate mass and that the king could hear and see him celebrate if he wanted to. This would be the same for the king as if he heard his own chaplain. This priest was a follower of Rokycana and adhered to his beliefs. When the king heard it, he ordered his marshal to go immediately and tell the priest to yield to the royal chaplain. If he did not obey, he should throw him from the tall cliff next to the chapel. Terrified at this message, the priest swallowed his anger. These things the ambassadors told about the King of Bohemia, a most noble boy, to the joy and great pleasure of the listeners. [Sect. 138-139]

These episodes made a great and favourable impression in Regensburg, showing that the young king was gradually coming into his own, that he was not a pliable puppet of the court, and that he might be expected to oppose the Hussites vigourously and, if possible, return Bohemia to the fold of the Catholic Church.

2.6.2.3. Duke Ludwig IX of Bavaria-Landshut

This remarkable prince was related to the emperor. At the time of the Diet of Regensburg, he was 34 years old. Thus he was certainly not young, especially not by 15th century standards – but he may have been somewhat inexperienced since he had only become a reigning duke four years before. Using his young age as an excuse to not share the presidency of the diet was probably just a pretext not to become involved in the imperial crusading project.

At any rate, Piccolomini appears to have been much impressed by the duke and wrote about him:

It is appropriate here to write a little about this great duke, since he is one of the three secular princes who came to Regensburg as enthusiastic and fervent defenders of Faith. Ludwig, Duke of Bavaria, is the son of Heinrich, and his mother was from the House of Austria, a sister of Emperor Albrecht, and an aunt of King Ladislaus of Hungary and Bohemia. While his father lived, he was given a strict upbringing, and he was allowed neither to consort with harlots and prostitutes nor to have feasts. He had little money to spend and was continuously urged to be virtuous. He did not render his father's labour vain, for when he took up the reins of government, he became an excellent prince, even though he did not imitate his father's frugality (some say his avarice). He had all the laudable qualities in a prince, being strong, just, strict, grave, magnanimous and well-disposed. He cleansed his province of criminals, expelled the Jews, made peace with his neighbours, administered justice to his subjects. He married a [princess] from Saxony, the emperor's niece. When the Austrians unjustly rebelled against the emperor, he offered himself as mediator. He helped King Ladislaus as much as possible. He did what he could to end the wars in Franconia and Swabia. One of the first he got reconciled with was his uncle Albrecht,¹ with whom his father had often been at war. He is said to be 28 years old. His stature is noble, his mien joyful, his speech pleasant, his bearing princely. If only he knew Latin, there was nothing more you could wish for in so great a prince. He mostly resides in Burghausen, a city situated above the Salz. It is a new and very well-protected city. It has a large fortress, renowned in all of Germany, whose natural conditions and walls make it almost invincible. It has a big tower, richly decorated with gold and silver, announcing to all the great wealth [of the duke]. [Sect. 29]

¹ Emperor Albrecht II

2.6.2.4. Margrave Albrecht III of Brandenburg

Among the few princes that Piccolomini admired was Albrecht Achilles of Brandenburg.¹

In the report he does not give a sketch of his life and personality, but many passages show him as the admirable prince and mover of great things, and a man of extraordinary authority.

Some examples are:

The Teutonic Knights' Master of Germany asked Albrecht to negotiate military assistance to the order with the government of Bohemia, a task which the margrave fulfilled:

When the [Order's] Master of Germany, a man remarkable for his nobility and wisdom, heard this, he begged Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg, a great and very experienced military leader, to go to Bohemia to ask the king² for help against the Prussian cities. [Sect. 79]

In the meantime, Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg, that great light of the German name, returned from Prague. [Sect. 140]

In a number of passages, Piccolomini shows that the margrave was the key political player at the diet.

When the assembly had to respond to the concrete imperial proposals, it was Albrecht who spoke not only for the Germans but also on behalf of the Duke of Burgundy, and with a personal authority which clearly transpires from Piccolomini's version of his address:

Then good men, desirous of harmony, persuaded the assembly that the counsellors of the duke should be called on together with the Germans and consulted together with them concerning the imperial articles. When that had been settled, they were informed that the duke agreed with what the Germans had decided to say about the articles, and Margrave Albrecht was charged with addressing the imperial legates on behalf of all. ...

This is our considered opinion, and this is the advice we give His Majesty as his loyal princes and obedient vassals." [Sect. 154-155]

And at later negotiations concerning the Teutonic Order:

This eloquent man of great authority easily convinced all. [Sect. 148]

¹ The others being King Alfonso of Aragon, the Duke of Burgundy and Francesco Sforza

² Ladislaus the Posthumous

And at the end of the diet, Albrecht again spoke for the whole assembly in addressing of thanks to the Duke of Burgundy and declaring the wholehearted commitment to the crusading cause:

When Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg, whom many call the German Achilles, a man of powerful body and mind, heard Philippe being so highly commended, he – also desirous of praise! – spoke in his own name and in the name of the great Duke Ludwig of Bavaria, sitting next to him, in this fashion: “Philippe, Illustrious Duke, you fill all of us here today with great consolation and joy, as you declare how far you are willing and ready to protect the Christian religion. We have eagerly heard your address and consider you worthy of eternal praise. We, too, shall not fail you in this so praiseworthy endeavour, and we shall not leave you alone. We, too, desire to protect the Faith of Christ with all our might, since we must – if we do not wish to be unworthy of our ancestors – come to the aid of the Christian religion as much as we are able to. Let there be no doubt that we, too, who are present and many of the princes of our nation who are absent will go to war against the Turkish people, fighting in person, and that we shall show the Christian people how much we care about the catholic and orthodox Faith.” [Sect. 173]

In his concluding address to the diet, Piccolomini was the first to thank him for his contribution:

Your words, Illustrious Margrave, spoken on behalf of all We have heard with pleasure since they make it clear that His Imperial Serenity’s proposals¹ for the protection of Christianity are welcome and accepted [by the assembly]. The advice you gave we shall pass on to His Imperial Highness unchanged [Sect. 165]

No wonder that the participants in the diet shared his enthusiasm:

After these addresses, great enthusiasm rose among all, the whole assembly rejoiced and praised and wished the best for Philippe and Albrecht, comparing them and extolling Philippe, who though he could have stayed in great peace, enjoying exquisite pleasures, wanted to take on hardship and danger for the sake of the common good. They also praised Albrecht to whom nothing seemed to be difficult, and who appeared to be the most hardworking and prudent of all. They declared both of them to be worthy of praise and glory and to be the only ones, in our time, who [truly] cared about the Christian commonwealth. [Sect. 174]

2.6.2.5. Cardinal Nikolaus von Kues

The cardinal was an old acquaintance and somewhat of a friend of Piccolomini’s. Their relationship would be pursued, sometimes stormily, when Piccolomini became pope and entrusted the

¹ The formal decisions of the conference, drawn up by Piccolomini

cardinal with sensitive, important tasks like governing Rome in his own absence and drafting a major reform of the Church.

The report from Regensburg gives a couple of glimpses of his personality.

His importance in German church affairs was recognized generally:

They [the cardinal and Johann Lysura] both became so great that in all German assemblies they were seen to be the first and said to be the helmsmen and guides of the people since they excelled not only in wisdom and knowledge of letters, but also in innate eloquence. [Sect. 135]

His wisdom, learning and memory were considered as outstanding:

In the meantime Nikolaus of Kues, Cardinal of San Pietro and Bishop of Brixen, a man of superior wisdom, gifted with knowledge of that very valuable discipline called theology, with care for the elegant language of Antiquity, and with an excellent memory ... [Sect. 31]

Although a proud man, he was capable of personal modesty, as when he accepted being placed at an inferior place to the papal legate in order to solve a problem of precedence:

And thus it happened that the papal legate was given a higher place than the cardinal, a new thing and unheard of in our age. But the cardinal did not want any disturbance for his sake: though he is a proud and perspicacious man, he also loves peace and unity, and puts public matters before private. [Sect. 85]

But Piccolomini seems to indicate some smallness of character where he relates the cardinal's concern about his travel costs and his pretence of not yet having left home when, in reality, he was already quite close to Regensburg:

When he approached Regensburg he sent a letter, as if was still at home, to his colleagues,¹ asking them if he should come and how his expenses would be covered. [Sect. 31]

And he noted the cardinal being swayed by national sentiment to a less than statesmanlike behaviour concerning the seating the Polish ambassador:

But the cardinal, angry with the Poles because of the Prussian rebellion, said that the envoys of the electors should be consulted, and they said that they would not accept that a man who was injurious to their nation should be placed before them. [Sect. 84]

¹ The other imperial legates

Though in other contexts, Piccolomini used the expression “copious eloquence” as a compliment, he may, finally, have faintly mocked - by way of damning praise - the cardinal’s verbosity, which was not necessarily a virtue to a man of Piccolomini’s elegant, but economical eloquence:

Also the Cardinal of San Pietro spoke indignantly about this rebellion, admonishing at length (pluribus verbis) the German nation not to lose its honour and pride [Sect. 80]

When the Master of Germany heard this from those legates of the princes who participated in the diet, he asked for a consultation, excluding the envoys of the cities whom he thought were favouring the Prussians. ... The Cardinal of San Pietro as usual spoke at length (suo more copiose) and wisely [Sect. 104]

After him, the Cardinal of San Pietro who had personally visited Constantinople several times and seen almost all of Greece, spoke gravely and at length (copiose) about the site of the lost city, the character of the peoples, the power of the Turks, and how to conduct the war. [Sect. 133]

2.6.3. Enea Silvio Piccolomini

As for Piccolomini himself, the direct references to his standing in the imperial council make it abundantly clear to the reader that the Bishop of Siena (and in this capacity a Prince of the Empire) was a high-ranking and important imperial counsellor, first to be asked for his opinion and capable of influencing his colleagues or at least declaring their unanimous position to the emperor.

The first instance occurred during the debate in the privy council of the emperor’s attendance at the diet:

When the time of the diet approached, the emperor summoned his senators and asked them whom to send to Regensburg as his representatives. The matter was discussed in secret and with only a few people. ... First, Aeneas, Bishop of Siena, was asked to give his opinion. ... When Aeneas had said this, and it had been translated into German, each of the others were asked to give their opinion. They all, unanimously, held and advised that nothing good could be hoped [to come] from the diet, unless the emperor participated in person, and nobody argued for sending representatives. [Sect. 12-13, 20]

The second instance occurred during the imperial court trial involving the Teutonic Knights and the Prussian cities:

The first one asked to speak was Aeneas, Bishop of Siena, who spoke in this fashion ... Then the counsellors of the emperor were asked for their opinion. With few exceptions, they all agreed with Enea. [71-73]

His eminent position among the imperial counsellors and diplomats is also underlined by the fact that Piccolomini was the one to open the diet's deliberations on the Turkish matter and to close it. The report also shows his importance in managing the issues and proceedings at the diet.

A first example is the reception of the ambassador of the Polish where it was Piccolomini who – as a matter of course – answered his address and promised him a hearing:

Bishop Enea of Siena improvised a short answer, commending the king who had sent him to the diet, as well as the man who came, and promising him a hearing when he wished it. [Sect. 81]

Another example is the matter of a Greek fraud. When the other presidents of the diet wanted to imprison him, it was forbidden by Piccolomini:

... when he [the Greek] was requested to speak, he asked the presidents about the army the Germans could raise and how they would proceed. Thinking that the man was a spy, they decided to have the man seized and thrown into chains, and they would have done so if Aeneas had not prevented it, saying that they could not contravene the emperor's letter which the Greek had on him as a safe-conduct. [Sect. 136]

And the third example is the affair of the Teutonic Knights versus the Prussians. When all other attempts, including Margrave Albrecht's, had failed, it was Piccolomini who clinched the matter with the proposal of a diplomatic solution – as was his wont:

Then the Bishop of Siena said: "If you heed me, you will send two or more legates in your name to the King of Bohemia. They shall inform him that this assembly considers the Prussian rebellion to be damaging and harmful to the Christian Commonwealth. They shall beg him to send his counsellors to the King of Poland to ask him to accept a truce with the Order in his own name and in the name of the Prussian cities and to agree to holding a meeting in Vratislava or another place where common friends can settle all the conflicts which the Prussians and the Poles have with the Order. Also the Roman Pontiff should send a legate de latere, and the emperor together with the electors should send eminent ambassadors. In the meantime you will beg the pope to entrust this task to the Cardinal of San Pietro." Margrave Albrecht agreed with this proposal and immediately translated it into German. All the others assented. [Sect. 152]

The report demonstrates Piccolomini's considerable political acumen, e.g., in the affair of the Teutonic Knights, where he foresaw what would happen if the Germans imposed a judgment

unacceptable to the Prussians, and in the debate of the emperor's absence, where he was aware from the beginning that without the presence and direct engagement of the emperor the crusading venture was doomed to fail.

It also demonstrates a certain independence of mind, visible in his unafraidness of giving the emperor advice not to his liking, and – intellectually – in his ability to free himself of the shackles of traditional ecclesiastical thought and conceive of a historical foundation (time and custom) of the development of the ecclesiastical orders (priest, bishops, cardinals) rather than divine decree:

But everything yields to time, all obey custom, mistress of all. We must consider things as they are now, not as they were once. Today, not only are cardinals given precedence over bishops, but – and I do not know why - even those notaries called protonotaries (a vain and presumptuous title) stand before the bishops. Sometime in the future it will probably happen that valets and doorkeepers and all the servants in the [papal] palace will be given precedence over bishops, since we see that it is the ambition of many people to destroy the name of bishop. And with some reason, in my opinion: the high episcopal honour has grown old. Everything that is born dies, and everything that rises grows old. The rank of bishop is old and goes back to the time of the apostles themselves: its very old age makes it decay and wither away. Cardinals and protonotaries are new titles. Why wonder if their flowering youth forces out the old age of the episcopacy and takes the lead instead? In the beginning of the Early Church, the parishes were ruled by the common counsel of the priests, and the bishop was not greater than the priest, at least if we believe Jerome. But when heresies broke out and it was said in the churches: "I am of Paul, I am of Cephas," the custom developed – for the sake of unity - to subordinate priests to bishops. So there is no reason why we should consider it an abuse if the same custom, which placed us bishops above priests, now places us below cardinals or men of another rank. So, if you heed me, you will not refuse to the cede [the first place] to the cardinal, especially not to a such a cardinal who is also a bishop. [Sect. 50]

So, through his report, Piccolomini clearly shows himself as a high-ranking imperial official, first man in the emperor's council, bishop of a venerable see, a consummate diplomat and problem fixer, a cultured humanist and speaker, a man well placed in the centre of great affairs, and, finally, as a fervent believer in the crusade against the Turks (which would, in the end, become the great fiasco and tragedy of his life).

To some extent, this message is indirect, shown through actions and oral interventions. Piccolomini often lets the imperial ambassadors or others appear as responsible for events, although he was probably an important mover in them all, and in at least one case he suppresses his own name in the revised version of the account, i.e., in the discussion with the papal legate on rights of precedence of a bishop legate before a cardinal non-legate, where he says that the bishop's interlocutor was a friend and not himself).

So, even if the report undoubtedly aimed – apart from the primary matter of the diet – to demonstrate his own importance and qualities, it was done with some, commendable discretion.

2.7. Conduct of diplomacy

The Diet of Regensburg was, among other things, an exercise in high diplomacy with the aim of uniting the German princes and cities and the neighbouring princes, locked in a permanent pattern of rivalry, conflict and war, in one grand, common project: the crusade against the Turks. As such, it contained all the basic elements of the conduct of diplomacy, and Piccolomini's report thus sheds light on this important phase in diplomatic history.

2.7.1. Appointment of ambassadors

When it had been decided that the emperor would not attend the diet, it became necessary to appoint his representatives, who would also preside over the conference. One group of presidents consisted of high officials from the imperial court, who would also act as his ambassadors (legates) at the diet. Another consisted of princes and prelates from outside the court, who would preside over the conference, but not act as the emperor's ambassadors (rank alone would forbid it).

The matter was debated in the emperor's privy council: as presidents and legates from the court were chosen two prelates, Piccolomini himself and Bishop Sonnenberger of Gurk, and two barons, Georg Volckdorf and Johann Ungnad. As high-ranking presidents from outside the court were chosen the prelates Cardinal Nikolaus von Kues and the archbishops of Trier, Würzburg and Regensburg, and prince-electors Friedrich of Saxony, the dukes Albrecht of Austria and Ludwig of Bavaria, and the margraves Albrecht of Brandenburg and Karl of Baden. The princes and prelates from outside the court formed a most high-ranking group, intended to bolster the authority of the diet and entice their princely colleagues to attend. However, most of them, like the Archbishop of Trier, did not, in fact, attend the diet in person but sent representatives, and the Duke of Bavaria attended but not as a president. [See Sect. 26]

Piccolomini's report mentions several instances of interventions by the imperial ambassadors (legates) but only a few involving the presidents of the diet as such.

2.7.2. Mandate

The mandate, or instructions, to the ambassadors – and to a majority at the diet - was presumably written by Piccolomini himself (on the basis of similar documents in the imperial archive), who was generally responsible for the imperial documents concerning the conference:

We have previously indicted a general assembly of kings, ecclesiastical and secular princes, dukes, counts, barons, cities, peoples and all the loyal subjects of Us and the Holy Empire. The assembly will be held in Our city of Regensburg on the Donau on the next Feast of Saint George. It will deal with the defence of the Catholic Faith, which the infidel followers of Muhammad are striving to attack and destroy, as well as with urgent affairs concerning the Holy Empire. We had hoped to come there in person and to deal vigorously with the common affairs. But now certain difficulties have arisen, which keep Us at home, though unwilling. Since We do not wish the realm to be neglected because of our absence, we have been considering to what qualified persons, gifted with wisdom and authority, We may confidently entrust these great matters, and Our mind has turned to you, whose foresighted circumspection, solid and unshaken loyalty, and minds are inclined to all that is good as known and proven to Our Serenity since past times. Therefore, We require you to go to the meeting in Regensburg and to apply yourselves diligently – together with the legate of the

Apostolic See and the prelates and princes present and the legates of the absent – to those matters concerning which We have indicted the meeting. Above all you should take care that the discussions lead to a decision by which the Christian religion may continue in our time, secure and safe from the attacks of the Turks and other infidels, and by which the arrogance and insolence of the enemies of the Cross of Christ may be curtailed. You should also intelligently endeavour to make the Roman Empire able to reclaim its glory. And so that you may the more easily be able to effect this the more you are strengthened by us with power and authority to perform, execute, decide, manage and do all that is necessary and expedient, just as We Ourselves in such matters, if We were present, would perform, execute, decide, manage and do, We by virtue of the present letter grant to you, our legates and ambassadors and to the majority of you who will be present in Regensburg full and free powers, and We shall ratify and accept all, whatever it is, that will be performed, executed, decided, managed and done by you or by the majority of you, who will be in Regensburg, and with the Lord's help we shall ensure that it is observed inviolably. Given in Neustadt on 11 April in the year of Our Lord 1454, the 14th year of Our reign, and the third year of Our imperial reign. [Sect. 26]

2.7.3. Facilitation of travel

The imperial ambassadors evidently had safe-conducts from the emperor as well as funds to pay the travel costs. Presumably, they also had imperial guards to protect them on the road.

It is explicitly mentioned that Duke Ludwig of Bavaria gave the ambassadors money to cover their expenses or lodgings in his city, a fairly common practice of diplomacy.

2.7.4. Interactions with princes

Interactions with the host princes was an important function of ambassadors. They had to maintain polite and respectful relations at the same time as promoting the interests of their master. This was, of course, easy in the cases when the interests of the princes coincided. But in the many cases they did not, the ambassadors had a challenging time of balancing the princes' conflicting interests with the demands of protocol and diplomatic regards.

The report records three instances of such interactions.

The first was with the Prince Archbishop of Salzburg, whom the imperial ambassadors visited in order to put pressure on him to attend the Diet of Regensburg as one of the imperially appointed presidents. Having already heard that the emperor would not be coming, the archbishop said that he would not participate himself, but send counsellors to represent him – obviously, he considered it beneath him to come to an imperial diet in the absence of the emperor. And then he

took up another matter with the ambassadors: the emperor had not yet granted him the regalia, i.e., the secular rights and properties belonging to the archdiocese, and, furthermore, in his letter the emperor had not recognized his rank as a prince. The ambassadors then frankly answered the prince that *he had several castles belonging to the House of Austria in his possession as a pledge. If they were returned the whole conflict would end, and this would be quite fair since the villages had already paid the yearly principal sum.* [Sect. 27].

The ambassadors also had a meeting with Duke Ludwig IX of Bavaria-Landshut, again in order to put pressure on him to attend the Diet of Regensburg as one of the imperially appointed presidents. The duke, a relative of the emperor, did not want to go in person, possibly like the archbishop because of the emperor's absence but also because - like his fellow dukes - he was not keen to involve himself in the crusading project or to be seen as one of its sponsors. He was more diplomatic than the archbishop, pointing to his youth and inexperience as an excuse for not immediately accepting the emperor's invitation. He did not refuse it directly but said he would consider the matter and inform the ambassadors of his decision in writing. In any case, he would send his counsellors. As the prince was then 34 years old and had been reigning duke for four years, the excuse appears somewhat thin, but the ambassadors got the message. The state of the prince's mind was exposed in a hilarious episode which Piccolomini did not omit to relate:

While they were speaking thus, a great many dogs were barking in front of the palace, and footmen and riders were shouting their dissatisfaction with having to wait and berating the prince for wasting precious time, and they cursed the legates for disrupting a great hunt. In the end, Ludwig invited the legates to join him [on the hunt], but when they declined he ordered that they be given the money they had used on lodgings, and gladly went hunting, accompanied by a throng of young people. [Sect. 28]

As luck would have it, the Duke of Burgundy later arrived, which changed the Duke of Bavaria's perspective on the matter. He appears to have been instrumental in Burgundy's decision to come to Regensburg even though the emperor was absent, but he did not accept the charge of president of the diet, despite the polite urgings of the imperial ambassadors.

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 would gladly accommodate the representatives of his host. [See sect. 90]¹

¹ The protocolary importance of the meeting place was also mentioned in Piccolomini's *Report on an Imperial Mission to Milan 1447: 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.* [Sect. 10]

2.7.5. Negotiation strategy

The primary aim of the imperial diplomats was the diet's approval of the crusading. To achieve this, they hammered two themes home to them: first, the terrible injury inflicted upon Christianity, and second, the imminent threat of a Turkish invasion of Europe. The princes may have been less responsive to the first theme: revenge might be fine for some, but avenging Christianity – and even almighty God himself – might not appear just as urgent to secular rulers as to high-ranking ecclesiastics. But the imminent threat of invasion ought to have been more convincing, especially as it was confirmed by the Governor of Hungary concerning the Turks and by the Polish ambassador concerning the Tartars. The princes might have considered that the Hungarians were able to defeat the Turks, as they had done before, and therefore, the imperial ambassadors pointed to Hungary's exhausted means and the Hungarian governor's declaration that without help from Germany the Hungarians would have to come to terms with the Turks.

Influential groups, however, considered that without peace at home, in war-torn Germany, there would be no chance of mounting a successful military expedition against the Turks. And since a reform of the Empire as a financial, judicial and military institution was necessary for peace to be established, they wanted the issue of the reform of the Empire to be dealt with before the crusade. Every time this argument was raised, the imperial ambassadors countered it, pointing with some justice to the great likelihood that such a reform would take so much time that the Turks would have arrived long before it could be achieved.

Apart from debates in public meetings and multilateral negotiations behind closed doors, the major instrument of persuasion was to be oratory, the imperial ambassador Piccolomini and the papal legate Castiglione representing the Italian style, and Cardinal von Kues and the Bishop of Toul the Northern style (their orations are only extant in Piccolomini's reworked versions). The efficacy of orations in general and of Latin orations in particular, however, was probably not as great as Piccolomini imagined. Voigt amusingly conjectured – and he may not have been wrong – *dass der Grund dieses Schweigens¹ war vielleicht der Verlegenheit der Anwesenden, deren viele die Worte Enea's nicht eher verstanden bis sie der Bischof von Gurk in deutscher Sprache zusammengefasst!*²

As for the concrete planning of the expedition, the imperial court had decided upon the strategy to leave that to the attendants themselves so as to avoid causing irritation and opposition by issuing an imperial plan. That strategy, however, singularly failed since the participants in the diet demanded a concrete plan in writing from the imperial ambassadors, which they were forced to give. Though it was given some consideration and amendments by the diet, its treatment was postponed to a later one.

¹ The silence following Piccolomini's grand oration "*Quamvis omnibus*"

² Voigt, III, p. 113

The diet did end in an enthusiastic pledge to go on a crusade against the Turks, but it was probably less due to the oratorical and negotiating skills of the ambassadors than the forceful intervention of the prestigious Duke of Burgundy, supported by Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg.

2.7.6. Problems of precedence

Piccolomini reports three conflicts of precedence at the Diet of Regensburg.

The first concerned a bishop who was a papal legate and a cardinal who was not:

The Cardinal of San Pietro happened to be staying in the neighbourhood. When he heard that Philippe was approaching, he decided not to await the reply from his colleagues to whom he had written, but immediately sent a message to Regensburg announcing his arrival and requesting that a house be prepared for him. When the apostolic legate heard it, he was in doubt whether to [honour him by] going out to meet him. He invited a friend to his house and said to him that the cardinal was, of course, worthy of all honours, being dear to the pope, a Father living a virtuous life, and one of the first among learned men. But he was coming there in his own name only or in the emperor's, whereas he himself was the envoy of the First See. He feared that it would somehow show disrespect to the pope if a bishop who was [papal] legate came to meet a cardinal who was not. His friend replied: "When you consider whether a bishop precedes a cardinal, and you search Holy Scripture and ancient laws, you can find nothing which gives precedence to a cardinal, a new title unknown to the early fathers, even though some claim that Saint Jerome was a cardinal. ... Therefore, our forefathers gave precedence to bishops since they were the apostles of Christ and vicars of the Great God among their peoples. But everything yields to time, all obey custom, mistress of all. We must consider things as they are now, not as they were once. Today, not only are cardinals given precedence over bishops, but – and I do not know why - even those notaries called protonotaries (a vain and presumptuous title) stand before the bishops. ... But you say to me: 'I am not contending with a bishop who is also a cardinal, but I do believe that a [papal] legate, even if [only] a bishop, should take precedence over a cardinal who is not a [papal] legate.' But you are wrong. At Basel we saw that those archbishops Eugenius had sent to preside [over the council] gave the place of honour to the cardinals. For they say, as you know, that the pope and the cardinals form one body. Finally, not to use many arguments with you, when we are in doubt whether what we are doing is right or wrong, we should consider the character and behavior of the person, to whom we are responsible so that you do what you may confident he would approve of. At present you are acting on behalf of the Apostolic See: why would that See criticize you for giving precedence to a cardinal, when everything there is ruled by the will and assent of the cardinals? If I was in your place, I would go to meet the cardinal and be the first to show him honour, and I would not fear to diminish my own status, since my office would be limited in time, while his is permanent. ... These arguments persuaded Giovanni, who went to meet the cardinal. The

cardinal entered the city, and the imperial legates brought their instructions to him. [Sect. 48-51]

The second conflict of precedence at the diet concerned the ambassador of the Polish king and the representatives of the German prince-electors. The ambassador's claim that his king had accepted the overlordship of Prussia and his insistent demand that the Teutonic Knights and the diet as a whole refrain from inimical acts against the Prussian cities did certainly not endear him to the Germans, who then proved quite inventive in involving the ambassador in problems of precedence. The ambassador, however, proved his mettle:

In the next session, which was to deal with common matters, a great controversy about the order of seating arose. The session would have two parts: one was to be led by the cardinal, and the other by the Bishop of Pavia as the pope's representative. To the cardinal's right were seated the bishops of Siena, Regensburg, Gurk and the other imperial legates. To Pavia's left were seated the ambassadors of the prince-electors. Then it was asked where the ambassador of the Polish king should be placed. The imperial legates said that he should be placed before the ambassadors of the electors. But the cardinal, angry with the Poles because of the Prussian rebellion, said that the envoys of the electors should be consulted, and they said that they would not accept that a man who was injurious to their nation should be placed before them, and they said much about the nobility and dignity of the prince-electors. The Pole was then asked to accept a place to the right of the imperial legates. He replied that he knew very well the seating order due to his king and pointed to the left of the apostolic legate, whereas the imperial legates were seated at the right. For in the context of the diet, the cardinal was held to be one of the imperial legates. If the Pole was placed to the right of the imperial legates, then the ambassadors of the electors would appear to be placed higher than him, since they were placed directly to the left of Pavia. After much heated discussion, it was finally settled that the apostolic legate should be placed in the middle, with imperial legates placed both to his right and left, then the Pole to the right, and the electors to the left. This calmed the Pole. But when the session had thus come to order, the ambassadors of the electors purposefully endeavoured to antagonize the Pole: they invited the Master of Germany to join them and placed him before themselves. Angered by this action the Pole rose and said: "This I cannot accept, and I will not have a seat which is not worthy of my king, for it is not right that the imperial ambassadors should be placed on both sides of the apostolic legate. It is enough if they have the first place and observe the custom of the Council of Basel." The matter was discussed for a long time, and some actually said that the Pole should be excluded from the meeting since he had brought up scandalous matters and presumed to dispute the seating in another's home. But the imperial legates considered that this foreigner and legate of a great king must be treated with courtesy. Therefore a new arrangement was made. The ambassadors of the prince-electors were invited to sit to the right of the imperial legates while the Pole was given the place to left of the Bishop of Pavia, and after him the Master of Germany was placed. And thus it happened that the papal legate was given a higher place than the cardinal, a new thing and unheard of

in our age. But the cardinal did not want any disturbance for his sake: though he is a proud and perspicacious man, he also loves peace and unity, and puts public matters before private. [Sect. 84-85]

Interestingly, the final arrangement caused the papal legate, who was only a bishop, not a cardinal, to be placed higher than a cardinal, which went against Piccolomini's own solution to the first problem of precedence and caused a piously scandalized comment from him.

The third conflict of precedence at the diet concerned the city of Aachen and the city of Cologne.

There was also another conflict about the seating order, this time between the legates from Cologne and Aachen. Though the City of Aachen has no bishop, it is raised above the other cities of the German Kingdom by privileges from Charlemagne and other emperors, and it is held to be the first seat and capital of the kingdom, where the king is crowned, and the crown received. They say that in the memory of our fathers no other citizens in Germany would come before the citizens of Aachen. But who protects the privileges of the poor? In vain do people seek honours if they lack wealth. Riches have always won and occupied the first place. So, when the people of Aachen lost their means, the people from Cologne began to come before them, and in many diets held in our memory they gained the first place, being considered to be the richest of the German cities. But in Regensburg the people from Aachen tried to claim their place, and on the first day they did sit as the first among the cities. But on the next day the people from Cologne rose and said that the first place was owed to their city. For why should Colonia Agrippina give way to Aachen which could in no way equal their power and nobility? Cologne was founded by Agrippa himself, who is said to have been the son-in-law of Augustus Octavian. It belonged to Italy before the city of Aachen came into existence. In Cologne there is a metropolitan See, the see, moreover, of the bishop who has the right to anoint and crown the King of the Romans, while the City of Aachen is not even considered worthy of an episcopal see. In Cologne there are many noble families whose forefathers were Roman patricians. A school of philosophy flourishes there as well as the studies of all the good arts. Albert the Great shone there. The bodies of the three kings, whom we call mages, and the bones of the 11,000 virgins are resting there. This very large and populous city, endowed with the most splendid temples and citizens' buildings as well as with the river Rhine, has no equal in all of Germany. It would be intolerable if the legates of such a great city should be forced to cede [the first place] to the legates from Aachen. The [envoys from] Aachen denied nothing of this, but said that their city was so dear to the emperors that they wanted to receive the crown of the kingdom there rather than in Cologne. They had letters from the emperors placing them above the other cities of Germany. It was only just that they should enjoy their own privileges. The city of Aachen belonged directly to the Empire, while Cologne had earlier had an archbishop as their lord though they later returned to the Empire. It was quite superfluous to argue about nobility, power and age, when the law of an emperor clearly placed the people from Aachen before all other citizens because of their loyalty. It is futile to argue a case that has already been decided. But almost

all the other cities supported Cologne, for men tend to side with the rich. In the end, the matter was settled in this way: one of the envoys from Cologne was placed first, then followed the highest-ranking envoy from Aachen, then another envoy from Cologne, then another envoy from Aachen and so forth. And the two parties agreed that this arrangement should not prejudice the privilege of Aachen. [Sect. 86-87]

2.7.7. Diplomatic report

Though the present text clearly transcends the format of an ordinary diplomatic report, it still contains the main features of such reports as written by Piccolomini himself in other circumstances.¹

There is a detailed account of the appointment of ambassadors, the imperial mandate to the ambassadors is given in full, the ambassadors' travel to Regensburg is described, the grand ambassadorial oration is not only mentioned or summarized but given in full, the negotiations concerning the main issues of the conference are carefully described, and even the disputes of precedence are reported in some detail.

The report transcends the format of the diplomatic report in its length and detail. It also has a highly developed section on the antecedents of the conference, which would be well-known at the imperial court, and not the subject matter for the report on the diplomatic mission itself. It also diverges into history in its account of the Prussian conflict with the Teutonic Knights. And it is coloured by the political objective of making the Hungarians attend the next crusade diet.

3. Date, recipient and format

3.1. Date

The editors of the RTA-volume on the diet have argued that the report was written in the period from the end of July to the middle of August 1454.² Collation of manuscripts for the present edition has made it possible to narrow down the date of composition: the manuscript Ottob. lat. 1563, considered by the present editor to contain the first version of the report (see below), ends with the date: *Ex Nova Civitate pridie nonas Augusti millesimo quadringentesimo quinquagesimo*

¹ See the other reports in the present series

² RTA, 19, 1, p. 30. The cover letter to János Vitéz may be found not only in Ottob. lat. 347 and the Plut. 54, 19, as indicated by RTA, but also in the other manuscripts containing Piccolomini's *epistolae in episcopatu*, e.g. the Vat. lat. 1787, num. 45

quarto. On the basis of this information, 6 August 1454 is accepted here as the date of composition.

3.2. Recipient

The recipient was the Hungarian chancellor, János Vitéz, a humanist friend of Piccolomini. Based on the introduction to the text, the RTA-editors believe that Vitéz had himself asked Piccolomini for a report on the diet.¹ The passage in question is: *Ratisponense concilium, quod imperante Friderico III. superioribus diebus celebratum est, si tibi, quod initium quemque progressum habuerit, ad verum denarravero, non tuo tantum – ut arbitror – sed omnium desiderio morem geram, qui posthac mea scripta perlegerint.* [Sect. 1] This passage does not clearly point to a specific request for a report on the diet, and neither does Piccolomini's cover letter which only says: *Rogasti me, pater observantissime, tibi ut aliquid novi operis scriberem. Nolui tuo desiderio morem deesse ...*² The present editor considers that Vitéz had simply asked for some new work of Piccolomini, and it was Piccolomini himself who chose to send him a report on the Diet in Regensburg.

Piccolomini used the report to convey three political messages to the chancellor, firstly, that the crusade project was in the Hungarians' own great interest, secondly that the emperor's absence from the diet, so detrimental to its success, was due to the Hungarian governor's aggressive stance towards him, and thirdly that the Duke of Burgundy's presence was immensely important to the crusade project, implying that it would be in the Hungarian interest to come to some kind of understanding with the duke on the matter of Luxembourg.³

3.3. Format

Piccolomini may originally have written or intended to write a proper diplomatic report to the emperor on the mission to Regensburg,⁴ and the report in its present state is patterned on the format of such reports though expanded to form a *historia* – in Piccolomini's own words (*epistola ne dicam historia*, sect. 1) – of a major political event, such as Piccolomini had previously written about the Council of Basel.⁵ In the introduction Piccolomini himself said that he had taken the time to write a more comprehensive text: *Curavi namque, cum essem in scribendo tardior, opere ut supplerem, quod tempore defuisset.* [Sect. 1.]

Its form is that of a letter, which Piccolomini used in other cases for his works, e.g., his treatise on the education of boys addressed to King Ladislaus.⁶ The epistolary fiction, however, is based only

¹ RTA, 19, 1, p. 30: *Aus dieser Einleitung ergibt sich 1. der Wunsch des ungarischen Kanzlers nach einem Bericht über den Verlauf des Regensburger Reichstags.*

² RTA, 19, 1, p. 30

³ The chancellor had himself participated in a failed negotiation on this matter in Mainz, March 1454 (RTA, p. 31)

⁴ As after his previous diplomatic missions for the emperor, see the other reports in the present series

⁵ Piccolomini: *De gestis*

⁶ WO, II, nr. 40

upon the initial salutation and direct address to the recipient. In his later accompanying letter to the chancellor, Piccolomini calls the text an opus (*aliquid novi operis scriberem*).¹ Concerning the style, the text has – apart from the orations and addresses – few rhetorical ornaments and classical quotations, and there are no *exempla* from Antiquity.

It may be noted that the orations of others inserted into the text are literary productions and considered as such by Piccolomini who felt free to form – like classical historians - the orations and addresses of others to fit his own political purposes and his own rhetorical style, though retaining – presumably - their substance. This is the case of the addresses of the emperor in council (sect. 21); the intervention of Johann Lysura on the reform of the Empire, which corresponds remarkably with Piccolomini's own intervention in the imperial council (sect. 15); the address of the Burgundian ambassador (sect. 153-163) which is so close to Piccolomini's own account of the acts of the Duke of Burgundy that he may have borrowed part of it from the ambassador; and the closing address of Duke Albrecht of Brandenburg (sect. 173). Since Piccolomini had actually heard the orations and addresses being delivered in their original form, these texts may be considered as semi-fictive orations. However, the oration he puts into the mouth of the Duke of Burgundy at the Feast of the Pheasant (sect. 37-38) is a fully fictive text, though he probably heard about it from eye-witnesses in the duke's following (*Philippus in hunc modum fertur locutus*).²

More surprisingly, he also extensively reworked the text of an imperial document, the imperial letter of summons to the Duke of Burgundy (see Appendix for the original and the revised version): Piccolomini himself wrote the original version, which is why he may have felt that he had an author's right to revise its style, though not its substance.³ Still, it is surprising that even an important imperial document would not be exempt from Piccolomini's concept of an author's literary freedom and right to revise his texts.⁴

4. Text

The text is extant in a large number of manuscripts, mostly humanistic collective manuscripts. The manuscripts collated for the present edition are:

4.1. Manuscripts

¹ RTA p. 30

² On Piccolomini's use of fictive orations, see COR, I, sect. 2.7

³ See appendix

⁴ See COR, I, sect. 3.3.

- **Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana**
 Ottob. lat. 1563, ff. 1r-45r (**O**)¹
 Urb. lat. 405, ff. 183v-245r² (**U**)
 Vat. lat. 3888, ff. 1r-58r³ (**V**)
 Vat. lat. 5604, ff. 1r-58r⁴ (**K**)
- **Wolfenbüttel / Herzog-August Bibliothek**
 Weissenburg 90, ff. 62r-95r⁵ [**W**]⁶

These manuscripts appear to represent three slightly different versions of the text, the oldest version being represented by O and W, the intermediate version by K and V, and the last version by U (and MA).

The differences between the three versions are mostly of style.

The O and W have variants that are clearly the original ones, whereas the corresponding variants in the other manuscripts clearly derive from a scribal error, e.g. the passage *Praetereo emolumenta pecunaria, quae secum hoc bellum afferre potest, si te populus armatus ducem habuerit*. [sect. 14], where O and W have the correct *praetereo*, whereas the other manuscripts have *praeterea* which does not function grammatically since it has no verb. Also the O is the only manuscript to give the date of the text (in the end). It is unlikely that this date could have been added to a later manuscript version not supervised by Piccolomini/Pius himself. Finally, in the O and W the initial passage of the major oration delivered by Piccolomini is *Omnibus qui adestis ... etsi nota est causa vestrae vocationis* and in the other manuscripts *Quamvis omnibus qui adestis ... etsi nota est causa vestrae vocationis*. Since *quamvis* and *etsi* are clearly redundant, this points to O and W representing the earlier text, revised by the inclusion of *quamvis* without deleting the *etsi*.

The U forms part of a splendid manuscript containing a compilation of Piccolomini's major works and written after he became a cardinal. The significant variants in this manuscript indicate a late, stylistic revision. It is therefore reasonable to consider this manuscript as representing the latest version of the text.⁷

4.2. Editions

¹ NB: error of pagination in WO

² Digivatlib: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Urb.lat.405

³ https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.3888

⁴ Digivatlib: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.lat.5604

⁵ Due to an error of binding, the sequence of the text in W is as follows: sect. 1-14 = ff. 61r-62v, sect. 14-52 = ff. 75r-82v, sect. 52-71 = ff. 71r-74v, sect. 71-105 = ff. 63r-70v, sect. 108-174 = ff. 83r-95r

⁶ In the W, the title indicates Piccolomini's cardinalial but not his papal state, wherefore that manuscript must have been written or copied between 1456 when Piccolomini was appointed cardinal and 1458 when he was elected pope.

⁷ On the relationship between the manuscripts, see also RTA, pp. 28-29

- Pius II: *Orationes politicae et ecclesiasticae*. Ed. Giovanni Domenico Mansi. 3 vols. Lucca: Benedini, 1755-1759 / III, pp. 1-84 **(MA)**
[On the basis of manuscripts in the collection of Sandeo Felini, now in the Archivio Storico Diocesano di Lucca (“Felini codicibus suppeditantibus”, III, p. iv)]¹
- *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*. Hrsg. von Rudolf Wolkan. 3 vols. Wien, 1909-1918 / III, nr. 291, pp. 492-563 **(WO)**
[On the basis of Vat. lat. 3888 (“Aus Vat. lat. 3888. Schreiberhand mit Korrekturen des Eneas.”). In many cases, however, Wolkan does not follow the text of that manuscript, but prefers the text in Mansi’s edition]²

In the RTA 19, 1, a large part of the text was published in small sections inserted where appropriate in the running text of the RTA:

- *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III*. Fünfte Abt., Erste Hälfte. Herausg. von Helmut Weigel und Henny Grüneisen. Göttingen, 1969. (Deutsche Reichstagsakten; ÄR; 19, 1)

The sections concerning the Prussians were apparently issued by Piccolomini both a) as an individual text, b) and included in his report on Diet of Regensburg, and c) – in a revised form – in his *Historia Austriaca*.³

They have been published in:

- *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum : Die Geschichtsquellen der Preussischen Vorzeit bis zum Untergange der Ordensherrschaft*. Eds. Th. Hirsch, M. Töppen, E. Strehlke. 6 vols. 1861-1968. (Scriptores rerum Prussicarum) // IV, 1870, pp. 218-231 ff.

Apparently, there are no previous translations of the text.

4.3. Present edition

The text is based on the Ottob. lat. 1563 (O), the Vat. lat. 3888 (V), the Urb. lat. 405 (U), the Vat. lat. 5604 (K), and the Weissenburg 90 (W), as well as the text as edited by Wolkan (WO) and two (or possibly more) manuscripts in the Felini collection as edited by Mansi (MA). Only such variants

¹ According to Wolkan, Mansi based his edition on the manuscript BAV / Vat. Lat. 5604, but this does not appear to be correct

² Second person singular forms changed to plural by Wolkan

³ See *Scriptores Rerum Prussicarum : die Geschichtsquellen*, pp. 213-215 for manuscripts and early editions

in Wolkan that differ from the Vat. lat. 3888 are given in the critical apparatus. Variants in Vat. lat. 3888 are marked with an asterisk in those cases when Wolkan's edition follows the main text. As lead manuscript has been chosen the Vat. lat. 5604.

Pagination is from the lead manuscript.

For principles of edition (incl. orthography) and translation see *Report on a Mission to Rome 1447*, (Reports of Enea Silvio Piccolomini; 1), Appendix.

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6. Sigla and abbreviations

K = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Vat. lat. 5604

O = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Ottob. lat. 1563

U = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Urb. lat. 405

V = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Vat. lat. 3888

W = Wolffenbüttel / Herzog-August Bibliothek / Weissenburg 90

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

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

Abbreviations

CO = *Commentarii rerum memorabilium que suis temporibus contigerunt*. Ed. A. van Heck. 2 vols. Città del Vaticano, 1984. (Studi e testi; 312-313)

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

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

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

OO = Pius II: *Opera quae extant omnia*. Basel: Heinrich Petri, 1551 [2nd ed., 1571; Anstatic reprod. Frankfurt: Minerva 1967]

RTA = *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III*. Fünfte Abt., Erste Hälfte. Herausg. von Helmut Weigel und Henny Grüneisen. Göttingen, 1969. (Deutsche Reichstagsakten; ÄR; 19, 1)

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II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Aeneae episcopi Senensis epistola ad Johannem episcopum Varadiensem de conventu Ratisponensi¹

Doctissimo ac² reverendissimo patri, domino Johanni, Varadiensium praesuli regnique inclyti³ Hungariae cancellario, Aeneas, episcopus Senensis et imperialis consiliarius, salutem plurimam dicit.

[1] {1r} Ratisponense concilium, quod imperante Friderico⁴ III. superioribus diebus celebratum est, est, si tibi⁵, quod initium quemque progressum habuerit, ad verum denarravero, non tuo tantum – ut arbitror – sed omnium desiderio morem geram, qui posthac mea scripta perlegerint. Grandia enim illic⁶ negotia et quae totam Christianitatem spectant⁷ inter manus recepta sunt parientque proculdubio maximum et uberrimum fructum, si coeptis aspiraverit divinus favor. Quamvis me futura praemeditantem Christiani populi vel nequitia terret vel secordia⁸ frangit, tibi si melior animus spem bonam praestat, ne me celes, oro. Sed dices fortasse: “Tertio ab hinc mense conventus Ratisponae cessat. Quae ibi gesta sunt, jam pistores, piscatores, cetarii cupedinarii que omnes decantant. Quid tu nunc afferas⁹ novi?” Audio, nec moveor. Scio vulgata esse decreta concilii. Pleraque tamen invenies inter scripta mea¹⁰, quae nondum ex aliis accepisti. Curavi namque, cum essem in scribendo tardior, opere ut supplerem, quod tempore defuisset. Legito ergo, si vacat, hanc epistolam, ne dicam historiam, et cum percurreris¹¹ universam, si nihil auditu dignum scribimus, amici supervacuum sedulitatem contemnito. Sin qua¹² tuas aures oblectamus, scito nihil esse nobis¹³ jucundius quam tuae satisfacisse voluntati. Sed jam rem ipsam aggrediamur.

¹ U; Incipit tractatulus reverendissimi patris domini domini Aeneae Silvii de Piccolominibus Senensis praesulis ac demum sacrosanctae ecclesiae Romanae presbiteri cardinalis et deinde pape Pii II. W; Pii II. P.M. Ratisponensis Dieta quae fuit Anno Domini 1454 MA; no title K, O, V, WO

² et W

³ regnique inclyti : inclytique regni U

⁴ Frideric... et passim W; Federic.. et passim O, U; Frederic.. et passim K, V, MA

⁵ [singular forms of 2nd person personal pronoun systematically converted to plural forms WO]

⁶ ibi W

⁷ omit. K; spectant corr. ex concernunt V; concernunt O, W

⁸ socordia O, MA, WO; secordia corr. ex socordia V

⁹ asseras WO

¹⁰ omit. MA, WO

¹¹ praecurreris MA; precurreritis WO

¹² corr. ex aliqua V; aliqua K, O, W

¹³ nihil esse nobis : nobis nihil esse W

Letter of Aeneas, Bishop of Siena, to János Bishop of Várad, on the Diet of Regensburg

Aeneas, Bishop of Siena and imperial counsellor, sends many greetings to the most learned and reverend Father, His Lordship János¹, Bishop of Várad and Chancellor of the illustrious Kingdom of Hungary.

1. Introduction

[1] The Diet of Regensburg was held a short time ago, at the command of Friedrich III.² If I inform you accurately about its beginning and proceedings, I shall – I believe – satisfy not only your desire, but also the desire of all who later read my work. For there great affairs, important to all of Christianity, were dealt with, and no doubt the results will be great and abundant, if only God favours our undertakings. As I ponder the future, I am terrified by the negligence of the Christian people and even shocked by its passivity. Therefore, if greater courage gives you better hope, then - pray - do not hide it from me. But maybe you will say: “It is now the third month since the end of the Diet of Regensburg. What was done there is now being bandied about by every miller, fisher, fishmonger, and confectioner. So, what new [insight] can you provide?” I hear what is said, but I am unmoved. [Of course,] I know that the decisions of the diet have been published already. But in my report you will find things that you have not yet heard from others, for since I was somewhat late in writing, I have taken time to write a more complete report than I would otherwise have been able to. So, if you have time, then read this letter, not to say history. If you read it through and do not find anything worthy of hearing, then dismiss the superfluous efforts of a friend. But if we please your ears, then know that we have no greater joy than to accommodate your wishes. But let us now move on to the matter itself.

¹ János Vitéz (ca. 1408-1472): Hungarian humanist. Bishop of Várad 1445. Archbishop of Esztergom 1465. Chancellor of Hungary

² Friedrich III (Habsburg) (1415-1493): Duke of Styria, Carinthia and Carniola 1424. Duke of Austria 1439. King of Germany 1440. Crowned as Holy Roman Emperor in Rome 1452

[2] Cum accepisset aestate superiori majestas¹ imperatoria Constantinopolim a Turcis² expugnatam nobilitatemque urbis cum principe caesam nostramque fidem miris illic modis³ probro⁴ habitam, revolvens animo, quantum esset Christianae religioni {1v} vulnus inflictum, quantumque deinceps fidei⁵ populo discrimen impenderet, mox Nicolao V., primae sedis antistiti, litteras dedit, quibus et cladem Constantinopolitanam deflevit⁶ et operam suam⁷ ad propulsandas ac vindicandas istiusmodi injurias obtulit.

{3} Nicolaus autem, qui suo⁸ ingenio et⁹ officio pastorali¹⁰ rem corde¹¹ gerebat summoque studio his rebus intentus erat, quibus et orthodoxa fides defendi et Turcorum impetus retundi posset, jam cum fratribus suis, sanctae Romanae ecclesiae¹² cardinalibus, clero decimam partem sui census ut ad rem conferret¹³ bellicam¹⁴, indixerat; plenariam peccatorum remissionem his¹⁵, qui militarent contra Turcos, repromiserat; apostolicae camerae universos redditus ac demimam partem vectigalium ecclesiae Romanae ad expeditionem nauticam deputaverat. Is cognita mente Caesaris, qui de communi Christianorum periculo anxius esset, Johannem episcopum Papiensem, nobili loco apud Insubres natum et comi¹⁶ ingenio facundiaque¹⁷ praestantem¹⁸, in Austriam ire jussit, qui et imperatoris animum ad vindicandum commune Christianorum vulnus magis ac magis incenderet et apostolicae sedis consilia¹⁹ provisionesque demonstraret.

¹ majestas W

² Turc... : Turch... *et passim* K, O, U, V; Thurc... *et passim* W; Turc... *et passim* MA, WO

³ illic modis : modis illic MA, WO

⁴ probio WO

⁵ fidei WO

⁶ defluit K; *corr. ex defluit* V

⁷ operam suam : operas suas K, O, W; operam suam *corr. ex operas suas* V

⁸ suapte O, W, MA

⁹ ex K, O, W, MA, WO

¹⁰ officio pastorali : pastorali officio MA

¹¹ cordi O, W

¹² *omit.* U

¹³ ad rem conferret : conferret ad rem MA

¹⁴ conferret bellicam : bellicam conferret WO

¹⁵ iis MA

¹⁶ comi *corr. ex ameno* V; ameno O, W

¹⁷ facundia U

¹⁸ prestantem *corr. ex prestabilem* V; prestabilem O, W

¹⁹ concili... *et passim* U

2. Antecedents of the diet

2.1. Emperor's reaction to the Fall of Constantinople

[2] When, last summer, His Imperial Majesty learnt that Constantinople had been conquered by the Turks,¹ that the city's nobles had been killed together with their emperor,² and that our Faith had been mocked there in unimaginable ways,³ he considered how great a wound had been inflicted upon the Christian religion, and how great a danger threatened the faithful people. He then very soon wrote to Nicolaus V,⁴ Bishop of the First See, in which he lamented the Fall of Constantinople and offered his help to avert and avenge these offences.⁵

2.2. Pope's reaction

[3] But Nicolaus - both by nature and by virtue of his pastoral office - had this matter at heart, and he was utterly determined to defend orthodox Faith⁶ and to counter the Turkish attacks. He had therefore already - together with his brethren, the cardinals of the Holy Roman Church - announced a tithe on the incomes of the clergy, promised a plenary remission of sins to those who fought against the Turks, and allocated the total income of the Apostolic Chamber and a tenth of the tax revenues of the Roman Church to a naval expedition. When he was informed about the intent of the emperor, concerned about the common danger to the Christians, he dispatched Giovanni,⁷ Bishop of Pavia, from a noble family in Lombardy, an affable and well-spoken man, to Austria, in order to rouse the emperor to avenge the common injury to the Christians and to inform him of the intentions of the Apostolic See and the measures taken.

¹ Constantinople fell to the troops of the Turkish sultan, Mehmed II, on 29 May 1453. RTA, 19, 1, pp. 4-18

² Constantine XI Dragases (Palaeologus) (1405-1453): Byzantine emperor from 1449 to his death

³ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 19-20

⁴ Nicolaus V [Tommaso Parentucelli] (1397-1455): Pope from 1447 to his death

⁵ In a letter of 10 August 1453 written by Piccolomini himself, the emperor informed the pope about the Fall of Constantinople and asked him to summon the Christian princes to a meeting with the purpose of mobilising a crusade against the Turks: *censemus clementiam vestram ... nunc exurgere, scribere regibus, legatos mittere, monere, hortari principes accompunitates, in aliquem communem locum aut veniant aut mittant ... atque junctis viribus adversus salutiferae crucis inimicos arma promoveant* (WO, III, p. 579). RTA, 19, 1, pp. 31-33

⁶ The Christian religion as a whole - not the Greek Orthodox Church

⁷ Giovanni Castiglione (1420-1460): Bishop of Pavia 1453. Papal envoy to Germany 1454-1455. Cardinal 1456

[4] Eo audito ex re esse visum est Caesari principes atque communitates imperii in unum aliquem locum evocare cumque his¹ de tanto negotio transigere. Instabant eo tempore natalia salvatoris domini, quibus de more peractis Theutonicorum² conventus ad festum sancti Georgii, quod Christiani VIII. kal.³ Maji celebrare consueverunt, apud Ratisponam indicitur.

[5] Haec urbs in Norico, cui nunc Bavaria⁴ vocabulum est, supra Danubium jacet, ampla atque insignis, ambitiosis aedibus palatiisque referta. {2r} Templata hic divino nomini dicata⁵ complura⁶ et et magnifica sunt. Pontem habet ex lapide secto⁷ et quadrato tota Germania celeberrimum⁸, qui ripam utramque⁹ Danubii¹⁰ conjungit atque in Franconiam Bohemiamque praebet iter. Murus altus spissusque cingit urbem et fossa latior atque profundior. Turres admodum multae et propugnacula pro moenibus eminent. Hic saepe Romanorum Caesares consedere atque habere concilia consueverunt. Hic quoque Conradus II. conventum tenuit, cum recepta domini salvatoris cruce exercitum adversus infideles eduxit.

[6] Huc ergo ex Alemania vocati sunt omnes, quorum vel auxilia vel consilia in hoc opus necessaria putabantur.

¹ iis MA

² Theoton... *et passim* MA

³ *omit.* U

⁴ Bajoar... *et passim* K, O, U, MA, V; Bavar... *et passim* W

⁵ *et add.* O, W

⁶ complura U; compluria K, O, MA

⁷ septo U

⁸ famosissimum K, O, W; celeberrimum *corr. ex famosissimum* V

⁹ ripam utramque : ripas utrasque K, O, W; ripam utramque *corr. ex ripas utrasque* V

¹⁰ *omit.* MA, WO

2.3. Emperor's decision to summon a diet

[4] When the emperor had heard the bishop,¹ he decided to summon the princes and communities of the Empire to a meeting in some place or other to discuss this important matter with them.² The Feast of the Birth of Our Lord and Saviour was close, but after the usual festivities a diet was summoned, to meet in Regensburg on the Feast of Saint George, which the Christians celebrate on the 24th of April.³

2.4. Regensburg

[5] This city in Noricum,⁴ now called Bavaria, lies above the Danube. It is large and splendid, full of grand buildings and mansions. There are many and magnificent temples dedicated to the divine name. It also has a bridge⁵ built with ashlar - famous in all Germany - which connects the two shores of the Danube and opens a road leading to Franconia and Bohemia. A tall and thick wall surrounds the city as well as a broad and deep moat. The walls have many towers and ramparts. The Roman emperors⁶ often dwelled in that city and held diets there. Also Konrad II.⁷ held a meeting there,⁸ when he took the cross of the Lord Saviour and led his army against the infidels.⁹

2.5. Parties invited to the diet

[6] To this city were summoned all those from Germany whose help or counsel were considered to be necessary for this undertaking.

¹ Giovanni Castiglione. RTA, 19, 1, pp. 51-63

² The emperor's letters to the kings and princes were written Piccolomini

³ Or rather the 23rd

⁴ Old Latin name for an area comprising most of present-day Austria and part of Slovenia

⁵ Steinerne Brücke in Regensburg, built in the 12th century

⁶ I.e., the Holy Roman emperors

⁷ Error for Konrad III (Hohenstaufen) (ca. 1193-1152): Duke of Franconia 1127, king of Germany 1138 to his death

⁸ Under Konrad III, two imperial diets, in Speyer December 1446 and in Frankfurt March 1447, dealt with Second Crusade

⁹ The German troops participating in the Second crusade met in and departed from Regensburg in May 1447

[7] Ex Italia quoque non pauci accersiti. At cum dies affuit, Italorum nemo comparuit, nisi Papiensis episcopus, qui Romani pontificis locum tenuit. Veneti jam finito concilio¹ legatos misere. Florentini Florentini ac Lucani, etsi scripserant gesturos se Caesari morem, postea tamen gravioribus occupati negotiis implere promissa non potuerunt. Borsius, dux Mutinae, bellorum praetendit incommoda. Senenses cum mandatum tardius accepissent, jure merito excusati sunt. Genuenses, Mediolanenses atque cum his marchiones Montisferrati et Salutiarum² nec excusatione opus sibi³ esse crediderunt. Ludovicus, marchio Mantuanus, errante cancellario sub nomine Caroli vocatus est: itaque litterae ad fratrem ejus missae nulli usui fuerunt.

[8] Ex regibus rogati sunt oratores mittere, qui viciniore videbantur: Carolus Franciae, Ladislaus Hungariae ac Bohemiae, Henricus Angliae, Casimirus Poloniae, Jacobus Scotiae, et Johannes Daciae. Neque in hac vocatione usus est imperio Fridericus, neque arroganter quidquam scripsit, sed reges quasi amicos, quasi fratres hortatus est, in {2v} communi Christianae religionis negotio ut secum concurrere ac dicere et audire consilia vellent. Nemo tamen, si Casimirum excipias, imperiali voto morem gessit, sive odio Caesarei nominis, quod omnes videri exempti volunt, sive quia religionis extinctus est ubique zelus.

¹ consi... *et passim* U

² *omit.* O

³ opus sibi : sibi opus MA

2.5.1. Italian powers¹

[7] Many were also summoned from Italy, but when the diet opened, no Italian had come except the Bishop of Pavia,² representing the Roman Pontiff.³ The Venetians sent legates after the diet had ended. The Florentines and the Lucchese had written that they would obey the emperor, but afterwards they became embroiled in very serious matters and could not fulfil their promises. Borso, Duke of Modena,⁴ gave troubles of war as his excuse.⁵ The Sienese had received the invitation too late and were justly excused. The Genoese and the Milanese and with them the marquesses of Monferrato⁶ and Saluzzo⁷ apparently thought that they needed no excuse. And due to an error in the chancellery,⁸ Ludovico, Marquess of Mantua,⁹ was invited under the name of Carlo, and therefore the letter was sent to his brother¹⁰ and had no effect.

2.5.2. European kings

[8] Of the kings, those who were the closest¹¹ were invited to send ambassadors¹²: Charles of France,¹³ Ladislaus of Hungary and Bohemia,¹⁴ Henry of England,¹⁵ Casimir of Poland,¹⁶ James of Scotland,¹⁷ and Johannes¹⁸ of Denmark. In his invitation, Friedrich made no imperial command and he did not write in a superior manner,¹⁹ but exhorted the kings as friends and brothers to meet with him and give and take counsel concerning this common matter of the Christian religion. However, except Casimir nobody accommodated the emperor's desire,²⁰ whether out of hate for the name of emperor, whose power nobody wishes to recognize, or because the zeal for religion has been extinguished everywhere.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 196-203

² Giovanni Castiglione

³ Nicolaus V

⁴ Borso d'Este (1413-1471): Marquess of Ferrara 1450, Duke of Modena from 1452 to his death

⁵ Emperor's letter to the duke, written by Piccolomini and dated 9. January 1454 (WO, III, pp. 609-610)

⁶ Giovanni IV (Paleologo) (1413-1464): Marquess of Monferrat from 1445 to his death

⁷ Ludovico I (del Vasto) (1405-1475): Marquess of Saluzzo from 1416 to his death

⁸ I.e. the imperial chancellery

⁹ Ludovico III (Gonzaga) (1412-1478): Marquess of Mantua from 1444 to his death

¹⁰ Carlo Gonzaga (ca. 1415-1456)

¹¹ The letters of invitation were written by Piccolomini (RTA, 19, 1, pp. 96-103)

¹² Thus, the kings of Spain and Portugal were not invited

¹³ Charles VII (1403-1461): Ruler of France from 1422 and King of France from 1429 to his death

¹⁴ Ladislaus the Posthumous (Habsburg) (1440-1457): Duke of Austria and King of Hungary and Bohemia

¹⁵ Henry VI (Lancaster) (1421-1471): King of England 1422-1461 and 1470-1471

¹⁶ Casimir IV (Jagiellon) (1427-1492): Grand Duke of Lithuania from 1440 and King of Poland from 1447 to his death

¹⁷ James II (Stewart) (1430-1460): King of Scotland from 1437 to his death

¹⁸ Another chancery error. The name of the Danish king was Christian I (1426-1481): King of Denmark (1448) and Norway 1450) to his death and of Sweden from 1457 to 1464

¹⁹ Piccolomini would know since it was he who had written the letters

²⁰ In a letter to the emperor of Palm Sunday 1454, King Christian I of Denmark regretted that he would not be able to participate in the diet, having received the letter of invitation only 10 days before its opening (OO, pp. 658-659)

[9] Rex Franciae – ut ajunt – suscepta sacra imperiali, cum neque suam operam¹ Christianitati negare auderet, neque Caesari tamen tribuere vellet, ut suo rogatu motus existimari posset, ad Romanum pontificem litteras scripsit, quibus se bello minime defuturum affirmavit, si Germani principes contra Turcos arma susciperent. Aliorum in tanto negotio tanta vel taciturnitas vel negligentia non admiranda dumtaxat, sed cunctorum hominum votis damnanda execrandaque fuit.

[10] Maxime vero Ladislai regis notata est legatorum absentia, qui et propter regnum Bohemiae, quod est imperii sacri nobile et² praecipuum³ membrum, parere Caesari tenebatur et propter Hungariam negligere eum conventum haudquaquam debuit, in quo suorum subditorum salus ac tranquillitas quaerebatur. Neque enim inter Christianos populi⁴ sunt, quorum magis quam Hungarorum referat exterminari Turcorum gentem, quam vicinam habent multis jam saeculis infestam. Quod si Turci contra Theutones progredi velint, necesse est Hungaros eorumve⁵ subditos subditos prius atterant, quales sunt et Dalmatae et Croatini. Sed nihil impingendum est nobilissimo adolescenti, qui quamvis est in omne bonum pronus et ardens, pro sua tamen aetate magis regitur quam regit. Rectoribus eam curam esse par fuit, ne conventum spernerent, in quo tanti regis negotium in primis erat agendum. Accusarem hic vehementer praelatorum ac baronum Hungariae sive {3r} pervicaciam sive somnolentiam⁶, qui tale concilium⁷ nec unico nuntio dignati sunt adire⁸, adire⁸, nisi remorsus timerem tuos, qui pro tua singulari providentia remittere sagittas in hostes optime calles.

¹ suam operam : suas operas K, O; suam operam *corr.* ex suas operas V, W

² *omit.* U

³ et praecipuum *omit.* K; principale *corr.* ex precipuum V; principale O, W

⁴ *omit.* U

⁵ eorumque U

⁶ sive somnolentiam *omit.* U

⁷ tale concilium : tali consilio U

⁸ visitare K, O, U, W; adire *corr.* ex visitare V

2.5.2.1. King Charles VII

[9] Concerning the king of France, it is said that when he received the emperor's letter,¹ he neither dared refuse to help Christianity nor did he want to appear to accommodate the emperor by acting on his invitation. He, therefore, wrote to the Roman Pontiff that he would certainly not fail to go to war if the German princes decided to take up arms against the Turks. The silence or negligence of the other [princes] in this vital matter is not admirable at all but deserves the disapproval and condemnation of all men.

2.5.2.2. King Ladislaus

[10] But most shameful of all was the absence of ambassadors from King Ladislaus. As King of Bohemia, a noble and preeminent member of the Holy Empire, he was obliged to obey the emperor, and as King of Hungary he most certainly ought not to ignore this diet which aimed at ensuring his own subjects' welfare and peace. Among the Christians, no people has greater interest than Hungary in destroying the Turkish people, a hostile neighbour for many centuries. For if the Turks wish to march against the Germans, they must first overrun the Hungarians and their subject peoples, like the Dalmatians and the Croatians. This is in no way a criticism of that noble adolescent,² who is ready and eager to do good, but who because of his age does not govern, but is governed. Indeed, it is his governors who should not have neglected this diet, which first and foremost was to deal with the affairs of this great king.³ Here I would vehemently accuse the Hungarian prelates and barons of obstinacy or slothfulness since they did not deign to send even one representative to this important diet if I did not fear your⁴ counterattack since with your brilliant intellect you are very good at shooting arrows back your enemies.

¹ "sacra". Letter of 9. January 1454, written by Piccolomini (WO, III, 602-607. RTA, 19, 1, pp. 97-100): *Cum autem fraternitas vestra inter Christianos reges sublimem locum divino munere sit sortita regnoque maximo et potentissimo praesit, non est nobis ambiguum, quin ad juvandam ejus causam, cujus dono regnat suosque populos in pace gubernat, mentem erectam habeat iamque vias et modos excogitaverit, quibus Turcorum confringi gladius, compesci furor et audacia plecti Christianaque rursus resurgere gloria possit. quibus ex rebus apprime nobis gratum esset et ad negotium fidei bene feliciterque deducendum admodum utile reputamus, quod vestra fraternitas in die dicta ad civitatem Ratisponensem nostramque presenciam suos prestantes destinet oratores, qui nos de mente vestra in hoc tam grandi et utili negocio efficiant cerciores ...*

² King Ladislaus was 14 years old at the time

³ As late as 14 February 1454, Piccolomini believed that King Ladislaus would send ambassadors to the diet, see his letter to Carvajal of that date (WO, III, 1, 256, p. 443)

⁴ János Vitéz, the Hungarian chancellor and recipient of Piccolomini's report

[11] Ceterum quidnam alios arguimus, nisi et aliorum similem contumaciam vidissem? Nam¹ quid faciant externi, quando neque ipsi Theutoniae principes neque civitates, ut necessum² erat, tam utile concilium adiverint³? Senserat hoc imperator atque idcirco Romanum praesulem rogatum fecerat, ut et⁴ ipse suis scriptis tum⁵ episcopos, tum duces, marchiones, comites Germanicae nationis ad conventum Ratisponensem invitaret, quia vocante papa atque⁶ imperatore⁷ concilium concilium concursus proculdubio major fieret. Ea res apostolicae sedi non placuit, quod⁸ fortasse latere dolos sub ea vocatione Nicolaus timuit: nihil est enim in alto sedenti tutum. Magni conventus magnos motus pariunt. Inimica⁹ est novitatum summa potestas. Spes mutationis enutrit enutrit miseros.¹⁰

[12] Imperator, cum dies conventionis appropinquasset, convocatis senatoribus quinam mittendi sint¹¹ Ratisponam vices acturi suas quaerit. Res secreto inter paucos agitur.

¹ nisi et ... nam *omit.* O

² necessarium MA

³ adiverunt O, W

⁴ *omit.* U

⁵ cum O

⁶ et MA

⁷ ad *add.* MA

⁸ quia MA

⁹ inimicitia U

¹⁰ Incipit liber VIII. de conventu Ratisponensi *add.* U

¹¹ sunt W

2.5.3. The Germans¹

[11] Moreover, why should we criticise others, when we see similar defiance elsewhere? For what should foreigners do, when neither the German princes nor the cities attended this important² diet, as was necessary? The emperor foresaw that this might happen, and therefore he requested of the Bishop of Rome that he, too, should write to the bishops, dukes, margraves and counts of the German nation and invite them to the Diet in Regensburg, since a joint invitation to the diet from pope and emperor would undoubtedly increase the number of participants.³ But the Apostolic See did not wish to do so, possibly because Nicolaus feared some trick or deceit behind such an invitation: nothing is safe for anyone in a high position.⁴ Great meetings cause great changes. Supreme power is an enemy of change, [whereas] hope of change sustains those who are miserable.

2.6. Deliberations in the imperial council on the emperor's participation

[12] When the time of the diet approached, the emperor summoned his senators⁵ and asked them whom to send to Regensburg as his representatives. The matter was discussed in secret and with only a few people.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 204-210

² "tam utile"

³ In the emperor's letter 1 January 1454 written by Piccolomini, the emperor asked the pope to exhort and admonish a number of princes to personally participate in the diet: *Utile et accomodum reputamus nonnullos principes [ecclesiasticos] et saeculares, quorum nomina praesentibus interclusimus, vestris litteris obnixe hortari et commonere, ut ad dietam hujusmodi non per legatos et oratores, sed in propriis se conferant personis* (WO, II, p. 601)

⁴ The very cautious and unwarlike pope did not want to be responsible for a European military venture against the Turks, preferring it to be the responsibility of the emperor. He might have feared that by issuing a joint summons to the diet, he would somehow be tricked into a position of co-responsibility

⁵ The privy council

[13] Prior, qui sententiam¹ dicere iussus est, Aeneas, episcopus Senensis: “Ego,” inquit, “Caesar, nequaquam² is fuerim, qui te mittere legatos suaserim ad eum conventum, qui tuam praesentiam exigit. Nisi enim tu iveris, neque principes electores atque³ ceteri proceres eo venient⁴ neque oratores mittent⁵ ad tantam rem idoneos. Ridiculum concilium erit, nihil illic geretur⁶ laude dignum. Si tu absis, omnes tuam negligentiam⁷ incusabunt, quia tantum negotium, quantum est Christianitatis defensio, parvipenderis. Quod si verum admittis, necesse est fateare nullam te causam concilio⁸ posse reddere⁹, si haec non reddit, ex qua pendet nostrae fidei salus. Illud quoque tua venia dixerim: nisi hoc iter assumis, neque honori tuo neque utilitati consules. Impugnatio namque Turcorum tibi multis ex causis debetur, non modo quod imperator es¹⁰ Romanorum et advocatus et¹¹ protector ecclesiae, verum etiam quia proximus consanguineus existis Ladislao, regi Hungariae, cuius regnum in faucibus Turcorum situm auxilia¹² Christianorum implorat, cui non opem ferre impium et crudele fuerit. Nec tui fines¹³ sine periculo sunt, si marchiam Slavonicam¹⁴ Carniolamque¹⁵ respicis¹⁶, haud procul a Turcis regiones. Tibi praeterea aetas florida est, corpus incolume, robustum ac bello aptissimum. Nunc omnium in te¹⁷ oculi sunt directi¹⁸ ¹⁹ tibi²⁰ ante omnes hanc belli gerundi provinciam credunt. Nisi conventum adis teque cupidum ostendis reipublicae defendendae²¹, neglector ac desertor imperii vocitabere, nec tuus ager²² in tuto erit. Non tamen ecclesiam suam deseret Deus, suscitabit alium de quacumque gente, de quocumque genere sui populi salvatorem, qui se pro communi salute devoveat et gloriam, quae tibi debetur, accipiat. *Imperium* semper, ut est apud Sallustium, *ad optimum quemque a minus²³ bono transfertur*. Quod si tua serenitas in concilio fuerit seque publici commodi procuratricem monstraverit, recuperabis pristinam famam, nomenque tuum, quod nunc paene sepultum videtur, rursus emerget. Et si, quod futurum speramus, tuo ductu Graecia vendicetur deleanturque Turci, *nulla umquam aetas de tuis laudibus {4r} conticescet*.

¹ summam MA

² Caesar nequaquam : nequaquam Caesar W

³ neque O, W

⁴ veniant K; conuenit U

⁵ mitterent MA

⁶ geritur U

⁷ absenciam W

⁸ consil... *et passim* W

⁹ dare W

¹⁰ imperator es : es imperator U

¹¹ etiam K; ac *corr. ex* et V; ac O, W, MA, WO

¹² auxilium K

¹³ tui fines : tua futura K; tua dominia O, W

¹⁴ Slavonicam K, MA

¹⁵ Sclavonicam Carniolamque : Sclavoniamque U

¹⁶ respicio K

¹⁷ in te : inter K

¹⁸ *omit.* U

¹⁹ si Marchiam *add.* U

²⁰ tibi W

²¹ cupidum ostendis ... defendendae : reipublicae defendendae cupidum ostendis MA

²² tuus ager : tuum territorium O, W

²³ a minus : animus K, U, V *

2.6.1. Piccolomini's intervention

[13] First, Aeneas, Bishop of Siena, was asked to give his opinion. He said, "Emperor, it is certainly not I who would advise you to send ambassadors to this diet. It demands your own presence, for unless you go yourself, neither the prince-electors nor the other nobles will attend or send ambassadors qualified for such an important matter. The diet will become a laughing matter, and nothing worthwhile will be done there. If you stay away, all will criticize your indifference, since you attach so little importance to this great matter, the defence of Christianity. If you accept that this is true, you must admit that if this matter on which depends the salvation of our Faith cannot induce you to attend the diet, then nothing can. Pardon me for saying this: if you do not undertake this voyage, then you will disregard both your honour and your advantage.¹ Attacking the Turks is incumbent on you for many reasons, not just because you are Emperor of the Romans and champion and protector of the Church, but also because you are the closest relative to Ladislaus, King of Hungary, whose kingdom – situated so close to the Turks – begs for help from the Christians: indeed, it would be both impious and cruel not to help him. Also, your own territory is threatened, if you consider the Slavonic March and Carniola, also very close to the Turks. Moreover, you are of flourishing age and healthy body, robust and in good condition for war. The eyes of all are now turned to you, and they believe that you more than any other have the responsibility of conducting this war. If you do not attend the diet and show yourself eager to defend the state, you will be called an uncaring deserter of the Empire, and your own territory will not be safe. But God will not desert his own Church, he will raise up someone else, from another people and another family, to save his people, to dedicate himself to the common salvation, and to harvest the glory which should have been yours. As Sallust says, *sovereignty is always being transferred to the best man from the hands of his inferior.*² If Your Serenity attends the diet and shows yourself as caring for the public good, then you will regain your former fame, and your name, now almost buried, will shine forth once more. And if, as we hope will happen, Greece is reclaimed and the Turks destroyed under your leadership, then *no any future age shall fail to make mention of your praise.*³

¹ Honestum et utile: an important pair of concepts in classical moral philosophy

² Sallustius: *De bello Catilinae*, 6: *Ita imperium semper ad optimum quemque a minus bono transfertur*

³ Cicero: *Pro Marcello*, 3.9.

[14] Etenim quamvis¹ est lugubris hoc tempore fortuna Graecorum ac dolenda nimis Constantinopolitana clades, tibi tamen, si gloriae cupidus es, optanda fuit haec ruina, quae te possit in altum vehere. Sigismundo quidem atque Alberto Caesaribus, qui te novissimi praecesserunt, optatissime haec obvenisset occasio, qua totam commovere Christianitatem potuissent seque fama clarissimos reddere. Sed data est tibi a Deo nostro haec² facultas, tibi hoc decus reservatum est, ut defensor conservatorque Christiani nominis appellere, si³ modi eniti audereque⁴ velis. Adde, quod te religiosum et Christianissimum principem vulgo dicunt nec tibi majorem esse⁵ curam, quam ut Deo placeas atque animam lucrifacias. Et quid est – obsecro - in quo vel Deo magis placere vel animae tuae melius consulere possis quam operam dare, ne Christiana religio pessundet? Quis est, qui dubitet *omnibus, qui fidem orthodoxam adjuverint, defenderint, auxerint, certum esse in caelo diffinitum*⁶ locum, in quo beati aevo sempiterno fruantur? Praetereo⁷ emolumenta pecunaria, quae secum hoc bellum afferre potest, si te populus populus armatus ducem habuerit. Quantum in te praeclarum⁸ derivabitur? Quot ad te spolia deferentur opulentissimorum principum ditissimarumque civitatum? Neque te sumptus vereri oportet, quasi tuo argento sit militandum: ex decima cleri, ex contributione populi stipendia tibi et militi distribues facileque plus accipies quam eroges. Sed quid ego nunc⁹ ista commemoro? Praematura est haec belli gerendi disputatio. Ratisponae hoc erit agendum.

¹ quantumvis MA

² talis W

³ omit. U

⁴ audireque W

⁵ maiorem esse : esse majorem MA, WO

⁶ omit. W

⁷ O, W; praeterea K, U, V, MA, WO

⁸ O, W ; praedarum K, U, V, MA, WO

⁹ iam add. W

[14] The fortune of the Greeks is lamentable, and the Fall of Constantinople is indeed a grievous matter, but if you are eager for glory, then this disaster is actually an opportunity for you to rise to the summit. Indeed, such an opportunity would have been highly welcome to emperors Sigismund¹ and Albrecht², your immediate predecessors, and they would have used it to shake up up the whole of Christendom and reach the highest fame. But now our God has given this opportunity to you. If only you will strive and dare, the glory of being called the defender and the saviour of the Christian cause has been reserved for you. Moreover, the people will call you a religious and most Christian prince and say that you have no greater concern than to please God and benefit your soul. But what – I ask – is more pleasing to God and better for your soul than to ensure that the Christian religion is not ruined? Who will doubt that *all those who have preserved, aided, or enlarged the orthodox Faith have a special place prepared for them in the heavens, where they may enjoy an eternal life of happiness.*³? I pass over the pecuniary benefits which such a war will bring you if the armed people have you as their leader. How much booty will you not get? Many spoils from opulent princes and rich cities will be brought to you. And you do not even have to fear the cost of spending your own money on the war: your expenses and your army's salaries will be covered through tithes from the clergy and contributions from the people, and you will easily receive more than you spend. By why am I dwelling on this now? Talking about the conduct of the war is premature: this is a matter to be discussed in Regensburg.

¹ Sigismund (Luxembourg) (1368-1437): King of Hungary (1387) and of Bohemia (1419). Elected King of the Romans (King of Germany) 1410, and crowned Holy Roman Emperor 1433

² Albrecht II (Habsburg) (1397-1439). Duke of Austria, King of Bohemia and Hungary and elected King of the Romans (King of Germany) 1438

³ Cicero: *De republica*, 6.9.13: *omnibus, qui patriam conservaverint, adiuverint, auxerint, certum esse in caelo definitum locum, ubi beati aevo sempiterno fruuntur*. Cicero was speaking of the state, here Piccolomini applied the quotation to the Christian Faith

[15] Impraesentiarum an eo tibi sit eundum quaerimus. Ego, si tuum locum teneam, ibo ac principibus me ostendam. Suadebo ex re Christiana, quae necessaria putem. Deinde {4v} addam: "Audio vos principes ac civitates aegro animo esse, quia non saepe ad vos venio, quia non amputo lites, non aufero bella, non punio nocentes, non parere omnes justitiae compello, neque animadvertitis exhaustum imperium facultates habere nullas, quibus haec perficiat. Si semel huc venio, facile plus absumo, quam decennio ex imperio queam corradere. Si jus dico, non est, qui exequatur¹. Si scribo, si mando, tantum paretis, quantum libet. Cur verba me vestra lacerant? An ego patrimonium meum dilapidabo, vestrum vobis ut salvum fiet? Non faciam! Satis est, si curam, si studium, si laborem, si operam, si personam meam vobis offero et dedo. Si datis, unde inter vos vivere et jus suum unicuique² tribuere³, et quae regis atque imperatoris sunt, agere possim, neque vobis neque reipublicae deero. At si paupertas imperii vobis cordi est, parcite saltem maledicere nec vestram culpam in me transferetis⁴, si dum singuli vultis imperare, omnes imperium et libertatem amittitis." Persuadeo mihi, Caesar, si te ita loquentem principes audiant, tibi atque imperio bene futurum. Intelligent, quantum sit dedecus, cum ceterarum nationum⁵ reges mirifice abundant, egere suum. Taedet insuper omnes quotidianarum assiduarumque litium, quas idcirco durare non ignorant, quia neque oboedientiam habes neque militem, quo illam exigas. Militem vero sciunt absque⁶ pecunia, quam nervum esse reipublicae vel praecipuum constat, conduci atque ali non posse. Quod si pacem et justitiam inter se⁷ jungere⁸ Alemani⁹ voluerint, tibi atque imperio uti¹⁰ provideant necessum erit. Idque jam tibi pollicitus est curaturum se fore Jacobus, Trevirensis¹¹ ecclesiae pontifex, inter electores tuos oculatissimus et solertissimus princeps, quemadmodum ex Johanne Lysura, viro acuto et prudenti, annus ab hinc dilapsus est, audisti.

¹ exequar O, W

² cuique O, W

³ tradere W

⁴ transferatis O, W **

⁵ omit. U

⁶ sine W

⁷ sese O, W

⁸ vigere O, W

⁹ Alemann... et passim K, O, V, MA; Alaman... et passim U; Alamann... et passim W; Aleman... et passim WO

¹⁰ ut O, W

¹¹ Treverensis O, W, MA

[15] Right now, we are discussing whether you should go there. If I was in your place, I would go and show myself to the princes. I would argue for the [defence of the] Christian faith as necessary. Then I would add, "I hear that you, princes and cities, are exasperated because I do not come to you often, do not end conflicts and wars, do not punish the guilty, and do not force all to follow justice. You appear not to realize that the imperial office is drained and has no resources to make these things happen. Just coming here once, I might easily spend more funds than I could collect from the Empire in ten years. If I pronounce a judgement, nobody executes it. If I write or command anything, you only obey if you wish to. So why do you criticize me? Should I spend my own inherited property to save yours? Certainly not! It is enough that I offer and dedicate my cares, my zeal, my labour, my work and my person to you. If you grant me [an income which allows me] to live among you and dispense justice to everyone and to perform the office of a king and emperor, then I shall never fail you nor the state. If you are concerned about the poverty of the Empire, then stop criticising, and do not blame me if you all lose your power and liberty because each of you want to rule." I am convinced, Emperor, that if the princes hear you speaking like this, it will benefit both yourself and the Empire. The princes will realize how shameful it is that the kings of other nations are amazingly rich, while theirs is poor. They are also tired of daily and unceasing conflicts, and they know that these go on and on because you have neither [your subjects'] obedience nor soldiers to enforce it. But they do know that soldiers cannot be hired or maintained without money, the most important muscle of the republic. If the Germans want peace and justice among them, they must provide for you and the Empire. This you have already been promised by Jakob, Bishop of the Church of Trier,¹ the most clear-sighted and clever of your [prince] electors, as you were told last year by Johann Lysura², an intelligent and wise man.

¹ Jakob von Sierck (1398-1456): Archbishop of Trier and German prince elector from 1439 to his death

² Johann Lysura (d. 1459): Born in the village of Lieser (close to Kues). Doctor of canon law. Counsellor to the archbishop of Mainz

[16] Duo igitur haec negotia in conventu Ratisponensi {5r} absolves: exercitum contra Turcos¹ institues, et imperium ad pristinum splendorem² rediges. Quorum si alterum fiat, honorem nomenque vel maximum assequeris³; si neutrum, officio tuo satisfeceris, neque illaudatum te populi praeteribunt honesta ac magnifica negotia prosequentem.

[17] Sed ais fortasse tacitus: “Quo pacto concilium adibo, si non est aurum?” Nescio, Caesar, quantum habes in arca, neque tuae crumenae sum iudex. Illud in tanto negotio palam dico: si non est in promptu argentum, corradendum est undecumque. Possessiones vendi aliquas malo quam res tantas negligi. Neque grandi pecunia opus est, quando nec multam familiam adducere oportebit. Ducenti equites comitatum honestum dabunt. Sigismundus, archiepiscopus Juvaviensis⁴ Ludovicusque, Bavariae⁵ dux, inter eundem sese tibi comites adjungent. Auri viginti milia nummum hoc iter tibi explicabunt.

[18] Quod si rursus objicias⁶ armatas in vicinia⁷ copias esse, quas dicunt comitem⁸ Ciliae nutrire, gubernatorem Hungariae paratum exercitum habere, utrumque tibi infensum parare insidias, verendum esse, ne dum bona communia curas, amittas propria, respondebo: Oppida tua non ea videri, quae primo insultu expugnari queant, dimittendos esse probatos viros, qui te absente patriam tueantur, neque male dictum putarim⁹, si agrum¹⁰ tuum futurum in absentia tua quam in praesentia tutiorem¹¹ affirmarim. Quis enim tuam invadere terram praesumpserit, dum tu reipublicae operam praebeas? Quo ausu tuos subditos infestent¹² Hungari, dum tu quaeris, ne ipsi amplius infestentur a Turcis? Amabunt te - mea quidem sententia - omnes Christianae fidei consulentem aut certe verebuntur, cum tuos tibi principes¹³ adjunctos viderint auxilia certissima praestituros¹⁴, si te quispiam conturbare praesumpserit. Te vero solum domi manentem non video, cur timeant armis ac populo longe imparem. Cum Francfordiae¹⁵, cum Norimbergae, cum Romae fuisti, multo {5v} melius defensa est terra tua, quam cum domi mansisti. Nec mirum, nam dum te Austria sive Styria tenet, ea existimatio de te est, quae de¹⁶ duce vel Austriae vel Styriae haberi potest. Cum vero apud electores moram trahis, omnes te veluti Caesarem recognoscunt et venerantur.

¹ Turc(h)um MA, WO

² vigorem W

³ assequaris W

⁴ Innaniensis U; Junamensis W

⁵ Baioa... *et passim* O

⁶ abicias W

⁷ vicina U

⁸ comite U

⁹ putaverim O, W

¹⁰ territorium O, W

¹¹ tutius O, W

¹² infestant W

¹³ participes MA

¹⁴ prestaturos K, O, W; *corr. ex prestaturos* V

¹⁵ Francfordi... *et passim* K, U, W, MA; Francofordi... *et passim* WO

¹⁶ *omit.* K

[16] So, you should deal with two matters at the Diet of Regensburg: you will organize an army against the Turk, and you will restore the Empire to its former glory. If you achieve just one of these two, you will gain honour and a great name. If you accomplish neither, the peoples will [at least] praise you for pursuing honourable and great matters.

[17] But maybe you are thinking, “How can I go to the diet, if there is no money?” I do not know, Emperor, how much money there is in your coffers, and I am not the judge of your purse. But this I say openly: if money is not readily available for this great venture, then it must be scraped together from everywhere. I would rather sell some properties than neglect such great affairs. And the sum needed is not enormous since it will not be necessary to bring a large suite of followers. 200 knights will be a decent company. Sigismund, Archbishop of Salzburg,¹ and Ludwig, Duke of Bavaria², will join you on the way.³ 20,000 ducats will be enough for this travel.

[18] If you object that there are armed forces in the vicinity reportedly maintained by the Count of Cilly⁴, and that the Governor of Hungary⁵ has an army ready, and that both are enemies plotting against you, and that it must therefore be feared that while you are occupied with the common good, you will lose your own, then I shall answer that your cities are not such that can be conquered at the first attack. You must appoint proven men to protect your country in your absence, and it may well be said that your territory is safer in your absence than in your presence. For who will dare to invade your country, while you are labouring for the good of commonwealth? How will the Hungarians dare to attack your subjects while you are seeking to free them from the attacks of the Turks? In my opinion, all will love you as you work for the good of the Christian faith, or they will undoubtedly fear you as they see you joined by your princes, who will certainly come to your aid if they see someone daring to attack you. But if you stay at home, alone, I do not see why they should fear you since you are certainly not their equal in weapons and people. When you stayed in Frankfurt, Nürnberg and Rome, your country was much better defended than if you had stayed at home.⁶ And no wonder, since when you stay in Austria or Styria, you are considered as a duke of Austria or Styria. But when you are staying with the prince-electors, all recognize and honour you as the emperor.

¹ Sigismund I von Volkersdorf (1395-1461): Archbishop of Salzburg from 1452 to his death

² Ludwig IX (1417-1479): Duke of Bavaria-Landshut from 1450 to his death

³ I.e., and thus augment the imperial party

⁴ Ulrich II von Cilly (1406-1456): Count of Cilly and Prince of the Holy Roman Empire

⁵ János Hunyadi (1387 or 1407-1456): Fought valiantly and often successfully against the Turks. Governor of Hungary 1446

⁶ In view of the Austrian rebellion against the emperor during his stay in Rome for his imperial coronation in 1452, only two years before, Piccolomini's argument seems farfetched and instead of convincing the emperor, it might have reminded him of the dangers of being absent from Austria in turbulent times

[19] His ex causis, quantum ingenioli mei parvitas capit, consulo, ne tuas nuptias per procuratorem agites, sed omissa legatorum mentione cum omni tua curia ad concilium te conferas. Quod si parum est ex re tua, quod dico, vel tua sapientia, Caesar, vel horum senatorum singularis prudentia de meo consilio iudicabit.

[20] His ab Aenea dictis atque in Theutonicum sermonem expositis, rogati sunt alii ex ordine sententiam promere, sed omnium unus animus, unum consilium fuit, nihil esse de conventu Ratisponensi bene sperandum, nisi Caesar interesset, nec procuratores mittendos quisquam suasit.

[21] Quibus auditis Caesar aliquandiu subtacuit¹, deinde vultu parum sereno in haec verba prorupit²: “Conventum me petere singuli suadetis, in aliena re facile liberales. Quod si vestra haec provincia fuerit, aliter iudicabitis. Gilles³ et Anchenreuter⁴ castra nobis vicina tenent, nec scimus, quo animo erga nos sunt. Raptores autem esse et alieni cupidos non ignoramus. Johannes, Hungariae gubernator, adversus eos⁵ exercitum ducit, nobis infestus qui⁶ est. Quis novit, si minas illis, nobis verbera parat? Ulricus, Ciliae comes, quantum nos amet, nostis. Nihil ei antiquius fuerit quam nos perire. Austriales⁷ in nostrum exitium⁸ dies noctesque nituntur, et vobis⁹ ex usu videtur videtur Ratisponam me proficisci? Pastorem me bonum esse vultis, oves in medio luporum qui relinquens fugiam. At mihi non est leve patrimonium perdere. Novi ego¹⁰ mores hostium atque insidias. Nihil illi aliud modo expectant, nisi me domum exire, {6r} vacuum ut in¹¹ possessionem sese recipiant. Ego certe¹² libens in concilio fuerim, quoniam nihil mihi cordi magis est quam communi utilitati consulere. Durum tamen est cum periculo proprio curare communia. Fateor, quia reipublicae¹³ subvenire singuli debemus, sed nullum ego video, qui alienae magis quam suae commoditati studeat. Quid vos mihi meos electores commemoratis? Non me fugit, quantum iis¹⁴ in commune bonum est studium¹⁵. Ibo ego Ratisponam, illi domi manebunt, aut si¹⁶ venerint ad concilium, privato aliquo emolumento trahentur. Cogitate potius, quo pacto sine nobis conventus agatur, quique nostras vices illic agere possint.”

¹ subtacuit K, O, U, V, W

² praeurupit K; *corr. ex prerupitur* V; prorupit O, W

³ Gilles K

⁴ Anchruter O, W

⁵ nos K

⁶ infestus qui : qui nobis O, W

⁷ Australes O, W, WO

⁸ exitum K, U

⁹ nobis U

¹⁰ ergo U

¹¹ *omit.* U

¹² certo W

¹³ reis MA

¹⁴ his O, U, W

¹⁵ in commune ... studium : studium est in commune bonum O, W

¹⁶ sic K

[19] For these reasons - as far as my puny intellect understands - I advise you not to perform a marriage by procurator,¹ but to drop all talk of ambassadors and go to the diet with all your court. If what I say is not to your advantage, your own wisdom, Emperor, or the eminent good sense of these senators will judge [the merits] of my advice.”

[20] When Aeneas had said this and it had been translated into German, each of the others were asked to give their opinion. They all, unanimously, held and advised that nothing good could be hoped [to come] from the diet unless the emperor participated in person, and nobody argued for sending representatives.

2.6.2. Emperor’s decision not to participate in the diet

[21] When he had heard them, the emperor remained silent for a short while, and then he said, visibly agitated, “Each of you, generous with another man’s possessions, advises me to go to the diet. But if this country was your own, you would judge otherwise. Gilles and Ankenreuter² are camping close to our borders, and we do not know how they are minded towards us. But we do know that they are robbers and greedy for other people’s possessions. János, Governor of Hungary, is leading an army against them, but he is our enemy, and who knows if he is preparing threats against them, but whips against us? As for Ulrich, Count of Cilly, you know how little he loves us. Nothing would please him more than our ruin. The Austrians are plotting night and day to destroy us. And you think that it would be to my advantage to go to Regensburg! You want me to be the good shepherd who flees his sheep surrounded by wolves! But for me it is not a small thing to lose my inherited lands. I know the ways and the schemes of the enemies. They are only waiting for me to leave my home empty to take it in their possession. I should certainly wish to attend the diet since nothing is closer to my heart than the common good.³ But it is hard to care for the common good⁴ at one’s own peril. I acknowledge that we should all assist the commonwealth, but but I see nobody who cares more for others’ benefit than for his own. Why do you mention my prince-electors? I well know how little they care about the common good. If I go to Regensburg, they will stay at home, or if they come to the diet, it will be because they are moved by some private interest. So, think rather on how the diet may be conducted without Us, and who should represent Us there.”

¹ Princely weddings were sometimes conducted with procurators representing one or both of the spouses. Here it means that the emperor should not participate in the diet through representatives, but be personally present

² Leaders of mercenary troops

³ “utilitas”

⁴ “communia”

[22] Ad haec Ungenodius¹, "Si cujuspiam interest," inquit, "te salvum resque tuas florentes esse, Caesar optime, nos ipsi sumus, quibus tua consilia credis. Nam quae tibi noxia, ea nobis mortifera sunt. Sine te neque honorem neque utilitatem consequi possumus. Tecum stamus tecumque perimus. Quod modo suasum est a nobis, in rem tuam esse credimus², veriti ne, qui te oderunt³ aut fortunae tuae invident, nocendi, si concilio desis, occasionem accipiant. Nec propterea tuam hereditatem sine custode⁴ relinquendam censuimus⁵ ⁶. Sunt tibi nobiles et fidelissimi proceres, quibus abfuturus⁷ patriam committas. Nec tu extra orbem iveris, ut auditis, si quae fiant adversum adversum te novitates⁸ ⁹, non queas evestigio reverti, tanto terribilior hosti quanto cum damno Christianitatis majori ad tua defendenda fueris revocatus. At¹⁰ si omnino te timor agitat gubernatorisque horres exercitum, quin das operam, ut ejus animum persentiscas? Prope est, mittito ad eum, dicito te concilium Ratisponae magnum convocasse, ibi ut de republica Christianorum tutanda consilium capias, quae res inter omnes fideles Hungaris potissime conducit, qui sunt Turcorum genti finitimi. Quod nisi tu¹¹ Ratisponam pergas, parum¹² esse, {6v} quod ibi te absente concludi possit. Velle te scire, quo animo in te ipse¹³ sit: iturum¹⁴ te, si pacem Hungari teneant; si minus, domi mansurum expositurumque Romano pontifici et universis regibus Christianis, quia impredientibus Hungaris negotia orthodoxae religionis nequeas, ut menti sedet, prosequi.

[23] Caesari {190v} ac senatui cum haec sententia placuisset, Artongus Cappel, utroque jure consultus, cum hisce mandatis ad gubernatorem mittitur, cum quo sibi vetus notitia fuit. Per idem tempus oraverat gubernator Caesarem, sibi adversus latrones ut auxilio esset, bombardas atque alias belli machinas concederet. Ad ea jussus¹⁵ est Artongus dicere latrones altas radices habere, comitem Ciliae stipendia his praebere. Si juvandus sit contra eos gubernator, necessarium¹⁶ esse¹⁷, si¹⁸ bellum inde majus emergat, foedus Caesari cum gubernatore¹⁹, quo²⁰ se ambo communibus viribus tueantur. Videri ex re utriusque colloquium esse invicem, quando itinere unius diei dumtaxat disjuncti essent.

¹ Eneas O, W

² credidimus O

³ odiunt O, W

⁴ custodia W

⁵ censemus MA

⁶ relinquendam censuimus : censuimus relinquendam W

⁷ affuturus K, U,

⁸ *em.*; novitatibus codd.

⁹ te novitates : novitatibus te K

¹⁰ ac U

¹¹ *omit.* U

¹² paratum U

¹³ in te ipse : ipse in te MA

¹⁴ iterum U

¹⁵ missus W

¹⁶ necessariam O, W

¹⁷ intelligenciam *add.* O, W

¹⁸ ut si O; ut W

¹⁹ sit *add.* O, W

²⁰ quomodo MA

2.6.3. Intervention of Johann Ungnad

[22] To this Ungnad¹ replied, “If any people have your safety and success at heart, it is us, Best Emperor, whom you entrust with advising you. For what is harmful to you is deadly to us. Without you, we can gain neither honour nor profit. We stand with you, and we fall with you. The advice we have given you now we believe to be to your advantage, for we fear that those who hate you or are jealous of your [good] fortune will seize the opportunity to harm you if you stay away from the diet. Moreover, we have not advised you to leave your inherited lands without guardians. You have lords and most loyal nobles to whom you can entrust your country in your absence. Moreover, you are not leaving this world, so that you cannot return quickly if you hear that there is some rebellion against you. Then you would be a much greater terror to your enemy since it would be most detrimental to Christianity if you were called back to defend your own. But if you are moved by fear and dread of the governor’s army, then why not find out what his intentions are? He is not far away. Send someone to him and tell him that you have summoned a great diet in Regensburg to consult on how to protect the Christian commonwealth, a matter more important to the Hungarians than to all other Christians since the Hungarians are neighbours of the Turkish people. If you do not go to Regensburg, very little can be decided in your absence. You wish to know how he is minded towards you. If the Hungarians will keep the peace, you go to Regensburg. If not, you stay at home and inform the Roman Pontiff and all the Christian kings that the Hungarians prevented you from dealing with the affairs of orthodox religion, as you wished to.

2.7. Mission to the Governor of Hungary

[23] The emperor and the senate agreed to this proposal. Hartung Kappel², a specialist in both laws,³ was sent with these instructions to the governor, with whom he had an old acquaintance. About the same time, the governor had asked the emperor to help him against the robbers and send him bombards and other machines of war. Concerning this request, Hartung was ordered to say that the robbers were firmly entrenched and were paid by the Count of Cilly. If the governor should have help against them, it would be necessary – in case of a major war arising – to have a treaty of mutual assistance between the emperor and the governor.⁴ It seemed appropriate for the two to meet since only a day’s travel separated them.

¹ Johann Ungnad (bef. 1429-1461): counsellor and chamberlain of Emperor Friedrich III

² Hartung von Kappel: counsellor of Emperor Friedrich III

³ Civil law and canon law

⁴ Since the emperor feared being attacked by the Hungarian governor it would indeed have been the height of folly to send him canons and other machines of war, at least without some binding treaty

[24] Gubernatoris audito Artongo hoc responsum fuit: “Auxilia contra latrones invasoresque regni nostri, qui nec Caesari parcunt, ab eo petivi. Existimavi, etsi majora peterem, nihil negatum iri, quando et majestati Caesareae multis in rebus usui fui, nec facultas abest, si velim, aut juvandi aut nocendi. Negata sunt, quae postulavi¹. Expugnabo tamen vel sine adiutorio suo latronum nidos. Caesar posthac² videbit, an rei³ suae bene consuluerit. Contra Turcos autem, si Christiani reges exercitum armaverint, non deerunt Hungari. Nec ego vel meae substantiae vel vitae parcam, si modo pugnam Christianiti utilem videro. At si relictui sumus Christiano populo, non est consilium nostrum, ut soli Turcorum feramus⁴ impetum, quibus impares sumus. Turci ex nobis sine detrimento nostro transitum petunt. Dabimus, {7r} si - ut palam⁵ videmus – Christianitas dormit. Maumethus,⁶ qui Turcis imperat, apud Andrinopolim curiam⁷ habet. In Sophia duces belli copias apparant. Tartari cum his foedus iniere⁸. Quies hoc anno erit, exinde totis sese conatibus in Christianos agitabunt. Haec Caesari meo nomine dices, cujus officium est hisce malis obviam ire.”

[25] Ea cum renuntiasset Artongus, nemo ultra fuit, iter qui Caesari ad concilium suaderet, quando et latronum armatae⁹ copiae vicinae essent, et gubernatoris animus irritatus, ejusque responsum minarum videretur plenum.

[26] Libuit igitur deligere viros, qui nomine Caesaris in concilio praesiderent. Ex absentibus nominati sunt Nicolaus sancti Petri ad vincula cardinalis, Jacobus archiepiscopus Treverensis, Gothfridus Herbipolensis, Fredericus Ratisponensis episcopus, Fridericus Saxoniae princeps elector, Albertus Austriae, Ludovicus Baioariae duces, Albertus Brandenburgensis et Carolus Badensis marchiones. Ex curia vero, qui praesentes erant, missi sunt Aeneas Senensis et Ulricus Gurcensis ecclesiarum pontifices, Georgius Folchstorfius et Johannes Ungnodius¹⁰, Austriae ac Styriae barones¹¹, hisque mandatum ab imperatoris culmine hujusmodi datum est:

[cont]

¹ quae postulavi *omit.* O, W

² post hoc W

³ an rei : aurei U

⁴ Turcorum feramus : feramus Turcorum MA

⁵ paulum U

⁶ Maumet... *et passim* U

⁷ curam MA, WO [NB: here Wolkan follows the erroneous reading in Mansi]

⁸ inire K

⁹ impuratae O, W

¹⁰ Ungenodius O, U, W

¹¹ Here begins the text of the imperial mandate, only given in O, W

[24] Having heard Hartung, the governor replied, "I have sought help against the robbers and invaders of our kingdom who do not spare the emperor either. I thought that though I asked for much, it would not be denied since I have been of help to the emperor in many matters and do not lack the means to help or to harm him if I so wish. But my request has been denied. Nonetheless, I shall destroy the robber nests, even without his help. Then the emperor will see how well he has looked after his own affairs. As for the Turks, if the Christian kings mobilize an army against them, the Hungarians will not be missing. And personally, I shall not spare neither my resources nor my life if only I see that the fight benefits Christianity. But if we are deserted by the Christian people, we do not intend to bear the Turkish attacks alone, since we are not equal to them. The Turks are demanding free passage [through our territories] with no harm to us. If Christianity sleeps - as we plainly see it does - then we shall grant it. Mehmed,¹ the Turkish ruler, holds court in Adrianopolis, while his generals gather their troops in Sophia. The Tartars have made an alliance with them. There will be peace this year, but then they will attack the Christians with all their might. Tell this to the emperor whose responsibility it is to counter such evils."

[25] When Hartung had reported this, nobody any longer advised the emperor to go the diet since the armed robber bands were close and the governor was angry and his reply full of threats.

2.8. Appointment and mandate of imperial ambassadors

[26] So now they were now free to select the men to preside over the diet in the name of the emperor. Of those who were absent, the following were chosen: Cardinal Nikolaus of San Pietro in Vincoli,² Jakob, Archbishop of Trier,³ Gottfried of Würzburg,⁴ Friedrich, Bishop of Regensburg,⁵ Friedrich, Prince-Elector of Saxony,⁶ the dukes Albrecht of Austria⁷ and Ludwig of Bavaria,⁸ and the the margraves Albrecht of Brandenburg⁹ and Karl of Baden.¹⁰ From those who were present [at court], the following were sent: the bishops Aeneas of Siena and Ulrich of Gurk,¹¹ Georg Volkersdorf,¹² Baron of Austria, and Johann Ungnad, Baron of Styria. They were given this mandate from the Imperial Highness: *[cont]*

¹ Mehmed II (1432-1481): Sultan of the Turks 1444-1446, 1451-1481

² Nikolaus of Kues (1401-1464): Cardinal 1448. Prince-bishop of Brixen 1450

³ Jakob von Sierck

⁴ Gottfried IV Schenk von Limpurg (1404-1453): Prince Bishop of Würzburg from 1443 to his death

⁵ Friedrich II von Parsberg (d. 1450) Prince Bishop of Regensburg 1437-1450

⁶ Friedrich II (1412-1464): Duke of Saxony from 1428

⁷ Albrecht VI (Habsburg) (1418-1463): Duke (and from 1453 archduke) of Austria. Brother of Emperor Friedrich III

⁸ Ludwig IX

⁹ Albrecht III Achilles von Brandenburg (1414-1486): Margrave, from 1471 Prince elector

¹⁰ Karl I von Baden (1427-1475): Margrave of Baden

¹¹ Ulrich III Sonnenberger (d. 1469): Prince Bishop of Gurk. Imperial counsellor

¹² Georg II von Volkersdorf (1422-1476) Counsellor of Emperor Friedrich III

[26 cont.] “Cum nos pridem pro defensione fidei catholicae quam perfidi Maumethi sectores impugnare et conculcare satagunt necnon pro magnis et arduis negotiis sacrum imperium concernentibus regum, principum ecclesiasticorum et saecularium, ducum, comitum, baronum, civitatum, populorum et universorum nostrorum et imperii sacri fidelium generalem conventionem in civitate nostra Ratisponensi supra Danubium ad festum sancti Georgii proximum indixerimus sperantes ibidem personaliter comparere rebusque communibus pro virili nostra consulere, quia tamen impraesentiarum difficultates aliquot emersae sunt, quae nos domi vel invitos remorantur, nolentes rempublicam propter absentiam nostram negligi, cogitantesque de personis idoneis, prudentia et auctoritate praeditis, quibus tanta negotia confidenter committere valeamus, ad vos¹ nostrae mentis convertimus aciem, quorum provida circumspectio, solida et inconcussa fides mensque in omne bonum prona retroactis temporibus serenitati nostrae multis in rebus cognita et probata est. Eapropter harum serie vobis committimus, quatenus conventum Ratisponensem accedentes tam cum legato sanctae sedis apostolicae quam cum praelatis et principibus, qui affuerint, ac legatis absentium ad ea diligenter intendatis, propter quae concilium est a nobis indictum, maxime autem id curetis, ut ea deliberatio conclusioque recipiatur, per quam Christiana religio ab impetu Turcorum et aliorum infidelium nostro tempore salva et tuta perseveret inimicorumque crucis Christi superbia atque insolentia retundatur. Ad ea quoque pro vestra solertia navetis operas, per quae Romanum imperium splendorem suum² valeat vindicare. Nos enim vobis legatis et oratoribus nostris vestrumve parti majori, qui Ratisponae praesentes eritis, ut haec tanto facilius curare possitis, quanto majori per nos auctoritate et potestate fueritis communiti omnia et singula tractandi, practicandi, concludendi, gerendi et faciendi, quae necessaria et³ opportuna fuerint, quemadmodum nos ipsi in talibus, si praesentes essemus, tractare, praticare, concludere, gerere et facere possemus, quamlibet⁴ plenam et liberam tenorem praesentium concedimus potestatem, ratum et gratum habituri, quidquid per vos aut majorem partem vestrum, qui Ratisponae fuerint, circa praemissa tractatum, practicum, conclusum, gestum factumve quovismodo fuit, idque faciemus auctore domino inviolabiliter observari. Datum in Novacivitate Austriae undecima die mensis Aprilis anno domini⁵ nativitatibus 1454, regni nostri 14. Imperii vero 3.⁶

¹ *em.*; nos W

² splendorem suum : splendorem suum O

³ aut O

⁴ quomodolibet O

⁵ dominice O

⁶ *Here ends the text of the imperial mandate, only given in O, W*

[26 cont.] “We have previously indicted a general assembly of kings, ecclesiastical and secular princes, dukes, counts, barons, cities, peoples and all the loyal subjects of Us and the Holy Empire. The assembly will be held in Our city of Regensburg on the Donau on the next Feast of Saint George. It will deal with the defence of the Catholic Faith, which the infidel followers of Muhammad are striving to attack and destroy, as well as with urgent affairs concerning the Holy Empire. We had hoped to come there in person and to deal vigorously with the common affairs. But now certain difficulties have arisen, that keep Us at home, though unwilling. Since We do not wish the realm to be neglected because of our absence, we have been considering to what qualified persons, gifted with wisdom and authority, We may confidently entrust these great matters, and Our mind has turned to you, whose foresighted circumspection, solid and unshaken loyalty, and minds are inclined to all that is good as known and proven to Our Serenity since past times. Therefore, We require you to go to the meeting in Regensburg and to apply yourselves diligently – together with the legate of the Apostolic See and the prelates and princes present and the legates of the absent – to those matters concerning which We have indicted the meeting. Above all, you should take care that the discussions lead to a decision by which the Christian religion may continue in our time, secure and safe from the attacks of the Turks and other infidels, and by which the arrogance and insolence of the enemies of the Cross of Christ may be tamed. You should also diligently endeavour to make the Roman Empire able to reclaim its glory. And so that you may the more easily be able to effect this the more you are strengthened by us with power and authority to perform, execute, decide, manage and do all that is necessary and expedient, just as We Ourselves in such matters, if We were present, would perform, execute, decide, manage and do, We by virtue of the present letter grant to you, our legates and ambassadors, and to the majority of you who will be present in Regensburg full and free powers, and We shall ratify and accept all, whatever it is, that will be performed, executed, decided, managed and done by you or by the majority of you, who will be in Regensburg, and with the Lord’s help we shall ensure that it is observed inviolably. Given in Neustadt on 11 April in the year of Our Lord 1454, the 14th year of Our reign, and the third year of Our imperial reign.”¹

¹ Also printed in RTA 19, 1, p. 133

[27] Legati ex curia Caesaris ad XVI. Kalendas Majas exeuntes¹ tres per Alpes ad Sigismundum, Juvaviensem² archiepiscopum, qui modo Saltzburgensis³ appellatur, recta via se contulerunt⁴. Ratisponam Georgius per Austriam petiit. Aeneae hoc iter incommodissimum fuit, qui cum laborare inter eundum podagra coepisset neque curru vehi posset in Alpibus neque legationem vellet negligere, inter ceteras molestias pede, qui patiebatur, ad sellam suspenso unius diei viam fecit. Ulricus et Johannes ubi⁵ Juvaviae sunt, magnum praesulem adeunt, utque conventum adeat reipublicae consulturus⁶, pluribus verbis orant. Is ait accinctum se fuisse, ut Caesarem sequeretur, si ejus majestatem ituram accepisset. Nunc se {7v} minime hoc itineris subiturum, quando Caesarem abfuturum intelligit. Missurum tamen legatos viros egregios, qui suas vices impleant, complexurumque pro communi utilitate Christianorum quaecumque concludi Ratisponae contingeret⁷. Multa insuper de Caesare quaestus est, qui neque regalia sibi concederet, neque se principem scriberet. Contra legati pleraque domus Austriae castella⁸ jure pignoris possidere eum⁹ dicebant, quae si restituerentur, controversiam omnem adimerent, neque id injuria peti, cum oppidorum¹⁰ annui redditus principalem jam summam dissolvissent¹¹.

¹ *omit.* MA, WO

² Innanie... *et passim* U

³ Salsburgensis K, O, U, V, W; Salisburgensis WO

⁴ contulit W

⁵ ut U

⁶ consulturi K

⁷ contigerit O

⁸ cum *add. interlin.* O

⁹ *omit.* O, W

¹⁰ castrorum O, W

¹¹ dissolvisset MA, WO [*NB: WO follows MA's erroneous reading*]

2.9. Archbishop of Salzburg

[27] The ambassadors from the emperor's court left on 15 April. Three of them¹ passed through the Alps and went directly to Sigismund,² Archbishop of Juvavia, now called Salzburg. Georg³ went through Austria to Regensburg. For Aeneas, this voyage was most uncomfortable since on the road he suffered an attack of gout and could neither travel by wagon in the Alps nor wished to neglect the embassy. Among other troubles, he had to travel a whole day with the suffering foot bound to the saddle with a sling. When Ulrich and Johann arrived in Salzburg, they went to the great bishop and asked him with many words to go to the diet and participate in the consultations concerning the commonwealth. He replied that he had already made preparations for following the emperor if His Majesty went, but now he had heard that the emperor would be absent, and therefore he would not go himself. He would, however, send legates, excellent men, to represent him, and he would accept everything that might be decided in Regensburg concerning the common good of the Christians. He also made vehement complaints against the emperor who had not granted him the regalia⁴ nor addressed him in his letters as a prince. The legates⁵ countered that the archbishop had several castles belonging to the House of Austria in his possession as a pledge. If they were returned, the whole conflict would end, and this would be entirely fair since the villages had already paid their yearly contribution.

¹ Piccolomini, Ulrich Sonnenberger and Johann Ungnad

² Sigismund von Volkersdorf

³ Georg von Volkersdorf

⁴ The secular rights and possessions of the archbishop, granted by the emperor

⁵ Ungnad and Sonnenberger

[28] Missa Juvavia, legati Purchausam¹ se contulerunt. Aeneas aqua vectus est per fluvium, quem Salzam accolae vocant, alii terra iter habuere. Hic Ludovicum, Bavariae magnum ducem, conveniunt ac redditis Caesaris litteris² dicunt, quibus de causis concilium Ratisponae sit vocatum³. Unum ipsum inter praesidentes dictum, de quo tamquam consanguineo et imperii principe summam fidem Caesar gerat, orat, ne gravetur in tanta populi Christiani necessitate Ratisponam, que prope est vicinaque suis agris, petere⁴ atque consulere reipublicae. Id si faciat, non daturum oblivioni haec Caesarem asserunt. Ad haec Ludovicus accepisse se paucis ante diebus litteras imperatoris ait, quibus tamquam princeps imperii Ratisponam in communi causa Christianitatis vocatus esset. Dignum videri sibi tam se quam ceteros⁵ principes imperatori tanto et et tam necessario in negotio morem gerere nec defuturum se Christianae religioni, quam sui progenitores summo conatu defendere ac propagare⁶ studuissent. Illud autem grave esse, quod sibi, juveni inexperto et ad magnas res nequaquam idoneo, legationis onus Caesar imponeret. {8r} Agere tamen se gratias imperatori, qui⁷ tantam de sua aetate vel fiduciam vel aestimationem habuisset. Meditaturum se paulo, an⁸ sibi haec legatio suscipienda sit, missurumque propediem suos consiliarios Ratisponam, qui mentem suam referant. Inter haec latrare innumeri⁹ canes¹⁰ ante ante regiam, voces extollere pedites equitesque indigne moram ferre, accusare principem, qui tempus idoneum amitteret, maledicere legatis, qui venationem optimam deturbarent. Tum¹¹ Ludovicus invitatis legatis, ut secum irent, cum illi recusassent, quas in hospitibus pecunias consumpsissent, his¹² reddi jussit laetusque magna juvenum comitante caterva venatum exiit.

¹ Purchansam U; Purchausen W; Burckhausam MA

² apicibus O, W

³ sit vocatum : vocatum sit O, W

⁴ omit. W

⁵ veteres MA

⁶ propugnare W

⁷ quod MA

⁸ ante U

⁹ innumeres U

¹⁰ cani U

¹¹ cum MA

¹² illis MA, WO

2.10. Duke Ludwig IX of Bavaria-Landshut

[28] The legates left Salzburg and went to Burghausen.¹ Aeneas was transported by water, on the river called Salz by the inhabitants, while the other [two] went overland. Here they met with Ludwig, great Duke of Bavaria, presented him with a letter from the emperor and explained why the Diet of Regensburg had been summoned. The duke himself had been named one of the presidents as a person whom the emperor trusted greatly both as a relative and as a prince of the empire. The emperor, therefore, asked him not to consider it a burden to go, for the good of the realm, to Regensburg which was close - indeed a neighbour - to the duke's lands in so great a crisis for the Christian people. If he went, they said, the emperor would not forget it. Ludwig replied that he had received a letter from the emperor a few days before inviting him, as a prince of the empire, to Regensburg in the matter common to all Christianity. He thought it would be proper for him and the other princes to obey the emperor in this great and urgent matter and to not fail the Christian religion which his forefathers had striven with all their might to defend and propagate. However, he was concerned that the emperor would put the burden of a legation on him, an inexperienced youth, unqualified for such important matters. But he did thank the emperor for thinking so confidently and well of his [young] age. He would soon consider whether to accept this mission, and in a few days he would send his counsellors to Regensburg to inform [them] of his intentions. While they were speaking thus, a great many dogs were barking in front of the palace, and footmen and riders were shouting their dissatisfaction with having to wait and berating the prince for wasting precious time, and they cursed the legates for disrupting a great hunt. In the end, Ludwig invited the legates to join him [on the hunt], but when they declined, he ordered that they be given money to cover their expenses on lodgings, and then he went hunting, gladly and accompanied by a throng of young people.

¹ The residence of Duke Ludwig

[29] Admonet¹ hic me² locus pauca de tanto duce scribere, quando is³ unus est ex tribus, qui Ratisponae visi sunt, principibus saecularibus ad fidem protegendam et animati et ferventes. Ludovicus, Bavariae dux, Henrici filius, matrem habuit ex⁴ domo Austriae, Alberti Caesaris sororem, Ladislai, Hungariae ac Bohemiae regis⁵ amitam⁶. Vivo patre sub custodia educatus⁷ est dura⁸, neque scortari⁹ neque convivari potuit, exigue sumptum habuit, ad virtutem assiduis commonitionibus¹⁰ excitatus. Haud vanum patris laborem reddidit¹¹, nam regni gubernaculis postquam potitus est, quamvis paternam illam frugalitatem, quam vulgo tenacitatem dixere, non est imitatus, principem tamen egregium egit, et – quae sunt regiae laudes – fortem, justum, severum, gravem, magnanimum beneficumque¹² se praebeuit. Provinciam expurgavit¹³ facinorosis hominibus¹⁴, Judaeos exire fines¹⁵ iussit, vicinis pacem dedit, subditis jus dixit. Uxorem de {8v} Saxonia, Friderici Caesaris neptem¹⁶, duxit. Cum lites in Caesarem Austriales¹⁷ non aequas movissent, arbitrum se concordiae dedit. Regi Ladislao, quantum potuit, opitulatus est. Franconica et Suevica bella pro virili sua sedavit. Albertum patruum, cum quo pater¹⁸ saepe contendit, inter primos sibi conciliavit. Annos jam - ut ajunt – natus est duo de triginta. Statura ei procera est, robustum corpus, laeta facies, sermo jucundus, gestus principe dignus. Si litteras norit Latinas, nihil est amplius, quod in maximo principe desideres¹⁹. Ejus mansio plerumque in Purchausia²⁰ est. Id oppidum supra Salzam jacet. Novum est²¹ et munitissimum, arcemque²² habet amplissimam totaque Theutonia memorabilem, natura loci et murorum structura paene inexpugnabilem, cujus majorem turrim auri et argenti magno thesauro plenam²³ praedicant.

[30] Hoc loco²⁴ dimisso duce legati Ratisponam veniunt, ubi et urbis episcopum et Georgium, alteros collegas, offendunt. Johannes quoque, Papiensis episcopus - cujus supra meminimus - apostolicae sedis orator, nonnullos ante dies eo pervenerat. Ex aliis, quorum tanta res

¹ admovet W

² hic me : me hic U

³ his U

⁴ e MA, WO

⁵ Hungariae ac ... regis : regis Hungariae ac Bohemiae MA

⁶ omit. [blank space] U

⁷ eductus O, W

⁸ diu W

⁹ crebro add. W

¹⁰ commotionibus MA

¹¹ frugalitatis contemptorem sese praebeuit principem add. O

¹² beneficum W

¹³ expugnavit U, W

¹⁴ omit. U

¹⁵ fines corr. ex territorium K, V; territorium O, W

¹⁶ nepotem U

¹⁷ Australes MA, WO

¹⁸ omit. U

¹⁹ desideras W

²⁰ Purchansia U; Purchausen W; Burchausia MA

²¹ omit. W

²² arcem K, U, O, V *, W

²³ magno thesauro plenam : plenam magno thesauro plenam MA, WO

²⁴ loci K, O, V *, W

praesentiam exposcebat, nemo adhuc comparuerat. Causa tarditatis credita est, quia per sacros majoris hebdomadae paschalesque dies, qui tum¹ currebant, haud volentes² magni viri domum³ exire⁴, tamquam majus sit opus et acceptius Deo intra cubiculi parietes orare quam pro salute Christiani populi⁵ conventus adire et consulere reipublicae.

¹ cum U, W

² nolentes W

³ demum U

⁴ *em.*; exeunt codd.

⁵ Christiani populi : populi Christiani MA, WO

[29] Here, it is appropriate to write a little about this great duke since he is one of the three secular princes who came to Regensburg as enthusiastic and fervent defenders of Faith. Ludwig, Duke of Bavaria, is the son of Heinrich,¹ and his mother² was from the House of Austria, a sister of Emperor Albrecht,³ and an aunt of King Ladislaus of Hungary and Bohemia. While his father lived, he was given a strict upbringing, and he was allowed neither to consort with harlots and prostitutes nor to have feasts. He had little money to spend and was continuously urged to be virtuous. He did not render his father's labour vain, for when he took up the reins of government, he became an excellent prince, even though he did not imitate his father's frugality (some say his avarice⁴). He had all the laudable qualities in a prince, being strong, just, strict, grave, magnanimous and well-disposed. He cleansed his province of criminals, expelled the Jews,⁵ made peace with his neighbours, administered justice to his subjects. He married a [princess] from Saxony,⁶ the emperor's niece. When the Austrians unjustly rebelled against the emperor,⁷ he offered himself as a mediator. He helped King Ladislaus as much as possible. He did what he could to end the wars in Franconia and Swabia. One of the first he got reconciled with was his uncle Albrecht,⁸ with whom his father had often been at war. He is said to be 28 years old. His stature is noble, his body strong, his mien joyful, his speech pleasant, his bearing princely. If only he knew Latin,⁹ there is nothing more you could wish for in so great a prince. He mostly resides in Burghausen, a city situated above the Salz. It is a new and very well-protected city, with a large fortress, renowned in all of Germany and made invincible by the natural conditions and its walls. It has a big tower, richly decorated with gold and silver, announcing to all the great wealth [of the duke].

2.11. Arrival of delegates in Regensburg¹⁰

[30] The legates left the duke there and proceeded to Regensburg, where they were met by their two colleagues, the bishop of the city and Georg. The envoy of the Holy See, Bishop Giovanni of Pavia - whom we have mentioned before - had arrived some days before. None of the others whose presence the important matter demanded had yet appeared. The reason for their tardiness was thought to be that it was the Great Week and Easter, and therefore the great men did not want to leave their homes, as if it was more important and pleasing to God to pray behind the

¹ Heinrich XVI (Wittelsbach) (1386-1450): Duke of Bavaria-Landshut from 1393 to his death

² Margarete von Österreich (Habsburg) (1395-1447)

³ Emperor Albrecht II

⁴ "tenacitas"

⁵ Note that expulsion of Jews was considered as a laudable princely virtue

⁶ Amalia von Sachsen (1436-1501)

⁷ The Austrian rebellion against the emperor in 1452, with the purpose of freeing Ladislaus the Posthumous, Duke of Austria, from the emperor's wardship

⁸ Albrecht II

⁹ Already in his *Pentalogus* from 1443, Piccolomini had insisted on the ability of princes to know and speak Latin (Piccolomini: *Pentalogus* (Schingnitz), pp. 66-68, 92

¹⁰ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 223-229

walls of one's own chamber than to attend a meeting about the safety of the Christian people and the benefit of the Commonwealth.

[31] Nicolaus interea Cusanus, cardinalis sancti Petri, Brixinensis¹ ecclesiae pontifex, praestabilis homo {9r} sapientiae doctrinaque ista utiliore, quam theologiam vocant, elegantiarum quoque veterum cura et memoria multum² praeditus, accepta sacra imperiali, quae se concilii praesidentem dicit, commendatis ovibus³, ut potest⁴, suis, Sigismundum Austriae ducem adit, Ratisponam iturum se⁵ aperit. Si quid committere velit in concilio gerendum, rogat litterasque cum cum Caesaris tum summi pontificis, quae sibi mandant hoc iter, ostendit. Is⁶ se quoque vocatum a Caesare perhibet, sibi tamen ex usu non esse patriam relinquere. Cardinalis uti suum in concilio locum teneat hortatur, amplexurum se omnia libenti animo asserit⁷, quae pro communi Christianorum profectu conventus in concordia decreverit. Suscipit onus cardinalis atque itinere continuato cum Ratisponae proximus esset, litteras, quasi adhuc domi sedeat, ad collegas mittit atque an ei veniendum sit et quis modus praebeatur⁸ faciendi sumptus exquirat.

[32] Dum haec geruntur, incertus rumor exoritur Philippum, Burgundiae potentissimum ducem et magnis aequandum⁹ regibus, Constantiae visum esse. Res vana¹⁰ ac somno similis ducitur tantum principem, tam divitem, tam potentem, qui tot tantisque provinciis praesidet, cui suppetunt, quae cupit, omnia, ad quem nihil attinet vereri Turcos, jam plena aetate ex terra loginqua Ratisponam quaerere. Nugaces omnes creduntur, qui se ducem hunc in Alemania vidisse profitentur. Sed ecce inter murmurandum vir domi nobilis et ipsa facie fidem exigens navigio applicat, qui se ducis nuntium asserit, missum ad Caesarem sciscitatum, an locus concilio sit futurus, litterasque legatorum petit, quibus Caesari commendetur. {9v} Ducem vero a se Ulmae relictum dicit. Simulque multi in horas veniunt, qui ducem Ulmae receptum astruunt¹¹. Quibus cognitis legati, quanta audiverint¹², mox Caesari scribunt, utque veniente duce, et ipse ascendere velit, magnopere suadent, quod et¹³ res fidei Christianae feliciter conduci posse et honorem suae serenitati pulcherrimum redundare confidant.

¹ Brixinensis U

² multa O, W

³ omnibus O, U

⁴ post U

⁵ iturum se : se iturum W, MA

⁶ his U

⁷ asseret W

⁸ modus praebeatur : modum praebeat MA

⁹ equitantum U

¹⁰ nova W

¹¹ asseruerunt W

¹² audierint K, MA

¹³ quod et : quae U

2.12. Cardinal Nikolaus of Kues

[31] In the meantime Nikolaus of Kues, Cardinal of San Pietro and Bishop of Brixen, a man of superior wisdom, gifted with knowledge of that most valuable discipline called theology, with care for the elegant language of Antiquity and with an excellent memory, had received the emperor's letter¹ appointing him one of the presidents of the diet. Having provided for his flock as best he could, he went to Siegmund, Duke of Austria,² and told him that he would be going to Regensburg.³ He asked if the duke wanted to entrust him with any tasks at the diet and showed him the letters from the emperor and the Supreme Pontiff requiring him to undertake this travel. The duke then told him that he, too, had been summoned by the emperor but that he found it inexpedient to leave his country. The duke, therefore, asked the cardinal to represent him at the diet and assured him that he would gladly accept everything which would be unanimously decided at the diet concerning a common Christian expedition [against the Turks]. The cardinal accepted the task and continued his travel. When he approached Regensburg, he sent a letter as if he was still at home to his colleagues,⁴ asking them if he should come and how his expenses would be covered.

2.13. Duke Philippe III of Burgundy⁵

2.13.1. Arrival in Germany

[32] In the meantime, an uncertain rumour had arisen that Philippe,⁶ mighty Duke of Burgundy and equal to great kings, had been seen in Konstanz. However, it was considered to be a false and dreamlike thing that so great, so rich and so powerful a prince should travel from faraway to Regensburg, a prince who rules many and great provinces that provide all he may wish for, who does not need to fear the Turks, and who is of advanced age. All those who claimed to have seen this duke in Germany were thought to be blathering fools. But, lo!, while they were gossiping, a man of a noble house and trustworthy appearance⁷ came sailing. He claimed that he was the duke's envoy, sent to the emperor to inquire whether this was the location of the diet. He also asked for a letter of recommendation to the emperor from the legates. He said that he had left the duke in Ulm. Many people now arrived confirming that the duke had been received in Ulm. When they learnt about this, the legates immediately wrote what they had heard to the emperor and

¹ "sacra"

² Siegmund (Habsburg) (1427-1496): Duke of Austria. Ruler of Tyrol from 1446 to 1490

³ As a cardinal, Nikolaus referred to the pope alone, but as the Bishop of Brixen, he had *regalia*, i.e. secular rights and possessions, from the Duke of Tyrol. It was therefore quite proper for him, as Bishop of Brixen, to inform the duke of his summons to the diet

⁴ The other imperial legates

⁵ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 141-193, 339 ff.

⁶ Philippe III le Bon (1396-1467): Duke of Burgundy from 1419 to his death

⁷ Probably Friedrich von Mengersreut (RTA, p. 222)

urged him to come himself now that the duke was arriving, confident that the matter of the Christian Faith could be conducted successfully and with great honour to His Serene Majesty.

[33] Nunc de duce Burgundiae quoniam sermo incidit, repetenda sunt paulo altius aliqua, ex quibus hic suus adventus originem ducit. Quae sit nobilitas hujus principis, quae altitudo animi non est, cur me scribere oporteat, quando nulla est *toto orbe*¹ *tam barbara tamque* inaccessa natio - Christiana inquam - quae suum nomen cum singulari laude non decantet.

[34] Illud tamen non me dixisse paenitebit, quamvis² maximi et opulentissimi et nobilissimi principatus huic homini parent, non tamen eum tanti imperii³ tam superba facies adeo clarum, gloriosum atque admirabilem facit⁴, quam mentis sinceræ probitas et animus ad virtutis egregia facinora promptus. Is aliquot ante annos, cum Christianos in oriente commorantes a Turcis modo, modo a Saracenis infinitas ferre⁵ contumelias didicisset gentemque illam Maumetho⁶ credentem inimicissimam esse nomini Christiano atque in dies tendere insidias nitique modis omnibus, ut orthodoxam fidem perdant. Irritatus animo accensusque zelo domus Dei statuit excitare atque adhortari rectores nostri orbis, ut arma contra impuratam Maumethi plebem sumerent Christianumque sanguinem vindicarent, quem pessima barbaries impune in dies⁷ fundit. Legatos ergo ad summum pontificem misit, ad imperatorem, {10r} ad plerosque reges, ad Hungaros, ad Bohemos seque in eam militiam iturum⁸ promisit, adjuutores ejus propositi si Christianos reliquos inveniret.

¹ *toto orbe* : orbe toto K, O, U, V *, W

² *quavis* MA

³ *corr. ex dominii* K, V; *dominii* O; *domini* W

⁴ *omit.* U

⁵ *fere* U

⁶ *Maumeto* U

⁷ *in dies* : *dietim* O, W

⁸ *seque in ... iturum* : *militaturumque propria in persona sese* O, W

[33] Since we are speaking about the Duke of Burgundy, let us now say a little about the background of his coming. I do not need to write about the nobility of this prince nor of his noble soul, since *no nation in the whole - Christian, I mean - world is so barbarous and isolated* that they do not praise his name to the skies.

2.14.1. Diplomatic initiatives 1450-1451

[34] But this I shall not regret having said: Though great and rich and noble principedoms obey this man, he is not made so famous, glorious and admirable by the proud appearance of so great a power but by the integrity of his sincere mind and the eagerness of his soul to perform the great deeds of virtue. Some years ago, he learnt that the Christians living in the East were being fiercely persecuted now by the Turks, now by the Saracens, and that the people believing Muhammad was extremely hostile towards the Christian name. Always, they were plotting and endeavouring in every way to destroy the orthodox Faith. Upset and filled with zeal for the house of God, the duke decided to arouse and admonish the rulers of our world to take up arms against Muhammad's filthy people and to avenge the Christian blood, shed every day with impunity by brutal barbarians. He, therefore, sent legates to the Supreme Pontiff, to the emperor¹ and to many kings, to the Hungarians, and to the Bohemians, promising that he would personally join a military expedition if he found other Christians willing to back his plan.

¹ See Piccolomini's oration "*Quamvis in hoc senatu*" (1451), held at the reception of the duke's ambassadors in the imperial court

[35] Quod si monitis ejus auscultatum fuisset, haud modo Constantinopolitana jactura nos angeret, et fortasse jam Turcorum truculentum genus trans Hellespontum fugavissemus. Sed laudarunt omnes ducis animum, nemo manus apposuit. Verum est quod ille ait: *omnes ignoscunt, nemo succurrit*. Calent magna verba, tenuia¹ frigent opera, cuique pacis consilia² magis placent. Remotus adhuc hostis esse videtur. Cum audiret quispiam lectulo resupinatus vociferantem populum, quia flagraret incendio civitas, “Non assurgam,” inquit, “nisi spondam calentem sensero. Quid mihi, si *proximus ardet paries*, dum mea domus integra friget.” At illum, dum vicinis opem ferre recusat, inopinantem subitus ignis exussit³. Idem vereor, ne Latinis accidat, quibus de salute Graecorum nulla sollicitudo fuit. Quippe Philippus, ubi torpere⁴ Christianorum animos seque frustra niti animadvertit, cum soli sibi⁵ tanti belli molem minime subeundam intelligeret, decrevit et ipse quiescere ac sibi et subditis suis⁶, dum superi permittant, vivere. Et fortasse in rem suam fuit non inventos esse, qui contra Turcos cum eo pergerent. Namque si rebellassent Gandavenses, Luziburgensesque novas res moliti essent, Philippo in Graecia aut⁷ in⁸ Asia militante, quemadmodum postea⁹ secutum est, motus profecto formidabiles excitassent turbasque¹⁰ Burgondo^{11 12} paene intolerandas dedissent, quos¹³ ille domi manens partim bello domuit, partim sapientia et lenitate¹⁴ ad oboedientiam reduxit.

[36] Ceterum postea ruinam Graecorum cum audisset {10v} ac Romani pontificis litteras accepisset¹⁵, quibus expeditio¹⁶ contra Turcos indicebatur, jam tempus advenisse ratus, quo suo posset desiderio¹⁷ satisfacere, grande convivium apud Insulas in Flandria facit ostentansque regni sui magnificentiam nobilitatem utriusque sexus ad mensam vocat. *Apponitur cena dubia*, id est¹⁸, *ubi tu dubites, quid sumas potissimum*: longe quasitae dapes vinaque, quibus regibus uti mos est: nemo non auro bibit. Ultime, ubi jam¹⁹ mensae locus adest, duae virgines *forma egregia, aetate integra*, venustis moribus, alta nobilitate ex interiori cubiculo in cenaculum prodeunt, vivum²⁰ fasianum afferunt ducique dono dant. Tum Philippus in hunc modum fertur locutus:

¹ *omit. [blank space]* U; tenua WO

² pacis consilia : consilia pacis O, W

³ excussit K, U, W; *corr. ex excussit* V

⁴ corpore K

⁵ tibi U

⁶ eius U

⁷ vel U

⁸ *omit.* MA, WO

⁹ *omit.* W

¹⁰ regimini *add.* O, W

¹¹ Borgundorum O, W

¹² Borgon... *et passim* K, O, U, W, WO; Burgund... *et passim* MA

¹³ quas W

¹⁴ admirabile tractatu O, W

¹⁵ recepisset O, W

¹⁶ passagium O, W

¹⁷ posset desiderio : desiderio posset W

¹⁸ id est : *corr. ex.* et O; et W; *omit.* MA

¹⁹ non W

²⁰ vnum O, W

[35] If his warnings had been heeded, we would hardly now be lamenting the Fall of Constantinople, and maybe we might even have forced the ferocious Turkish people to flee back across the Hellespont. But though all praised the duke's intentions, nobody did anything. It is true what they say: *every one acknowledges it,¹ but no one comes to their rescue.²* While the magnificent words were warm, the paltry actions were cold. Everybody preferred the counsels of peace. The enemy seemed still to be far away. When somebody lying on his bed heard the people crying that the city was in flames, he said. "I won't get up before I feel the bed burning. Why should I care *when the neighbour's wall is in flames³*, as long as my own whole house is cool." But while he refused to aid his neighbours, he was suddenly consumed by an unexpected fire. The same, I fear, will happen to the Latins since they have no care for the deliverance of the Greeks. Philippe saw the apathy of the Christians and noted that his own endeavours were in vain. Realizing that he was not able to sustain the burden of so great a war on his own, he decided to relax too and to live for himself and his subjects as long as the higher beings permitted. And maybe it was to his own advantage that he found nobody to accompany him against the Turks, for if the people of Ghent had risen up or the people of Luxembourg had rebelled (as they actually did later), while Philippe was in Greece or in Asia,⁴ they might indeed have caused fearful troubles and almost overwhelming turmoils for the Burgundian. However, staying at home, he was able to reduce them to obedience partly through war, partly through wisdom and leniency.

2.13.3. Feast of the Pheasant

[36] Anyway, when he had heard about the ruin of the Greeks⁵ and received the letter of the Roman Pontiff declaring a crusade⁶ against the Turks, he thought that the time had now come to fulfil his desire. He, therefore, invited noble men and women to a great feast⁷ in Lille in Flanders,⁸ Flanders,⁸ where he showed off the splendour of his rule. *A problematical meal⁹ is laid before them: the problem is what to eat first.¹⁰* Culinary specialities and wines were brought from far away, as is the custom of kings. Everybody drank from golden cups. At the end of the meal, two virgins of *exquisite beauty, of flowering age,¹¹* charming manners, and high nobility came into the

¹ *Ignoscere* rather means to forgive, pardon. Piccolomini is probably thinking of the word *agnosco*, which means to recognize, realize, acknowledge

² Seneca: *Epistolae ad Lucilium*, 1.1.4

³ Horatius: *Epistolae*, 1.18.84.: *tua res agitur, paries cum proximus ardet*

⁴ Asia Minor

⁵ The Fall of Constantinople on 29 May 1453

⁶ "expeditio"

⁷ The famous *Banquet du voeu du Faisan*, held on 17 February 1454

⁸ Lille: Now part of France

⁹ "cena dubia"

¹⁰ Terentius: *Phormio*, 342-343: *cena dubia apponitur ... ubi tu dubites quid sumas potissimum*

¹¹ Terentius: *Andria*, 73: *egregia forma atque aetate integra*

dining room from an interior chamber, bringing with them a live pheasant which they gave to the duke. Then the duke reportedly spoke as follows¹:

[37] “Vos mihi, proceres, testes estis decrevisse me tris ante annos adversus impiam Maumethi sectam bellum gerere², si Christiani me reges³ adjutassent⁴, rogasse complurimos una vellent arma arma induere, ut quibus esset una fides, unus esset ad eam tutandam animus. Cum nemo mihi aures adhiberet, coactus sum domi manere, nam soli mihi grandius coeptum⁵ fuit. Post haec secuta est Constantinopolis expugnatio, nobilitas ibi cum principe suo caesa⁶, plebs in captivitatem captivitatem ducta, altaria Christi subversa, imagines ac⁷ reliquiae sanctorum⁸ luto provolutae. Sic Sic dum nos silemus, Christiano nomini insultant Turci, qui si essemus viri^{9 10}, non auderent terga nostra, ne dicam vultus¹¹ intueri! At ecce modo, quamvis sero invitat nos Romanus praesul, hanc uti contumelian vindicemus¹² neque ulterius tantam ignominiam religioni nostrae patiamur inferri¹³. Utinam ante vulneratam causam hoc egisset¹⁴: inferre ultro vulnus, quam illatum praestabat ulcisci! Sed non est cur praeterita corrigamus. Nunc tempus nostrum est: neque imperator – ut arbitror – {11r} neque reges ceteri tacebunt. Omnes haec injuria tangit. Quis erit jam Christianus, qui non ardenti animo bello sese accingat, quando¹⁵ tanta est in salvatorem nostrum irrogata hoc tempore¹⁶ contumelia? Nunc qui viri simus, licebit ostendere! Nunc, si juvatis, proceres, patrem ulciscar meum, quem Turci captum duris¹⁷ diu¹⁸ vinculis constrinxere! Vos igitur, quibus cor nobile est et¹⁹ animus generosus, qui religionem colitis nostramque fidem cupitis esse sublimem, dicite jam nobis palam, an²⁰ coepta nostra sequi velitis. Mihi, quae sit mens²¹ quodve²² propositum hinc audietis.”

¹ In the manner of classical historians, Piccolomini wrote his own versions of speeches given by great men. He also wrote, in the *Commentarii*, the speech given by King Henry to his men at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415 (CO, VI, 7). He indicates, however, that he is not giving the exact wording of the oration, which was anyway in French: *Tum Philippus in hunc modum fertur locutus* (Then the duke reportedly spoke as follows)

² bellum gerere : belligerare O, W

³ regem U

⁴ adjuvassent MA, WO

⁵ ceptus U

⁶ est *add.* O, W

⁷ atque MA, WO

⁸ in *add.* O, W

⁹ homines O; *corr. ex* homines V

¹⁰ essemus viri : viri essemus MA

¹¹ *corr. ex* facies V; facies O, W

¹² vendicemus V

¹³ infecti W

¹⁴ quod nunc agitat *add.* O, W

¹⁵ quoniam MA

¹⁶ irrogata hoc tempore : hoc tempore irrogata MA

¹⁷ *omit.* MA, WO

¹⁸ duris diu : diu duris W

¹⁹ est WO

²⁰ ante U

²¹ meus U

²² quidve MA

[37] “You are my witnesses, nobles, that three years ago I decided to go to war against the impious sect of Muhammad,¹ if only the Christian kings would support me. I asked several to join me in arms so that just like we have one Faith, we would also be of one mind to protect it. But since nobody heeded me, I was forced to stay at home, for the venture was too great for me alone. Then followed the Fall of Constantinople, where the nobility was killed together with their prince, the people led into captivity, the altars of Christ overturned, the images and relics of the saints smeared with filth. Thus, while we are silent, the Turks insult the Christian name. If we were men, they would not dare to look at our backs, not to say our faces! But now, though late, the Bishop of Rome invites us to avenge this affront and to no longer tolerate this great dishonour to our religion. If only he had done so before the damage was done! It would have been better to cause harm to the others than to avenge the harm they have done to us. But we should not try to correct the past. Now is the time: neither the emperor – as I believe – nor the other kings will remain silent. All are affected by this calamity. Which Christian will not ardently prepare for war when so great an injury has been done, in our own time, to Our Saviour? Now we can show what kind of men we are! Now I can – with your help, nobles – avenge my father, whom the Turks held captive for a long time, harshly chained! So, you who have a noble heart and soul, who honour religion and wish our Faith to be supreme, tell us now openly if you will join our undertaking. As for me, hear now my mind and my intentions.

¹ At that time, the Church considered Islam to constitute a heretical sect which had split off from orthodox Christianity, and not as a separate religion

[38] Atque aperta veste, qua pectus claudebatur, schedulam detraxit heraldoque¹ dedit legendam. Schedulae² fuit hujusmodi³ sensus⁴: “Ne proterat ecclesiam catholicam neve ultro⁵ Christiano illudat nomini Turcorum genus impuratum, si Carolus Francorum rex Dalphinusve⁶ primogenitus aliusve⁷ clarus ex regno princeps in Turcos exercitum hac tempestate ductaverit, in comitatu ejus ero roburque meae militiae peditesque equitesque huic expeditioni dicabo pugnamque manu conseram. Si se⁸ obtulerit hostis, singulare certamen non detrectabo. Si minus, provocabo daboque operam, spolia, ut opima feram. Sic tibi, Deo viventi, patrique filioque flaminique spondeo et promitto dux ego Burgundiae Philippus. Vosque, matronae nobiles virginesque illustres, hujusce voti testes adhibeo, ut cum has aliasve istiusmodi generis aves, quas Phasidos Insula primum vidit, in conspectu habebitis, mendacii me insimuletis, nisi steterit dicto fides.”

¹ haraldoque MA

² cedulae W

³ hujusmodi W

⁴ scriptus U

⁵ ultra K, O, U, W

⁶ Dalphinusque K; Dalphinus vel MA

⁷ aliusve MA, WO

⁸ omit. O, W

[38] And opening his doublet¹, he pulled out a document and gave it to the herald to read. This was the purport of the document²: “To prevent the filthy Turkish people from crushing the Catholic Church and further mock the Christian name, I shall, if King Charles of France or the dauphin or some other illustrious prince from that kingdom next summer³ leads an army against the Turks, join him. I pledge the strength of my army, infantry and cavalry, to this expedition, and I shall be fighting in person. If the enemy comes forward, I shall not decline a duel. If he does not, I shall challenge him and endeavour to take rich spoils. This I, Duke Philippe of Burgundy, vow and promise to you, the Living God, Father, Son and Spirit.⁴ And you distinguished dames and illustrious virgins I take as witnesses to this vow, so that you – with these and other pheasants, first seen here in Lille, before your eyes - may accuse me of lying if the vow is not kept.”

¹ Or jerkin

² Here Piccolomini gives his own version of the text, in Latin, indicating, however, that he is giving the *sensus* of the text, and not the exact wording

³ “tempestate”

⁴ “flaminique”

[39] Haec ubi alta voce lecta sunt, exultare ac vociferari omnes, magnificare suum principem, laudare propositum, offerre se comites, dare dexteras, orare superos, ut coepta secundent¹ pioque duci longam atque incolumem vitam praebeant. Philippus seorsum quemque ad se vocitat et quem secum {11v} ducturus sit comitatum² rogat³ jubetque⁴ numerum describi. Edunt cuncti nobiles sua nomina ingentesque⁵ copias⁶ promittunt. Unus dumtaxat consulendi regis Franciae tempus expetit, cuius esset ditioni subjectus. Laetus tanta suorum procerum alacritate Philippus sacerdotes, uti mentem suam exponant populo, jubet, sacrificia et publicas supplicationes decernit⁷, quibus divina gratia valeat impetrari.

[40] Sed neque hoc pacto desiderium pii principis locum habet⁸, neque enim rex Franciae neque alius ex regno princeps in Turcos pugnare proponit. Huc accedunt regis Angliae vexationes, qui missa non parva classe agros Arthoos⁹ populatur atque incendit, cui nisi resistatur omnis in metu Flandria¹⁰ atque Picardia ponitur. Optimates provinciarum Philippum¹¹ adeunt, Anglicorum conatum exponunt, ne se deserat, rogant. Is ubi suorum periculum videt, neque Christianos¹² magnificare¹³ Turcorum facta¹⁴ cognoscit, rursus inter suos morari ac tueri patriam statuit, quando nec Luzeburgensium¹⁵ civitas satis constans firmaque videretur. Erat enim ei de ducatu Luzeburgensi cum rege Bohemiae vetus et anceps controversia, neque terrae cultores satis exploratum habebant, cui potissimum¹⁶ foret parendum, regis alio, ducis alio causam probante.

¹ secundarent W

² comitiuam O, W

³ rogatque W

⁴ omit. W

⁵ ingentemque O, W

⁶ comitatum O, W

⁷ discernit U

⁸ omit. U

⁹ Artheos U

¹⁰ Frandria *et passim* K, O, U, V, W

¹¹ ducem O, W

¹² Christiana nos MA

¹³ magnificere O; magnificere WO

¹⁴ fata MA

¹⁵ Lucenb... *et passim* W

¹⁶ potissime O, W

[39] After this had been read in a loud voice, all rejoiced and shouted. The nobles extolled their prince, they praised his intent, they offered themselves as his companions, pledging themselves and asking the supreme beings to favour the undertaking and to give the pious duke a long and safe life. Then Philippe summoned each of them separately, asked what company they would bring, and ordered the numbers to be noted. All the nobles gave their names and promised large troops. Only one asked for permission to consult the King of France, whose subject he was. Delighted by the enthusiasm of his nobles, Philippe ordered the priests to announce his plans to the people¹ and decreed that there be held masses² and public prayers to obtain divine mercy.

[40] But the pious prince's desire could not be fulfilled in this manner, either, for neither the King of France nor any other prince from that kingdom decided to fight the Turks. In addition to this came troubles with the King of England who sent a large fleet to ruin and burn the region of Artois. If he was not resisted, all of Flanders and Picardie would be reduced to fear and trembling. The nobles of these provinces came to Philippe and informed him about the English operations, asking him not to let them down. When he saw the danger of his subjects and realized that the Christians did not make much of the Turkish actions, Philippe again decided to stay among his own and to protect his country since also the City of Luxembourg did not appear to be sufficiently constant and stable.³ For he had a longstanding and unsettled conflict with the King of Bohemia concerning the Duchy of Luxembourg, and the peasants were uncertain whom of the two they should obey, one party siding with the king and another with the duke.

¹ In their sermons

² "sacrifica"

³ In their allegiance to the duke

[41] At ei dum modo repellere Anglicos, modo rebus consulere Luzeburgensibus studet, litterae Caesaris hujusmodi¹ afferuntur:

”Fridericus tertius, divina favente clementia Romanorum imperator, Philippo, duci Burgundiae illustri, salutem. Memores sumus te oratores ante aliquot annos ad nos misisse, qui nobis duras et acerbissimas molestias, quas Christiani per orientem sive a Turcis sive a Saracenis paterentur, non sine quadam commiseratione referentes² {12r} summopere nos adhortati fuerunt, ut tamquam protectores³ et advocati⁴ fidei catholicae adversus inimicos salutiferae crucis expeditionem⁵ institueremus⁶, reges et principes, quicumque Christum colerent, invitantes⁷. Ad quod tam pium et et necessarium opus corpus⁸ tuum⁹ et¹⁰ offerebas et dedicabas. Nos tunc id¹¹ propositum commendantes, cum Romam propediem petitori essemus, cumque res maxima esset, quam nobis suadebas, ac fidem spectaret¹², respondimus¹³ - ut par fuit - de tanto negotio Romanum pontificem consulendum¹⁴, quemadmodum paulo post Romam venientes in publico consistorio fecimus. Praesul vero Romanus pro verbis nostris hilarior factus et verba nostra et rem ipsam mirifice laudavit, et quoniam nos optime¹⁵ animatos¹⁶ videbat, dixit et¹⁷ aliorum quoque regum nostri orbis se¹⁸ mentes perscrutaturum, quemadmodum rei magnitudo videbatur exposcere. At opus ingens, dum suapte natura tempus ex tempore quaerit, crudelis Turcorum dominus Constantinopolim, orientalis imperii caput Graeciaeque decus, invadit, obsidet, expugnat¹⁹, diripit. Imperatorem gentis interficit²⁰, nobilitatem majori ex parte gladio ferit, innumeras animas in servitutem redigit²¹, templa²² divino dicata nomini spurciciae Maumethi²³ subigit, altaria proterit, salvatoris nostri ac matris ejus, intemeratae virginis, imagines delet, sanctas quascumque reliquias invenit, porcis objectat. Neque contentus his, nactus locum et portum, ex quo plurimum

¹ homini U

² refertas W

³ protector O, W; procuratores MA

⁴ aduocatus O, W

⁵ passagium O, W

⁶ instituerimus U; instituerunt W

⁷ imitantes U

⁸ personam O, W

⁹ tuam O, W

¹⁰ omit. MA, WO

¹¹ omit. O, W

¹² corr. ex concerneret V; concerneret O, W

¹³ nos add. O, W

¹⁴ consulturos O, W

¹⁵ optimos U

¹⁶ dispositos O, W

¹⁷ omit. U

¹⁸ omit. MA

¹⁹ oppugnat MA

²⁰ interfecit U

²¹ redegit W

²² item U

²³ Maumeti U; Maumethhi MA

Christiano populo nocere potest, ingentes copias¹ terra marique parat hisque se totum occidentem invasurum subversurumque Christi legem² jactitat.

¹ Christiano populo ... copias *omit.* U

² Christi legem *omit.* W

2.13.4. Emperor's summons to Regensburg

[41] As he was now fending off the English and now being occupied with the matter of Luxembourg, the letter from the emperor¹ arrived, saying²:

“Friedrich III, by the grace of merciful God Emperor of the Romans, to Philippe, Illustrious Duke of Burgundy, greetings.

We remember that you sent ambassadors to Us some years ago, who pityingly told us about the harsh and bitter abuse suffered by the Christians in the East at the hands of either the Turks or the Saracens. You movingly exhorted us – as protector and champion of the Catholic Faith – to organize an expedition against the enemies of the cross of salvation and to invite all the kings and princes who worship Christ [to join it]. You offered and dedicated your own person³ to this pious and urgent undertaking. We praised your proposal, replying⁴ that as We were shortly to go to Rome, and as the matter you urged upon Us was most important and concerned the Faith, We would - as was reasonable – consult with the Roman Pontiff on this great affair, and when We came to Rome, We did so in a public consistory.⁵ The Bishop of Rome was glad to hear Our words and highly praised them and the matter itself, and seeing Our great resolve, he said that he would – as the importance of the matter appeared to require – ask of the other kings of our world how they felt about it. But such a large affair naturally takes time, and then the cruel lord of the Turks attacked, besieged, conquered and pillaged Constantinople, capital of the Eastern Empire and the pride of Greece. He killed the emperor of that people, struck down most of the nobles, carried innumerable people into servitude, subjected the temple dedicated to the divine name⁶ to the filthy rites of Muhammad, overturned the altars, destroyed the images of Our Lord and His Mother, the pure Virgin, threw all relics he could find to the dogs. And not content with this, having acquired a place and a port from which he can seriously damage the Christian people, he is now mobilizing enormous troops on land and at sea, bragging that with them he will invade the whole of the West and destroy the law of Christ.

¹ Written by Piccolomini himself

² The version of the emperor's letter included in the report is a revised version of the original document, see Introduction, sect. 3.3, and Appendix

³ "corpus"

⁴ Through his counsellor Piccolomini, in the oration "*Quamvis in hoc senatu*" (1451) [17]

⁵ Again through Piccolomini, in the oration "*Moses vir Dei*" (1452) [19]

⁶ Hagia Sophia

[42] Quod quamprimum cognovimus, mox domino nostro papae litteras dedimus rogantes, ut de modo resistendi tam potentibus inimicis consilium in communi¹ caperet², {12v} nam et nos operam nostram³ in obsequio fidei minime negaremus. Is vero misso legato et intentione sua in tali negotio nobis exposita vehementer atque impense nos hortatus est, ut adversus Turcorum insolentem et perniciosissimam audaciam cum nostris principibus insurgamus, ac veluti primi inter saeculares potestates, quibus de profectu reipublicae Christianae⁴ cura et⁵ sollicitudo incumbit, ceteros Christiani orbis rectores nostris exemplis et hortationibus invitemus. Nos ergo considerantes rem esse dignam, in qua laboremus, nosque praecipue tamquam imperatorem et advocatum ecclesiae respicere⁶, universorum⁷ principum ecclesiasticorum et saecularium cunctorumque⁸ nostrorum et imperii sacri subditorum in festo Sancti Georgii proxime futuro in civitate nostra Ratisponensi supra Danubium statuimus habere conventum, in quo⁹ comparituri cum his, qui aderunt, de propulsandis hostibus tuendaque nostra religione consultabimus¹⁰, sperantes¹¹ et apostolicae sedis legatos¹² et nonnullorum potentum regum, quibus super hoc scripsimus, oratores adfore¹³. Cum igitur res haec ad illum finem tendat, super quo nos pridem¹⁴ hortabare, cumque modo non solum¹⁵ utile, sed necessarium sit pro fide nostra consurgere et instantibus inimicis toto conatu resistere, dilectionem¹⁶ tuam requirimus tibi velut imperii sacri principi¹⁷ mandamus, ut tamquam princeps orthodoxus ac fidelis cultur crucis Christi statuto¹⁸ termino ad Ratisponense concilium te conferas neque graveris in tanta necessitate populi Christiani eo¹⁹ proficisci, qui te²⁰ alias etiam in Asiam transiturum hac ipsa²¹ de causa promittebas. {13r} Nos enim illic²² et cum tua dilectione et cum ceteris, qui advenerint, eam deliberationem, si Deus faverit²³, capiemus, per quam non modo tueri haereditatem domini, id est Christianum populum, sed ultro in suis finibus impias Turcorum manus coercere atque confringere valeamus. Datum in Nova Civitate pridie idus Januarias anno dominicae nativitatis²⁴ MCCCCLIII¹."

¹ consilium in communi : in communi consilium MA

² *corr. ex* reciperet V; reciperet O, W

³ operam nostram : *corr. ex* operas nostras V; operas nostras K, O, W

⁴ *omit.* W

⁵ atque U

⁶ *corr. ex* concernere V; concernere O, W

⁷ ~~universorum~~ O

⁸ universorumque O, W

⁹ personaliter *add.* O, W

¹⁰ consultationes habebimus O, W; consuleretur MA

¹¹ sperantem MA, WO

¹² legatum MA

¹³ adesse O, W

¹⁴ nos pridem : pridem nos O, W

¹⁵ modo O, W

¹⁶ dilectionem U

¹⁷ ~~seriose~~ *add.* V; seriose *add.* O, W

¹⁸ *omit.* K; *corr. ex* in prefixo V; in prefixo O, W

¹⁹ personaliter *add.* O, W

²⁰ *omit.* U

²¹ *omit.* MA

²² illuc W

²³ faveret U

²⁴ dominicae nativitatis : a nativitate domini W

¹ MCCCCLVII. W

[42] As soon as We heard this, We wrote to Our Lord the Pope asking him to arrange a joint consultation on how to resist so powerful enemies, and We assured him of Our own loyal efforts for the Faith. He sent Us a legate,¹ who set forth his intentions in this great matter and vehemently exhorted Us to rise up together with our princes against the insolent and dangerous effrontery of the Turks, and - as the first among the secular powers responsible for the care and concern about the welfare of the Christian commonwealth – to encourage² the other rulers of our Christian world by example and exhortation. Considering that this is a matter worthy of Our efforts and that it must concern Us as emperor and champion of the Church, We have decided to hold a meeting with all the ecclesiastic and secular princes and all Our subjects³ and the subjects of the Holy Empire on the coming Feast of Saint George in Our city of Regensburg on the Danube. We shall go there and together with those present deliberate on how to repel the enemies and protect our religion, in the hope that legates of the Apostolic See and of several powerful kings, to whom We have written in this matter, will be present. Since We are pursuing the same goal as you previously urged upon Us, and since it is not only advantageous, but necessary to stand up for our Faith and resist the threatening enemies with all our might, We ask Your Highness⁴ and direct you as a prince of the Holy Empire, orthodox prince and faithful worshipper of the cross of Christ, to appear at the Diet of Regensburg on the appointed date, and not find it burdensome to travel there in this great crisis of the Christian people, since on another occasion you promised to go even to Asia in this cause. There We shall, together with Your Highness and the others who attend, deliberate on not only how to protect the Lord's inheritance, that is the Christian people, but also how we shall be able to force the impious Turkish troops back beyond their frontiers and to destroy them.

Given in Wiener Neustadt on 12 January in the year of Our Lord 1453⁵.

¹ Bishop Giovanni Castiglione of Pavia

² "invitemus"

³ As Duke of Austria

⁴ "dilectionem tuam"

⁵ I.e. 1454; 1453 in the dating system used by the imperial chancellery

[43] Lectis his Philippus iterum bene gerendi negotii spem recipit. Dubius tamen inter duo¹, an Ratisponam quamprimo² petat, an hostes ex agro suo prius deturbet, hominem quemdam Dei in solitudine morantem, sanctum atque incorruptum, adit³ ac rebus expositis consilium quaerit. Ad quem ille: "Magna sunt," inquit, "quae tibi divina pietas beneficia contulit, neque si mille annos in obsequio Dei labores⁴, satis videri gratus queas. Nunc, si quod te dignum est efficere cupis, non tam tuum negotium quam Dei curabis. Quae te domi premit, tua causa est. Quod Ratisponam vocaris, Dei res est. Si mihi auscultabis, duces eliges⁵, qui terram tuam ab Anglico tueantur. Tu vero imperatori oboedies profectusque Ratisponam, ut Christiana religio ab infidelibus defendatur⁶, navabis operam."

[44] Confirmatus atque animatus magis ac magis hoc responso Philippus Vilhelmum, Tullensem episcopum, gravis iudicii virum doctrinaque juris pontificii ac prudentia multa praestantem⁷, et alios plerosque legatos in Bohemiam mittit, qui de concordia cum rege tractent (nam et paucis ante diebus per legatos partium coram pontifice Treverensi apud Maguntiam de hoc⁸ ipso actum fuerat, si pacem nequeant invenire, at⁹ saltem indutias belli petant, ne, si Bohemis opponere se oporteat, contra Turcos minus queat). {13v} Duci quoque¹⁰ id esse decretum asserant aut cum Caesare aut cum rege in Graecia atque Asia pro fide catholica militare, nec minus quam sexaginta milia pugnatorum secum adducere¹¹. Cumque¹² rex ipse Ladislaus non modo Bohemiae, sed Hungariae quoque regnum possideat, quantum sua intersit prosterni ac deleri Turcos ostendant, utque suam pueritiam tam necessario bello consecret oratum faciant.

¹ duos U

² quamprimum O, U, W

³ adiit U; *omit.* W

⁴ vivas O, W

⁵ eleges U

⁶ ab infidelibus defendatur : defendatur ab infidelibus MA

⁷ *corr. ex callentem* V; *colentem* O, W

⁸ per legatos ... ipso : Maguntie, uti nosti, qui unus inter legatos regis aderas, coram Treverensi pontifice, profunde cogitationis et ingenii summi prelati, de hoc O, W

⁹ ac K, O, W

¹⁰ quomodo MA

¹¹ traducere O, W; abducere MA

¹² modo *add.* MA

2.13.5. Travel to Regensburg

[43] Having read this, Philippe regained hopes for a successful outcome of this matter. He was in doubt, however, whether to go to Regensburg immediately or to drive the enemies from his lands first. He, therefore, went to a a holy and honest man of God, living in solitude¹, told him about the the problem, and asked for his advice. The man said to him, “The Divine Piety has shown you great favour, and even if you labour a thousand years in his service, you will not have shown enough gratefulness. Now, if you wish to do the worthy thing, you must be more concerned about God’s cause than your own. Your problems at home are your own cause. What calls you to Regensburg is God’s cause. If you heed me, you will choose leaders to defend your lands against the English while you obey the emperor and go to Regensburg, endeavouring to defend the Christian religion from the infidels.”

2.13.6. Embassy to King Ladislaus

[44] This answer greatly strengthened Philippe’s resolve. He sent Guillaume,² Bishop of Toul, a man of great discernment and wisdom and an eminent specialist in pontifical law, to Bohemia together with several other legates to negotiate some form of peace with the king.³ Actually, some some days before the legates of the two parties had met with the Archbishop of Trier⁴ in Mainz in order to explore the possibilities of peace or at least a truce: it would make it easier [for the duke] to fight the Turks if he did not have to fight the Bohemians at the same time. The ambassadors were to inform the king that the duke had decided to fight for the Catholic Faith in Greece and Asia either with the emperor or with the king himself, and that he would bring at least 60,000 soldiers with him. They should also point out that since King Ladislaus was king not only of Bohemia but also of Hungary, the overthrow and destruction of the Turks would be to his own great advantage, and they were to ask him to dedicate his youthful self⁵ to this very necessary war.

¹ I.e., a hermit

² Guillaume Fillastre Jr. (d. 1473): Bishop of Toul, counsellor and ambassador of Duke Philippe III (including, later, to Piccolomini as Pope Pius II)

³ In 1443, Philippe III had bought the Duchy of Luxembourg from Duchess Elisabeth of Bohemia. However, King Ladislaus claimed the same duchy as part of his inheritance from his maternal grandfather, Emperor Sigismund of Luxembourg. See RTA, 19, 1, pp. 346 ff. Piccolomini reported on

⁴ Jakob von Sierck

⁵ “pueritiam”

[45] Tali legatione in Bohemian missa, Philippus ordinatis, quae¹ domi fieri voluit, cum paucis comitibus ex Flandria in Burgundiam se recipit, post in Alemaniam transit ac per Suicensium et domus Austriae fines² Constantiam venit, ubi nostra aetate magnum et memorabile illud concilium celebratum est, quod trium summorum pontificum³ deleto schismate Martinum quintum, Romanae primaeque sedi non dubitatum pontificem dedit. At Philippo, quacumque iter facit, innumerabiles occurrunt populi miranturque tantum ducem et summos aequantem reges inter nationes exterarum iter habere. Hi diversos habitus, illi non intellectum sermonem notant. Nemo illi honorem negat: portae civitatum, templa, fora, triclinia publicaeque viae omnes ornantur.

[46] Certant inter se principes ac civitates, quis magnificentius ducem excipiat. Albertus, Austriae dux, non liberalitate minus quam nobilitate praestans, obviam factus se suaque illi dedit⁴ licereque sibi impetrat, ut Philippi se filium vocitet. Comes quoque⁵ Virtembergensis⁶ non sine muneribus duci se exhibet. Omnis Sveviae nobilitas Philippo gratias agit, qui suam terram visere dignatus sit et amicorum domus fidenter accesserit. Ille omnibus pro dignitate salutatis⁷ cum magna Germanorum caterva ad Ulmam descendit, quem cives⁸ ejus urbis et honore ingenti⁹ et affectu benevolentissimo suscipiunt. Fama {14r} interea regiones vicinas opplet Philippum, Burgundiae ducem¹⁰, Ratisponam petere, intrasse Germaniam, venisse Constantiam jamque Ulmam supra Danubium appulisse. Laudare complurimi¹¹ pium principem, qui servandae amplificandaeque¹² fidei nostrae curam gerat, superos illi optare faventes, benedicere ac magnificare nomen atque hunc unum esse asserere, cui rerum summam par sit¹³ credere.

¹ *omit.* W

² *corr. ex* dominia V; dominia O, W

³ summorum pontificum *corr. ex* paparum K, V; paparum O, W

⁴ *omit.* W

⁵ comesque MA, WO

⁶ Virtembergensis K; Vntemburgensis U; Virtembegensis O; Virtenbergensis W; Virtenburgensis MA

⁷ salutis U

⁸ civem U

⁹ honore ingenti : honorem genti U

¹⁰ Burgundiae ducem : ducem Burgundie W

¹¹ complurimi U

¹² ampliandaeque O, W

¹³ sic U, V *

2.13.7. Enthusiastic reception in Germany

[45] Having sent this embassy to Bohemia, Philippe arranged matters at home as he wished to. Then he left Flanders with a small following to go to Burgundy and from there to Konstanz via Swiss territories and lands of the House of Austria. (In that city a great and memorable council was held in our own time which ended the schism of three popes¹ and gave Martin V² as undoubted pope to the Roman and First See.) Wherever Philippe went, countless people flocked together in wonder that so great a duke, equal to the greatest kings, was travelling abroad. Some were fascinated by the foreign dresses, others by a language they could not understand. All honoured the duke: the city gates, the temples, the squares, the dining rooms³ and the public roads were decorated.

[46] Princes and cities were competing about giving the duke the most splendid reception. Albrecht, Duke of Austria,⁴ equally outstanding in generosity and nobility, came to meet him, [saying to him that] he and his were the duke's, and he even obtained the right to call himself Philippe's son. The Duke of Württemberg⁵ presented himself, bearing gifts. All the nobility of Swabia thanked Philippe for deigning to visit their country and coming trustingly to the home of friends. He greeted everybody as befitting their rank, and then, with a large following of Germans, he proceeded to Ulm whose citizens received him with immense honour and enthusiasm. Rumour spread to the neighbouring regions that Duke Philippe of Burgundy was going to Regensburg, had entered Germany, come to Konstanz, and had now reached Ulm on the Danube. Many praised the pious prince who cared for the protection and propagation of the Faith, they prayed the heavenly beings to protect him, they blessed and extolled his name, and proclaimed that he was the only man who might be entrusted with the greatest matters.⁶

¹ The Great Western Schism (1378-1417)

² Martin V [Odo Colonna] (1369-1431): Pope from 1417 to his death

³ "triclinia"

⁴ Albrecht VI (Habsburg)

⁵ Ulrich V (1413-1480)

⁶ "rerum summam": meaning uncertain. If Piccolomini implies supreme government, it would be threatening to the emperor whose authority was otherwise under criticism and would later even be plotted against by his own princes

[47] Sed neque obtretractores desunt lividi ac maledici, qui principem hunc privati boni causa, non communis advenisse dictitent. Alii hominem imperandi cupidum simulare se Turcis infestum, religionis amantem ajunt, inde ut favores aucupetur¹ et rumusculos² populorum, quibus dignus imperio judicetur. Alii Brabantiam eum, Hollandiam³ Zelandiamque⁴ injuste occupasse asserunt, venire ad imperatorem, has provincias ut in regnum erigat, cui sunt opes regi⁵ magno convenientes, ne desit titulus, aut si hoc nequeat⁶ obtinere, titulum⁷ saltem feudi⁸ extorqueat. Negant importuni atque impurati dicaces verisimile posse videri eum ducem, cui libentiae gratiaque⁹ cordi fuerint, qui latissimis regionibus, maximis populis dominetur, abundet opibus, deliciis affluat, nulla re careat, quae possit voluptatem retardare, cum jam¹⁰ senescit, Christi¹¹ causam quaerere. Sed ut sunt homines, ita alios aestimant. De nostro ingenio proximos judicamus. Nulli suspectiores esse fures quam furi constat. Sceleratae menti non est pietas verisimilis, neque pusillus animus maximis rebus fidem praebet. Quae sibi quisque facilia factu¹² putat, aequo animo accipit: supra ea veluti ficta pro falsis ducit¹³. Plerosque invidia vexavit, qui cum viderent suos principes communia facta negligere, Philippi gloriam ferre¹⁴ non poterant. Indignum minimeque¹⁵ tolerandum putabant, quas mereri¹⁶ laudes Germanos¹⁷ {14v} decuit eas secum Gallos¹⁸ reportare. Nos illius ducis¹⁹ intemeratum animum et antea credidimus et postea re ipsa cognovimus.

¹ *corr. ex venetur* V; venetur O, U, W

² tumusculos WO

³ Olandiam K, U, V

⁴ Zelaudiamque U

⁵ et *add.* W

⁶ hoc nequeat : nequeat hoc W

⁷ investituram O, W

⁸ *omit.* O, W

⁹ omnes *add.* O, W

¹⁰ *omit.* W

¹¹ Christianam U

¹² facta W

¹³ dicit U

¹⁴ ferri W

¹⁵ minime U

¹⁶ merere U

¹⁷ *omit.* W

¹⁸ *corr. ex Gallicos* O, U, W

¹⁹ duci U

2.13.8. Criticism of the duke

[47] But there were also hateful and malicious critics who kept saying that this prince had come to serve his own private interests and not the common good. Some claimed that he is a power greedy man who only pretends to hate the Turks and love religion, and who is chasing popularity only to be judged worthy of ruling. Some say that he has occupied Brabant, Holland and Zeeland unjustly and now comes to the emperor to make him raise these provinces to the status of a kingdom: since the duke has the power befitting a great king, he would also have the title [of king], and if he cannot have that, then he would at least wrest the title of feudal lord [of these provinces from the emperor].¹ These insolent and vile cynics claim that the duke cannot possibly come to support Christ's cause since he loves pleasures and refinement, rules large areas and great peoples, abounds in wealth and comfort, and lacks for nothing that may prolong the satisfactions of his ageing self.² But men measure others after their own standards. We judge our neighbours according to our own character. To a thief, nothing is more suspect than other thieves. To a criminal mind, piety seems unbelievable, and the timid soul does not believe in great ventures. Everyone calmly accepts what is easy for him to do; what is hard, he considers to be a fraud. Many were actually jealous: seeing that their own princes ignored the public good, they could not bear Philippe's glory. They found it unworthy and intolerable that the French³ should earn the praise which the Germans ought to merit. As for ourselves, we believed until now that the duke's soul is unblemished, and now we know it for a fact.

¹ I.e., to receive these provinces from the emperor as a feudal possession

² The meaning of the last passage is doubtful, possibly due to a corrupt Latin text

³ The House of Burgundy was part of the royal House of France (Valois)

[48] Cardinalis autem sancti Petri, qui forte in propinquo delitescebat, postquam Philippum adventare didicit, haud expectandum collegarum, ad quos scripserat, responsum censuit, sed mox Ratisponsam mittit, qui se venturum dicat domumque¹ apparet. Quod cum legatus apostolicus cognovisset, an cardinali obviam exeat² dubius, amicum quendam³ accersit, cardinalem quovis honore dignum affirmat, quem summo pontifici acceptum norit, optima vita patrem et inter doctos facile primum, sed venire eum aut suo tantum aut Caesaris nomine, se vero primae sedis nuntium esse. Vereri, ne dignitati summi praesulis⁴ detrahat, si cardinali non legato legatus episcopus occurrat: parvam⁵ esse apud Germanos cardinalium curam, nisi legati nomen teneant, nam et Gnesnensem⁶ archiepiscopum in coronatione reginae Poloniae in civitate Cracoviensi⁷ novissime constabat cardinali esse praelatum.

[49] {200v} Super his amicus⁸: “Cum respicis,” inquit, “cardinali⁹ an¹⁰ episcopus praestet, si sacras litteras et jura vetusta rimeris, nihil est, quod tribuas cardinali, incognito et inaudito nomini priscis patribus, quamvis divum Hieronymum quidam velint cardinalem fuisse. Verum et hic Augustino episcopo scribens, quoniam erat Hieronymus major natu¹¹, in calce litterarum¹²: ‘Vale,’ inquit, ‘amice carissime, aetate fili, dignitate parens.’ Nemo, qui vetera legerit¹³, cardinalem anteponat episcopo, quem vicem tenere apostolorum non est¹⁴ ambiguum: hic dignitatem, hic ordinem, hic grande officium invenias, et ligandi solvendique potestatem (fateor, cardinalis maximam esse dignitatem, altum officium - cetera ne requiras). {15r} Hinc majores nostri¹⁵ episcopos praetulerunt, quoniam Christi essent apostoli¹⁶ et vicarii summi Dei apud suas plebes.

¹ demumque MA

² obviam exeat : exeat obuiam K

³ amicum quendam : Eneam O, W

⁴ populi MA

⁵ parvamque W

⁶ Gnesnensem K; Gnesenenem O; Gnesensem U

⁷ Carcouiensi K, V *; Carconiensi U

⁸ Eneas O, W

⁹ cardinalis K, O, U, W

¹⁰ aut U

¹¹ major natu : natu major O, W

¹² in calce litterarum *omit.* U

¹³ legit U; legent W

¹⁴ *omit.* U

¹⁵ ante *add.* W

¹⁶ altissimo K, O, U, V *, W

2.14. A problem of precedence: papal legate vs cardinal

[48] The Cardinal of San Pietro¹ happened to be staying in the vicinity. When he heard that Philippe was approaching, he decided not to await the reply from his colleagues² to whom he had written³ but immediately sent a message to Regensburg announcing his arrival and requesting that that a house be prepared for him. When the apostolic legate⁴ heard it, he was in doubt whether to to [honour him by] going out to meet him. He invited a friend⁵ to his house and said to him that the cardinal was, of course, worthy of all honours, being dear to the pope, a Father living a virtuous life, and one of the first among learned men. But he was coming there in his own name only or in the emperor's, whereas he himself was the envoy of the First See. He feared that it would somehow show disrespect to the pope if a bishop who was a [papal] legate came to meet a cardinal who was not. The Germans had little respect for cardinals if they did not have the status of a [papal] legate. Indeed, at the recent coronation⁶ of the Queen of Poland⁷ in the city of Krakow, the Archbishop of Gniezno⁸ was clearly given precedence over a cardinal.⁹

[49] His friend replied, "When you consider whether a bishop precedes a cardinal, and you search Holy Scripture and ancient laws, you can find nothing which gives precedence to a cardinal, a new title unknown to the early fathers (even though some claim that Saint Jerome was a cardinal). But Jerome¹⁰ who was older than Bishop Augustine wrote to him at the end of a letter, "Farewell, dearest friend, my son in age but my parent in rank."¹¹ Nobody who has read the old writings would give precedence to a cardinal over a bishop, who most certainly holds the place of the apostles. In the bishops, you find dignity, order, a great office and the power to bind and to loosen. (Otherwise – you do not need to ask – I consider the cardinal's rank to be eminent and his office to be high). Therefore, our forefathers gave precedence to bishops since they were the apostles of Christ and vicars of the Great God among their peoples.¹²

¹ Nikolaus von Kues

² The imperial legates

³ See above sect. 31

⁴ Giovanni Castiglione, Bishop of Pavia, not a cardinal

⁵ Most likely Piccolomini himself, cf. the Wolffenbüttel manuscript (W) which twice has Aeneas instead of amicus. See also RTA p. 223

⁶ In March 1454, a month before the opening of the Diet in Regensburg

⁷ Elisabeth of Austria (ca. 1436-1505): Queen of King Casimir IV of Poland. Sister of King Ladislaus the Posthumous

⁸ Jan Sprowski (d. 1464): Archbishop of Gniezno from 1453 to his death

⁹ At the coronation, the archbishop primate of Poland and the Polish cardinal, Zbigniew Olesnicki, quarrelled about precedence. The primate won (RTA, p. 227)

¹⁰ A priest

¹¹ Jeronimus: *Epistolae*, 105, 5, 2

¹² Piccolomini had already mentioned the rise of the order of cardinals in his *Report on an Imperial Mission to Bohemia*, 1451 (Nr. 3 in the present series), sect. 63

[50] Sed cedunt omnia tempori, omnia rerum dominae consuetudini parent. Quod nunc est, non quod olim fuit, spectare oportet. Hodie non modo cardinales episcopis anteferuntur¹, sed - nescio cur² - tabelliones, quos vocant³ protonotarios (non minus inanis quam arrogantis⁴ nominis) episcopis antestant. Credo futurum aliquando⁵, ut et cubicularii et ostiarii et omnes intra palatium ministri ecclesiarum pontifices antecedant, quando hoc esse studium nonnullorum videmus, ut episcoporum nomen funditus extinguatur⁶. Nec ab re meo iudicio: nimis enim inveteravit episcopalis apex. Omnia nata occidunt⁷, et omnia orta senescunt. Vetus est episcopi dignitas et ipsis apostolorum coaeva⁸ temporibus: vetustate ipsa jam corruiatque⁹ tabescit. Cardinalium ac protonotariorum nova est appellatio.¹⁰ Quid miri¹¹ est, si virens¹² ipsa iuventus suis¹³ innixa viribus episcopalem senectutem loco pellit et accipit ipsa principatum? In exordio nascentis ecclesiae communi presbyterorum consilio parochiae regebantur, neque maior episcopus presbytero fuit, si Hieronymo credimus. At cum schismata excrevisset et diceretur¹⁴ ecclesiis: *Ego sum Pauli, ego Cephae*, ad unionem tenendam usu receptum est presbyteros episcopis haberi subjectos. Non est, cur nobis injuriam fieri dicamus, si quae nos presbyteris anteposuit consuetudo, eadem nobis aut¹⁵ cardinales aut alios cuiusvis ordinis homines antetulerit. Tu ergo, si me audias, non recusabis cardinali cedere, at¹⁶ huic maxime, qui cum cardinalatu servat episcopatum.

[51] At mihi dicis: non est episcopo cum cardinali contentio, legatum episcopum¹⁷ cardinali non legato praeferendum existimo. Falleris: Basileae vidimus, quos miserat Eugenius praesidentes, archiepiscopos honorem locumque cardinalibus dare. Ajunt enim, ut nosti, unum summi pontificis atque cardinalium corpus esse. Denique, ne multis agam tecum, cum dubitamus aequumne sit, quod agimus, an iniquum, ejus ingenium moresque ante oculos revocare oportet, cui est facti reddenda ratio, ut hoc geras, quod illi probare¹⁸ posse confidas. Tibi modo cum sede apostolica negotium est: quo pacto haec te arguat cardinali cedentem, quae cardinalium voluntate nutuque regitur? Ego, si tuo loco sim, cardinali obviam ibo primumque sibi honorem locumque dabo, nec verebor, ne parum dignitatem meam retinere videar, cum sit mihi temporale munus, illi

¹ anteferantur W

² *em.*; qui codd.

³ vocitant V

⁴ arroganter W

⁵ alioquin MA

⁶ extingvetur W

⁷ occidunt U; aridunt W

⁸ cena U

⁹ ac O, W

¹⁰ cardinalium ac ... appellatio *omit.* U

¹¹ mirum U

¹² virtus W

¹³ sua U

¹⁴ in *add.* O, W

¹⁵ et MA

¹⁶ atque O, W

¹⁷ at mihi ... episcopum *omit.* U

¹⁸ probari O, W

perpetuum. Rursusque nec me Polonorum movebit¹ exemplum, si consuetudo apud illos, non ratio² episcopo cardinalem submitit et³ archiepiscopo⁴ jus⁵ coronandi suum servavit. Placere Johanni verba⁶: itum est obviam cardinali. Introivit. Legati Caesaris, quae mandata habuerunt, ad eum retulere.

¹ monebit U

² *omit.* O, W

³ sed O, W

⁴ archiepiscopoum W

⁵ uis U

⁶ Enee *add.* O, W

[50] But everything yields to time, all obey custom, mistress of all. We must consider things as they are now, not as they were once. Today, not only are cardinals given precedence over bishops, but – and I do not know why - even those notaries called protonotaries (a vain and presumptuous title) stand before the bishops. Sometime in the future, it will probably happen that valets and doorkeepers and all the servants in the [papal] palace will be given precedence over bishops since we see that it is the ambition of many people to destroy the name of bishop. And with some reason, in my opinion: the high episcopal dignity has grown old. Everything that is born dies, and everything that rises grows old. The episcopal rank is old and goes back to the time of the apostles themselves: its very old age makes it decay and wither away. Cardinals and protonotaries are new titles. Why wonder if their flowering youth forces out the ancient episcopacy and takes the lead instead? At the beginning of the Early Church, the parishes were ruled by the common counsel of the priests, and the bishop was not greater than the priest, at least if we believe Jerome. But when heresies broke out and it was said in the churches: *I am of Paul, I am of Cephas*,¹ the custom developed – for the sake of unity - to subordinate priests to bishops. So, there is no reason why we should consider it an abuse if the same custom that placed us bishops above priests now places us below cardinals or men of another rank. So, if you heed me, you will not refuse to cede [the first place] to the cardinal, especially not to a cardinal who is also a bishop.²

[51] But you say to me, “I am not contending with a bishop who is also a cardinal, but I do believe that a [papal] legate, even if [only] a bishop, should take precedence over a cardinal who is not a [papal] legate.” But you are wrong. At Basel, we saw that those archbishops Eugenius had sent to preside [over the council] gave the place of honour to the cardinals. For they say, as you know, that the pope and the cardinals form one body. Finally, not to use many arguments with you, when we are in doubt whether what we are doing is right or wrong, we should consider the character and behavior of the person to whom we are responsible, so that you do what you believe he would approve of. At present, you are acting on behalf of the Apostolic See. Why would that See criticize you for giving precedence to a cardinal when everything there is ruled by the will and assent of the cardinals? If I was in your place, I would go to meet the cardinal and be the first to show him honour, and I would not fear to diminish my own status since my office would be limited in time, while his office is permanent. Moreover, the Polish example would not sway me since it is custom, not reason which gave a bishop precedence over a cardinal and reserved the right of crowning to the archbishop.³ These arguments persuaded Giovanni, who went to meet the cardinal.⁴ The cardinal entered the city, and the imperial legates brought their instructions to him.

¹ 1. Corinthians, 1, 12: *Ego quidem sum Pauli : ego autem Apollo : ego vero Cephae : ego autem Christi (Now this I say, that every one of you saith: I indeed am of Paul; and I am of Apollo; and I am of Cephas; and I of Christ)*

² Nikolaus of Kues was both a cardinal and bishop of Brixen

³ The primate of Poland

⁴ The cardinal arrived in Regensburg on 2 May

[52] Ludovicus interea Bavariae dux consiliarios quattuor Ratisponam mittit, qui legatos imperatorios convenientes in hunc modum colloquuntur¹: “Quamvis honoratum sese magnopere Ludovicus intelligit², quod³ se praesidentem in hoc concilio caesar elegerit, non tamen id muneris sibi subeundum⁴ existimat, tum quia juvenis est inexpertus, tum quia Philippus Burgundiae dux eum ad se accersit, quem videre, ut ait, admodum cupit, antequam Germania⁵ excedat. Hoc Ludovicus pro necessitudine, quam cum illo habet, negare non potest. Accedet⁶ eum⁷, gratias sibi sibi aget⁸, qui nostram nationem sua praesentia illustrare⁹ dignatus est¹⁰, {16r} morem¹¹ ei, in quavis re¹² geret¹³, sive seria sive jocos¹⁴ malit. Vestrum erit principem nostrum excusatum Caesari¹⁵ reddere, si legationem¹⁶ ejus hoc tempore non amplectitur. Verum quia incertus adhuc Philippus est, an¹⁷ huc se conferre¹⁸ debeat, cum de Caesaris adventu nihil certi exploratum habeat, cupit Ludovicus ex vobis¹⁹ cognoscere, an Caesari complaciturus²⁰ sit, Philippum huc loci si forte adduxerit. Nam sive hoc sive aliud malit imperator, id curabitur, quod ex re Caesaris arbitremini. Neque id arduum erit, cum dubius animus paulo momento aut huc aut illuc impelli possit. Nos interea temporis apud vos erimus et in rebus agendis nostri ducis nomine navabimus operam²¹.” Ad haec legati Caesaris optasse se ajunt, Ludovicum ducem praesidentiae pondus accepisse, qui et suo²² ingenio multum saperet et consiliarios haberet expertos rerum; mansuros se tamen adventum ejus secumque de hoc ipso denuo locuturos. Philippum autem Burgundiae ducem scire se litteris imperialibus accersitum, nec dubitare adventum ejus impense placitum Caesari. Facturum, quod²³ se²⁴ decet, Ludovicum, si tantum principem magnifice honoraverit Ratisponamque traxerit. Praesentiam autem consiliariorum ejus in conventu sibi esse carissimam, quos prudentia et auctoritate praestare non ignorarent²⁵.

¹ locuntur O; loquuntur W

² intellexit MA, WO

³ qui U; quia MA

⁴ sibi subeundum : subeundum sibi U

⁵ Germaniam MA

⁶ accedit K; accedat MA

⁷ cum K

⁸ agit W

⁹ omit. O

¹⁰ visitare add. W

¹¹ moram W

¹² ut W

¹³ quavis re geret : quavis gereret U

¹⁴ iocus W

¹⁵ omit. O

¹⁶ legationes W

¹⁷ ad add. U

¹⁸ se conferre : conferre se W

¹⁹ nobis U

²⁰ compliciturus U; complacitus MA

²¹ corr. ex operas V; operas K, O, W

²² corr. ex suapte V; suapte K, O, W

²³ quoque U

²⁴ si W

²⁵ ignorent W

2.15. Duke Ludwig and Duke Philippe

[52] In the meantime, Duke Ludwig of Bavaria sent four counsellors to Regensburg. They met with the imperial legates and told them as follows: "Ludwig recognizes that he has been greatly honoured by the emperor choosing him to be one of the presidents of the diet. However, he does not think that he should accept this charge both because he is an inexperienced youth and because Duke Philippe of Burgundy has sent him an invitation and said that he much wants to see him before he leaves Germany again. Because of their kinship,¹ Ludwig cannot decline this invitation. He will go to him and thank him for deigning to honour our nation with his presence, and he will accommodate him in any way whether he wants to see him for serious business or for lighthearted companionship. Please send our prince's apology to the emperor for not accepting the function of legate at the present time. Since Philippe does not have certain information concerning the emperor's arrival, he is uncertain whether to come to Regensburg. Therefore, Ludwig would like to know from you if it would please the emperor if he could persuade Philippe to come here. For whatever the emperor wishes, Ludwig will do whatever you think is to his advantage. And it will not be difficult since Philippe is in doubt and it will take very little to induce him to do this or that. In the meantime, we counsellors will remain with you and participate in the proceedings on behalf of our duke." The imperial legates replied that they had wished for the duke to accept the charge of co-presiding the diet since he had a great understanding of things, and moreover had experienced counsellors. But they would await his arrival and then speak with him about the presidency. As for Duke Philippe of Burgundy, he knew that he had been summoned by an imperial letter, and they did not doubt that his coming would much please the emperor. If Ludwig showed great honour to this high prince and brought him to Regensburg, he would be doing as he should, but in any case, the presence of his counsellors at the diet was very welcome to the legates since they knew of their wisdom and authority.

¹ Duke Philippe was related to the House of Wittelsbach through his mother, Margaret of Bavaria

[53] Dum haec aguntur, legati diversorum principum plurimumque¹ civitatum adventant, qui se praesidentibus exhibentes operam suam² in communi offerunt. Consilarii Caesaris, ubi conventum paulo auctum³ vident, in praetorium civitatis universos vocant. Ulricus ibi⁴, Gurcensis episcopus, inter consiliarios Caesaris fide prudentiaque nulli cedens⁵, patrio sermone verbum facit: quae gesserit apud Constantinopolim Turcorum {16v} feritas, quae ultra minatur, cur dies universae Germaniae dicta sit⁶. Optasse Caesarem cum suis principibus convenire⁷, impeditum domi remansisse magna causa.⁸ Necessarium esse⁹ Christianitati consulere¹⁰ seque cum collegis missum¹¹ vicem Caesaris impleturum. Mandatum quoque in medio legi jubet. Denique, ut omnes in communi consulant, ne quid detrimenti amplius quam passa est Christiana res patiatur nostro tempore, rogat.

[54] Quibus dictis cardinalis sancti Petri, quoniam et ipse aliquando in Graecia fuisset Constantinopolimque vidisset, multa de potentia Turcorum deque Graecorum moribus in medium retulit, asserens idcirco videri sibi¹² exterminatum iri Graecorum genus, quia Romanam ecclesiam parvipenderint, durae cervicis atque impurae mentis homines, qui etsi palam intelligerent Latinos¹³ de fide multo melius quam se sapere, errori¹⁴ succumbere mallebant quam Romanae sedis institutionem¹⁵ suscipere. Nullam gentem minus tolerabilem se aliquando vidisse quam Graecam, quae¹⁶ licet opes amiserit atque imperium nec eloquentiam aut quarumvis bonarum artium studia retinuerit, mentis tamem elatione atque superbia paene incredibili carere non potest. Legatus apostolicus pro tempore pauca dixit, in aliud tempus dicturum se plura promittens.

¹ plurimumque U; plerumque W

² *corr. ex* operas suas V; operam suam : operas suas K, O, W

³ ante K, U

⁴ *omit.* MA, WO

⁵ cedere W

⁶ palam facit *add.* O, W

⁷ dicit *add.* O, W

⁸ impeditum domi ... causa : impedimenta que domi eum eum retinere proponit quoniam O, W

⁹ sit O, W

¹⁰ docet *add.* O, W

¹¹ ait *add.* O, W

¹² *omit.* MA, WO

¹³ lacius W

¹⁴ errore U

¹⁵ videri *add.* O, W

¹⁶ si *add.* U

3. First session of the diet, 5 or 6 May¹

[53] In the meantime, legates from various princes and many cities arrived. Upon arrival, they presented themselves to the presidents and offered their contribution to the common undertaking. When the imperial counsellors saw that attendance at the diet had increased somewhat, they summoned all to [a meeting] in the townhall.

3.1. Address of Bishop Ulrich Sonnenberger

There, Bishop Ulrich of Gurk, eminent among the imperial counsellors for his loyalty and wisdom, addressed the assembly in the vernacular. He spoke about the actions of the rabid Turks in Constantinople, the future threats, and the reasons for summoning all the Germans to a diet. The emperor had wanted to meet personally with his princes but had been prevented from doing so for important reasons that forced him to stay at home. Nonetheless, it was necessary to take counsel for Christendom, and therefore the bishop would, together with his colleagues, fulfil the emperor's mission. Then he read [the emperor's] mandate and finally asked all to deliberate on measures to prevent the Christian cause from being subjected to more damage than it had already suffered in our time.

3.2. Address of Cardinal Nikolaus von Kues

[54] Afterwards, the Cardinal of San Pietro, who had himself been in Greece and visited Constantinople, spoke at length about the power of the Turks and the character of the Greeks. He thought that the Greek people were being destroyed because it spurned the Roman Church. They were obstinate and sordid men who, although they clearly knew that the Latins know the Faith much better than themselves,² would rather fall into error than accept the guidance of the Roman Roman See. He had never seen a people less agreeable than the Greeks. Although they had lost both power and empire and had preserved neither eloquence nor any of the good arts, they were still incredibly proud and arrogant.

The apostolic legate only improvised a short address, promising to say more later.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 229 ff.

² The cardinal was probably referring to the theological debates at the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-1445) leading to the reunion of the Latin and Greek Churches

[55] Post eum viri religiosi, quos fratres beatae Mariae Theutonicorum appellant, cum priore suo Alemaniae surgunt deque populis Prutenorum grandem querelam faciunt, qui cum¹ foedus inter se minus honestum adversus religionem percussissent idque demum² apostolica et imperiali sententia rescindere jussi essent³, utrumque⁴ gladium contempsissent atque arma sumentes dominos suos tota⁵ Pruscia⁶ pepulissent, neque religioni jam {16v} aliud parere quam castellum⁷ sanctae Mariae et quaedam alia non magni momenti oppida⁸, et ea⁹ quoque obsessa¹⁰ ab his esse esse magistrumque magnum ordinis¹¹ clausum vix posse defendi. Consilia igitur¹² atque auxilia petunt.

[56] Hic, quoniam de Prutenis mentio incidit, quae sit haec regio et quo pacto in religionis Theutonicae potestatem devenerit, si modo referam, nemo – ut arbitror – ab re dixerit. Pruscia regio est supra mare¹³ Balteum, quod ad Sueciam Norvegiamque¹⁴ protenditur¹⁵. Hinc Saxones, illinc Polonos Livoniosque conterminos habet. Mediam terram perlabitur fluvius, cui Viscela nomen est, qui ex Sarmatiae montibus ortus per Poloniam et Prusciam in mare devolvitur ac Germaniam Scythiamque¹⁶ disternit. Hoc mare, quamvis ab oceano Britannico ducit originem, undique tamen terra cingitur neque – ut plerique tradunt – Amphitrites dici potest. In quo errore mihi videtur fuisse Jordanis, qui Viscelam¹⁷ Justulam¹⁸ nominans in oceanum decurrere confirmat.

¹ tum U

² domum K, W

³ jussi esent : jussissent U

⁴ utrum U

⁵ omit. U

⁶ Peruscia U; Prussia W

⁷ castrum O, W

⁸ et quaedam ... oppida omit. O, W

⁹ id O, W

¹⁰ obsessum O, W

¹¹ in eo add. O, W

¹² agitur U

¹³ omit. K

¹⁴ Novergiamque V

¹⁵ praetenditur MA

¹⁶ Scythiramque U

¹⁷ Viscelani U

¹⁸ Iustulani U; Instulam W

3.3. Prussian issue^{1 2}

[55] After him, the brethren of the Order of Holy Mary of the Germans, rose with their prior and vehemently complained about the Prussian peoples. These had made a sordid pact between themselves against the Order. Though they had been ordered both by the Apostolic See and by an imperial judgment to annul it, they had scorned the Two Swords,³ taken up arms against their lords, and driven them out of the whole of Prussia. Now, the Order's power only comprised to Marienburg and some unimportant cities, but these were under siege by the Prussians, and the Grand Master of the Order was beleaguered and could barely defend himself. Therefore, they asked for advice and help.

3.3.1. Conflict between the Prussian cities and the Teutonic Knights

3.3.1.1. *Geography of Prussia*

[56] Since we are now speaking of Prussia, no one would consider it irrelevant – I believe – if I give an account of this region and how it came into the power of the Teutonic Order. Prussia is a region neighbouring the Baltic Sea that reaches to Sweden and Norway. In one direction, they share frontiers with the Saxons, and in other directions with the Poles and the Livonians. Through the middle of the country runs a river called Viscela,⁴ that flows from the Sarmatian Mountains, runs through Poland and Prussia, empties into the [Baltic] sea, and separates Germany from Scythia. Though this sea originates in the Britannic Ocean, it has land on all sides and cannot – contrary to what many say – be called Amphitrites. I believe that Jordanes⁵ held this error since he named the the Viscela river Justulum and claimed that it empties into the Ocean.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 416 ff.

² A survey of Piccolomini's writings on Prussia is given in *Scriptores*, IV, pp. 213 ff.

³ The religious and the secular power with their different means of coercion

⁴ Jordanes, ch. 3

⁵ Jordanes (6th cent.): Gothic Byzantine official and historian, who wrote a history of the Goths (*De origine actibusque Getarum / Getica*), about 551, which Piccolomini used as a basis for his own *Historia Gothorum* and for his description of the Goths in the present report

[57] Hanc terram¹ cum Gothi duce Berigo Scandaviam reliquissent, Ulmerigi tenebant, quos illi bello victos propriis sedibus expulerunt, atque deinde cum Vandalis, qui vicini fuerunt, manum conserentes, cum virtutem paene parem invenissent, eos sibi socios asciverunt. Manserunt hic Gothi usque ad Filimerum², qui post Berigum quinto loco regnavit. Filimerus autem, gloriae cupidus, sedes dum novas quaerit, ad paludes Maeotidas pervenit ac ponte facto³ partem trajecit exercitus atque in Pontum Euxinum victis, quae mediae⁴ fuerunt, gentibus penetravit ibique sibi⁵ ⁶ suisque perpetuas sedes habuit.

[58] Hinc Scytharum⁷ laboribus ac bellis asperum genus ortum, a quo rex Persarum Darius turpi fuga summotus, Cyrus cum omni exercitu trucidatus, dux Alexandri magni Sepirion⁸ pari ratione cum universis {17v} copiis deletus⁹ traditur, quod¹⁰ Romanorum audisse, non sensisse arma perhibetur, quod¹¹ Parthicum et Bactrianum imperium condidisse vetus opinio confirmat. Nondum tamen omnes Filimeri copiae trajecerant, cum pons in medio fractus et¹² illis redeundi¹³ et his, qui retro fuerunt, transeundi facultatem ademit¹⁴. Remansit igitur non parva pars Gothorum citra paludes, quae sedes priores ad Viscelam fluvium¹⁵ ac Baltici maris littora repetunt. Haec cum ritu barbaro foetidoque¹⁶ vitam degeret gens, Brutenica dicta est, quamvis postea mutata prima littera Prutenicum nomen obtinuerit.

¹ turram U

² Felimerium W

³ magnam *add.* O, W

⁴ medio W

⁵ *omit.* O

⁶ ibique sibi : ibi suique W

⁷ Hinc Scytharum *omit.* W

⁸ Sopirion O; Soprion W

⁹ delatus U

¹⁰ quem MA

¹¹ quem MA

¹² *omit.* MA

¹³ redeundis W

¹⁴ adeunt U, W

¹⁵ Flavium U

¹⁶ fetido U

3.3.1.2. Early history of Prussia

[57] At the time when the Goths left Scandavia with Berigus as their leader, this country was held by the Ulmerigi. The Goths defeated the Ulmerigi and drove them from their homes. Then they fought the Vandals, their neighbours, but finding them almost their equal in strength, they instead allied themselves with them. The Goths stayed in Prussia until Filimerus, who was their fifth ruler after Berigus. But Filimerus was eager for glory and went to find a new home for the people. Coming to the Maeotian Marshes, he built a bridge and led part of his army over it. Having defeated the peoples in between, he reached Pontus Euxinus,¹ where he established a permanent permanent home for himself and his people.

[58] (There, the Scythian people,² strengthened by labours and wars, had its origins. It is said to have forced Darius, King of the Persians, to flee shamefully, to have killed Cyrus with all his army, and to have destroyed Sepirion,³ a general of Alexander the Great, together with all his forces. This people is said only to have heard of Roman arms, but never to have felt them. According to an old belief, they founded the Parthian and the Bactrian empire.⁴)

Not all of Filimerus' troops had passed over when the bridge broke in the middle, making it impossible for the first to return and for the last to pass over. A large part of the Goths was therefore left in the area beyond the [Maeotian] marshes, but later they returned to their former home by the river Viscela and the coast of the Baltic Sea. Here they lived their barbarous and sordid lives, for which reason they were called the Brutenic (brute) people.⁵ Later, the first letter in the name was changed to P, and thus they obtained the name Prutenic (Prussian).

¹ The Black See

² A Central Asian people, known to the Greeks and the Romans

³ Not identified

⁴ This whole passage (a quo rex Persarum ... confirmat) is taken almost literally from Justinus' epitome of Trogus' *Liber Historiarum Philippicarum*, 2.3: *Imperium Asiae ter quaesivere; ipsi perpetuo ab alieno imperio aut intacti aut invicti mansere. Darium, regem Persarum, turpi ab Scythia submoverunt fuga, Cyrum cum omni exercitu trucidaverunt, Alexandri Magni ducem Zopyriona pari ratione cum copiis universis deleverunt. Romanorum audivere, non sensere arma. Parthicum et Bactrianum imperium ipsi condiderunt. Gens laboribus et bellis aspera*

⁵ This etymology is of course false

[59] Hic Christi nomen incognitum neque audita Romana tuba neque signum aquilae visum ante Friderici secundi tempora fuit. Eo vero imperante, cum jam Saraceni Jerosolymam¹ obtinuissent atque urbem Accon² expugnassent, fratres beatae Mariae Theutonicorum, qui ex orienti fugam fecerant, ne per otium tabescerent, Hermano duce, claro atque animi et corporis dote³ pollenti, qui tum religionis magister fuit, imperatorem adeunt, Prusciam, si queant, ab infidelibus extorquere, dono petunt. Obtinent, auxilia vicinorum implorant, bellum Prutenis inferunt, diu varia victoria pugnant, ad extremum victos paganos sub jugum mittunt, dominatum terrae accipiunt, in Livoniam transeunt, regionem longe lateque populantur, barbaros quamplurimos ad Christi⁴ religionem trahunt, ditionem suam mira felicitate amplificant. Fiunt potentia, fastu, gloria pares regibus.

[60] Cum Polonis frequentes lites ineunt, nunc superantur, nunc superant. Denique patrum nostrorum memoria {18r} Vladislao⁵ gentis regi, prudentia et animi magnitudine ac religionis cultu memorabili, bellum indicunt. Is impigre proelium struit⁶ Vitoldumque fratrem suum, magnum Lituaniae ducem, in auxilium vocat, virum sui temporis severissimum et astutiarum⁷ plenum. Proelium Julio mense committitur, pugnatum est summa contentione, diu Mars dubius fuit. Multi hinc atque inde ceciderunt. Ad ultimum victi religiosi corruunt, sexcenti⁸ equites natu nobiles ea pugna periere⁹, vulgus ignobile sine numero caesum. Victor Polonus omnem Prusciam invadit. Religioni castellum¹⁰ beatae Mariae tantum remanet. Sed interveniente Sigismundo Caesare provincia fratribus¹¹ restituta est, aurum regi datum, foedus utrimque perpetuo dictum. Regnaverunt posthac suo modo¹² religiosi compluribus annis, subditos suos pace parta non tam metu^{13 14} quam beneficiis in oboedientia retinentes.

¹ Hierosoly... *et passim* MA, WO

² Acharon U; Accaron O, W

³ *omit.* U

⁴ regionem longe ... Christi *omit.* K

⁵ Ladislao U

⁶ truit U

⁷ astutia W

⁸ quadringenti O

⁹ perire K

¹⁰ castrum O, W

¹¹ patribus U

¹² more O, W

¹³ mora W

¹⁴ tam metu : tametu U

3.3.1.3. *Arrival of Teutonic Knights*

[59] The name of Christ was unknown there, and they had neither heard the Roman trumpet nor seen the eagle standard before the times of Friedrich II. When, during his reign, the Saracens took Jerusalem and conquered Accon, the brothers of Holy Mary of the Germans fled from the East. So as not to waste away in idleness, they – under the leadership of Hermann,¹ a noble man of great physical and mental strength, and at that time Master of the Order – went to the emperor and requested to be given Prussia as a gift if they were able to wrest it from the infidels. When their request was granted, they asked for help from their neighbours and made war on the Prussians.² Long they fought with changing success, but in the end, they defeated the pagans and sent them under the yoke.³ Having taken the lordship of that country, they continued to Livonia which they laid to waste far and wide, forcing many barbarians to convert to the Christian religion. They extended their domain with astonishing success and became the equals of kings in power, splendour and glory.

3.3.1.4. *War with Poland*

[60] They often fought with the Poles, sometimes winning, sometimes losing. Finally, in the memory of our fathers, they declared war on the king of that country, Wladislaw,⁴ a man of superior wisdom, greatness of soul, and piety. He prepared energetically for war, calling on his brother Vitold, Grand Duke of Lithuania, for help. Vitold was one of the most ruthless men of his time and very crafty. Battle was joined in July⁵. They fought relentlessly, and for a long time, it was uncertain who would win. Many fell on both sides, but in the end, the order lost. 600 knights of noble birth were slain and numerous common soldiers killed. The victorious Pole invaded all of Prussia, and only Marienburg remained in the hands of the Order. But at the intervention of Emperor Sigismund, the Order regained the province, the king was given a sum of money, and a permanent settlement was imposed on the two parties. Since then the Order has reigned for many years, and after the peace was obtained, they kept their subjects obedient less through fear than through favours.

¹ Hermann von Salza (ca. 1165-1232): Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights from 1210 to his death

² 1230

³ "sent them under the yoke": a classical Roman expression, cf. Caesar: *De bello Gallico*, 1, 7: *Caesar, quod memoria tenebat L. Cassium consulem occisum exercitumque eius ab Helvetiis pulsum et sub jugum missum*

⁴ Wladyslaw II (Jagiellon)(1351-1434): Grand Duke of Lithuania, King of Poland from 1386 to his death

⁵ Battle of Tannenberg, 15 July 1410

[61] At cum pax divitias¹, divitiae² superbiam luxumque peperissent, saevire fortuna ac miscere omnia coepit. Administrante Paulo³ religio scissa est: aliud his, aliud illis videri, insidias invicem tendere, alter alterum ferre non posse. Qui res belli asperrimas maximaque pericula toleraverunt⁴, quietem atque opes⁵ pati non posse. Fratrum igitur major pars a magistro deficit. Is veritus, ne civitates quoque dividerentur, et aliae suam, aliae suorum aemulorum partem sequerentur, vocatis rectoribus earum, ut se uniant, jubet haud dubitans, quin uniti secum sentirent. Civitates occasionem nactae faciendi, quod tota mente quaerebant, accersita nobilitate ac militia {18v} provinciae, quas vel praelati vel religiosi multis ante annis injurias in populum contulissent, non sine grandi querela commemorant. Regimen terrae pessimum esse, nisi occurrant, ruituram patriam dicunt. Est omnibus unus animus nunc, cum facultatem habeant, succurrendi, ne propriam salutem deserant. Fit conventus indulgente magistro. In eo decernitur sedecim virorum fieri consilium oportere, quod singulis annis certo loco certoque tempore sedens querelas privatorum audiat, gravamina corrigat, neque injuriam fieri cuiquam⁶ sinat. Si quis hujus consilii censuram contempserit, in eum publice vindicetur⁷, sive is episcopus sive magister supremus fuerit. In eo consilio qui praesideant, placet quattuor ex ordine praelatorum, quattuor ex religiosis, reliquos octo ex nobilibus ac civitatibus⁸ assumi debere. Probat omnia Paulus, faventes sibi ut civitates sint⁹. Nec diu post¹⁰ legati civitatum Fridericum tertium Caesarem adeunt, religiosorum ineptum regimen accusant, indignis se contumeliis affici queruntur. Foedus, quo se ab injuriis¹¹ tueantur ut sibi habere liceat, impense petunt. De facto foedere nihil aperiunt. Indulget Caesar, si modo juri religionis nihil praejudicii fiat.

¹ diuitiae U

² diuitias U

³ *omit.* U

⁴ toleraverant K, O, W

⁵ *corr. ex opem* V; opem K, U, W

⁶ fieri cuiquam : cuiquam fieri MA

⁷ vendicet W

⁸ esse *add.* W

⁹ *int corr. ex fiant; functo* U; *sunto* O, W

¹⁰ posse W

¹¹ iuriis O; iuris W

3.3.1.5. Alliance of Prussian cities

[61] But when peace had brought wealth, and wealth arrogance and luxurious living, fortune began to rage and throw all into disorder. During the administration of Paul,¹ the Order broke into into two factions, each pursuing its own policies, loathing and plotting against each other. The knights had endured great hardships and dangers of war, but they could not bear tranquillity and wealth. Thus, the majority of the Brethren deserted the Master. Fearing that the cities, too, would become divided and that some would follow him and others his rivals, he summoned the cities' leaders and bade them unite, in the belief that once united they would side with him. The cities seized upon the opportunity to do what they so ardently desired. They summoned the nobles and the military leaders of the province and presented a bitter indictment of the injuries inflicted over many years on the people by the prelates and the Order. Their government, they said, was the worst in the world and would destroy their country if unopposed. They all agreed that they should now, while they had the opportunity, join forces to aid their country and not give up on their own salvation. With the Grand Master's permission, they held a meeting in which it was decided to set up a board of 16 men to meet once a year in a certain place and on a certain date and settle conflicts between private people, correct abuses, and allow no one to be harmed. If anyone disregarded the decisions of this board, public measures would be taken against him, be he a bishop or even the Grand Master himself. As presidents of this board they decided to appoint four prelates and four knights, and the other eight from the nobles and the cities. Paul approved everything in order to keep the cities on his side. Soon afterwards, legates of the cities came to Emperor Friedrich III, accusing the Order of incompetent government and complaining of the bad treatment they were receiving. They earnestly sought permission to set up an alliance to protect themselves against further injury – without saying anything about the pact they had already made.² The emperor gave his permission on the condition that the rights of the Order were respected.

¹ Paul von Rusdorf (ca. 1385-1441): Grandmaster of the Teutonic Knights from 1422 to his death

² 1440

[62] Post aliquot annos mortuo Paulo Ludovicoque in ejus locum suffecto notitia foederis ad Nicolaum quintum, Romanum pontificem, defertur¹. Is legatum in Prusciam mittit episcopum Silvensem, hominem Portugallia natum, qui brevi tempore cuncta rimatus conventiones {19r} nexusque civitatum in publica forma Romam defert. In his pleraque capitula inventa sunt ecclesiasticae libertati adversa canonibusque contraria. Decernit apostolica sedes iniquum foedus atque ipso jure irritum. Qui illo posthac utatur, eum² anathemate ferit³. Id ubi inter Prutenos palam factum est, sunt qui censuras⁴ veriti mox foederi renuntiant, quos reliqui velut infames ac pejerantes⁵ falsum probro habent atque indignos hominum consortio. Crescit ob eam causam vulnus, odia inter civitates et religionem augentur. Turbida omnia fiunt, nihil boni aut aequi consulitur.

¹ defertum U

² cum U

³ ferat W

⁴ *omit.* U

⁵ deierantes O, W

3.3.1.6. *Papal intervention*

[62] Some years later, Paul died and was succeeded by Ludwig.^{1 2} Then information about the pact reached the Roman Pontiff, Nicolaus V. He sent the Bishop of Silva,³ a Portuguese, as a legate to Prussia. Having investigated everything in a very short while, he brought public information about the agreements and the alliance between the cities back to Rome. In the agreements were found several articles contrary to ecclesiastical liberty and the canons.⁴ The Apostolic See, therefore, judged that the pact was unlawful and illegitimate, and excommunicated those who kept it in the future. When this [judgment] was made public in Prussia, some, fearing the censures, soon renounced the pact. The others considered them to be infamous oathbreakers, unworthy of human fellowship. Thus, the wound keeps worsening, and the hate between the cities and the Order keeps growing. All is in disorder, and nobody cares for what is good and just

¹ Ludwig von Erlichshausen (1410-1467): Grandmaster of the Teutonic Knights 1449 to his death

² Paul Rusdorf was not directly succeeded by Ludwig von Erlichshausen, but by Konrad von Erlichshausen, grandmaster from 1441 to 1449

³ Not identified

⁴ Canon law

[63] Religiosi, postquam auctoritas ecclesiastica contemptui est, Caesarem uti bracchium saeculare adhibeat contra rebelles oratum faciunt. Imperatori vocanda altera pars atque audienda videtur. Ante Caesaris tribunal legati¹ utriusque partis ubi comparent, alteri criminantur alteros, deinde in Caesarem velut arbitrum compromittunt, ut is² controversiam, quae hinc atque inde objici possit, omnem audiat ac jure³ diffiniat, eo pacto, ut conventio ac reconventio⁴ eodem iudicio terminetur. Ad diem dictam cum ambae partes misissent, legati civitatum, dum per Moraviam iter faciunt, in manus latronum incidunt excussique bonis omnibus carceribus mancipantur. His de rebus suspenditur in alteram diem cognitio et rursus in alteram, donec verisimile sit, aut dimitti legatos interceptos aut alios ex Prussia remitti. Fit haec prorogatio contranitentibus {19v} religiosis, qui non obstante captura procedendum esse contendebant, cum legati civitatum aliud iter habentes suo⁵ ingenio per Moraviam perrexissent, inhospitam terram ac latronum domum, ubi rapina laudi datur, nec nobilis quisquam censetur, nisi praeda raptuque vivat⁶. Sed qui dandam esse dilationem putabant, nullam ex Prussia in Austriam satis tutam viam inveniri dicebant legatisque nihil imputandum, qui non modo imperatoris, sed Ladislai quoque Bohemiae regis ac Moraviae marchionis publicae securitatis litteras impetrassent atque his confisi recta via ad Austriam properassent. Fuit autem ultima, quae concessa est, dilatio sex dierum et XII hebdomadarum. Ea pendente legati civitatum e custodia dimittuntur, adnitente plurimum Georgio Pogiebratio⁷, regni Bohemiae gubernatore, viro illustri et alto ingenio.

¹ legatique U

² his U

³ in re W

⁴ ac reconventio *omit.* U

⁵ suapte O, W

⁶ iuvat O, U, W

⁷ Pogiebratiae U; Podzebracio W

3.3.1.7. *Imperial court trial (June – December 1453)*¹

[63] The Prussians ignored the ecclesiastical authority, and therefore the knights asked the emperor to employ the secular arm against the rebels. The emperor decided that the other part should be seen and heard, too. When the legates of the two parties appeared before the emperor's tribunal, they made accusations against each other and then agreed to submit to the arbitration of the emperor. He would hear the whole controversy and the arguments from both sides and then make a judgment, in such a way that both the claim [of the knights] and the counterclaim² [of the Prussians] would be adjudicated in the same judgment. Both parties sent their representatives to appear on the appointed day, but then it happened that the legates of the [Prussian] cities fell into robbers' hands while travelling through Moravia, were robbed of all their possessions, and thrown into prison. Therefore the trial³ was adjourned twice until there was reliable information whether the legates who had been abducted would be freed or others would be sent from Prussia. This postponement was made against the opposition of the knights who contended that the trial should proceed notwithstanding the capture of the legates from the [Prussian] cities: though they could have chosen other routes, they had decided to travel through Moravia, an inhospitable country and home of robbers, where plunder is praised, and no one is considered noble if he does not live from robbery and pillage. But those who favoured the postponement considered that there is no really safe road from Prussia to Austria. Moreover, the [Prussian] legates could not be blamed since they had obtained safe-conducts both from the emperor, from King Ladislaus of Bohemia and from the Margrave of Moravia, and had hastened directly to Austria, trusting in them. But the last postponement granted was for a period of 12 weeks and six days. During this postponement, the legates of the cities were released from prison, due to the energetic intervention of Georg Podiebrad,⁴ Governor of the Kingdom of Bohemia, an illustrious man of noble character.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 419 ff.

² "conventio / reconventio": claim / counterclaim

³ "cognitio"

⁴ Georg Podiebrad (1420-1471): Governor of Bohemia 1451 to 1457 when he became King of Bohemia

[64] Postquam secundo partes in praesentia Caesaris adsunt, concordiam prius¹ quaerere quam judiciarum sequi rigorem placet², delecti, qui hoc agitent³. Diebus plusculis frustra nituntur, legati civitatum indigne se multa⁴ perpeccatos a religiosis quaeruntur, relicturos se foedus ajunt, si modo cautum⁵ sit, ne contra privilegia deinceps vexari queant. Religiosi nihil se indigne fecisse affirmant. Foedus nisi ante omnia refutetur, spem nullam concordiae praebent. Itur ergo in jus.

[65] Ibi Petrus Knor⁶, qui tum⁷ religionis patronus erat, vir doctus ac⁸ dicendi peritus, iniquitatem iniquitatem foederis exponit, quod neque civili neque canonico jure subsistere possit. Civitates magno magistro simulque conventui oboedientiam promississe ac jurasse dicit, constitutiones Caroli quarti et aliorum Caesarum vetustas leges in medium profert, quibus {20r} conventiculae⁹ prohibentur. Omnes, qui convenissent damnosumque religionis foedus inissent, infames ac perjuros¹⁰ asserit, excidisse privilegiis, amisisse feuda, dignitate quavis nudatos esse simulque auri magno pondere plectendos. Foedus iniquum, cassum atque irritum pronuntiari debere. Anathema quoque in omnes promulgat, qui foederi contra mandata Romani praesulis adhaesissent.

¹ plus MA

² *omit.* U

³ agitant W

⁴ multos W

⁵ tantum U

⁶ Kuor U

⁷ tam W

⁸ atque W

⁹ conuenticula W

¹⁰ perjuros K, O, U, V *, W

[64] The second time they met before the emperor, it was decided to seek mutual agreement before having recourse to strict judicial process, and the persons who would undertake this were selected. For several days they laboured in vain: the legates of the [Prussian] cities complained of the many and undeserved abuses they had suffered at the hands of the knights, but they also said that they would end their pact if only they could have guarantees that they would no longer be harassed, in contravention of their privileges. On their part, the knights claimed that they had done nothing unjustified. The pact must be repealed before they would give any hope of an agreement. So, a judicial process was initiated.

[65] There Peter Knorr,¹ at the time an advocate of the Order, a learned man and a trained speaker, expounded on the heinousness of the [Prussian] pact, invalid in terms of civil as well as canon law.² The cities had promised and sworn obedience both to the grandmaster and to the Order. He also cited the constitutions of Karl IV³ and old laws of other emperors that forbade associations. He claimed that all who had met and joined this pact, so harmful to the Order, were infamous perjurers, who had lost their privileges and feudal possessions, had been deprived of all their offices, and should be heavily fined. The pact must be declared unlawful, null and void. Finally, he stated that all who had kept the pact against the command of the pope were excommunicated.

¹ Peter Knorr (1410-1478): German cleric and doctor in canon law

² Therefore they could not justify their actions by appealing to the grandmaster's permission alone

³ Karl IV (Luxembourg) (1316-1378): King of Bohemia 1446. Elected King of the Romans 1346 and crowned emperor in Rome in 1355

[66] Martinus Mair eo tempore causam civitatum tuebatur, bona facundia et scientia juris viris disertioribus comparandus. Ubi Petrus dicendi finem fecit, rogato Caesare, ut se quoque audiret. Civitates, inquit, indigne accusari neque merito vel perjuras vel infames dici, quae minime jusjurandum contempsissent foedus ineuntes, quod cum voluntate magistri et aliquorum praeceptorum percussissent facturosque sese omnia promisissent,¹ ² in quibus religioni tenerentur, neque belle adduci leges aut canones conventiculas³ prohibentes, quae tum⁴ damnantur, cum sine jussu aut voluntate superioris aguntur. Civitates namque Prutenicas jubente magistro convenisse, ligam nullo pacto irritam videri posse, quae auctore principe facta fuisset, nec rursus excommunicationis vinculo civitates teneri, quae numquam vocatae neque audita a summo pontifice fuissent. Esse praeterea jus naturae, ut se quisque vitam corpusque tueatur neque indignas oppressiones ferat. Religiosos tenuisse civitates loco servorum, nihil curasse libertates earum a divi imperatoribus obtentas. Hos agris, illos uxoribus spoliasset. Monetam percussisse damnosam. Theolonia graviora induxisse. Bella minus necessaria gessisse. Damnasse ultimo supplicio innocentes, delinquentes accepta pecunia liberasse. Non fuisse in terra Pruscia⁵ justitiae locum. Frustra quaestum populum. Si quando Romanus pontifex imploratus est, dixisse {20v} fratres ad imperii se tribunal pertinere; si rursus imperatoris censura quaesita est, in apostolicae sedis refugisse tutelam. Viros quattuor et viginti, qui de gravibus causis Romam ibant questum, interceptos a religiosis occisos et cum equis terra obrutos. Tot insolentiis oppressas civitates, cum nullum esset aliud remedium, ad suam defensionem id foederis necessario recepisse⁶.

¹ permisissent MA, WO

² facturosque sese ... permisissent *omit.* U

³ conventicula MA, WO

⁴ tunc MA

⁵ Pruscie O

⁶ accepisse O

[66] At that time, Martin Mair defended the cause of the cities, a well-spoken man who equalled the most eloquent men of law. When Peter had finished speaking, the emperor asked to hear Martin, too. He said that the accusations against the cities were without foundation and that they had not deserved being called infamous perjurers. They had not disregarded their oath when they entered the pact, for they had done so at the instigation of the grandmaster and some preceptors [of the Order], and they had promised to fulfil all their obligations to the Order. Moreover, it was unjust to refer to the laws and canons¹ forbidding associations since these are only forbidden when they are created against the command and will of the superior. The Prussian cities had met at the order of the Master, and the league could in no way be invalid when it had been founded at the instigation of their own prince. And the cities could not be excommunicated since they had neither been summoned nor heard by the Supreme Pontiff. Also, the law of nature allows all men to protect their own life and body and not to suffer unjust oppression. The knights had treated the cities as slaves and ignored the liberties they had obtained from the holy emperors. Some of them robbed them of their lands, others of their wives. They had struck bad money. They had imposed hefty levies. They had made unnecessary wars. They had sentenced innocents to death and taken money to set criminals free. In Prussia there was no room for justice. The people complained in vain. If they begged the Roman Pontiff [for help], the knights claimed they were subject to the emperor's tribunal, and if they then sought a judgment from the emperor, the knights took refuge with the Apostolic See. When 24 men went to Rome to complain of very important matters, the knights ambushed and killed them and buried them together with their horses. The cities had suffered so much abuse that, with no other remedy available, they had been forced to make the pact for their own protection.

¹ Canon law

[67] Ad eamque rem Caesaris auctoritatem accedere dicens litteras Friderici tertii, qui tum sedebat, legi iussit. Auditis litteris negavit Petrus magistrum Prussiae conventum civitatibus indulsisse aut ligam quovismodo probasse. Quod si factum fuisset, non tamen excusatas civitates esse, quae non magistro dumtaxat, sed magistro atque conventui iuramentum oboedientiae praestitissent. Apostolicum anathema refelli non posse dixit, cum Romanus pontifex causa cognita ligam damnasset iussissetque¹, ne quis illa uteretur. Si quis contra faceret, anathemate feriretur². Quid ni excommunicati essent, scienter usi. Quae de gravaminibus atque injuriis Martinus dixerat, partim refellit, partim negavit. Contra Caesaris litteras objecit³, quia neque locum, in quo datae fuissent, neque secretum geminae⁴ signum ex more continerent emanassentque longe post ligam factam⁵ neque retro trahi deberent. Deinde laxatis habenis: "Quid ego," inquit, "tecum, Martine, contendam? Concedo tibi, quae cupis omnia; esto⁶, magister conventusque ligam fieri consenserit, Caesar facultatem praebuerit, papa minime manum apposuerit⁷, gravissimas injurias ex religione civitates acceperint⁸. Quid tum? Licetne idcirco foedus inire perversum, statuta iniqua condere⁹, iuramenta recipere, quae libertatem ecclesiasticam pessumdent? {21r} Age, Martine, quid hic respondes? Capitulum illud est unum pessimum, quod inter cetera civitates sanxerunt, in quo se iudices super dominos suos constituunt. Ajunt enim: si factam injuriam cuiquam cognoverint, sive religiosi sive praelati injuriati fuerint, daturus se operam, menda¹⁰ ut aequa dignaque fiat; id si nequeant obtinere vindicatos se. Id mali minantur in eum, qui damnum dederit, quicumque is¹¹ demum fuerit, sive magister ordinis, sive pontifex. Quid tibi, Martine, videtur: licetne subditos facta superiorum corrigere? Esto, liceat! Quid illud? Vindicare in praelatos inque religiosos licet?"

¹ iussitque U

² si quis ... feriretur *omit.* U

³ abjecit MA, WO

⁴ gemme K, O, V, W; WO

⁵ fractam MA, WO

⁶ ego U

⁷ opposuerit MA, WO

⁸ acceperunt K

⁹ concedere W

¹⁰ emenda O, W

¹¹ his U

[67] Declaring that he could also refer to the emperor's own authority, he had the letter of Friedrich III read – in his presence. After the reading of the letter, Peter denied that the grandmaster had allowed the cities to meet or had in any way approved such a league. And even if he had, it was still no excuse, for they had made an oath not only to the grandmaster but also to the Order. And the apostolic anathema could not be disputed since the pope had condemned the league and forbidden membership in it only after having investigated the matter formally. All who disobeyed were excommunicated. Thus, those who were active in the pact knowingly were excommunicated. What Martin had said about the abuses and injuries [suffered by the Prussians], Peter partly refuted, partly denied. Against the emperor's letter, he objected that the place of issue was not indicated and neither had the secret, double¹ seal been used. Moreover, the letter had been issued long after the league had been formed, and it could not be made retroactive. Then Peter said, letting go of all restraints: "But why do I dispute with you, Martin? I admit everything you wish me to. Let us assume that the grandmaster and the Order actually approved the creation of the league, that the emperor gave his assent, that the pope did not intervene, and that the cities were greatly harmed by the Order. So what? Would they therefore be allowed to make a wicked pact, to pass evil statutes, to receive oaths, and to do away with ecclesiastical freedom? Now, Martin, what do you answer to that? The one completely unacceptable article, which the cities endorsed among others is the one in which they made themselves the judges of their lords. For they say: If they learn of an injury done to anyone, be it by the knights or by the prelates, then the cities shall endeavour to redress the matter reasonably and fairly. If they are unable to, then they shall take revenge. Thus, they threaten the person who did the injury whoever he is, be he the grandmaster or a bishop. What do you think, Martin: May subjects correct the actions of their superiors? And if that is allowed: may they take revenge on prelates and members of religious orders?"

¹ "geminae": a reference to the imperial double-headed eagle?

[68] Tum Martinus “Cogis me,” inquit, “Petre, plura, quam ab initio statueram, dicere. Parebo voluntati tuae. Unicum est – ut video – capitulum, quod toto in foedere damnas, reliqua ergo omnia probas. Recte hic agis, illud inique, quia multa, quae bona sunt, unico malo perire vis. Non sic rector orbis caelique motor Deus, qui multa milia malorum salvatorum se Loth promisit, si decem in civitate bonos viros offendisset. Apud Deum paucis¹ bonis² multi³ mali⁴ salvati sunt⁵; apud te, Petre, multis bonis unus malus exitio est. Sed ostendam tibi neque unicum hic malum inveniri capitulum, nam quod sedecim viris permissa est super illatis injuriis cognoscendi facultas, eatenus intelligendum est, quatenus illi capaces sunt. Si de re profana quaestio est, cur nequeat laicus adjuncto clerico cognoscere? Si hoc - quemadmodum diximus - ex consensu partium datum est, haud⁶ hic actio injuriarum intentatur, quam possis dicere personalem, sed rei per injuriam amissae vendicatio datur. {21v} Si hoc modo capitulum accipis, nihil est, quod criminari possis, neque tua est justa objurgatio, qui vindictam accusas in episcopos atque magistrum. Ostendis enim, cum multum intelligas, te nihil intelligere. Non enim vindicaturas⁷ sese⁸ injurias civitates ajunt, nisi cum alia via saluti suae consulere nequeant, hoc est, si⁹ potenti manu vel¹⁰ magister vel¹¹ episcopus injuriam pergit facere. *Ibo obviam ac vim vi repellam*: neque tu, Petre, hoc justum esse negabis, qui a natura ipsa defensionem indultam esse non ambigis neque hic¹² vindictam quasi vetitam ultionem interpreteris. Nam et vindicta dicitur, cum se quisquam adversus injuriantes modo licito atque honesto tuetur, neque nos tam verba quam sensum convenit sequi. Ego paulo ante dixi tuos religiosos multis modis injurios civitatibus esse multaque ab his fieri indigna, neque permitti homines Prusciae justitiae causa vel papam vel imperatorem adire. Haec - si vera sunt - quis non intelligit licere civitatibus factum facto tollere? At cum tu^{13 14} ista neges, in nos onus probandi transfers, neque id nos recusamus, si modo tempus datur et ad partes remissio et compulsoria. Annuis jam his, Petre, non dubito, qui nos aequum petere non ignoras.”

¹ *corr. ex pauci* V; pauci K, O, W; paci U

² *corr. ex bonis* V; boni K, O, U, W

³ *corr. ex multi* V; multis K, O, U, W

⁴ *corr. ex mali* V; malis K, O, U, W

⁵ salvati sunt : sunt saluti W

⁶ aut U

⁷ iudicaturus W

⁸ esse MA

⁹ *omit.* MA

¹⁰ *omit.* MA

¹¹ dominus *add.* MA, WO

¹² hoc W

¹³ *omit.* W

¹⁴ cum tu : tu cum MA

[68] Then Martin said, “You force me, Peter, to say more than I wanted to from the beginning, but I shall obey your wish. I see that you only condemn one article in the whole treaty, which means that you approve the others. To approve the others is right, but to condemn the one is wrong, for thus you want all the good ones to be quashed because of one bad. This is not what God, the ruler of the world and the mover of Heaven, would do: he promised Loth to save many thousand evil men if only he could find ten good men in the city. Thus God saved many evil men for the sake of a few good, but with you, Peter, one evil man is the ruin of many good men. But I will show you that this one article is, in fact, not bad, either. For when the 16 men are authorized to investigate injuries suffered, it should be understood in the sense that “as far as they have the competency.” If the matter in question is of a secular nature, then why can it not be investigated by a layman joined by a clergyman?¹ And if that was actually – as we have said – decided unanimously by the [two] parties, then this action has no injurious intent, not being aimed at any one person, but rather at reclaiming the thing lost injuriously. If you understand the article in this way, there is nothing to incriminate, and when you criticize the vindication against bishops and the grandmaster, you do so unjustly, showing that though you understand much, you really understand nothing. For the cities state that they shall only vindicate themselves in case of such injuries if they are unable to assure their safety and well-being by other means, that is if the grandmaster or a bishop endeavours to harm them by force, [according to the principle]: “*I shall oppose them and repeal force by force.*”² You, Peter, cannot deny that this is just, since you can have no doubt that nature itself allows self-defence and you do not interpret vindication as forbidden revenge. For it is called vindication when someone protects himself by licit and honourable means against those who harm him. Here it is important to understand the sense of the words rather than the words themselves. A short while ago, I said that the knights had harmed the cities in many ways, had done many unjustified things, and had not allowed the Prussians to seek redress either from the pope or the emperor. If this is true, who does not understand that the cities protected themselves from action by action? But if you deny this, you move the burden of proof to us. We do not decline this, if only we are given time, and both [parties] are obliged to come back. I do not doubt, Peter, that you approve of this since you know that we what we ask for is just.

¹ The board of investigation was actually composed of both laymen and clergy, see above

² *Vim vi repellere licet*: the principle of self-defence in Roman law, as codified in the Digest of Justinian

[69] “Immo vero,” inquit Petrus, “neque annuo neque justum censeo. Hic jam finiri litem oportet. Diem dictam novistis: armatos venire in bellum decuit, non postquam in campum exieras¹ domum redire atque arma sumere. Demirror tuam, Martine, prudentiam, qui tempus ad ea probanda {22r} requiris, quae probata tuam causam nihil adjuvent. Age, si quid telorum habes, nunc emittito neque parte praesente certamen fugias. Novi² ego tuas versutias, fuga salutem quaeris.”

[70] Cum diu³ Petrus diuque Martinus invicem contendissent, eo demum deducta res est, ut super danda negandave⁴ dilatione omnis controversia consistere videretur. Emissis igitur litigatoribus, Caesar inter assistentes ex bono et aequo, quid agendum sit, percontatur. Aderant legati principum complures⁵, qui cum accepissent coram Caesare civitates Prutenicas adversus religionem litem habere subditosque contra superiores atque – ut ipsi dicebant – servos contra dominos, jus sibi nimium vindicare, non tam vocanti Caesari morem⁶ gesturi⁷ quam propriam acturi⁸ causam ad commune restringendum incendium accurrisse videbantur.

¹ exieris K

² non W

³ diuque K, V

⁴ neganda ne W

⁵ contra quamplures MA

⁶ moram W

⁷ gestari W

⁸ auctori K

[69] Peter replied, "I most certainly do not approve of it nor consider it just. The trial must be ended here and now. You knew the appointed day: you should have come armed to the war and not return home and arm yourselves after you had entered the battlefield. I really wonder at your wisdom, Martin, since you demand time to get proofs when those proofs do not aid your cause. If you have any spears, throw them now, and do not flee battle while the [other] party is present. But I know your clever tricks: you seek salvation by flight."

[70] When Peter and Martin had argued against each other for a long time, in the end the whole controversy became a question of whether a postponement should be granted or not. The litigants were then sent out of the room, and the emperor asked the attendants what they thought would be good and equitable to do. Many legates from the princes were present, for when these heard that there would be a trial before the emperor of the Prussian cities against the Order and that subjects would vindicate their rights against their superiors (servants against their lords, as they said), they hastened to come, not in obedience to the emperor, who had summoned them, but in order to protect their own interests and extinguish a fire threatening them all.

[71] Primus tamen, qui sententiam dicere rogaretur, Aeneas fuit, Senensis episcopus, qui hoc modo locutus est: “Lis, quantum mihi videtur, optime Caesar, neque parva neque contemnenda est, quae religiosos fratres civitatesque vexat. Non hic ager¹ Arpinas aut Tusculanus in dubium² venit: de grandi provinca, de regno potenti quaestio est. Religiosi, ut³ sibi subjectas et ad omne imperium obsequentes habeant civitates, conantur. Civitates, ut liberae sint religionique minimum debeant, contra nituntur⁴. Quinque – nisi fallor – et quinquaginta civitates inter se⁵ foedus iniere⁶, iniere⁶, quod nunc religio damnat. Hoc lippis oculis ac summis – ut ita dicam – digitis aut infringere infringere aut approbare grave est. Quantum ego sive legendo sive videndo in hanc usque diem percipere potui, haudquaquam regnorum causas jure ac iudicio diffinitas invenio, nisi {22v} fortasse sub magno imperio parvum regnum in litem cecidit⁷. Nam tempore, quo floruit Romana potestas, non me latet et litigasse reges⁸ de regno et accepta sententia paruisse. Nec obscurum est duos fratres de regno Bulgariae⁹ contententes apud Francfordiam imperatoris olim iudicium suscepisse. Sed poterat eo tempore Caesar, quod verbo dixerat, opere complere. Nunc, quae sit potestas imperii, neminem fugit. Sedes apostolica, etsi nonnumquam regnorum causas suscipit, quantas diffiniat, videtis. Saepe nostris diebus de regno Franciae, de regno Siciliae, de regno Hungariae disputatum audivimus, sed adhuc sub iudice lis est. Regnorum controversias aut amici bonique viri componunt, aut gladius dirimit. Mutae sunt leges, ubi loquuntur reges. Non minus vere quam pulchre dictum est similes araneorum telis esse leges, quae tenuis census homines quasi muscas capiunt, in transitu potentum velut aquilarum dissipantur. “Sed quorsum haec?” dicat aliquis. Nempe ne credas, Caesar, quamcumque sententiam tuleris, acceptum iri, ne praecipis iudicium agas, ne sententiam promas, quae ridiculo sit. Omnia experiri prius, quae sunt ad concordiam, malim quam ferri¹⁰ sententiam, cui non pareant partes.

¹ agere K

² quaestionem MA

³ autem U

⁴ mittuntur U

⁵ inter se *omit.* O

⁶ inire K, U

⁷ uenit O

⁸ litigasse reges : reges litigasse MA

⁹ Hungariae U

¹⁰ ferre MA, WO

[71] The first one asked to speak was Aeneas, Bishop of Siena, who spoke in this fashion¹:

“As far as I can see, this conflict, excellent Emperor, which agitates the Order and the cities, is neither small nor insignificant. It is not a question of a field in Arpinum or Tusculum, but of a great province and a powerful realm. The Order is endeavouring to keep the cities as subjects obeying all commands, while the cities are striving to become free and owe as little as possible to the Order. If I am not mistaken, 55 cities have made a pact between them which the Order now rejects. Breaking it or approving it is a grave matter, to be undertaken with the eyes wide open and – so to say - with the tips of the fingers. As far as I have been able to ascertain until now, by reading and by seeing, the causes of kingdoms are not regulated by law or judicial practice – except, possibly, in those cases when a small kingdom under a great empire came into conflict. For I am aware that when the Roman power flourished, kings were sometimes fighting about a kingdom and obeyed the sentence passed. And it is known that once two brothers fighting about the Kingdom of Bulgaria accepted the emperor’s judgment in Frankfurt.² But at that time, the emperor had the power to carry out what he said. Everybody, however, knows what [little] power the Empire has today. As for the Apostolic See, it sometimes intervenes in matters of kingdoms, but you see with how small effect. In our own days, we have often heard about conflicts concerning the Kingdom of France, the Kingdom of Sicily, and the Kingdom of Hungary, but these conflicts are still under judicial consideration. Conflicts about kingdoms are settled by friends and good men³, or by the sword. Laws are silent when kings speak. As it is said both truly and elegantly, laws are like the webs of spiders: they may catch unimportant men like flies, but when powerful men pass through they are torn apart as by eagles. ‘But what is your intention with this?’ someone may ask. It is that you should not, Emperor, believe that your judgments will be accepted whatever you decide; that you should not make a judgment precipitously; that you should not pass a sentence that is laughed at. I would try everything to make peace rather than pass a sentence which the parties will not obey.

¹ As Peter Knorr and Martin Mair would have spoken in German, and there is no mention of translation from German to Latin, this passage may indicate that Piccolomini had sufficient German to understand even a complex oral argumentation in German

² Piccolomini is probably referring to the judgment of Emperor Ludwig der Fromme between two brothers, each claiming the crown of the Wilzen (changed by Piccolomini to Bulgaria). The incident is mentioned in the *Annales Einhardi*, but it is uncertain if Piccolomini had his knowledge of the event directly from that source

³ I.e., mediators

[72] Quaeris ex nobis, an quae petitur¹ danda dilatio videatur? Minime, inquit Petrus, cur enim eorum probatio requiratur, quae probata nihil praesidii causae afferunt? Sic Petrus existimat. Ego contra sentio, namque² si probant civitates magnum magistrum conventusque magnam partem fieri foedus consensisse, rursusque religiosos contumeliose rexisse provinciam, {23r} privilegia civitatum sprevisse neque Romani praesulis neque Caesaris adiri tribunalia permississe, quamvis ruit³ statutum⁴ ecclesiasticae libertati contrarium, non tamen⁵ est, cur civitates quasi perjuras atque infames grandi pecunia condemnemus⁶ foedusque totum irriteremus, quod potest magna in parte salvari. Statuo⁷ igitur dandam esse dilationem, quae petitur, non modo ut probentur, quae civitates objiciunt, sed ut iterum atque iterum de pace tractetur. Illic principales erunt partes, apud quas et pacis et belli plena potestas est, hic procuratores sunt, quos servare mandati fines diligenter oportet. Quis novit, an quae hic negatur, ibi concordia reperiat? Dilationem mea sententia, Caesar, quae petitur, non negabis⁸, legatos in Prusciam praestantes viros mittes, partes ad concordiam summo conatu vocabis. Si annuunt, rem paene divinam confecisti. Si neque illic paci locus est, jube⁹ probationes recipi, quae possunt, atque in alteram diem vocatis partibus cum consilio principum sententiam prome. Quod si negata dilatione processeris, vereor, ne civitates indigne circumventas aut oppressas se dicant atque sententiae tuae quasi nimis affectatae parere recusent.

¹ petito W

² nam MA, WO

³ ruat MA, WO

⁴ statum U

⁵ omit. U

⁶ dampnemus W

⁷ corr. ex statuto V; statuto U, MA, WO

⁸ corr. ex non negabis petitur V; petitur non negabis : non negabis petitur K

⁹ lube U

[72] You ask us whether the requested postponement should be granted. No, Peter says, for why should we want proof of something which even if proven is not relevant to the case? That is Peter's opinion. I, on the contrary, believe as follows: if the cities prove that the grandmaster and a large part of the Knights accepted the pact and that the Order has ruled the province abusively, ignored the cities' privileges, and allowed access neither to the pope's nor the emperor's law courts, then, even if one of the statutes is incompatible with ecclesiastical liberty, there is no reason for us to fine the cities heavily as perjurers and infamous and to annul the whole pact when it may to a great extent be preserved. I, therefore, consider that the requested postponement should be granted not only to examine the objections of the cities but also that peace may be negotiated repeatedly. The principal parties with full powers to [make] peace and war will be there,¹ while their representatives, bound to carefully respect the limits of their mandate, will be here.² Who knows whether the peace that is refused here, may be found there? So, in my opinion, Emperor, you should grant the requested postponement, send eminent men as legates to Prussia, and do everything you can to draw the parties towards peace. If they assent, you will have performed an almost divine thing. If there is no room for peace there, either, you should ask for the documentation the Prussians can deliver, summon the parties to appear on another day, and pass sentence with the advice of the princes. But if you deny the petition now and continue the proceedings, I fear that the cities will claim to have been tricked and molested and refuse to obey your sentence as prejudiced and one-sided.³

¹ In Prussia

² At the emperor's court

³ That this was not Piccolomini's judgement after the events actually happened but before is shown by a letter from him to Cardinal Carvajal from the beginning of December 1453, right before the emperor passed sentence, where he wrote: *Prutenica causa non me permisit recedere. Ea hodie ut puto finietur. Pars civitatum existimans se gratam, non vult in iudicio amplius comparere, nisi aliud nascatur; timendum est inter partes grave bellum. Neque enim legibus aut canonibus inter populos potentes diffiniri lites solent; facile est ferre sententiam, exequi difficillimum* (WO, III, 1, 188, p. 369).

[73] His ab Aenea dictis, rogantur legati archiepiscopi Maguntini, quae sentiant¹, dicere. Hi cum ceteris principum legatis colloquium petunt. Assurgunt universi atque in alium se locum recipiunt. Diu inter se² confabulantur. Ubi unanimes sunt, reversi dilationem³ concedendam negant neque aliud causae dicunt, nisi quia⁴ probatis, quae Martinus pro sua parte adduxisset⁵, non tamen⁶ foederi pondus esset. Atque hoc esse legatorum omnium concors iudicium asserunt. Ad ea, quae dixerat Aeneas, nihil {23v} respondent. Quaeritur deinde, quid opinionis habeant⁷ consilarii Caesaris. Dempstis paucis omnes in sententiam Aeneae dilabuntur⁸. Legati principum duodeviginti fuerunt, consilarii Caesaris quattuordecim, ex quibus duo incerti fuerunt. Ceteri, quamvis cum Aenea saperent, numero tamen victi sunt. Caesar, quod est consuetum, majorem partem secutus est, quamquam male sese res⁹ habet, cum sententiae numerantur, non ponderantur. Martinus, quamvis spe¹⁰ magna cecidisset, non tamen animo decidit, sed cum succedere hac via non videt, alteram aggreditur. Audiri jam civitates aequum esse, dicit, super querelis suis contra religiosos, antequam sententia de foedere promatur, quando¹¹ ex compromisso liquet conventionem atque reconventionem simul terminari debere, nihil dubitans, quin admissa reconventionem dilationem obtineat ad ea probanda, quae contra religiosos objecerit. Sed neque hac via successit.

¹ sentient W

² sese O, W

³ deletionem U

⁴ quod MA

⁵ adduxit O

⁶ tantum MA, WO

⁷ habent W

⁸ Aeneae dilabuntur : dilabuntur Enee W

⁹ sese res : res se W

¹⁰ spes K

¹¹ quin MA

[73] When Enea had spoken, the legates of the Archbishop of Mainz were asked for their opinion. They requested [time for a] meeting with the other legates of the princes. Then they all rose and went to another room where they had a long discussion. When they had reached unanimity, they returned and said that the postponement should not be granted, giving no other reason than that the proofs which Martin had presented on the part of his clients were of little importance with regard to the pact. And they stated that this was the unanimous judgment of all the legates. They did not make any response to Aeneas' arguments. Then the counsellors of the emperor were asked for their opinion. With few exceptions, they all agreed with Enea. The legates of the princes were 18 and the counsellors of the emperor 14, of whom two were uncertain. Though the rest agreed with Aeneas, they were defeated by numbers. The emperor, as is the custom, followed the majority. It is bad, though, when opinions are counted, not weighed. Though Martin had been disappointed as regards his great hope, he did not lose courage but seeing that one way did not succeed, he tried another. He said that it was equitable to hear the cities concerning their conflicts with the Order before passing sentence on the pact, since, according to the compromise [that had been reached previously], both the claim¹ and the counterclaim² should be dealt with. He did not doubt that if they accepted to deal with the counterclaim, he would obtain a postponement, making it possible for him to obtain proofs of the complaints against the Order. But this way did not succeed either.

¹ Of the Order

² Of the cities

[74] Assurgens enim Petrus, renuntiatum esse reconventioni a Martino dixit, qui cum defensionem suam multis verbis exposuisset, interrogatus denique, num quidquam proponere vellet, et¹ reconventionem se nolle interpretari² dixisset. Fatetur Martinus illis se verbis usum, quae Petrus ait, sed addidisse “ea vice” atque “illam³ vicem” pro illa audientia posuisse, ne taedio esset auditoribus, neque verisimile cuiquam videri posse tantam causam, tam magnam, tam contentiose agitatam unico verbo donari ac propterea esse remissum⁴, quia dictum a se fuerit “ea vice”; nolle reconventionem praeponere⁵ neque se mandatum tantae donationis {24r} habere, qui sit ad causam procurator atque advocatus constitutus. Negat Petrus dictum esse “ea vice”, Martinus instat dictum. Fit controversia an sit dictum⁶. Hic rursus emissis litigatoribus de dicto quaeritur. Notario, qui pro Martino testimonium praebet, non adhibetur fides. Rogantur assistentes, quid audiverint. “Ea vice” dictum quinque dicunt, XII negant, reliqui neque hoc neque⁷ illud asserere se posse asserunt⁸, qui⁹ non sint¹⁰ omnium verborum memores. Res tum¹¹ magis dubia redditur: sunt, qui voces illorum praeferendas putant¹², qui dictum ajunt obaudisse, namque quae sunt dicta, facile quispiam potest audisse, quae dicta non sunt, nemo potest¹³. Contraria tamen sententia obtinuit atque his¹⁴ creditum est, qui dictum “ea vice” negaverunt.

¹ *interlin.* V; *omit.* K, O, W

² *intemptare* O; *intemptae* W

³ *eam* O, W

⁴ *remissam* O

⁵ *proponere* K, O, U, V, W

⁶ *sit dictum* : *sic sit* U

⁷ *nec* MA, WO

⁸ *dicunt* W

⁹ *quod* MA; *quia* WO

¹⁰ *sunt* W

¹¹ *cum* MA, WO

¹² *putent* K, O, U, V *, W

¹³ *audisse quae ... potest* *omit.* W

¹⁴ *iis* MA

[74] Peter rose up and said that Martin had waived the counterclaim [of the Prussian cities] when - after he had made his lengthy defence - he was asked if he wanted to say something further and then replied that he would not be talking about the counterclaim. Martin responded that he had, in fact, said that but had added "for now"¹, meaning in the present court hearing since he did not wish to exhaust the audience. Nobody could consider it likely that so important a cause, so vehemently fought, could be given up with one word and conceded just because he had said "for now". He did not want to waive the counterclaim, and he - as an appointed procurator and advocate in this trial - did not have the mandate to make such an important concession. Peter then denied that Martin had said "for now", but Martin insisted that he had. A disagreement arose as to whether it was said or not. Again the litigators were sent out of the room so that the question of what was actually said could be discussed. The notary gave testimony in support of Martin but was not believed. Those present were asked what they had heard. Five said they had heard the words "for now", 12 denied it, and the rest said they could not say since they did not remember all the words. Then the matter became even more uncertain when some thought that the opinion of those who said they had heard these words should be heeded since it is easy to remember something you have heard but impossible to remember something you have not heard. But the opposite opinion won, and it was decided to believe those who denied that Martin had said "for now".

¹ "ea vice"

[75] Non tamen reconventio prorsus negata est, sed procedendum in causa foederis sententiatum, atque id tacite sublatum, quod Martinus ex forma compromissi petebat, conventionem simul reconventionemque¹ currere. Inter haec rursus de concordia tractatur. Legati civitatum arbitrio Caesaris concedunt, foedus ex communi consensu deleat², dum suis privilegiis alio consulat remedio. Religiosi, nisi sententia feratur, casseturque liga, nulli concordiae auscultant. Tum Martinus civitates, inquit, ex compromisso coram Caesare litigare, arbitros autem prohibente parte pronuntiare non posse; ne Caesar in causa ultra procedat, quando³ formae⁴ compromissi non est locus, rogat. Legati procuratores revocant⁵, notarios quosdam relinquunt, qui publice protestentur, si contingat absente parte procedi. Pars legatorum evestigio recedit. Sequentibus diebus quaeritur in consilio, {24v} an liceat Caesari parte altera sive absente sive prohibente sententiam promere. Sunt, qui negant, et qui affirmant, nec leges aut isti parti aut illi desunt. Scientia namque juris huc atque⁶ illuc facile flectitur. Majori parti placet litigatoribus quamvis absentibus sententiam ferri⁷, quia compromissum in Caesarem factum jurisdictionem, quae illi est in omnes, haudquaquam extinxerit⁸.

¹ et (*interlin.*) reconventionem O

² debeat O, W

³ quoniam MA

⁴ ferme W

⁵ invocant W

⁶ huc atque : aut huc aut MA, WO

⁷ fieri U

⁸ extinserit O; extenserit W

[75] The [adjudication of] the counterclaim was not wholly denied, though: it was decided to proceed in the matter of the pact¹ and only tacitly avoid what Martin had requested by virtue of the formal compromise, viz. to address both the claim and the counterclaim² together. In the meantime, they again discussed a possible peace. The legates of the cities entrusted the decision to the emperor: he could dissolve the pact by common consent if only he preserved their privileges by other means. On their part, the Order would hear of no peace unless a formal sentence was passed and the league dissolved. Then Martin said that the cities were participating in this lawsuit on the basis of the compromise made in the emperor's presence and that bystanders³ had no say in it if just one of the two parties forbade it. He asked the emperor not to proceed with the case since the stipulations of the compromise were not respected. Then the legates [of the cities] recalled their procurators, leaving only some notaries who were to protest publicly if the trial was continued in the absence of one of the parties. A part of the legates left immediately. The following days, it was debated in the [imperial] council whether the emperor could pass judgement if one of the parties was absent or forbade it. Some said no, others yes, and both parties found laws in support. For legal science can easily be bent in one or the other direction. The majority found that sentence could be passed even in the absence of the litigants for the compromise reached in the emperor's presence did not annul his general legal authority.

¹ The claim of the Order against the Prussian cities that their pact was illegal

² The counterclaim of the Prussian cities against the Order, that they ruled badly

³ The representatives of the princes

[76] Quod si non teneat sententia tamquam arbitri, tamquam Caesaris et ordinarii iudicis omnino sit valitura. Caveri quoque in compromisso¹ dicunt, si qua pars litigatorum abfuerit², ad instantiam praesentis procedi debere. Convocantur³ de more civitates sententiam auditurae. Notarii, quibus id negotii mandatum erat, adversus compromissi formam et absente parte procedi queruntur solemnemque protestationem efficiunt, sed nullum his pondus inest. Fertur sententia, quae hunc habet sensum: civitates inter se foedus jure⁴ ⁵ facere non potuisse neque valere factum, cassum⁶ atque irritum esse. De poenis nihil dicitur, nam eas religiosi, priusquam sententia promeretur, in voluntate⁷ Caesaris posuerant. Litteras sententiae utraque pars recipit⁸, civitates uti calumnientur, calumnientur, religiosi uti se his juvent.

[77] Legati civitatum⁹ reversi domum spreto se atque irriso coram Caesare dicunt, sententiam ex ex odio atque invidia latam, compromissum violatum, venisse consiliarios {25r} principum homines partiales pretio conductos, qui Caesari assedissent, neque jus fieri ex bono et¹⁰ aequo¹¹ sinissent¹². Debitam dilationem pactamque reconventionem negassent, inauditis rationibus ligam damnassent, civitates omnes infames declarassent, pecunia inextimabili mulctassent, privilegia libertatesque ademissent, optimates populi capitali¹³ poenae subiecissent, reliquum vulgus in perpetuam servitatem iratis fratribus praebuissent.

[78] Commoti hac relatione populares non sine grandi furore arma sumunt. Oppida muro¹⁴ cincta et arces¹⁵ quasque munitas sive praelatorum sive religiosorum expugnant, diripiunt¹⁶, diruunt¹⁷. Fratres complurimos¹⁸ in vincula conjiciunt. Obstantes occidunt, intraque dies paucos omnem Prusciam sibi subjiciunt¹⁹. Oppidum, quod beatae Mariae vocitant, cum paucis aliis²⁰ in potestate religionis remanet, quod esse munitissimum ferunt, triplici fossa circumdatum, muris egregie²¹ ac turribus aedificatum, annona²², armis et omni machina belli copiose refertum. Huc se tota religio

¹ in compromisso *omit.* U

² adfuerit K; affuerit U

³ cum vocantur O, U, W

⁴ inire U

⁵ foedus jure : jure foedus W, MA, WO

⁶ quoque *add.* V

⁷ voluntatem MA

⁸ recepit W

⁹ civitatum U

¹⁰ ex *add.* U

¹¹ bono et aequo : aequo et bono W, MA, WO

¹² siuissent K, O; siuissent *corr.* ex sinissent V *

¹³ capituli W

¹⁴ mura MA, WO

¹⁵ arcis W

¹⁶ damnant W

¹⁷ *omit.* U

¹⁸ complures O

¹⁹ solum *add.* O, W

²⁰ cum paucis aliis *omit.* O, W

²¹ egregiis U

²² *omit.* K; victualibus O, W; *corr.* ex victualibus V

recipit, sperans, quod olim contigit, ex hoc loco amissam provinciam vindicare posse. Nec populares hujus oppidi fortitudine deterrentur: copias huc admovent¹ obsidionemque parant, sed non absque magno suorum detrimento repelluntur.

¹ admonent U

[76] Even if the emperor did not pass judgment as [chosen] arbitrator [of the present case], he could still pass judgment as emperor and ordinary judge. They also said it was stipulated in the compromise that even if one party of litigants was absent, they could proceed [with the case] at the demand of the party which was present. As customary, the cities were summoned to hear the judgment. Their notaries, who had been charged with this task, made complaints that the proceedings continued despite the formal compromise and in the absence of one party, and they made a solemn protest which carried no weight. The sentence was passed to this effect: the cities did not have the right to make a pact between them: therefore, the pact they had made was not valid but null and void. Nothing was said about penalties, for before the sentence was passed, the Order had made such dependent on the emperor's will. Both parties received a letter with the judgment, the cities so that they might be blamed, and the Order so that they might be helped.

[77] The legates of the cities went home and said that they had been scorned and mocked before the emperor, that the sentence passed was based on hate and envy, that the compromise had been violated, that the princes' counsellors, partial and bribed men, had come, sat with the emperor, and not allowed fair and good justice to be done. They had denied the due postponement and the adjudication of the counterclaim which had previously been agreed upon, they had condemned the league with unheard of reasons, they had declared all the cities to be infamous, they had wanted to impose an incredible fine, they had ignored the [cities'] privileges and liberties, they had wanted the death penalty for high-ranking citizens and to make the rest of the people permanent slaves of the maddened Knights.

3.3.1.8. Prussian rebellion

[78] Enraged by this report, the people took to arms. They stormed the walled cities and fortresses of the prelates and the Order, pulled them down and destroyed them. They threw many brothers [of the Order] in chains. They killed the opponents, and in a few days, they subdued all of Prussia. Only the city called Marienburg and a few others remained in the power of the Order, a city reported to be much fortified, surrounded with a triple moat, built with high walls and towers, and abundantly provided with food supplies, weapons and war machines of every kind. All the knights took refuge there, hoping to be able to reconquer all of the lost province from there – as had happened before. But the people were not deterred by the strength of this city: they brought their forces there and mounted a siege but were driven back suffering large losses.

[79] Magister Alemaniae, vir nobilitate ac prudentia memorabilis, cum haec audit, Albertum, marchionem Brandenburgensem, magnum illum et peritissimum belli ducem, multis rogatum precibus in Bohemiam dirigit, ubi ut auxilia regis adversus civitates Prutenicas quaerat. Ipse Ratisponam se confert, ubi Theutoniae¹ principes conventuros² {25v} intelligit. Quo cum venisset atque³ fandi potestatem impetrasset, perfidiam civitatum duris verbis accusat, quae spretis apostolicae sedis atque imperii sacri⁴ decretis adversus dominos suos arma cepissent, castra diruissent, religiosos fratres partim neci, partim captivitati dedissent. Consilia atque auxilia contra rebellem perjuriamque gentem flagitat, et quoniam⁵ necessarium sit ei argentum ad militem conducendum, quae sunt in Alemania possessiones religionis, venditurum se ait. Indulgentiam papae atque imperatoris ex legatis petit.

[80] Multa ibi de tanta injuria verba fiunt⁶: Dolere se omnes casum religionis ostendunt. Acta civitatum vituperant. Rem potissime⁷ gravem reddunt oratores marchionum Brandenburgensium, qui primi inter amicos religionis videri volunt. Cardinalis quoque sancti Petri acerbo⁸ animo de tali novitate locutus est: nationem Theutonicam⁹ pluribus verbis admonet, ne suam gloriam suumque decus amittat. Prusciam enim¹⁰ unicam esse terram¹¹ ait, quam Theutones armis in alieno solo quaesiverint¹². Caveant, ne id laudis perditum eant, si vel libertatem sibi civitates vendicent vel dominum ex alia natione asciscant. Legati papae atque imperatoris rem esse odio dignam ajunt, neque imperio neque apostolicae sedi tolerandam, quam civitates attemptasse dicuntur, nec¹³ dubitandum esse, quin utraque potestas {26r} in favorem religionis assurgat. Consensum de vendundis possessionibus ex papa atque imperatore petendum. Consulere¹⁴ religio¹⁵ quamprimum possit¹⁶ cum benevolis atque amicis exercitum paret atque ante occurrat¹⁷ quam Mariae castrum expugnetur. Non tamen concordiae tractatum spernat, si quis haberi possit. Scitum¹⁸ illud esse, omnia prius¹⁹ consilio quam armis aggredi sapientem²⁰.

¹ Theutonicae K; *corr. ex.* Thetonicae V; Theutonices U

² futurum O; futuros W

³ et O

⁴ imperii sacri : sacri imperii U, MA, WO

⁵ quantum MA, WO

⁶ sunt U

⁷ potissimum U

⁸ acerbo *corr. ex amarulento* V; amarulento K, O, W

⁹ Theutoniam K

¹⁰ ne suam ... enim *omit.* U

¹¹ esse terram : terram esse MA

¹² quaesierint MA

¹³ neque MA, WO

¹⁴ consulere O, W

¹⁵ religioque U

¹⁶ posset U

¹⁷ occurratur U

¹⁸ scitumque O

¹⁹ plus MA

²⁰ sapienter U

3.3.2. Plea of the Master of Germany

[79] When the [Order's] Master of Germany,¹ a man remarkable for his nobility and wisdom, heard this, he begged Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg, a great and most experienced military leader, to go to Bohemia to ask the king² for help against the Prussian cities. He himself went to Regensburg since he had heard that the German princes would assemble there. When he arrived and obtained permission to speak, he vehemently accused the cities of treacherousness: they had scorned the decrees of the Apostolic See and the Holy Empire, had taken arms against their lords, destroyed their castles, and killed or imprisoned Knights. Now he begged for advice and help against this rebellious and perjurious people, and since he would need money to hire soldiers, he would sell possessions of the Order in Germany. Finally, he asked – through their legates - for acceptance from pope and emperor.

[80] Much was said about this great injury: all expressed their regret at the plight of the Order and denounced the actions of the cities. The matter was given special importance by the ambassadors of the Margraves of Brandenburg, who wish to be seen as the first among the friends of the Order. Also the Cardinal of San Pietro spoke indignantly about this rebellion, admonishing at length the German nation not to lose its honour and pride, for Prussia was the only foreign country, he said, that the Germans had conquered by arms. They should take care not to lose this glory³ if the cities reclaimed their liberty or took a new lord from another nation.⁴ The papal and imperial legates declared that what the cities were trying to do was unacceptable both to the Empire and the Apostolic See, and both powers would undoubtedly come to the aid of the Order. It would be necessary to obtain both the pope's and the emperor's assent to sell possessions [of the Order]. The Order should consult as quickly as possible with supporters and friends about mobilizing an army and march to Marienburg before it would be conquered. However, the cardinal did not reject peace negotiations if possible for any wise man knows that diplomacy⁵ should always be tried before arms.

¹ Jost von Venningen (d. 1455): Master of the Teutonic Knights in Germany (Deutschmeister) from 1447-1454

² Ladislaus the Posthumous

³ "laudis"

⁴ E.g. the King of Poland, which actually happened

⁵ "consilium"

[81] Inter haec venit ad concilium Johannes Luthico, Casimiri regis Poloniae ac Lituaniae magni ducis orator, homo cautus et qui juris scientiam calleret. Is, cum audiretur, Casimirum, inquit, quoniam¹ esset Christianae religionis zelantissimus, aegerrime audisse, quae apud Constantinopolim Turci perpetrassent, quia et gravissimo vulnere Christianitatem confossam cerneret et in futurum² nostram³ religionem funditus eversum iri timeret, quando et Tartari et Turci una mente Christi nomen delere conarentur foedusque invicem ferocissimae illae gentes iniissent⁴. Pacatum tamen regis animum esse, quia cognovisset imperatorem cum suis principibus de tuenda Christianitate deque vindicanda injuria Graecorum adversus Turcos consilium cepisse. Hortari ergo, ne coeptum opus deseratur. Quod si Theutones et reliqui Christiani contra Turcos exercitum ducant⁵, Polonos, qui sunt finitimi Tartaris, immanibus illis et atrocissimis barbaris bellum illaturos acturosque, ne Turcis praesidio esse queant. Reliqua in aliud tempus dicturum se pollicetur. Huic⁶ Aeneas, Senensis episcopus, pro tempore pauca respondens et regem, qui ad conventum misisset, et hominem, {26v} qui venisset, commendavit audientiamque, cum vellet⁷, repromisit.

¹ quantum MA

² futuro U

³ nostratem O, W

⁴ inissent K, O, U, W

⁵ ducunt U

⁶ hic U

⁷ velle U

3.3.3. Intervention of the Polish ambassador¹

[81] In the meantime, Jan Lutek², ambassador of Casimir, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, arrived, a clever man and a specialist in the science of law. Given leave to speak, he said that since Casimir was a fervent believer in the Christian religion, he had been much pained to hear what the Turks had done at Constantinople. He considered that Christianity had received a terrible wound, and he feared that our religion would be completely ruined if the Tartars and the Turks joined efforts to destroy the name of Christ and if these ferocious peoples made an alliance between them. But the king's mind was eased when he heard that the emperor was taking counsel with his princes about protecting Christianity against the Turks and avenging the injury done to the Greeks. He, therefore, urged that this undertaking should not be abandoned. If the Germans and the other Christians led an army against the Turks, the Poles, who are neighbours to the Tartars, would go to war against those monstrous and dreadful barbarians so that they could not come to the aid of the Turks. He promised to say more [about this] at a later time.³ Bishop Enea of Siena improvised a short answer, commending the king who had sent him to the diet as well as the man who come, and promising him a hearing when he wished it.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 231-236

² Jan Lutek [Lutka] (1405-1471): Counsellor and diplomat of King Casimir IV. Later (1464) appointed Archbishop of Krakow

³ Pilat: *The Ottoman*, p. 125: *The Ottoman threat is presented in even darker colours by Jan Lutek of Brzezina, the Polish emissary at the Diet of Regensburg. On 5 May 1454, he told of the Ottoman domination in the northwest area of the Black Sea as being a certainty. After the fall of Constantinople, he went on to give an account of how Moldavia came under the power of Turks, which created a direct boundary between Poland and the Ottoman Empire. Jan Lutek asked for the help of the emperor and the other princes who were present at the Diet, so that the realms of Poland and Hungary remain unconquered by barbarians. Even if a future confrontation with the Turks and the Tartars were worrying for Poland, the realm was not as exposed as Hungary at that moment. Lutek obviously exaggerated in order to demonstrate the eagerness and fervor which King Casimir invested into the defence of faith and the reconquest of Constantinople*

[82] Tum ille: “Video,” inquit, “astare hic fratres Theutones admodum sollicitos. Fortasse de re Prutenica vobiscum¹ agunt. Quamvis ea minime mihi commissa est, quia tamen regi meo sum obnoxius, si quid ex vobis petitur, quod ad Prutenos pertineat², oro, ne properetis³, neve contra regem meum inauditum quidquam decernatis. Nihil enim contra civitates Prussiae statuere potestis, quin regi Poloniae damno atque incommodo sitis. Fuit enim Pruscia quondam Polonici juris, sed eam hi fratres multis annis contra jus fasque occupaverunt. Nunc, quia nihil est perpetuum, quod violenter agitur, exclusi eliminatique fratres sunt. Pruscia ad suum dominum reversa est. Praelati omnes excepto Varmiensi⁴ pontifice⁵ mei regis fidem sequuntur, neque is diu alienus erit. Militia et civitates universae sacramentum⁶ regi praestitere⁷. Is jam magno magistro bellum per fetiales indixit, obsiderique ab eo castrum Mariae non ambigo. Cavete, ne vestris decretis meo regi molesti sitis. Pensate atque attendite diligenter, quid expediat in tanta re agere, ne quid statuatis, quod postea statutum esse nolitis. *A Deo factum est istud et est mirabile in oculis nostris*, ut tantum⁸ terrae, tantum⁹ populorum, tantum dominiorum, tot saeculis a corona nostra alienatum, jam sine sanguine, sine gladio, sine ulla – {27r} ut ita dicam – opera nostra in potestatem Polonicam redierit. Quod si vos modo hanc regionem novo bellm implicueritis¹⁰, vereor, ne Turcorum causae faveatis.”

[83] His dictis fremere ac maledicere homini omnes Alemani vixque se continere¹¹, quin hominem unguibus laniarent. At magister Alemaniae: “Nos” inquit, “homo, cum tuo rege foedus aeternum paucis ante annis percussimus, jurejurando ac litteris et sigillis id firmavimus, nec putamus tantum regem fidem fallere. Prusciam ex manibus infidelium armis quaesivimus emimusque nostro sanguine. Nunc - si vera narras¹² – mirum est ac¹³ monstri simile et regem et praesules et nobilitatem Poloniae universam juramenta contemnere. Nos tamen propterea¹⁴ provinciam nostram haudquaquam vindicare¹⁵ negligemus.” Jurgatum est utrimque diu¹⁶, atque ita demum ejus diei soluta conventio.

¹ nobiscum U

² pertineat *corr. ex* concernat K, V; concernat O, W

³ properatis MA

⁴ Variniensi U

⁵ pontifici U; episcopo MA

⁶ *omit.* K; *corr. ex* homagium V; homagium V

⁷ prestare U

⁸ tam MA

⁹ tantorum MA

¹⁰ implicaueritis U

¹¹ continerent U

¹² narres U

¹³ et W

¹⁴ praeterea MA

¹⁵ vindicare MA, WO

¹⁶ duo MA, WO

[82] But then he said, “I see that some Teutonic Knights are present and greatly agitated. Maybe they have taken up the Prussian matter with you. I have not received any mandate in this matter, but since I am bound to protect my king’s interests, I ask that you – in case you receive any requests regarding the Prussians - do nothing in a hurry and do not decide anything unheard of against my king for you cannot decide anything against the Prussian cities without injury and trouble to the King of Poland. Prussia was once subject to Poland, but many years ago the Knights conquered it with arms, against law and right. Now, since nothing gained violently lasts forever, the knights have been driven away and thrown out, and Prussia has returned to its lord. All the prelates have now submitted to the king, except the Bishop of Warmia, but he will soon come over. The soldiers and all the cities have made an oath to the king. Through his heralds, he has declared war on the Grand Master, and I do not doubt that he is now besieging Marienburg. Take care not to offend my king with your decrees. Ponder and think carefully about what is expedient in this great matter, and do not make decisions you will regret later. *This is the Lord’s doing, and it is wonderful in our eye,*¹ that so great a country, so great a people, so great a dominion, lost to our crown for so many centuries, has now without shedding blood, without the use of arms, and – if I may say so – without any efforts on our part returned to the power of Poland. If you now embroil this region in a war, I fear that you will aid the cause of the Turks.”²

[83] When he had spoken, all the Germans began to rage and curse the man and almost attacked him with their nails. But the Master of Germany said, “It is only a few years ago that we made a perpetual pact with your king, confirmed by oaths, letters and seals, and we do not believe that so great a king will fail his oath. We tore Prussia from the hands of the infidels with arms and bought it with our blood. Now, if what you say is true, it is astounding and monstrous that the king, the bishops, and all the nobility of Poland would disregard their oaths. But that shall not prevent us from reclaiming our province.” Then they quarrelled violently, and finally this day’s meeting was ended.

¹ Psalms, 117, 23

² Pilat: *The Ottoman*, p. 125: *The Diet of Regensburg, one of those “Turkish Reichstage” organized in 1454-1455, had been called in order to prepare the general crusade for expelling the Turks from Europe. It provided a good opportunity for the King of Poland to complain about the difficulties he was facing. Still, Poland’s real reason for attending was not to paint King Casimir as an eager crusader, but to advocate its cause in the disputes with the Teutonic Order. Present at the sessions of the Diet, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini recorded the conflict between the Polish and the followers of the Teutonic Order and Jan Lutek’s famous line, which claimed that if the Order should want to start a new war, it would actually aid the Ottomans*

[84] In sequenti contione, cum de rebus communibus agendum esset, orta est de consessu¹ non parva contentio. Constituta erant duo sessionis capita: alterum cardinalis tenuit, alterum Papiensis episcopus, qui tum summi pontificis vices agebat. At dexteram cardinalis consederunt Senensis, Ratisponensis et Gurcensis episcopi ac² reliqui Caesaris legati. Sinistram Papiensis tenebant oratores principum electorum. Quaesitum est, ubi locandus esset orator regis Poloniae. Legati Caesaris ante oratores³ electorum⁴ locum ei⁵ deberi dicebant. Cardinalis, qui Polonos ob novitatem Prutenicam⁶ odisset, consulendos electorum nuntios ait. Illi minime se passuros inquirunt hominem ante {27v} se esse, qui nationi fuerit injurius, multaue de principum electorum nobilitate ac dignitate in medium afferunt. Rogatur Polonus ad dexteram oratorum Caesaris locum accipiat. Is se⁷ non ignorare consessum⁸ suo regi debitum ait ostenditque legati apostolici sinistram, quando imperatoris oratores⁹ dextram tenerent. Nam et cardinalis ex¹⁰ legatis¹¹ Caesaris unus habebatur¹². Quod si post legatos Caesaris¹³ ipse collocaretur, viderentur oratores electorum altius sedere, quibus sinistra Papiensis concederetur. Cum diu certatum esse, denique ita conveniunt: legatus apostolicus uti medius sedeat, tum hinc atque inde legati Caesaris, dexteram deinde Polonus, sinistram electores teneant. Quiescit hoc dicto Polonus¹⁴.

¹ consensu U, W

² et U

³ regis Poloniae ... oratores *omit.* U

⁴ doctorum MA

⁵ locum ei : ei locum MA

⁶ novitatem Prutenicam : novitates Prutenicas MA

⁷ is se : ipse U

⁸ consensum U, W

⁹ oratoris U

¹⁰ et U

¹¹ legati U

¹² habebatur K

¹³ unus habebatur ... Caesaris *omit.* U

¹⁴ sinistram electores ... Polonus *omit.* U

4. Second session of the Diet, 7 or 8 May

4.1. More problems of precedence

4.1.1. Polish ambassador vs ambassadors of prince electors

[84] In the next session, which was to deal with common matters, a great controversy about the order of seating arose. The session would have two parts: one was to be led by the cardinal, and the other by the Bishop of Pavia acting as the pope's representative. To the cardinal's right were seated the bishops of Siena, Regensburg, Gurk, and the other imperial legates. To Pavia's left were seated the ambassadors of the prince-electors. Then it was asked where the ambassador of the Polish king should be placed. The imperial legates said that he should be placed before the ambassadors of the electors.¹ But the cardinal, angry with the Poles because of the Prussian rebellion, said that the envoys of the electors should be consulted, and they said that they would not accept that a man who was injurious to their nation should be placed before them, and they said much about the nobility and dignity of the prince-electors. The Pole was then asked to accept a place to the right of the imperial legates. He replied that he knew very well the seating order due to his king and pointed to the left of the apostolic legate, whereas the imperial legates were seated at the right. For in the context of the diet, the cardinal was held to be one of the imperial legates. If the Pole was placed to the right of the imperial legates, then the ambassadors of the electors would appear to be placed higher than him since they were placed directly to the left of Pavia. After much heated discussion, it was finally settled that the apostolic legate should be placed in the middle, with imperial legates placed both to his right and left, then the Pole to the right, and the electors to the left. This calmed the Pole.

¹ I.e., immediately to the left of the Bishop of Pavia

[85] Cumque jam sessio concors esset, tum oratores electorum tamquam studiose¹ facerent², quod Polono displiceret, magistrum Alemaniae vocant eumque ante se collocant. Indignatus hoc facto Polonus assurgens, “Non feram”, inquit, “neque hoc loco sedebo, qui non est par meo regi: neque enim aequum³ est oratores imperatoris utrumque⁴ latus apostolici legati stipare. Satis est, si primum obtineant locum”, moresque Basiliensis concilii in medium adducit. Diu res in dubio est, neque defuerunt, qui Polonum excludendum dicerent, qui et res odiosas attulisset et in aliena domo de sessione⁵ contendere praesumeret. At legati Caesaris peregrinum hominem et magni regis legatum benigne tractandum censuerunt. Fit igitur nova ordinatio. Vocantur oratores principum electorum⁶ ad dexteram legatorum Caesaris, Polono ad sinistram Papiensis⁷ episcopi⁸ locus⁹ assignatur¹⁰, et post eum magister Alemaniae collocatur. Atque ita visum est legatum papae papae digniori esse loco quam cardinalem¹¹, res nova et inaudita nostro tempore, sed noluit¹² cardinalis sui causa turbam fieri, homo quamvis alti cordis et animi videntis, pacis tamen et unitatis amator, et qui privatis rebus publicas antefert.

¹ studio O, W

² fecerant W

³ *omit.* U

⁴ utrum K

⁵ possessione MA

⁶ et electores U

⁷ Piensis MA

⁸ episcopus MA

⁹ *omit.* MA, WO

¹⁰ assignarunt K

¹¹ cardinali U; cardinalis O, W

¹² nouit U

[85] But when the session had come to order, the ambassadors of the electors purposefully undertook to antagonize the Pole: they invited the Master of Germany to join them and placed him before themselves.¹ Angered by this action the Pole rose and said, "This I cannot accept, and I will not have a seat which is not worthy of my king, for it is not right that the imperial ambassadors should be placed on both sides of the apostolic legate. It is enough if they have the first place," and then he referred to the practice at the Council of Basel.² The matter was discussed discussed for a long time. Some actually said that the Pole should be excluded from the meeting since he had brought up scandalous matters and presumed to dispute the seating in another's home. But the imperial legates considered that this foreigner and legate of a great king must be treated with courtesy. Therefore, a new arrangement was made. The ambassadors of the prince-electors were invited to sit to the right of the imperial legates while the Pole was given the place to left of the Bishop of Pavia, and after him the Master of Germany was placed. Thus it happened that the papal legate was given a higher place than the cardinal, a new thing and unheard of in our age. But the cardinal did not want any trouble for his sake: though he is a proud and perspicacious man, he also loves peace and unity and puts public matters before private.

¹ I.e., immediately to the left of those imperial legates who were placed to the left of the Bishop of Pavia

² The Polish ambassador here refers to the order of precedence and seating used at the Council of Basel (1432-1438)

[86] Fuit et alia contentio¹ de consessu² inter legatos Colonienses et Aquenses. Civitas enim Aquensis, quamvis episcopatu caret, ex privilegiis tamen Caroli magni et aliorum imperatorum³ ceteris civitatibus regni Alemanici praelata est eaque prima sedes et regni caput existimatur, in qua et rex inungitur, et regni corona suscipitur, servatumque ferunt patrum memoria, ne quis civium Alemaniae Aquensibus antestaret. Sed quis pauperum privilegia tueatur? Frustra honores quaerunt, quibus opes desunt. Vicere semper divitiae primumque locum occupavere⁴ ditiores. Attenuatis igitur Aquensium facultatibus coeperunt praeire Colonienses, atque in plerisque conventibus memoria nostra celebratis priorem locum obtinuerunt, qui ex Theutonicis civitatibus opulentiores habentur. In Ratispona tamen temptaverunt Aquenses suum locum vindicare⁵ et prima quidem⁶ die inter civitates primi sederunt, in sequenti vero contione assurgentes Colonienses civitati primum debere⁷ locum⁸ dixere. Cur enim Colonia Agrippina cedat Aquensibus, qui nec vetustate neque⁹ potentia neque nobilitate pares esse quoquo modo¹⁰ possunt? Coloniam Coloniam ab ipso Agrippa conditam, quem generum Augusti Octaviani ferunt, Italici juris {28v} ante fuisse, quam civitas Aquensis in rerum natura reperiretur. In Colonia sedem metropolitica esse et ejus quidem pontificis, cujus est¹¹ Romanorum regem inungere et coronare. Aquensem civitatem neque episcopali cathedra dignam habitam. In Colonia multas esse nobilium familias, quorum majores ex patriciis Romanorum fuere. Vigere illic scholam philosophiae et omnium bonarum artium studia. Claruisse illic magnum Albertum. Corpora trium regum, quos magos dicimus, et ossa XI milium¹² virginum apud se quiescere. Urbem illam amplissimam, templis atque civium aedibus splendidissimis ac Rheno flumine dotatam¹³, populo plenissimam, nusquam tota¹⁴ Germania¹⁵ parem habere. Intolerabile videri, si tantae urbis legati Aquensibus cedere cogantur.

¹ inter legatos *add.* MA, WO

² consensu W

³ *omit.* W

⁴ occupare U, W

⁵ vindicare MA

⁶ quid W

⁷ debere K, U, V, MA, WO; deberi O, W

⁸ debere locum : locum deberi W

⁹ nec W, MA, WO

¹⁰ quoquo modo : quomodo MA, WO

¹¹ *omit.* U; *et add.* W

¹² milia W

¹³ ditatam W

¹⁴ totam O

¹⁵ Germaniam O

4.1.2. Aachen vs Cologne

[86] There was also another conflict about the seating order, this time between the legates from Cologne and Aachen. Although the City of Aachen has no bishop, it is raised above the other cities of the German Kingdom by privileges from Charlemagne and other emperors, and it is held to be the first seat and capital of the kingdom, where the king is anointed and crowned. They say that in the memory of our fathers no other citizens in Germany would come before the citizens of Aachen. But who protects the privileges of the poor? In vain do people seek honours if they lack wealth. Riches have always won and occupied the first place. So, when the people of Aachen lost their means, the people from Cologne began to come before them, and in many diets held in our memory they gained the first place, being considered to be the richest of the German cities. But in Regensburg, the people from Aachen tried to claim their place, and on the first day, they did sit as the first among the cities. But on the next day, the people from Cologne rose and said that the first place was owed to their city. For why should Colonia Agrippina give way to Aachen which could in no way equal their power and nobility? Cologne was founded by Agrippa¹ himself, who is said to have been the son-in-law of Augustus Octavianus². It belonged to Italy before the city of Aachen came into existence. In Cologne, there is a metropolitan See, indeed the see whose bishop has the right to anoint and crown the King of the Romans, while the City of Aachen is not even considered worthy of an episcopal see³. In Cologne, there are many noble families whose forefathers were Roman patricians. A school of philosophy flourishes there as well as the studies of all the good arts. Albert the Great shone there. The bodies of the three kings, whom we call magi, and the bones of the 11,000 virgins are resting there. This very large and populous city, endowed with the most splendid temples and citizens' buildings as well as with the river Rhine, has no equal in all of Germany. It would be intolerable if the legates of such a great city should be forced to cede [the first place] to the legates from Aachen.

¹ Agrippa, Marcus Vipsanianus (ca. 64-12 BCE): Roman statesman, son-in-law to Emperor Augustus

² Augustus, Gaius Octavius (63 BCE – 14 CE): Roman statesman, adoptive son of Julius Caesar, first emperor of the Roman Empire (27 BCE to his death)

³ "cathedra"

[87] Aquenses nihil horum negare, sed fuisse civitatem suam adeo imperatoribus acceptam dicere, ut infulas¹ illic regni quam Coloniae accipere maluissent. Habere se litteras Caesarum², quibus ceteris Alemaniae³ civitatibus praeferentur. Dignum esse se suis privilegiis gaudere. Aquenses ad imperium sine medio⁴ pertinere, Colonienses habuisse archiepiscopum⁵ ante tempora dominum, quamvis postea ad imperium redierint. Frustra de nobilitate⁶, de potentia, de vetustate disputari, quando lex⁷ aperta est imperatoris, quae propter fidelitatem {29r} suam Aquenses omnibus aliis civibus anteponit. Diffinita causa, in vanum argumenta⁸ proferri. Sed assistebant Coloniensibus aliae fere civitates universae. Nam ubi divitiae plurimae sunt, eo et favor hominum se inclinat. Eo denique⁹ deducta res est, ut ex Coloniensibus unus antestaret, tum primus inter Aquenses, deinde deinde mixtim, modo Aquensis, modo Coloniensis ordinem teneret. Placitum tamen utrimque est, ne quid per hunc actum Aquensium privilegio derogaretur.

[88] Dum haec aguntur, Philippus, Burgundiae dux, et Ludovicus Bavariae, qui ei obviam processerat, per Danubium Ratisponae applicant et cum his Alberti ducis Austriae, Ludovici ducis Sabaudiae et aliorum principum diversarumque¹⁰ communitatum¹¹ legati veniunt, quibus omnis conventus ad Danubii ripam occurrit atque amicis verbis magnos duces excipit.

[89] Fuit autem Philippus corpore procero, grandioribus et illustribus oculis, naso adunco, quem vocant aquilinum, erecto pectore, gracilioribus tibiis, modesto intuitu, moribus benignis, gratissimo alloquio¹², cibo potuque temperatiori¹³, annos supra LX natus neque mentitus aetatem. Mos illi fuit paulo ante meridiem e somno surgere, rem divinam visere, inde consilium de re publica habere, tum prandere, post inter amicos versari. Hinc dormiscere paulum, mox ludo josisque ad vesperam laxare animum, cenam denique ad multum noctis pertrahere, audire cantus, interesse choreis, rursusque consiliariis aures dare, ac postremo quieti se committere. Accipimus¹⁴ tamen ex his, qui secreti ejus habentur conscii, non dormire {29v} hominem ad meridiem, sed consurgere ante opinionem vulgi ac familiae aliquot horis idque temporis privatis actionibus suis¹⁵ elegisse. Nam cum sit alioquin suapte natura facilis neque ulli se neget, nisi hoc ordine vitam instituisset, nullum erat tempus, quod suum dicere potuisset.

¹ insulas K, W

² Caesaris in K

³ partibus *add.* W

⁴ ad imperium sine medio : sine medio ad imperium W

⁵ habuisse archiepiscopum : archiepiscopum habuisse O, W

⁶ de nobilitate *omit.* U

⁷ *omit.* U

⁸ argumentum U

⁹ eo denique : eodemque K

¹⁰ diversorumque MA, WO

¹¹ comitatum MA, WO

¹² eloquio MA, WO

¹³ moderatiori MA

¹⁴ accipimus U

¹⁵ actionibus suis : suis actionibus MA

[87] The [envoys from] Aachen denied nothing of this but said that their city was so dear to the emperors that they wanted to receive the crown of the kingdom there rather than in Cologne. They had letters from the emperors placing them above the other cities of Germany. It was only just that they should enjoy their privileges. The city of Aachen belonged directly to the Empire, while Cologne earlier had an archbishop as their lord though they later returned to the Empire. It was quite superfluous to argue about nobility, power and age when the law of an emperor clearly placed the people from Aachen before all other citizens because of their loyalty. It is futile to argue a case that has already been decided. However, almost all the other cities supported Cologne, for men tend to side with the rich. In the end, the matter was settled in this way: one of the envoys from Cologne was placed first, then followed the highest-ranking envoy from Aachen, then another envoy from Cologne, then another envoy from Aachen and so forth. And the two parties agreed that this arrangement should not prejudice the privilege of Aachen.

5. Arrival of Duke of Burgundy, 9 May¹

[88] In the meantime, Duke Philippe of Burgundy and Ludwig of Bavaria, who had gone to meet him, was coming to Regensburg, and together with them the legates of Duke Albrecht of Austria, Duke Louis of Savoy, and other princes and various cities². The assembly met them all on the shore of the Danube and received the great dukes with cordial greetings.

[89] Philippe had a noble physique, large and brilliant eyes, a curved, so-called aquiline, nose, straight chest, slender limbs, modest mien, pleasant manners, graceful conversation. He ate and drank with moderation. He was more than 60 years old and did not conceal his age. It was his habit to rise shortly before noon and to hear mass. Then he met with his council to discuss affairs of state. Afterwards, he had lunch and spent time with friends. After a short nap, he relaxed with games and sports until evening. Finally, he dined until late at night, hearing songs and dancing. Then he met again with his counsellors, and afterwards, he went to bed. However, people who know of his private life have told us that he does not sleep until noon but gets up earlier than people, even his household, know, having chosen to spend some hours with his family and dealing with private affairs, for since he has a courteous manner and does not refuse to see anybody, he would not have time he could call his own if he did not arrange his life in this way.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 237-239

² "communitatum"

[90] Hunc visitarunt domi suae legati Caesaris. Laudarunt¹ de remotioribus partibus adventum ejus. Dixerunt enim² rem fecisse imperatori gratissimam. Exposuerunt et sibi causas³, quae Caesarem domi retinuisent. Dixerunt se⁴ de suo accessu reddidisse majestatem imperatoriam⁵ certiore suassiseque, ut ascenderet ad concilium venturamque⁶ opinari, si id ex utilitate sua publica facere possit. Responsum propediem affuturum conventumque apud se haberi, uti ferret, rogaverunt, nam ceteri, qui adessent, excellentiae suae non inviti cederent. Ad ea Philippus hoc fere sensu respondit: litteras Caesaris, quibus ad concilium vocatus esset, ait in Flandria se⁷ recepisse. Fuisse sibi adversus Anglicos bellum, qui rupto foedere agros suos populati essent. Rogasse se⁸ incolas terrae ad tuendam patriam demorari⁹, sed plus apud se¹⁰ Caesaris mandata quam subditorum postulata valuisse. Praeposuisse¹¹ majora minoribus et privata publicis¹². Venisse Ratisponam non sine dititionis suae dispendio. Adesse Caesarem, qui se affuturum scripserat, speravisse. Cupere adhuc ejus adventum, ut res fidei catholicae feliciter dirigantur. Conventum apud eum¹³ fieri non decere¹⁴, venturum se in aedes, quas legati Caesaris habitent, aut alium in locum, quo illi jusserint. Caesarem suum esse dominum, aequum se scire his gerere morem, qui ab eo legati essent. Sic maximus ille princeps, quanto sublimior est, tanto se submissius gerere ostentans, quod erat omnium in¹⁵ se nobilissimum.

¹ laudaverunt O, W

² eum O; emi U

³ causam MA

⁴ ei U

⁵ reddidisse majestatem imperatoriam : imperatoriam majestatem reddidisse MA

⁶ venturumque MA, WO

⁷ sese MA, WO

⁸ omit. U

⁹ demari U

¹⁰ apud se : ad pulse W

¹¹ proposuisse K, U, V, W

¹² privata publicis : privatis publica MA, WO

¹³ se O, W

¹⁴ dicere U

¹⁵ omit. O, W **alii?**

[90] The imperial legates visited him in his lodgings. They praised his coming from afar. They said that what he had done was most pleasing to the emperor. They explained the reasons that had kept the emperor at home. They said that they had informed His Imperial Majesty about the duke's arrival and recommended that the emperor come to the diet, and they thought he would do so if his own and the public interest made it possible. They were expecting a reply any day. They asked the duke if the meetings should be held in his lodgings, for all the others who were present would gladly bow to his eminence. To this Philippe answered something like this: He had received the emperor's letter summoning him to the diet while he was in Flanders, making war on the English who had broken their pact and laid waste to his territory. The inhabitants had asked him to stay and defend their country, but the emperor's command was more important to him than the requests of his subjects. So, putting the greater things above the smaller and the public above the private, he had come to Regensburg – but not without loss to his lands. He had hoped that the emperor would be present as he had written he would be. He still wished he would come so that the affairs of the Catholic Faith might be better taken care of. He thought that the diet should not meet in his lodgings and said that he would come to the building where the emperor's legates resided or in any other they might decide: the emperor was his lord, and he knew that it was proper for him to accommodate his legates. Thus, this great prince showed that the greater his nobility was, the more modest his behaviour should be, which was really his most noble quality.

[91] Neque enim multa de se nobilitas opinatur neque primas sibi¹ vindicat partes nec *cervice*² *procedit obstipa*³, nullum salvare⁴ jubens, nulli manum porrigens, quemadmodum plerosque novimus, qui sanguini suo renuntiatum a se censent, si minorem se quempiam salutaverint: veri trunci nihil plus pensi habentes quam columnae marmoreae aut⁵ aerae⁶ statuae, degeneres isti atque ignobiles habendi sunt. Virum nobilem jure dicimus, qui cum majores suos longa serie claros potentesque referat, progenitorum vestigia imitatur gloriamque gentilem adauget, qualem vidimus Ratisponae Philippum, non elatum⁷ potentia, non inflatum opinione⁸ sui, nulli se praefertentem, nulli molestum, aditu facilem et nobilitati et plebi communem. Is, ne se levi motu tractum ostenderet, jussit afferi litteras Caesaris, quae se vocaverant⁹, atque his lectis adventum suum in Caesaris vocatione fundatum palam fecit, quia non licuisset se suo principi non paruisse. Legati Caesaris rursus gratias agentes magno duci, qui mandatis imperialibus obtemperasset, tanto¹⁰ eum efferendum¹¹ magis affirmavere, quanto cum¹² majori periculo {30v} atque incommodo pro communi omnium patria¹³ suam propriam reliquisset. Conventionem autem in praetorio civitatis habendam statuerunt, quando apud se illam teneri Philippo non placuisset. Prius tamen, quam de communi negotio transigeretur, expectari Caesaris responsum libitum, si forte sua celsitudo ascendere decrevisset.

¹ primas sibi : sibi primas U

² servire U; cervici W

³ obstipi W

⁴ salvare W

⁵ ut U

⁶ enee U

⁷ illatum U

⁸ opinionem U

⁹ notaverant U

¹⁰ tantum U

¹¹ afferendum *corr. ex efferendum* U; offerendum W

¹² enim U

¹³ patriam O, W, WO **alii?**

[91] For [the true] noble does not make much of himself, he does not demand the first place, nor does he *stride along with stiff neck*¹, greeting nobody, giving his hand to nobody, as we have seen in many who think that they demean their bloodline if they greet someone of lesser rank: they are really like trunks with no more thought than marble columns or bronze statues, and should be considered degenerate and ignoble. We say that a true noble is a man with a long line of noble and powerful forefathers in whose steps he follows while he himself increases his family's glory.² This we saw Philippe do in Regensburg, not carried away by his own power, not swollen with self-importance, not standing on his own,³ not being injurious to anyone, a man approachable to all, both noblemen and common people. To show that he had not come for some frivolous reason, he ordered the emperor's letter of summons to be brought and had it read aloud, thus making it plain to all that his coming was caused by the emperor's summons and that he had not been at liberty to disobey his own prince. The imperial legates again thanked the great duke for obeying the imperial command, saying that it was so much more praiseworthy as he had, with great risk and trouble, left his own country for the sake of the common country of all.

The diet would assemble in the townhall since Philippe did not wish it to be held at his own place. But before they began to deal with the common affairs, they would await the emperor's letter in case His Highness decided to come in person.

¹ Suetonius: *Vitae Caesarum / Tiberius*, 68: *Incedebat cervice rigida et obstipa*

² A contribution of Piccolomini to the Renaissance discussion of true nobility, see also Poggiolini and Landino (Jorde, p. 61)

³ "nulli se praeferentem"

[92] Johannes de Lysura, dum expectatio pendet, vir acris ingenii ac rerum agendarum et scientiae juris impense¹ doctus, qui² tunc³ Jacobi Treverensis archiepiscopi et principis electoris oculatissimi et ad rempublicam attentissimi, locum tenebat, legatos imperatoris adit aitque, priusquam publicae res⁴ agitentur, pro quibus dicta dies est, ex usu videri solos Theutones inter se convenire, omissis civitatibus, quae nondum vocandae⁵ viderentur. Aperiturum se illic nonnulla, quae Caesaris gloriam attingant. Annuunt legati, convenitur apud Ludovicum Bavariae ducem. Ibi Johannes quasi ex ore omnium servatum esse retroactis temporibus ait, cum de rebus gravioribus haberi concilia fuit⁶ necessum⁷, antequam principes convenirent inter legatos res ipsas discuti ac discussas ad dominos demum referri, tumque⁸ concilium agitari. Idem quoque⁹ in hoc Turcorum negotio et maximo et difficillimo fuisse faciendum. Memores priscae consuetudinis principes electores habuisse inter sese¹⁰ colloquia, priusquam ad concilium seu venirent seu mitterent, praemeditatosque nonnihilo esse pro tuenda religione Christiana. {31r} Salubre nunc videri, quoniam neglecta sit conventio praecursoria cum legatis electorum et aliorum principum, uti praesidentes imperiales de provisione contra Turcos facienda pertractent mentemque Caesaris notam reddant, atque hic vires potius Germaniae¹¹ examinentur quam in aures Gallorum et aliorum nationum deferantur.

[93] Agebat hoc Johannes, quatenus eo¹² res deduceretur, ut necesse esset de adventu Caesaris ac deinde de paupertate imperii disputare paulatimque¹³ de resarcienda republica sermonem inveniri. Sed accepta sunt ejus verba a legatis imperialibus in sinistram deterrimamque partem, tamquam Caesar ab eo incusaretur, qui conventum insciis electoribus indixisset, mentemque Caesaris in facto Turcorum nosse vellet, non tam probaturus quam calumniaturus existimabatur. Ea propter, cum paululum inter se collocuti essent legati Caesaris, in hanc sententiam Gurgensem episcopum respondere jusserunt¹⁴: sive res magnae sive mediocres in consultationem veniant¹⁵, imperatorem suo jure principum et subditorum suorum conventum indicere solitum, nec subpeditasse hac tempestate Caesari tantum spatii, ut vel consulere principes electores de concilio indicendo posset vel colloquium inter legatos praemittere¹⁶.

¹ impende U

² cui U

³ tum K, O, W, WO; cum U

⁴ publicae res : res publicae MA

⁵ omit. W

⁶ sint W

⁷ necesse U

⁸ cumque W

⁹ idem quoque : idemque MA

¹⁰ se O, U

¹¹ vires potius Germaniae : Germaniae vires potius O

¹² ea U

¹³ paulatim U

¹⁴ jussere U

¹⁵ venient W

¹⁶ permittere U

6. Reform of of the Empire, 11-14 May¹

6.1. Intervention of Johann Lysura

[92] On that occasion, Johann Lysura, a man of keen intellect, experienced in the conduct of affairs, and a specialist in law, represented Archbishop and Prince-Elector Jakob of Trier, a man who was most perspicacious and attentive to public affairs. During the waiting period, Johann approached the imperial legates and said to them that before the public affairs were taken up on the day appointed, it would be useful for the Germans to have a meeting between them – excluding the cities, which should not be summoned yet. There, he would speak openly on a number of matters touching upon the emperor's honour. The legates assented, and they met at [the residence of] Duke Ludwig of Bayern. There, Johann, as if speaking for all, said that in the past it was the custom when necessary to hold diets concerning important matters, that envoys met before the princes and discussed the matters and then reported back to their lords, and only afterwards the diet would be held. This should also have been done in this most important and difficult matter of the Turks. Remembering the old custom, the prince-electors should have discussed the matter between them before they came or sent [representatives] to the diet, having considered in advance all that should be done for the defence of the Christian religion. Since an advance meeting between legates of the electors and other princes had been neglected, it now seemed profitable that the imperial presidents should examine the measures to be taken against the Turks and announce the intentions of the emperor, and that the German strength should be reviewed here² rather than brought to the knowledge of the French and other nations.³

[93] Johann's initiative really aimed at reaching a point where it would be necessary to discuss the coming of the emperor, and then the poverty of the Empire, and gradually come to speak of the restoration of the Empire.⁴ But the imperial legates perceived his words as hiding a sinister and very bad intention, as if the emperor was being criticized for indicting the diet without the electors' knowledge, and as if Lysura wanted to know the emperor's intentions, not in order to commend them but to denounce them. Therefore, after a short exchange on the matter, the imperial legates asked the Bishop of Gurk to make the following answer: Whether the subject for consultation was important or ordinary, the emperor was in his full right to summon his princes and subjects to a diet, and in the present circumstances he simply had not had the necessary time to consult the princes on holding the diet or having an advance meeting between legates.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 239-247

² In a closed meeting for the Germans

³ In a meeting open to all

⁴ Piccolomini would quite likely agree with this aim, and he may have known of Lysura's initiative beforehand

[94] Quod adversus Turcorum insolentiam praemeditatus esset imperator, id se jussos publice proponere neque neglecturos aut quovis pacto variaturos imperatoris mandatum, ne suo principi non obsequio debito, sed consilio non desiderato respondere videantur. Commotusque deinde¹ {31v} aliquantisper Gurcensis episcopus, “Quid² vos³ hic,” ait, “electores tantopere commemoratis, quasi omnes hoc in loco legatos habeant? At nos trium tantum⁴ electorum⁵ ⁶ oratores praesentes cernimus, reliqui nullum hic vel nuntiolum habent, cui mentem Caesaris exponamus.”

[95] Haec cum audisset Johannes, miratus apud imperatorios oratores sua verba aegre fuisse recepta, ut est astuto corde et animo videnti, se prudenter expurgatum dedit. Exin pedetentim ad rem Turcorum transiens, “Ego,” inquit, “non calumniae causa cupidus eram audire, quae cogitasset adversus Turcos imperator. Intelligo enim rem illam esse maximam neque *illotis manibus attingendam*, quamvis minima esset Germanico nomini, si hoc nostrum⁷ imperium suo ordine regeretur. Sed videtis⁸ omnes⁹ hanc nostram Theutoniam quassatam undique ac laceratam laceratam et nulla in parte sibi ipsi cohaerentem. Hic civitates cum principibus lites immortales ducunt, ibi principes principi, civitas¹⁰ civitati bellum movet¹¹. Nemo est tam infimae¹² conditionis, qui vicinis ex arbitrio suo bellum indicere non praesumat. Nullus angulus est nationis nostrae quietus. Quocumque pergis, latrones, insidias, spoliationes¹³, mortem timeas. Neque pax clero est neque nobilitati honor. Raptoribus omnia patent. Impletum est in nobis¹⁴ Ovidianum illud: *Vivitur ex raptu, non hospes ab hospite tutus, Non socer a genero*. Completa est nequitia nostra. Nemo suae domi¹⁵ tutam¹⁶ agit vitam. {32r} Quid tu cum hisce moribus agas? Quo pacto contra Turcos arma sumemus, qui domi timemus alterutrum? Et pudet nostri nominis, pudet hujus regiminis.

¹ qui U

² qui U

³ nos W

⁴ trium tantum : tantum trium O, W

⁵ electores MA, WO

⁶ tantum electorum : tanto tempore W

⁷ nostrorum U

⁸ videns U

⁹ omit. W

¹⁰ civitates MA

¹¹ movent MA

¹² intime U

¹³ spolia O, W

¹⁴ est in nobis : in nobis est O, W

¹⁵ domus K; domui W

¹⁶ tutus O, W

[94] Concerning the emperor's plans against the insolent Turks, they had been requested to announce them publicly. This they would not fail to do, nor would they in any way to change the emperor's mandate and thus be seen to not give their prince the respect due to him or to give unwanted advice. And the Bishop of Gurk, somewhat agitated, said, "Why do you make so much of the electors, as if they all had their legates here? We only see the ambassadors of three electors, the others have not sent any representative at all¹ to whom we could explain the emperor's intentions."

[95] When Johann heard this, he was surprised that the imperial ambassadors were displeased at his words, but – being astute and clear-sighted – he excused himself and then gradually passed on to the Turkish matter, saying, "I did not want to hear the emperor's plans against the Turks in order to criticise them for I understand that this is a most important matter that cannot be *touched by unwashed hands*,² though it would really be a small matter for Germany if our Empire was governed as it should be. But you all see our Germany being mauled and scourged from all sides and falling apart everywhere. Here, the cities have unending conflicts with the princes, there, the princes are at war with other princes, and the cities with other cities. Nobody is so abject that he will not dare to declare war on his neighbour on his own authority. No corner of our nation is at peace. Wherever you turn, you must fear robbers, ambush, plundering and death. The clergy has no peace and the nobles no honour. All lies wide open to robbers. We fulfil this verse of Ovid: *Men lived on plunder. Guest was not safe from host, nor father-in-law from son-in-law*.³ Our wickedness is complete. Nobody lives peacefully in his home. What can you do when people behave like that? How can we go to war against the Turks when we fear each other at home. We are ashamed of our name, we are ashamed of this state of things.

¹ "nuntiolum"

² Plautus: *Poenulus*, 315: *tu hujus oculos illutis manibus tractes aut teras*. Proverbial expression meaning irreverently or without proper preparations

³ Ovidius: *Metamorphoses*, 1.144-145

[96] Majores nostri, quamvis neque opum neque militum quantum nos haberent, imperium tamen Romanum, quod apud Graecos erat, ad se traxerunt. Cur hoc? Nempe quia¹ domi pacem colebant, foris bellum gerebant, ecclesiam Romanam adversus invasores coactis exercitibus tutabantur, oppressis per injuriam quibusque proximis opem ferebant neque inter se rapinas exercebant neque in alios injusta spolia fieri permittebant. Hinc illi - nec vetusta adeo res est – imperium a Pyreneis montibus in Pannoniam² protenderunt³, Italiam parentem habuerunt, Hispanis, Anglicis, Hungaris, Bohemis, Polonis⁴ reges dederunt. Nunc vix lingua omnis Theutonica nostri juris existit. En quo desidia nostra nos redigit⁵? En quo nostrae nos divisiones impellunt? Omnibus per circuitum nationibus derisui atque contemptui sumus, qui cum simus⁶ ipsi⁷ potentes, domi nobiles, nobiles, opulentas civitates ac⁸ populo plenas habeamus bonisque omnibus abundemus – quod est est mortalibus optimum – domi pacem tenere nescimus⁹, et, quae illam gignit atque conservat, justitiae locum inter nos esse non sinimus.

[97] Haec dum ajo, vos¹⁰ fortasse, Caesaris oratores, sugillare¹¹ me vestrum nostrumque¹² principem arbitramini, qui¹³ nos justitiae ac pacis egentes {32v} reddat. Minime gentium¹⁴ hoc agitem¹⁵: nihil est enim, quod impropere suae majestati, si Germaniam pacare non pergit, neque enim opus est suarum virium. Nota est omnibus ejus potentia. Novimus, quae sunt ejus vectigalia. Ex patrimonio tantum habet, quantum decet honestum principem. Ex imperio vix exhaurit, unde legatos alere possit, quos huc atque illuc dirigit. Non est Styria atque Carinthia, quae onera sufferre possit imperii, neque, si posset¹⁶, aequum censeam ex patrimonio Caesarem imperio satisfacere, exhaereditare¹⁷ proprios liberos, ut communi utilitati subveniat. Nam quamvis aliquando¹⁸ sublimes et laudatissimi principes id egerunt, nunc tamen monstruosa fuerit haec caritas. Satis est, si personam suam Caesar exhibet et in communi laboraturum¹⁹ se offert, quemadmodum anno superiore ex ore suo audisse me²⁰ recolo, cum apud novam civitatem archiepiscopi Treverensis agerem vices. Vos Senensis ac²¹ Gurcensis episcopi praesentes eratis.

¹ qui U

² Poloniam U

³ pretenderunt W

⁴ *omit.* MA, WO

⁵ en quo ... redigit *omit.* MA

⁶ sumus U

⁷ episcopi U

⁸ provincias *add.* O, W

⁹ tenere nescimus : nescimus tenere W

¹⁰ nos U

¹¹ singulare U

¹² nostrorumque U

¹³ quod U

¹⁴ gentem W

¹⁵ agentem W

¹⁶ possit O, W, MA

¹⁷ exhereditare U

¹⁸ alioquin MA

¹⁹ laboratum U

²⁰ audisse me : me audisse W

²¹ et U

[96] Our forefathers had neither our means nor our soldiers, but still they took over the Roman Empire, which was in the hands of the Greeks. How could they do that? Because they cultivated peace at home, made wars abroad, with their armies protected the Roman Church against aggressors, brought help to neighbours who were being molested, did not rob each other, and did not allow others to be robbed unjustly. Thus – and it is not so long ago – they extended the Empire from the Pyrenean Mountains to Hungary, had the obedience of the Italians, and gave kings to the Spanish, the English, the Hungarians, the Bohemians and the Poles. Nowadays, some German-speaking people are not part of the Empire. Whereto has our apathy brought us? Whereto do our divisions drive us? All the neighbouring nations scorn and despise us: we are powerful and noble at home, we have an abundance of rich and populous cities and all good things, but that which is the greatest good for men, keeping peace at home, we cannot have, and among us we leave no place for justice which begets and preserves peace.

[97] When I say this, you imperial ambassadors may think that I am blaming yours and our prince for failing to give us justice and peace, but nothing is further from my mind. I do not reproach His Majesty that he does not strive to give peace to Germany, and there is no need for his personal resources. All know what little power he has, all know of his tax revenues. From his own paternal lands, he only gets what is fitting for an honourable prince. From the Empire, he barely gets enough to sustain the legates he sends here and there. Styria and Carinthia cannot carry the burden of the Empire, and even if they could, it would not be reasonable to expect the emperor to cover the costs of the Empire out of his own paternal inheritance and to rob his own children of their inheritance in order to care for the common good. For although exalted and praiseworthy princes have sometimes done so, today such charity would be preposterous. It is enough if the emperor makes himself available and works for the common good, as I remember hearing from his own mouth last year when I came to Wiener Neustadt on a mission from the Archbishop of Trier.¹ You bishops of Siena and Gurk² were there.

¹ Jakob von Sierck

² Ulrich Sonnenberger

[98] Sed quos ego accuso? In quos malorum nostrorum causam retorqueo? Equidem omnes increpo, qui nomine Theutonico censentur. Omnes inertes atque ignavi sumus, omnes supplicio digni, qui neque regem nostrum respicimus neque de nostra republica solliciti sumus, et – quasi nihil ad nos imperium pertineat – omnia ruere sinimus et in nostris manibus tantam extingui lucem, pro qua {33r} nostri progenitores animas suas dediderunt¹. Et quo pacto credimus valitura membra languente capite? Quid nos capiti nostro, regi nostro contribuimus? Nihil ex nobis praeter nomen Caesar habet. Satisne² hoc judicamus? Et quod – oro – sub caelo regnum est, quod suum non pascit³ regem? Pacem omnes optamus, odimus bellum, discordias, rapinas accusamus, nec modum quaerimus habendae quietis! Nusquam sine justitia pacem reperias. Quietum regnum judicia reddunt. At dicat aliquis: “Juri reddendo Caesar praeest. Nisi iudicium faciat, in culpa est.” Sed unde is – obsecro – stipendia sumat, quae iudicibus eroget?

[99] Ponito milites, et juris interpretes assidue jus dicere: quis parere compellit⁴ invitum? Ecce nunc adversus Prutenos lata sententia est, at illi, dum jubentur oboedire, religioni magis insultant, vetustos dominos domo pellunt, neque sedis apostolicae censuras neque imperii decreta formidant. Possem multa in medium afferre mandata Caesarum Sigmundi, Alberti ac Friderici⁵, quae memoria nostra incassum⁶ prodire⁷. Ecclesiam Trajectensem pluribus annis et contra Romani pontificis jussiones et adversus imperium Caesaris vidimus occupatam. Nunc quoque Monasteriensis ecclesia, quo jure teneatur, non ignoratis. Quid Susatenses referam, ecclesiae Coloniensis notissimam cladem? Quid illi vel summi pontificis anathema vel nostri Caesaris bannum extimuerunt⁸? {33v} Frustra leges condimus, judicia tenemus, sententias proferimus⁹, nisi manus assit¹⁰ armata, quae contumaciam¹¹ coerceat subditorum. Sed accusatis Caesarem, qui temeritatem inoboedientium¹² non corripit neque¹³ spolia prohibet neque resistit potentibus injuriam facientibus. Quid ille inermis agat? Quis curet verba, quae non sequuntur verbera¹⁴? Vetusti Caesares armatas habuerunt legiones, quibus injusti ac cervicosi homines facile plectebantur. Nunc noster imperator solus est et nudus¹⁵. ‘Armet et ipse legiones,’ dicat quispiam. Et unde has nutriat? inquam ego. Quis exercitum nisi pecuniosus alit? Nihil est quod imperio ministramus. Titulare atque inane est regis nostri nomen¹⁶. Absque aereo regnum habemus

¹ rediderunt WO

² satis in U

³ poscit W

⁴ compellet K, O; compellat W

⁵ moderni *add.* O, W

⁶ in casum U

⁷ prodire U

⁸ extimauere O, W

⁹ praeferimus MA

¹⁰ esset W

¹¹ contumacia U

¹² inobedientiam W, MA, WO

¹³ nec MA, WO

¹⁴ quis curet ... verbera *omit.* MA

¹⁵ est et nudus : et nudus est O, W

¹⁶ regis nostri nomen : nomen regis nostri W

atque idcirco tantum paremus, quantum volumus. Hinc lites immortales, cum se quisque regem ducit¹.

¹ dicit U, W

[98] So, who do I blame? Who do I consider responsible for our evils? I blame all, indeed, who carry the name of German. We are all passive and indolent, we all merit to be punished for not respecting our king and not caring for our state. As if the Empire had nothing to do with us, we are letting all fall apart and allow the light in our hands to be extinguished for which our forefathers gave their lives. How do we believe that the members can be strong if the head is weak? What do we offer to our head, our king? He gets nothing from us except the name of emperor. Do we really consider that to be sufficient? What country under the heaven – I ask – does not feed its own king? We all want peace, we hate war, we denounce conflict and plunder, but still we are not searching for a way to have peace. You will never find peace without justice. Justice makes for a peaceful realm. Here someone may object, “It is the emperor’s responsibility to deliver justice. If he does not, then he is at fault.” But – I ask you – from where can he get the funds to pay the judges?

[99] Take away the soldiers and let the lawmen deliver judgments regularly: who forces the unwilling to obey? Quite recently, a judgment was delivered against the Prussians but instead of obeying as ordered, they intensify their attacks against the Order, drive their old masters from their homes, and fear neither the censures of the Apostolic See nor the decrees of the Empire. I could point to many decisions of emperors Sigismund, Albrecht, and Friedrich that in our own memory remained without effect. For many years, we have seen the See of Utrecht being occupied by someone against the orders of the Roman Pontiff and the emperor’s command.¹ And now, too, you know with what right the Church of Münster is being held.² What shall I say about the people of Soest and the scandalous defeat of the Church of Cologne? Did those people of Soest fear the curse of the Supreme Pontiff or the ban of the Empire?³ In vain we make laws, keep justice and render judgments if there is no armed arm⁴ to coerce defiant subjects. You blame the emperor for not censuring the effrontery of the disobedient, for not preventing plundering, and for not resisting powerful transgressors. But what can he do unarmed? Who bothers about words when they are not followed by whips? The emperors of old had armed legions with which they could easily punish stiff-necked and criminal men. Now, our emperor is on his own and without means. ‘But let him arm legions,’ someone may say. And how shall he feed them?, I ask. How can anybody sustain an army without money? We contribute nothing to the Empire. In our country, the name of king is an empty title. We have a kingdom without a treasure, and therefore we only

¹ In 1424 the Cathedral Chapter of Utrecht elected Rudolf of Diepholt as Bishop of Utrecht. He was the preferred candidate of the town council of Utrecht. The pope, Martin V, appointed another bishop, Walram von Mörs, and excommunicated the citizens in 1425 and the region was put under interdict. In 1433, Rudolf of Diepholt was appointed bishop of Utrecht by Martin’s successor, Pope Eugenius IV (*Handbook of Dutch*, pp. 108-109)

² In the *Münsterische Stiftsfehde* from 1450 to 1457 two candidates fought to become Bishop of Münster, Walram von Moers and Erich von Hoya. Pope Nicolaus V intervened in the conflict, excommunicating the opponents of his own candidate/s and putting the district under interdict. The University of Erfurt pronounced against the papal censures which were then ignored by the concerned parties

³ The Soest Feud: a feud that took place from 1444 to 1449, in which the town of Soest claimed its freedom from the Archbishop of Cologne. In 1444, Soest accepted a new lord, the Duke of Cleve, and as a result, the emperor imposed the imperial ban on the city

⁴ “manus”: hand

obey it when we want to. Everybody considers himself a king, and therefore we have those unending conflicts.

[100] Quod si quietem cupimus, unum esse principem oportet, qui et jubere possit et cogere. Id fiet¹, si regem nostrum egere prohibuerimus atque ita ordinaverimus, ut ad retundendam inoboedientium contumaciam exercitum, cum necesse est, contrahere possit. Nec ego profecto quemquam esse arbitror Theutonici nominis amantem, cui haec odiosa videantur, neque enim Alemania nostra adeo pauper est, ut regem {34r} suum magnifice nutrire non possit. Ego saepe apud Gallos sum versatus, cumque nostram nationem cum Gallica compararem, fatebantur omnes nos multo² praestare, si parentes regi nostro fuerimus. At cum nulla inter nos oboedientia vigeat³, sitque sibi quilibet imperator, ajunt de nobis, quod de Graecis olim civitatibus dictum constat, quae dum singulae imperare volunt, omnes imperium perdidere. Dicunt Theutonium grandem esse provinciam, opulentam, hominibus, equis armisque refertam, natura potentem, regimine imbecillem, neque falluntur mea quidem sententia⁴. Neque enim arbitror ullam esse nationem tam grandem sub caelo, quae *habeat deos appropinquantes sibi, sicut adest⁵ nobis dominus⁶ Deus noster*. Tantum nos ipsi propitii nobis simus velimusque⁷ vivere sicut ceterae nationes, honorem capiti nostro⁸ deferre, regi parere, submittere colla justitiae, servare ordinem. Quod⁹ si pergimus ita vivere, quemadmodum coeptum est, actum¹⁰ de nostra natione dixerim. Venient alieni¹¹ et auferent¹² nobis regnum et gentem, et qui nolumus¹³ nostri sanguinis imperatori servire, jugum ferre alienum cogemur.

[101] Puto vos haec jamdudum animadvertisse¹⁴, viri nobiles ac potentes, vestramque mentem de reformatione nationis atque imperii saepe cogitantem esse, neque ego rem difficilem arbitror, si Caesar cum principibus conveniat. Nam etsi multi sunt ab hoc proposito alieni, vincentur {34r} tamen ratione, neque *sinderesi* poterunt adversari, quae omnibus est innata hominibus, habens in se virtutis et boni quaerendi semina. Mihi ergo - ut eo¹⁵ redeam¹⁶, unde sum digressus – nullo pacto contra Turcos arma sumenda videntur, nisi prius statum imperii ad suam normam redigamus. Reformare autem¹⁷ imperium non video quo pacto valeamus, nisi Caesar ascendat ac

¹ fit W

² multa W

³ vigeat W

⁴ regimine imbecillem ... sententia *omit.* U

⁵ est U

⁶ *omit.* W

⁷ velimus U

⁸ capitiue nostro honorem MA

⁹ qui U

¹⁰ est *add.* U

¹¹ enim U

¹² auferunt U

¹³ uolumus U

¹⁴ animo advertisse MA

¹⁵ ego U

¹⁶ reddam U

¹⁷ *omit.* W

cum suis principibus de reformanda republica consilia captet. Quod si ordinatum imperium fuerit¹, fuerit¹, non modo Turcis facile resistemus, sed alias quoque nationes in frena pristina redigemus ac nomen Theutonicum², quod modo suppressum et³ vile habetur, in altum efferemus.

¹ faterit U

² Theutonicorum U

³ ac U

[100] If we want peace, we must have one prince who can both give orders and enforce them. This will happen if we do not allow our king to be lacking in means and if we make it possible for him to mobilize an army to suppress the defiance of the disobedient whenever needful. Indeed, I think that nobody who loves the German name will consider this to be preposterous, for our Germany is not so poor that it cannot provide magnificently for its king. I have often been in France, and when I compared our nation with the French, all said that we would be much superior if we obeyed our king. But since there is no obedience among us, and everybody wants to be his own emperor, the French say about us that what once happened to the Greek cities also applies to us: each of them wanted to govern, and therefore they all, together, lost the government. They say that Germany is a great province, rich, full of men, horses, and weapons, strong by virtue of its nature, but with a weak government, and in my opinion, they are not wrong. However, I do believe that there *is no grander nation* under the sky *that hath gods so nigh them, as your Lord God is with you.*¹ If we would only be kind to ourselves and let us live like other nations, honour our head, submit to the king, bow to justice and preserve order! But if we go on living as we have now begun to, then I would say that our nation is finished. Others will come and take the kingdom and the people from us, and we who do not wish to serve an emperor of our own blood will be forced to carry a foreign yoke.²

[101] I believe that you, noble and powerful men, are already aware of this and have often been thinking about the reform of the nation and the Empire. I do not believe it will be a difficult thing if only the emperor would meet with his princes. For although many disagree with these ideas, they will be persuaded by reason itself and will not be able to fight against *synderesis*³, which is innate in all men and carry the seeds of seeking what is virtuous and good. But – to return to my point of departure – I believe that we should absolutely not go to war against the Turks unless we have first restored the Empire to its proper state.⁴ And I do not see how we can reform the Empire, if the emperor does not come and take counsel with his princes on reforming the state. But if the Empire is set in order, we shall not only be able to resist the Turks with ease but also to bridle the other nations, as we did in the past, and raise up high the German name, now considered as vile and worthless.

¹ Deuteronomy, 4, 7. Piccolomini would reuse this passage in his oration "*Constantinopolitana clades*" [22], sect. 32, delivered at the Diet of Frankfurt later that same year

² As pope, Piccolomini would reuse this passage in his grand opening oration at the Congress of Mantua, the "*Cum bellum hodie*" [45], sect. 18: *Utinam mendaces et falsi prophetae simus in hac parte, sed credite nos folium recitare Sybillae. Venient, venient Turci, nisi obviam imus, et auferent nobis locum et gentem*

³ Greek *synteresis*: the supposed innate ability of the human mind to realise the basic principles of ethics and morals

⁴ "normam"

[102] Probaverunt omnes dicta Johannis. Legati tamen Caesaris illud refellere conati sunt, quod ultimo positum erat, non esse contra Turcos pugnandum, nisi prius imperium resarciretur, id enim tempus expetere longius¹ videbatur. Turcis, nisi quam primum obviam itum esset, religionem Christianam funditus perire, quam illi armati ac victores summo conatu persequerentur². Reliqua Johannis verba pleno ore commendant³.

[103] Dum haec geruntur, Albertus marchio Brandeburgensis, qui petiturus adversus Prutenos auxilia in Bohemiam se contulerat⁴, magistro Alemaniae scribit hujusmodi sese conventiones⁵ cum rege Bohemiae pepigisse: "Exercitum Bohemi contra Prutenos ductabunt {35r} equitum quattuor milium, peditum viginti milium. Instructi armatique erunt, ut est Bohemis pugnaturis modus, pugnabuntque summo conatu hebdomadis quindecim. Si Prusciam hoc tempore vendicabunt, religioni restituent. Si minus, non erunt obnoxii amplius⁶ morari aut bellum gerere absque novis pactionibus. Hujus rei causa dabit religio regi Bohemiae, quamprimum exercitus erit instructus, auri Hungarici trecenta⁷ milia nummum⁸ tantundemque, postquam Prusciam introierint copiae⁹. Vendicata autem regione quattuor milia quotannis coronae Bohemorum pendebit¹⁰. Rex vero in aevum protector religionis erit. Rex quoque Poloniae, ne sit impedimento religiosis, quadringenta milia similium nummorum ex ipsis accipiet. Georgius, Bohemiae gubernator et harum fabricator rerum, auri Rhenensis octuaginta milia nummum emerebitur. Ea si velint religiosi fratres amplecti, necessarium esse quamprimum scribere." Non videri dubium, quin¹¹ eo pacto superbia civitatum conteratur. Ad rem hanc remissi sunt nonnulli ex fratribus, qui cum marchione profecti fuerant¹². Ipse paululum aegrotans marchio Pragae aliquot diebus remansit.

¹ expetere longius : longius expetere W

² prosequerentur MA, WO

³ reliqua Johannis ... commendant *omit.* U

⁴ contulerit K, U

⁵ sese conventiones : conventiones sese MA

⁶ obnoxii amplius : amplius obnoxii MA

⁷ tricenta W

⁸ nummorum W

⁹ capit W

¹⁰ pendet *corr.* ex penedebit V

¹¹ qui U

¹² fuerint WO

6.2. Reply of the imperial legates

[102] All approved of the words of Johann, but the imperial legates endeavoured to refute what he had said last about not fighting the Turks before the Empire had been set in order, for that would take a very long time. Unless the Turks were confronted as soon as possible, the Christian religion would be destroyed by armed victors persecuting it with all their might. The rest of Johann's speech they agreed with wholeheartedly.

7. Bohemian aid to the Teutonic Knights¹

[103] Meanwhile, Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg had gone to Bohemia to seek aid against the Prussians. Now he wrote to the Master of Germany that he had made this agreement with the King of Bohemia:

“The Bohemians will lead a war against the Prussians consisting of 4,000 cavalry and 20,000 infantry. They will be trained and armed as Bohemian soldiers usually are, and they will fight with all their might for 15 weeks. If during that time they gain Prussia, they will restore it to the Order. If not, they will have no obligation to stay longer or to wage war without new agreements. In return, the Order will, as soon as the army is formed, give the King of Bohemia² 300,000 Hungarian gold ducats and the same amount when the troops enter Prussia. If they gain the region, the Order will pay the Crown of Bohemia 4,000 ducats annually, and the king will be its protector in perpetuity. The Knights will also pay the King of Poland³ 400,000 ducats to not trouble them. Georg, Governor of Bohemia,⁴ who made this arrangement, will be paid 80,000 Rhinish gold ducats. If the Knights accept the agreement, they must write as soon as possible.”

This way, there was no doubt that the haughty cities would collapse. Several of the Knights who had accompanied the margrave were sent back on this errand, while he himself, due to a brief illness, stayed in Prague for some days.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 247-257

² Ladislaus the Posthumous

³ Casimir IV

⁴ Georg Podiebrad

[104] Magister Alemaniae his cognitis ex legatis principum, qui conventum agebant, exclusis oratoribus civitatum, quos favere Prutenis opinabatur, consilium petit: auri maximam esse, quae requiritur¹, summam dicit neque scire {35v} se, unde corradi possit. Cardinalis sancti Petri suo more copiose prudenterque locutus, legatos mitti suadet², qui concordiam cum rege Poloniae tractent, quem constaret patrocinari civitatibus. Interea, quem possent, religiosi exercitum compararent, marchioni Alberto scriberent, tractatus cum Bohemis eo usquam prorogaret, donec ex magistro Prusciae cognosci posset, an aurum expetitur in promptu habeat. Nam ex Alemania, etsi omnes possessiones religionis venundentur, non tamen pactionibus satisfaciunt. Ea fere³ omnium sententia fuit. Placuit tamen expectari marchionem, quem brevi affuturum dicebant, uti ex eo pressius omnia cognoscerentur.

[105] His actis, cum jam plenum⁴ concilium⁵ videretur, statuunt legati Caesaris contionem advocare atque illic imperatoris mandata referre. Et quamvis Nicolao cardinali antea commisissent, ut is⁶ verba faceret, pridie tamen quam conventus celebretur, mutato proposito Aeneam dicere jubent, non quod is orator videretur melior, sed quoniam unus ex his esset, qui ex curia Caesaris missi fuerant, quasi plus ponderis apud eos existeret, qui ex latere Caesaris novissime⁷ adventassent⁸. Cardinalis enim ex domo sua per litteras vocatus concilium adiverat. Gravis ea res Aeneae fuit, cui ad meditandum, quae proferret, una tantum nox intercedebat, sed fuit ei⁹ praesidio valitudo ducis Burgundorum, qui febribus {36r} ea nocte vexatus concilio interesse non potuit. Dilata est igitur in aliam diem audientia. Ibi cum omnes adessent, in hunc modum Aeneas oravit:

¹ quaeritur MA

² suadere K, O, U, V, W

³ vere W

⁴ satis plenum O; plenum satis W

⁵ consilium U

⁶ his U

⁷ nouissimi O, W

⁸ advenissent W

⁹ omit. MA

[104] When the Master of Germany heard this from those legates of the princes who participated in the diet, he asked for a consultation, excluding the envoys of the cities whom he thought were favouring the Prussians. He said that the required amount of money was enormous and that he did not know how to scrape it together. The Cardinal of San Pietro, as usual, spoke at length and wisely: he advised them to sent legates to negotiate a settlement with the King of Poland who was known to protect the cities. In the meantime, the Knights should gather such army as they could. They should also write to the margrave and ask for a postponement of the treaty with the Bohemians until they could hear from the Master of Prussia if he had the required sum available. For even if all the German possessions of the Order were sold, they were not enough to fulfil the terms of the treaty. Almost all agreed, but they decided to await the margrave whose arrival was said to be imminent so that they could learn about the matter in greater detail.¹

8. Third session, 16 May: Crusade against the Turks²

8.1. Oration “*Quamvis omnibus*” of Piccolomini

[105] Afterwards, as the diet now seemed to be fully attended, the imperial legates decided to summon a meeting and there to communicate the emperor’s mandate. They had previously asked the cardinal to speak, but the day before the meeting, they changed their mind and asked Aeneas to speak. The reason was not that he was the better speaker, but that he was one of those who had been sent from the emperor’s court since those who had come straight from the emperor’s court carried greater weight. For the cardinal had come to the diet from his own home, summoned by letter. This was a quite demanding task for Aeneas since he only had one night to plan what he would say. However, he was helped by the state of health of the Burgundian duke who that night suffered an attack of fever and thus could not participate in the meeting. The session was therefore postponed to the next day. When all had assembled, Aeneas spoke in this fashion:

¹ “pressius”

² RTA, 19, 1, pp. 258 ff.

[106] Quamvis¹ omnibus, qui adestis, reverendissimi patres, illustrissimi et nobilissimi principes, ceterique viri magnifici ac praestantes², etsi nota est causa vestrae vocationis - in litteris enim³ ad unumquemque transmissis exprimitur - quia tamen res ardua est et universam Christianitatem respicit⁴, ob quam divus Caesar Fridericus, Romanorum imperator, in hac urbe celeberrima conventum indixit, ex usu judicant⁵ esse reverendissimi ac magnipotentis collegae mei sublimitatis imperatoriae⁶ legati causam ipsam, quae vos⁷ accersendos persuasit, in medium vestri amplius explicari, quodque Caesareae menti ad consulendum reipublicae⁸ Christianae propositum sedeat, in hoc amplissimo auditorio palam fieri. Partes autem dicendi ad me, ut cernitis, delatae sunt, qui etsi pareo non invitus⁹ majoribus meis, in hoc tamen negotio, quod est omnium maximum, non ab re alium meo loco¹⁰ suffectum esse voluissem, qui parem rebus potuisset orationem habere.

[107] Verum quia turpe est contendere, ubi necesse est oboedire, munus¹¹ mihi demandatum pro mea facultate conabor absolvere. Vos pro vestra mansuetudine ac nobilitate, quas¹² ceteris praestare soletis aures, eas non dicam mihi, sed rerum, quas proponam magnitudini atque ipsi, cujus nomine loquar, Friderico Caesari concedetis. Ego ut quam brevissime res absolvam, {36v} oratiunculam meam duas in partes dividam. In prima referentur ex ordine convocati¹³ hujus concilii rationes. In secunda commissionis nostrae tenor explicabitur. Ac ne tempus frustra teram, de priori parte succincte transigam.

[108] Duae fuerunt causae, quibus impulsus est Caesar hunc conventum indicere. Unam praestitit grandis¹⁴ illa atque insignis contumelia, quam aestate¹⁵ proxime decursa Turcorum ductor Maumethus apud Constantinopolim Christiano intulit nomini. Alteram maximus praebuit apparatus, quem ipsi iidem Turci habere dicuntur, ut Christianam gentem funditus perdant¹⁶. Illa damnum pensitat jam illatum, haec futurum discrimen periculumque metitur. De his est paulo altius conferendum, ut intelligant omnes neque parvam injuriam esse, quam dicimus vindicandam, nec minimum esse periculum, quod suademus vestro¹⁷ consilio praecavendum.

¹ ~~Quamvis~~ in marg. K; Quamvis add. in marg. V; omit. O, U, W

² prestabiles O, W

³ omit. K

⁴ corr. ex concernit V; concernit K, O, W

⁵ viderant W; judicarunt MA, WO

⁶ imperator U

⁷ nos U, W

⁸ publice rei K

⁹ inviditis U

¹⁰ quod est ... loco omit. U

¹¹ minus W

¹² quibus MA, WO

¹³ convocatio U

¹⁴ omit. U [blank space]

¹⁵ aetate U

¹⁶ pergant U

¹⁷ nostro W

8.1.1. Introduction

[106] Most Reverend Fathers, Illustrious and Noble Princes, and you other Excellent and Distinguished Men, present here today, you already know the reason why you have been invited to this conference since it was stated in the letter sent to each of you. But the matter concerning which Holy Roman Emperor Friedrich has summoned a meeting in this famous city is of the highest importance and concerns all of Christianity, and, therefore, my Most Reverend and Great Lords and Colleagues, orators of His Imperial Highness, have deemed it useful to explain more fully to this excellent assembly the reasons you have been summoned and to disclose His Imperial Majesty's intention in taking counsel with you concerning the Christian Commonwealth. As you see, the task of speaking has fallen to me: though I gladly obey my betters in this matter, the most important of all, I should rather have wished to be replaced with someone who could give a more suitable oration.

[107] But since it is shameful to argue when you should obey, I shall perform the task requested of me to the best of my ability. And since you are kind and noble, you will - as you usually do to others - lend an ear, not to me but to the important matter concerned and to Emperor Friedrich in whose name I shall be speaking. I shall perform this task as briefly as possible, dividing my little speech into two parts. In the first, I shall state the reasons why this conference has been summoned. In the second, I shall explain our task [in this assembly]. And so as not to waste time, I begin the first part right now.

8.1.2. Turkish conquest of Constantinople

[108] Two reasons have moved the emperor to summon the present diet. The first one is the great, nay enormous injury that the Turkish leader, Mehmed,¹ inflicted upon the Christian cause last summer at Constantinople.² The second is the reported intensive Turkish military build-up, aiming at the complete destruction of the Christian people.³ The injury inflicted upon us by the Turks he considers as belonging to the past, whereas the build-up means future risk and danger. In a moment, I shall speak of both so that all may understand how serious is the injury we claim should be avenged and how great is the danger we urge you to prepare for.

¹ Mehmed II

² The Fall of Constantinople, 29 May 1453

³ See Isidore of Kiev: Letter to Pope Nicolas V of 6 July 1453 (Pertusi, I, 62): *comminatur omne christianum nomen radicitus excerpere*

[109] Circa injuriam autem, sicut mihi quidem videtur, nihil est, quod pro magnitudine rei satis dici possit. Nos tamen aliquid pro nostro captu in medium afferremus. Quiescebat Graecorum imperator domi suae apud Constantinopolim, quamvis in fide nostra orthodoxa non satis instructus neque¹ satis fixus, Christianus tamen², Dei ac domini nostri Jesu pro captu suo³ cultor, sanguine nobilis, et virtute clarus. Nulla ei cum Turcis lis erat. Ferre potius superbae gentis contumelias, quam inferre⁴ cuipiam⁵ molestiam in {37r} animum induxerat suum: nulli noxius⁶, nulli gravis. Tranquilla suum populum in pace regebat.

[110] Sed est in Thracia locus non longe a Constantinopoli, qui apud veteres Bosphoros nomen habuit, ubi magnus ille Hellespontus in angustias coactus, ut nonnulli tradunt, quingentorum passuum hinc⁷ Europam inde Asiam disjungit.⁸ Hinc olim Darius, rex Persarum, ponte facto copias copias transportavit, hic et Sacellum aliquando⁹ fuit Michaelis Archangeli miraculis innumerabilibus illustratum. In hoc Europae latere, quod ditionis Graecorum erat, Maumethus contra foedus jusque castellum erigit, quo et suis trajicientibus sit praesidio, et naves ex Euxino in Propontidem transeuntes ex arbitrio impediatur. Denuntiat imperator novum opus haudquaquam faciendum esse, foedus fidemque commemorat, jus bonumque¹⁰ petit. Ille in proposito perseverans castellum perficit.

[111] Exin magnis copiis terra marique congregatis imperatori bellum indicit, Constantinopolim obsidet, machinas admovet¹¹, muros quatit, urbem vehementer oppugnat¹², capit, diripit. Constantinus illic imperator occumbit. Mira Dei judicia et arcana consilia: sub eo nomine Graecorum extinguitur imperium, sub quo sumpsit exordium. In ipso ingressu mille hominum ferme¹³ occiduntur¹⁴, fit deinde¹⁵ per urbem major caedes. Nobilitas omnis extinguitur, sacerdotes in ore gladii pereunt. Virgines ac matronae ea {37v} perpetiuntur, quae sunt libita victoribus. Filii in complexu¹⁶ parentum¹⁷ enecantur, infinitus animarum numerus in captivitatem ac perpetuam

¹ atque MA

² et *add.* O

³ *omit.* MA

⁴ inferri W

⁵ copiam U

⁶ erat *add.* O, W

⁷ *omit.* WO

⁸ disjungat WO

⁹ alioquin MA

¹⁰ hominumque U

¹¹ ammonet U

¹² expugnat *add.* O

¹³ hominum ferme : ferme hominum MA

¹⁴ occiditur O, W

¹⁵ denique U

¹⁶ amplexu MA

¹⁷ *omit.* W

servitatem arripitur. Miseram et¹ lacrimabilem urbis fortunam, omnia plena rapinis, flammis, libidinibus, cruore, cadaveribus² vidissetis.

¹ ac MA

² et *add.* W

[109] Concerning the injury, it is so great that it cannot be expressed in words. Still, we shall attempt to do so to the best of our ability. The Greek emperor¹ was living peacefully at home in Constantinople. Although he may not have been sufficiently instructed and firm in our orthodox faith, he was a Christian and a sincere believer in God and Our Lord, Jesus, and a man of noble blood and excellent virtues. He had no conflict with the Turks. He was convinced that it was better to tolerate being abused by this arrogant people than to cause trouble to others. He harmed no man, threatened no one, and ruled his people in tranquil peace.

[110] But in Thracia, not far from Constantinople, there is a region called Bosphorus by the ancients. There the great Hellespont narrows so much that some people claim only 500 passus² separate Europe from Asia. Once, the Persian King Darius³ transported his forces from the other side on a bridge built for this purpose. On the European side, there used to be a chapel in honour of the Archangel Michael, famous for countless miracles. On that side, which belongs to the Greeks, Mehmed, in contravention of all treaties and rights, built a fortress. His purpose was to protect his men when they were to be shipped [from the Asian to the European side]. He also wanted to be able to prevent ships from sailing from Euxinus⁴ to Propontis⁵. The emperor protested against the construction of the fortress, reminded Mehmed of their treaty, and demanded what is just and right. But Mehmed pursued his chosen course and finished the fortress.

[111] Then, he gathered great forces by land and sea, declared war on the emperor, besieged Constantinople, deployed his war machines, broke down the walls, made a ferocious attack on the city, captured it and plundered it. There Emperor Constantine fell. How wondrous are the judgments of God and how mysterious his ways! About 1,000 men were killed during the attack itself, and afterwards, a general slaughter took place throughout the city. All the nobles were killed, and the priests put to the sword. Virgins and matrons suffered the pleasure of the victors. Boys were killed in the arms of their parents, and an infinite number of people were carried off to captivity and permanent slavery. Oh, the miserable and tearful destiny of that city: everywhere you saw plunder, fire, debauchery, blood, and corpses.

¹ Constantine XII

² Roman measure, ca. 1.5 m.

³ Darius III (ca. 380-330 BC): Last king of the Achaemenid Empire of Persia from 336 BC to his death

⁴ The Black Sea

⁵ Sea of Marmara

[112] Templata divino dicata nomini nefandis profanantur modis, stabula ac - proh pudor - lupanaria fiunt. Effigies magni Dei matrisque praecursorisque beatorumque omnium delentur. Reliquiae martyrum et aliorum sanctorum jam cum Christo regnantium, quae fuerunt illis in templis pretiosissimae, porcis ac canibus objiciuntur. Simulacrum ipsum¹ crucifixi praeviis tympanis in castra deducitur; pro ludo hinc atque inde rapitur, conspuitur, luto provolvitur. Parvane ista videntur et non dolenda flagitia? *Quis talia fando² temperet a lacrimis? Horresco talia referens.* O maximam atque intolerabilem ignominiam Christianae gentis! Et cujus est, obsecro, pectus Christiani hominis, quod haec audiens non commoveatur, non incendatur, non ferveat ira? Quis est oculus fidelis hominis, qui non gemat? Amissa est³ civitas nobilissima et amplissima, quam quondam Constantinus primus ejus nominis imperator, jussu domini salvatoris sibi per quietem apparentis, ad aemulationem Romanae urbis erexit, quae licet saepe civilibus⁴ bellis ac barbaricis incursionibus vastata fuerit, numquam tamen extra manum Christianorum, nisi modo traducta est.

[113] {38r} Hic orientalis imperii solium, hic patriarchalis sedes longo tempore floruit, hic grande illud et memorabile concilium celebratum est, in quo Dioscorus et Eutyches prava de salvatore sentientes et praedicantes condemnati et in exilium missi sunt. Hic sacratissimae leges⁵, quae constringunt hominum vitas, cum essent antea confusae atque obscurissimae, per Justinianum Caesarem ad compendium claritatemque sunt redactae. Hic oratoria, hic philosophia et omnium bonarum artium studia, postquam consenuerunt et extinctae sunt Athenae, unicum domicilium et certissimum templum habuere. Hinc, si qua est hodie apud nostros, eloquentia manavit. Sed hanc urbem, adeo memorabilem, adeo gloriosam, Turci nostra tempestate nulla injuria lacesiti bello invadentes ex Christianorum manibus⁶ abstulerunt, sanguinem innoxium fuderunt, bibliothecas et et libros rerum memorabilium incenderunt, sanctorum loca foedarunt, et opprobria in Christum Deum, quae *referre horreo*, protulerunt.

¹ ipsius O, W

² fanda W

³ enim MA

⁴ ciuibus W

⁵ legis W

⁶ nostra tempestate ... manibus *omit.* W

[112] The temples dedicated to the divine name were profaned in unspeakable ways and turned into taverns and – oh, what shame – brothels! The icons of the Great God, of His Mother, of the Precursor, and of all the saints were destroyed. The precious relics of martyrs and other saints now reigning with Christ, kept in the temples, were thrown to pigs and dogs. A crucifix was carried into the [Turkish] camp, preceded by trumpets. They made a game of throwing it back and forth, mocked it, and dragged it through the filth. Does this [outrage] seem small and insignificant? *Who can talk about such things without tears?*¹ *I shudder even as I tell them.*² Oh, what great and intolerable shame on the Christian people! I believe that the heart of every Christian who hears about this will be moved and burn with anger. Is there any believer who will not cry in sorrow? For lost is the great and noble city built by Constantine,³ first emperor of that name, at the command of Our Lord and Saviour appearing to him in his sleep. He built the city in emulation of the city of Rome, and although it was often plagued by civil wars and incursions of barbarian peoples, it has never, before today, passed out of Christian hands.

[113] There the throne of the Eastern Empire and a patriarchal see flourished for a long period. There that great and memorable council was held, where the false teachings and preaching of Dioscorus⁴ and Eutyches⁵ were condemned, and they themselves sent into exile.⁶ There those holy holy – but by then confusing and incomprehensible - laws that regulate human life were clarified and edited in one law collection by Emperor Justinian.⁷ ⁸ There oratory, philosophy, and the studies of all the good arts⁹ found a unique home and a secure temple after they had grown old and disappeared from Athens. There eloquence dwelt – if we can still talk of such in our time. This is the city, so memorable and so glorious, which the Turks without any provocation whatsoever have now conquered and taken from the Christians' hands, shedding the blood of harmless people, burning libraries and important books, polluting the holy places and committing sacrileges against Christ, Our God, which *I shudder to relate.*¹⁰

¹ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 2.361

² Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 2.204

³ Constantine I the Great (272-337): Emperor from 306 to his death

⁴ Dioscorus I (d. 454): Patriarch of Alexandria 444

⁵ Eutyches (ca. 380-ca. 456): Archimandrite of Constantinople

⁶ The Council of Chalcedon, 451 AD

⁷ Justinianus I (483-565): Emperor from 527 to his death

⁸ The corpus juris civilis, issued from 529 to 534 AD

⁹ The liberal arts

¹⁰ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, II, 204: *horresco referens*

[114] Haec Caesarem nostrum vehementer urgent et angunt; digna haec scelera suae majestati videntur, digna flagitia, quae vindicemus: minime ille tantam injuriam, tam insignem contumeliam inultam existimat¹ relinquendam. Neque enim solis hic Graecis illusum² est, sed omnis Christianitas enormiter laesa est atque contempta. Neque mortales tantum, sed ipsi superi immortales derisi ac provocati sunt, Deus noster indicibili more spretus. Quod si nos pro levibus {38v} damnis, pro rusticis nostris modica injuria lacessitis arma sumimus et ingentibus nos periculis objectamus, quid hic agendum erit, ubi tota Christianitas³ laesa est? Et ipse Deus, quem⁴ colimus, colimus, e suis ejectus sedibus? An non aequum est vitam illi offerre, qui dedit, qui pro nobis in ara crucis voluit immolari? Ingratum genus hominum, si ei corpus nostrum tradere⁵ negamus, qui nobis corpus et spiritum et animam elargitus est.

[115] Sed neque⁶ injuriae vindicandae ratio dumtaxat Caesarem movet⁷, quae sane maxima est⁸. est⁸. Instare periculum grande videt⁹ existimatque cavendum, ne injuria injuriam pariat. Habet jam jam sibi subjectam Maumethus Constantinopolim. Illic portus est amplissimus et statio benefida carinis¹⁰, quae non modo unam aut alias¹¹ naves, sed inifinitas paene classes capere possit. Neque toto Mediterraneo mari situs¹² est ad infestandum omne pelagus magis aptus. Jacet enim Constantinopolis supra Propontidem, ita ut neque ex ponto Euxino, quem mare majus hodie¹³ vocant, in pelagus Euboicum, Jonium ac Creticum¹⁴, quae maria unum videri queunt, nunc quod Archipelagus appellatur, neque versa vice ex hoc in illud invitis Turchis transitus esse possit. Sunt enim angustiae per Bosphorum Thraciae ac per Hellespontum, quod Bracchium Sancti Georgii vulgus dicitat, in potestate Turcorum. Nec jam {39r} mercimonia ex Tanai prohibentibus Turcis ad nostros¹⁵ deferri queunt. Facultas nunc illis est in portu Constantinopolis¹⁶ classem parare, quae cunctas insulas Archipelagi vastatum eat, quarum jam¹⁷ plerasque captas atque directas¹⁸ memorant.

¹ estimat W

² illum U

³ ita *add.* K

⁴ et ipse ... quem *omit.* U

⁵ contradere O, W

⁶ ne U

⁷ monet W

⁸ ~~et ingentissima~~ *seq. V; et urgentissima add. O; et ingentissima add. W*

⁹ vidit W

¹⁰ ~~carinis~~ W

¹¹ duas O, W

¹² sus U

¹³ moderni O, W

¹⁴ ~~Creticum~~ W

¹⁵ nos MA

¹⁶ Constantinopoleos O, W

¹⁷ *omit.* U

¹⁸ directas O

[114] These [events] have shocked the emperor profoundly. His Majesty believes that such crimes and shameful acts must be avenged: this enormous injury, this flagrant abuse must not be left unavenged. It is not only the Greeks who have been scorned. Indeed, all Christendom has been grievously wounded and mocked. And not only have mortals, but even the immortal beings in Heaven been mocked and provoked. Our God has been scorned in an unspeakable fashion. We go to war and risk terrible dangers in matters of small harm and when our farmers have been only slightly molested. So what should we do now when all Christianity has been injured and God himself, whom we worship, has been thrown out from his dwellings? Is it not worthy to offer our life to him who gave his life for us and accepted to become a sacrifice on the altar of the Cross? Humankind is indeed ungrateful if we refuse to offer our body to him who granted us both body and spirit and soul.

8.1.3. Turkish threat to Europe

[115] The emperor, however, is not just moved by the motive of avenging this injury though it is, of course, quite serious. For he sees a great danger threatening us and considers that we must take care to avoid that one injury leads to another. Mehmed has now conquered Constantinople. There he has a large harbour and a site very suitable for ships, which can hold not just one or some ships, but almost immense fleets. No other place on the Mediterranean is more convenient for dominating the whole sea, for Constantinople lies above Propontis¹ so that you cannot against the will of the Turks sail from the Pontus Euxinus² (which today is called the Great Sea) to the Euboan, Jonian, and Cretan seas, which may be considered as one sea (today called the Archipelago), nor the opposite way. The narrow straits through Thracian Bosphorus and through the Hellespont (that our people call The Arm of Saint George) being now in the power of the Turks, no commercial goods can come from Tanais³ to our regions against their will. And it will now be possible for the Turks to prepare a fleet in the port of Constantinople with which to lay waste to all the islands of the Archipelago – actually they are already reported to have attacked and plundered a number of them.

¹ The Marmara Sea

² The Black Sea

³ Don

[116] Maumethus autem¹, ut certo affirmant, qui ejus mores vitamque norunt, quique illis ex regionibus ad nos veniunt, auctus animo nequaquam se otio atque inertiae tradit, sed proximam quamque victoriam veluti sequentis instrumentum ducit²: exercitus copiosos classesque potentissimas extruit eo proposito, ut amplius Christianitatem lacescat, neque aliud dies noctesque meditatur, quam Christianum nomen funditus eradicare atque extinguere memoriam Jesu domini nostri. Nec mirum si tumescit atque insanit illius animus, cum patris sui ac suas victorias mente revolvit. Genitor ejus Amurates³ paucis ante annis bis Christianorum prostravit exercitus non parvos neque contemnendos. Vladislaum, Poloniae regem nobilissimum adolescentem, Julianumque sancti angeli cardinalem, apostolicae sedis legatum, virum sui temporis excellentissimum, ad necem compulit. Hic vero⁴ de Constantinopolitana victoria et imperatore Graecorum caeso gloriosus majorem se patre jactitat⁵. Et quoniam falsi et⁶ mendosissimi prophetae Maumethi, qui sectam ampliavit atque roboravit⁷ Agarenorum, nomen gerit, incredibili torquetur⁸ siti Christiani nominis extinguendi.

[117] Cumque patriarchalibus ex sedibus illis quattuor, super quibus veluti solidissimis basibus Christiana subnixa {39v} fides in totum olim orbem palmites suos extendit, jam tres obtineant Agareni, Alexandrinam, Antiochenam, et Constantinopolitanam, nullo jam dubio tenetur, quin⁹ et Romanam nobis eripiat. Usurpare quoque inter familiares sermones haec verba solet: "Cur ego non totum mihi occidentem armis subjiciam, qui sum Asiae, Thraciae,¹⁰ Macedoniae ac¹¹ totius Graeciae dominus, quando Alexander, Philippi filius, cum soli Macedoniae dominaretur, ausus est cum¹² duobus et triginta milibus militum orientem invadere et¹³ usque ad Indiam penetrare? Comparat se Julio Caesari, Hannibali Poeno, Pyrrho Epirotae ac ceteris illustribus viris, praestareque se omnibus asserit¹⁴.

¹ ante U

² duci K

³ Amurathes K, V, MA, WO; Homorat O, W

⁴ vere W

⁵ patre jactitat : jactitat patre MA

⁶ ac O, W

⁷ irroboravit O, W

⁸ torquentur U

⁹ quod MA

¹⁰ ac *add.* MA, WO

¹¹ atque MA

¹² dico *add.* W

¹³ *omit.* K

¹⁴ *omit.* U

[116] But men who know Mehmed's character and life well and who come to us from those regions report that Mehmed has grown bolder and will certainly not want peace and quiet: one victory is the means for the next. He is gathering large armies and strong fleets in order to further assail Christianity. Night and day, he only thinks about how to completely destroy the Christian cause¹ and to destroy the memory of Jesus, Our Lord. Indeed, it is not to be wondered that his mind swells and raves when he considers his father's and his own victories. Only a few years ago, his father, Murad,² twice destroyed large and strong Christian armies, causing the death of Vladislaus, the young and noble king of Poland,³ and Giuliano, Cardinal of Sant'Angelo, one of the most outstanding men of his time.⁴ Proud of his victory at Constantinople and the killing of the Greek Emperor, Mehmed now boasts that he is greater than his father. And since he carries the same name as the false and lying prophet Muhammad, who enlarged and strengthened the sect of the Agarenes, he is tormented by his burning desire to destroy the Christian name.

[117] The Christian Faith was solidly rooted in four patriarchal sees,⁵ from where it once spread over the whole Earth, like vine sprouts. Of these, the Agarenes have now taken three: Alexandria, Antiochia and Constantinople. Therefore Mehmed has no doubt that he can also win the Roman patriarchate from us. Indeed, among his intimates, he often says, "Why should I not be able to conquer and possess the whole of the West since I am already lord of Asia, Thracia, Macedonia, and all of Greece? After all, Alexander,⁶ son of Philip,⁷ was lord of Macedonia only when he dared to invade the East with [just] 32,000 soldiers and reach as far as India." He actually compares himself to Julius Cesar,⁸ Hannibal of Carthage,⁹ Pyrrhus of Epirus,¹⁰ and other illustrious illustrious men and claims to surpass them all.

¹ "nomen" (*et passim*)

² Murad II (1404-1451): Sultan of the Turks from 1421 to 1444 and from 1446 to his death

³ Vladislaus I (Jagiellon) (1424-1444): King of Hungary from 1440 to his death

⁴ Giuliano Cesarini (1398-1444). Cardinal (1426), papal legate, President of the Council, mentor and friend of Piccolomini. Little did Piccolomini know that one day he himself would succeed him as Cardinal of Santa Sabina

⁵ In the texts, there is some fluctuation concerning whether there were four or five main patriarchates (Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Rome – with or without Jerusalem)

⁶ Alexander III the Great (356-323 BC): King of the Greek kingdom of Macedon. Created one of the largest empires of the ancient world, stretching from Greece and Egypt into present-day Pakistan

⁷ Philip II of Macedon (382-336 BC): King of the Hellenic kingdom of Macedon from 359 BC until his assassination in 336 BC

⁸ Gaius Julius Caesar (100-44 BC): Roman general and statesman

⁹ Hannibal Barca (247-ca. 183 BC): Carthaginian general and statesman

¹⁰ Pyrrhus of Epirus (ca. 319-272 BC): King of Epirus

[118] Copias sese ait innumeras armare atque in proelium ducere posse. Neque hic mentitur. Manifestum enim est ducenta et amplius milia pugnatorum in bellum ab eo educi posse. Quod si Tartarus¹ junctus fuerit, ut legatus regis Poloniae refert et Hungariae gubernator affirmat, exercitum paene innumerabilem conflare valebit. Sed quid ego in re notissima moror? Progenitores hujus Maumethi, cum nihil citra mare possiderent, maximos² saepe populos in Europam trajecere. Quid modo is faciat, qui usque ad Hungariae metas et usque ad Dalmatiam protendit imperium? Non est spernendus hic hostis, cui et potentia ingens est et animus ad bella paratus, qui juvenis est³ laudis amans et⁴ sanguine bulliens, cui naturali quodam odio ex insita et innata malignitate atque crudelitate Christianos persequi propositum est, qui multos habet apostatas nostri generis, ad audendum provocantes⁵, ex quibus omnia consilia nostra {40r} cognoscit, qui nobis vicinus est et aditum habet sive in Italiam, sive in Germaniam non difficilem per loca propinqua Dalmatiae atque Croatiae. Nam et Albani⁶ et Bosnenses magna ex parte in ejus ejus sese clientelam dedere. An putandum est quieturum hominem victoria functum, quem tot invitant ad insequendum commoditates? Qui norunt hominem et consilia sua⁷ perscrutati sunt, haud dubium censent, quin⁸ anno proximo in Christianos magno impetu⁹ ruat atque omni¹⁰ conatu conatu vicinos opprimere pergat.

[119] Ob has igitur causas indictum est hujuscemodi concilium: de vindicanda injuria, de vitandis amplioribus malis captanda consilia sunt. Optavit Caesar ad hunc locum se conferre, sed compulsus ex causis saepe relatis pro tutela suarum provinciarum domi manere, direxit huc hos patres et¹¹ proceres insignes, meque cum eis, qui vices suas gereremus¹². Mandatum nostrum nudiustertius, cum legeretur, audistis. Quae¹³ Caesar in hac re potuisset, eadem quoque et nos possumus, si modo vestrae mentes ad tuendam vindicandamque Christianam religionem erectae sunt^{14 15}. Intelligitis, quae fuerint convocationis vestrae rationes.

¹ Thartaris W

² permaximos O, W

³ et *add.* MA

⁴ belli *add.* K

⁵ prouocantis O

⁶ Albam U, MA

⁷ eius O, W

⁸ quod MA

⁹ in Christianos ... impetu : magno impetu in Christianos MA

¹⁰ enim W

¹¹ atque MA

¹² geremus U

¹³ quecumque O, W

¹⁴ erectae sunt : sunt erecte O, W

¹⁵ *omit.* K, U, W; *add. in marg.* V

[118] He claims that he can arm and lead countless forces into war. This is not a lie for it is evident that he can bring more than 200,000 soldiers into battle. And if the tartars join him, as the legate of the Polish King reports and the Governor of Hungary confirms,¹ then he will be able to mobilize an almost innumerable army. But why dwell on something that is common knowledge? Although his forefathers did not have any land over the sea, they often brought great forces over to Europe. What would he do now when his empire reaches from the frontiers of Hungary to Dalmatia? We should certainly not despise this mighty enemy! His mind is set on war. He is young and hot-blooded. He loves glory. He is determined to pursue Christians - with a kind of natural hate born of ingrained and innate malignity and cruelty. He has many renegades from our people with him who encourage him and from whom he learns of all our plans. He is our immediate neighbour, with easy access to Italy and Germany through the neighbouring regions of Dalmatia and Croatia – for most Albanians and Bosnians have surrendered to him and have become his clients. Do you really believe that this man, enticed by so many advantages, will settle down after his victories? Those who well know the man and his intentions are quite certain that next year he will assault the Christians with all his might and do all he can to vanquish his neighbours.

8.1.4. War against the Turks

[119] Therefore, the present meeting has been summoned to deliberate on how to avenge the injury and how to avoid even greater evils. The emperor himself wanted to come here, but for reasons that have been explained several times already, he had to stay at home to protect his lands. Instead, he has sent these illustrious fathers and nobles and me with them to come here and represent him. You heard our mandate when it was read to you the day before yesterday. We are empowered to do what the emperor would have done in this matter if only your minds are focused on protecting and avenging the Christian religion. You now understand the reasons you have been summoned to this place.

¹ See sect. 24 and 81

[120] Nunc¹, quae sit nostra commissio, paucis expediam. Id est enim, quod secundo loco dicturum me promisi. Munus nostrum hoc potissimum est requisitas atque commonitas facere vestras excellentias, ne quo pacto hinc² abeatis³, priusquam conclusionem unanimum recipiatis, per quam non modo defendi⁴, quae superat Christianitas, sed et vendicari possit⁵, quae in hostium potestate consistit. Id autem quo pacto quoque ordine faciendum {40v} sit, non est⁶ nobis certo limite demandatum. Sed jussi sumus audire consilia vestra, opiniones vestras agnoscere⁷, gravia et illuminatissima sequi iudicia vestra, discutere vobiscum⁸, quae opportuna quaeque necessaria videantur, et in communi, quae meliora visa⁹ fuerint, amplecti atque concludere.

[121] Ipse autem divus Fridericus, tamquam Romanorum imperator, tamquam advocatus et protector ecclesiae, tamquam princeps religiosissimus, cui cordi est catholica et orthodoxa fides Christiana, suam operam¹⁰ suasque vires et omne patrimonium suum in medium offert. Voluntarium quoque et promptum paratumque se dicit, quantum in ejus potestate fuerit, cuncta executioni mandare, quae in hac conventionem pro tutela Christiani nominis, pro augmento fidei Catholicae, pro honore Romani imperii, pro gloria Germanicae nationis quoquomodo deliberata conclusaque fuerint.

[122] Illud nihilominus vel sine consilio necessarium Caesar existimat atque in medium suadet, ut divinum auxilium in primis devotissime impleretur, ut fiant opera digna misericordia ac clementia Dei. Nam quemadmodum peccatis et iniquitatibus nostris offensa divina majestas Christianam gentem succumbere atque affligi sinit, ita piis actibus et orationibus placata suum tuebitur populum, praebebitque veniam omnipotens et misericors {41r} Deus, sine cujus nutu nihil est, quod humana potestas valeat explicare. Exhortatur igitur imperatoria sublimitas reverendissimos ecclesiarum pontifices ceterosque praelatos, ut commissos sibi populos ad opera pietatis invitent, atque ipsi per sese cum clero sibi subjecto immaculatas hostias pro peccatis offerant populorum.

¹ Secunda pars *in marg.* V

² hoc W

³ abeatis *corr. ex habeatis* W

⁴ deferendi W

⁵ posset W

⁶ non est *omit.* W

⁷ *omit.* U

⁸ nobiscum U, W

⁹ nisi W

¹⁰ suam operam *corr. ex operas* V; suas operas O, W

[120] Now, I shall briefly deal with our mission, for that is what I promised to speak of in the second place. Our most important task is to demand of Your Excellencies not to depart from here before you have made a unanimous decision to not only defend what remains of Christianity but also to reclaim, as far as possible, what is now in the hands of the enemies. We have not received specific instructions concerning the manner and the order in which this should be done. Rather, we have been ordered to receive your counsel, to hear your views, to follow your serious and enlightened judgment, to discuss with you what would be useful and necessary, and to reach a joint agreement on the best course to follow.

[121] As Holy Emperor of the Romans, as champion and protector of the Church, as a pious prince who has the Catholic and orthodox Faith at heart, Friedrich himself will dedicate all his efforts and resources to this enterprise. He declares that he is prompt and ready, and he will, to his greatest ability, order everything to be done that this assembly may decide for the protection of the Christian cause, for the growth of the Catholic faith, for the honour of the Roman Empire, and for the glory of the German nation.

[122] However, he needs no counsel to consider it necessary and to urge you first of all to humbly beg God for help and perform acts worthy of God's mercy and clemency. For just as the divine majesty has been offended by our sins and iniquities and therefore allows the Christian people to falter and be harassed, omnipotent and merciful God will be pleased by pious acts and prayers and, therefore, protect and forgive his people. For unless He wills it, human power can achieve nothing. Therefore, His Imperial Majesty exhorts the reverend bishops and other prelates to urge the people entrusted to them to perform pious acts and themselves together with their clergy to offer up immaculate hosts [in atonement] for the sins of the peoples.

[123] Vos autem, magnanimi proceres, duces, marchiones, comites¹, equites, quos non minus alti cordis quam clari sanguinis esse² crediderim, commonitos efficit Caesarea majestas, ne Constantinopolitanam dumtaxat cladem³, quae recens est et supra⁴ modum dolenda, sed vetusta vetusta quoque⁵ vulnera, et jam⁶ ⁷ vix curabilia, ante mentis oculos revocetis cogitetisque quomodo perdidit⁸ Deus caeli Jerosolimam terram suam, in qua visus est, et annis supra XXX homo homo cum hominibus conversatus, suam utique quam illustravit miraculis, quam proprio sanguine dedicavit, in qua primi resurrectionis flores apparuerunt. En Terram Sanctam, terram⁹ benedictam, benedictam, terram lacte et melle fluentem, officinamque nostrae salutis osores occupant vivificae crucis. Sacrosanctam¹⁰ civitatem nostri possident hostes, pia et sacratissima loca agni immaculati purpurata cruore sceleratissimi calcant pedes.

[124] Advertite, obsecro, viri fortes, {41v} en quantum dedecus hoc nostrum est, quod ipsum religionis nostrae sacracrium lectumque illum pretiosissimum, in quo propter nos vita nostra obdormivit in domino nisi Saracenis ostendentibus videre¹¹ nequimus. Nam illi quaestus causa sepulchrum domini servant illaesum. Itane servos crucis nos¹² esse fatemur, et sanctum canibus margaritasque porcis dimittimus? Non est baptismatis unda renatus, non est verus Christicola, qui haec¹³ sine dolore, sine lacrimis audit. En quo redacta est nostra religio! Proh quantum Maumethi perfidia crevit, dum nos domi sedemus neque vicinis, quid accidit¹⁴, advertimus. Cornua intumescunt hostium, sociosque nostrae fidei prosternunt, terramque nostram longe lateque sibi subjiciunt. Antiochia, in qua primo auditum est Christianorum¹⁵ nomen, a Deo nostro facta est aliena, neque sancti quidquam¹⁶ habet¹⁷, plena spurcitiarum est. Alexandria, in qua tot clarissimi ac sanctissimi viri divinum evangelium praedicarunt ac magnificarunt, nunc Maumethi fabulas audit: nihil est in Asia, nihil in Africa nostrum. Europae maximam¹⁸ partem amisimus; in angulum nos Maumethus coarctavit: hinc Hungaros, inde Hispanos premit.

¹ *omit.* MA, WO

² *omit.* MA

³ dumtaxat cladem : cladem dumtaxat MA

⁴ super U

⁵ quorum U

⁶ *omit.* U

⁷ et jam : etiam K

⁸ *omit.* MA

⁹ *omit.* U

¹⁰ sacrosanctamque U

¹¹ videri U

¹² non K

¹³ hoc W

¹⁴ accidat O, W

¹⁵ Christianum MA

¹⁶ sancti quidquam : quicquam sancti W

¹⁷ habent MA

¹⁸ magnam W

[123] Great Nobles, Dukes, Margraves, Counts, and Knights, whose courage I must believe equals your nobility, His Imperial Majesty urges you to call to mind not only the recent and lamentable Fall of Constantinople but also those old injuries that may now barely be healed. Consider how the God of Heaven lost Jerusalem and the Holy Land where he lived for more than 30 years, as a man together with other men, a land that he ennobled with his miracles and dedicated with his own blood, and where the first flowers of the resurrection appeared. And now those who hate the lifegiving cross occupy the Holy Land, that blessed land, that land overflowing with milk and honey,¹ the workplace of our salvation! Our enemies are in possession of the Holy City, and villains villains trample the pious and holy places,² empurpled by the blood of the immaculate lamb.

[124] Consider carefully, I beg you, mighty men, how shameful it is for us that, unless the Saracens will show them to us, we are unable to visit the holiest place of our religion and indeed the very couch where He who is our life lay dead for our sake. They keep the tomb of Our Lord intact only for the sake of lucre. However, if we claim to be servants of the cross, why do we leave our Holy One to dogs and pearls to swine? Anyone who can hear about this without pain and tears has not been reborn from the baptismal water, and he is not a true follower of Christ. See what our religion has come to! See how Muhammad's false religion has grown while we were staying at home, ignoring what happened to our neighbours. Our enemies raise their horns, they cast down our fellows in the Faith, and they occupy our lands far and wide. Antiochia, the city where the name of Christians was heard first, has now become estranged from our God. It has nothing holy anymore and is filled with impurity. Alexandria, where so many famous and holy men preached and glorified the gospel, now follows Muhammad's fables. In Asia and in Africa, we have nothing left. Of Europe, we have lost a large part, and Muhammad has forced us into a corner: at one end he harasses the Hungarians, and at the other the Spaniards.

¹ Cf. Flavio Biondo: *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades*, II, 3 [Im. 76]

² Cf. Flavio Biondo: *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades*, II, 3 [Im. 75]

[125] Evigilare jam tempus est fuissetque plurimos ante annos, et antequam haec vulnera¹ nobis infligerentur, {42r} antequam hostis tantum virium accepisset. Immortalis Deus omnia potest, sed non plus vult de nobis quam nostri parentes. At parentes, si pergunt liberi errare, bonis exhaeredant. Quid ergo nos² ab optimo³ Deo nostro amplius expectemus, nisi malis actionibus⁴ finem facimus⁵? Verberati sumus propter delicta nostra. Nunc si mentem bonam recipimus et animum⁶ fortem, miserebitur nostri Deus noster. Si poenitentiam egerimus de malis nostris, aget et ipse poenitentiam super malum⁷, quod cogitavit, ut faceret nobis. Virtutem immortalis⁸ Deus approbare, non prohibere⁹ solet. Excitare alter alterum debemus, surgere atque occurrere hostibus, priusquam fines nostros, quos nunc habemus, ingrediantur, ne¹⁰ nos in cubilibus nostris oscitantes ac somnolentos¹¹ inveniunt, nobisque locum et gentem¹² auferant.

[126] Hora est jam, principes, arma sumere atque inimicos crucis in suis laribus quaerere, bellum fortibus animis et unitis viribus gerere. Certa est in manibus nostris victoria, si modo pura mente ob Dei honorem¹³ salutemque populi Christiani proelium inchoemus, emendataeque mentes nostrae, non quae sua sunt, sed quae Jesu Christi quaerant¹⁴. Etenim quamvis est ille – ut ante dixi¹⁵ – ferocissimus et potentissimus hostis, non tamen par est Germanicis viribus neque Theutonico nomine comparandus. Non est cur eum¹⁶ formidetis, proceres, si unanimes bellum amplectimini; neque enim aut¹⁷ homines, aut equi, aut arma, aut currus, aut naves vobis¹⁸ desunt. Sed {42v} omnia haec vobis¹⁹ quam illis²⁰ meliora supersunt. Quod si majorum nostrorum²¹ gesta memoriae repetamus, neque terrestri, neque maritimo bello²² pares umquam fuisse Turcos²³ progenitoribus vestris²⁴ inveniatis, quando concordibus animis adversus eos²⁵ est itum. Possem

¹ haec vulnera : uulnera hec U

² omit. U

³ opimo U

⁴ corr. ex rationibus V; rationibus O, U, W

⁵ faciamus K

⁶ animam O, W

⁷ malo O, W

⁸ immortalitatis U

⁹ em.; adhibere codd.

¹⁰ vt W

¹¹ somnolentes K

¹² locum et gentem : gentem et locum MA

¹³ amorem W

¹⁴ querunt W

¹⁵ ferinus add. U

¹⁶ omit. MA

¹⁷ omit. MA

¹⁸ nobis U, W

¹⁹ nobis U, W

²⁰ illi MA

²¹ suorum U

²² neque maritimo bello : bello neque maritimo O

²³ fuisse Turcos : Thurcos fuisse O, W

²⁴ nostris W

²⁵ omit. W

referre Caroli Magni, Conradi tertii, Friderici primi ac secundi, Romanorum imperatorum, Gotfridi quoque Lotharingiae¹ ducis, ingentes quas de Turchis deque ceteris infidelibus victorias habuere.

¹ Lothoringiae K, O, U, V, WO

[125] It is time to wake up – indeed, we should have woken up years ago, before these wounds were inflicted upon us, and before the enemy had grown so powerful. Immortal God can do anything, but he demands no more from us than our own fathers. If children go astray, their fathers will disinherit them, so, what may we not expect of Our Best God unless we put an end to our evil doings? We have been scourged because of our sins, but if we now show goodness of mind and strength of soul, God will have mercy upon us. If we repent of our iniquities, He too will repent of the punishment he has devised for us. Immortal God approves of virtue and [certainly] does not forbid it. So, we should urge each other to act and to rise and meet our enemies, before they invade the territories we have still left and find us yawning and sleepy in our bedrooms and rob us of our peoples and of our lands.

[126] Princes, now it is time to take to weapons, to attack the enemies of the Cross in their own dwellings, and to wage war with brave hearts and united forces. Certain victory will be in our hands, if only we go to battle with a pure mind, for the honour of God and for the salvation of the Christian people, and with reformed minds seek not what is our own, but what is Jesus Christ's. Though Mehmed is - as I said before - a most ferocious and powerful enemy, he does not equal German strength, nor can he be compared to the German name. You have no reason to fear him, Nobles, if only you embrace war unanimously, for you are lacking neither in men, horses, weapons, wagons or ships: in all these things, you are superior to your enemies. If you think back on the deeds of our forefathers, you will find that the Turks never equalled them in battles at sea or on land if only the Christians acted in concert against them. Just think of the great victories over the Turks and other infidels won by the Roman emperors Charlemagne,¹ Konrad III,² Friedrich I³, Friedrich II⁴ and by Godefroy, Duke of Lorraine.⁵

¹ Charlemagne (d. 814): Crowned emperor in Rome 800

² Konrad III (Hohenstaufen): Duke of Franconia. Elected Holy Roman Emperor 1138

³ Friedrich I Barbarossa (Hohenstaufen) (1122-1190): Holy Roman Emperor 1152 to his death

⁴ Frierich II (HohenstaufenI) (1194-1250): Holy Roman Emperor 1212 to his death

⁵ Godefroy de Bouillon (ca. 1060-1100): one of the leaders of the First Crusade. First ruler of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem

[127] Sed parco defessis auribus vestris. Unum dico: numquam¹ generale passagium contra hostes nostrae religionis institutum traditur, quin nostri triumphaverint, nisi fortasse cum fames, aut pestilentia, aut discordia nostros afflixit. Manifestum est igitur nostram esse victoriam, si abdicatis causis, quae nobis Deum iratum faciunt, pro Christi nomine bellum suscipiamus. Sumite² igitur, clarissimi³ proceres, fortes animos. Nolite hinc prius abire quam gerendum adversus Turcos bellum decernatis. Nolite rem tantam ac tam necessariam in tempus aliud proferre, ne dum vos de bello gerendo deliberatis, hostis jam castra tenens, id faciat, quod vos⁴ facturos spem gerimus. Etenim quis non intelligit⁵ magnum instare Christianitati⁶ discrimen, si hoc concilium rebus infectis dissolvatur? Habet adversarius noster exploratores, non latent eum consilia vestra. Tanto ferocior erit, quanto vos⁷ cognoverit⁸ ⁹ magis desides.

[128] Christiani, qui vicini sunt Turcis, ubi de vestris¹⁰ auxiliis desperaverint, {43r} in leges Turcorum ibunt. Sic Trapezuntios, Georgianos, Rascianos, Albanos, Bulgaros facile amitemus. Caramannus, qui auxilia contra Turcos pollicetur, quamvis est ejus perfidiae comes, ubi negligentes Christianos acceperit, et ipse sibi consulat. Hungari, qui sunt¹¹ admodum potentes¹² et annis pluribus¹³ suum effundendo¹⁴ sanguinem tutati sunt nostrum, indutias cum Turcis habent non longo tempore duraturas. Quod si audiant dissolutum esse sine fructu conventum, novis se pactionibus obligabunt, neque cum voluerimus eorum uti consiliis¹⁵ dabitur.

¹ *omit.* U

² *sinite* U

³ *principes add.* W

⁴ *nos* U, W

⁵ *intelliget* W

⁶ *instare Christianitati : Christianitati instare* MA

⁷ *nos* W

⁸ *cognovit* W

⁹ *vos cognoverit : cognoverit vos* MA

¹⁰ *nostris* O, W

¹¹ *sicut* MA

¹² *omit.* MA

¹³ *quampluribus* K, O, W

¹⁴ *fundendo* W

¹⁵ *uti consiliis : uti ausiliis* O; *ut auxilium* W

[127] But I shall spare your tired ears and only say this: never has it been heard that we were defeated in a crusade against the enemies of our religion unless our [troops] were struck by hunger, plague or strife. So it is clear that if we refrain from such things that anger God, we shall be victorious when we go to war for the cause of Christ. Therefore, excellent Nobles, be courageous. Do not leave from here before you have decided on war against the Turks. Do not put off this great and urgent matter, so that while you are still discussing war, the enemy, already on the move, will actually do what you only hope to do. Who does not understand how dangerous it is for Christianity if our meeting ends with this matter left unfinished? Our adversary has spies, he knows of your plans. The more he sees you vacillate, the more ferocious he will become.

[128] If the Christians who are the neighbours of the Turks lose hope of your help, they will accept the terms of Turks. Thus we shall easily lose the peoples of Trebizond, Georgia, Rascia, Albania and Bulgaria.

Karaman¹ is being promised help against the Turks, though an infidel like them. If he hears that the the Christians are indifferent, he will look to his own interests.

The Hungarians, who are very strong and who for many years have shed much blood as they protected ours, have an armistice with the Turks that will expire shortly. If they hear that this conference has ended without a result, they will be forced to accept new agreements [with the Turks], and they will not be able to assist us when we want them to.

¹ The ruler of the Turkish tribe and principdom of Karaman, potential allies of the West against the dominant Osman Turks

[129] Neque hic rem dubiam proferimus. Johannes Huniat¹, comes Bistricensis², qui regnum³ Hungariae gubernat, vir alti consilii, Turcorum metus, Christianorum spes, hoc ipsum novissime Caesari nostro significavit per oratores, qui ad se missi fuerant. Ait enim Turcorum principem grandes belli apparatus facere, Tartarorum gentem⁴ foedere junctam⁵ habere, personam ejus esse in Andrinopoli, exercitus in Sophia apud Bulgaros congregari ibique duces belli convenisse. Hungaros autem nihil magis optare quam Turcorum conatus infringere, se quoque sumpturum arma pugnaturumque totis viribus, si Theutones ceterique Christiani concurrant. At si nostrae religionis principes torpeant, neque velle, neque posse Hungaros tantam belli molem subire, sed accepturos condiciones, quas Turci offerant, daturos transitum, qui ab illis petitur. Quod an sit in rem Christianorum, ipsi reges viderint {43v} Christiani⁶ ⁷. Sic Hungari regno suo consulere proponunt. Quid Venetos, quidve⁸ Genuenses facturos arbitramini? Nemo est qui non sibi quam alteri melius velit. Omnes de suo statu solliciti sunt. Rex autem Franciae Christianissimus, majorum suorum vestigia premens, teste reverendissimo cardinali, summo pontifici litteras dedit, quibus sese arma sumpturum pollicetur, si Germanos indixisse Turcis bellum cognoverit.

[130] Quod si vos nihil agitis, deserta Christianitas erit. Nemo illam tuebitur: *exterminabit eam aper de silva, et singularis feras depascetur eam*, vosque tanti mali causam praestabitis, si convenientes in hoc loco ad consulendum reipublicae Christianae infectis negotiis abieritis. Sunt enim omnium oculi in vos conversi, vosque veluti rectores Christiani populi omnes intuentur. Si audetis, omnium erigentur animi. Si torpetis, actum est de nostra⁹ religione, Turcorum ferre imperium, Maumethique parere legibus oportebit.

¹ Huniad W

² Vistricensis O, W; Bistticensis MA;

³ rem MA

⁴ gentes K

⁵ iunctas K

⁶ quidne O; *omit.* U

⁷ viderint Christiani : Christiani viderint MA

⁸ quid et MA

⁹ vestra W

[129] We are not advancing a doubtful argument here, for this is what Janos Hunyadi, Count of Bistruta, who governs the Kingdom of Hungary, a most perspicacious man, terror of the Turks and hope of the Christians, quite recently told our emperor through ambassadors sent to him¹. He says that the Turkish prince is making serious preparations for war, that he has entered an alliance with the Tartars, that he is now himself in Adrianopolis, that his armies are assembling at Sophia in Bulgaria, and that his generals are gathering there. [Further, that] the Hungarians want nothing more than to oppose the Turkish endeavours, and that they will go to war and fight with all their might if the Germans and the other Christians join them. But if the princes of our religion are passive, then the Hungarians neither can nor will shoulder this great burden of war [alone] but shall accept the conditions offered by the Turks and give them the free passage they demand. The Christian kings will have to consider whether that is in the interests of the Christians. This is how the Hungarians intend to provide for their kingdom.

And how do you think the Venetians and the Genoese will react? Nobody wants the other part to fare better than oneself; everyone is most concerned about his own affairs.²

The Most Christian King of France³ follows the example of his forefathers and has, according to the the Most Reverend Cardinal, sent a letter to the Supreme Pontiff,⁴ in which he promises that he, too, will take up arms if he hears that the Germans have declared war on the Turks.

8.1.5. Conclusion

[130] So, if you do nothing, Christianity will be left defenceless, nobody will protect it. You have assembled here to provide for the Christian Commonwealth. If you leave without having done so, *the boar out of the wood will lay it waste: and a singular wild beast will devour it.*⁵ All eyes are on you now, and the Christian peoples are looking to you for leadership. If you show determination, they will be encouraged. If you show apathy, our religion is done for, and we shall have to bear the rule of the Turks and obey the laws of Muhammad.

¹ Mission of Kappel Hartung, see above sect. 23-25

² Piccolomini alludes to the probability of Venice and Genoa making separate treaties with the Turks to protect their commercial interests

³ Charles VII

⁴ See above, sect. 9

⁵ Psalms, 79, 14

[131] Agite igitur! Consulite in medium, proceres! Nolite matrem vestram¹ ecclesiam desertam relinquere. Cogitate quo pacto Turcorum rabiem elidatis. Non erit hoc difficile, si concordēs estis. Ecce divino nutu et ad nostrum tutamentum lites Italiae compositae sunt. Facile jam summus² apostolicae sedis praesul ac praestantissimus ille rex Aragonum cum Venetis, Genuensibus et aliis Italiae populis ac principibus adversus Turcos classem maritimam apparabunt. {44r} Quod si vos terrestrem exercitum armaveritis, terra simul ac mari uno tempore superbissimus hostis invasus, adiutore altissimo, nostris ex finibus propulsabitur. Haec sunt, quae pro nostra commissione secundo et ultimo loco de mente Caesaris dicenda fuerunt

[132] Vos igitur, quibus curae³ est orthodoxa religio nostra, quique bonum commune Christianae plebis exoptatis, operam dabit, ne hoc concilium, ex quo spes omnium Christianorum pendet⁴, absque salubri conclusione dissipetur, neve tantus et tam altus princeps, quantus⁵ est Burgundiae dux, de remotissimis regionibus vocatu Caesaris ad vestros lares frustra venerit⁶, sed et ipse potius ad propria laetus jucundusque redeat, et omnes, qui spem habent in vobis, sui voti compotes fiant.”

[133] Hanc orationem cum verbis latinis pronuntiasset Aeneas, factumque esset mirum silentium, assurgens Ulricus episcopus Gurcensis, eandem in sermonem Theutonicum convertit, ne quis ex circumstantibus mentem Caesaris ignoraret. Post eum cardinalis sancti Petri, quoniam fuerat et ipse nonnumquam apud Constantinopolim Graeciamque paene omnem lustraverat, multa de situ amissae urbis, de moribus gentium, de potentia Turcorum, de modo gerendi belli graviter et copiose disseruit. Et quamvis Graecos digna supplicia passos asseruerit, qui Romanam ecclesiam sequi nolissent unionemque simulatam cum fraude fecissent, Christianos tamen magnopere adhortatus est, ut injuriam salvatoris ulciscerentur.

¹ nostram U

² summamus U

³ cura U

⁴ pendet K, O, U; *corr. ex* pendent V; pudeat W

⁵ quantum K

⁶ veniret U

[131] So, act now, Nobles, consult together! Do not abandon the Church, your mother! Think about how to overcome the rabid Turks! It will not be difficult if only you are in agreement. The Italian conflicts have been settled, by divine will and for our safety. It will now be easy for the Supreme Pontiff and the excellent King of Aragon together with the Venetians, the Genoese, and the other peoples and princes of Italy to prepare a fleet against the Turk. If you, on your part, mobilize a land army, our arrogant enemy can be attacked both on land and at sea, and with the help of the Most High he will be thrown out of our lands.

This is what we had been commissioned to say, in the second and last place, about the intentions of the emperor.

[132] Now it is up to you, caring for our orthodox religion and desiring the common good of the Christian people, to make sure that this congress, on which hangs the hope of all Christians, does not end without a fruitful conclusion. Nor should the great and exalted prince, the Duke of Burgundy, at the emperor's call have travelled in vain from faraway regions to your homes. No, may he go back happy and joyful, and may all who hope in you be contented.

8.2. Address of Nikolaus of Kues

[133] When Aeneas had delivered this oration in Latin, there was a moment of remarkable silence. Then Bishop Ulrich of Gurk rose and translated the oration into German so that all the attendants would know the emperor's intentions. After him, the Cardinal of San Pietro, who had personally visited Constantinople several times and seen almost all of Greece, spoke gravely and at length about the site of the lost city, the character of the peoples, the power of the Turks, and how to conduct the war. And although he declared that the Greeks had merited their sufferings since they had not wanted to follow the Roman Church and had fraudulently feigned the union, he did much urge the Christians to avenge the injury to the Saviour.

[134] Ex hinc Johannes episcopus Papiensis, legatus apostolicus, {44v} orationem habuit cum multa venustate¹ ac luce munditiaque verborum. Ejus orationis sensus fuit: diabolum ab initio saeculi veritatem odisse, divisiones, errores, schismata confovisse, haereses adversus veritatis lucem innumerabiles excitasse², quarum pestilentissimam et omnium nefandissimam Maumethi sectam esse comprobavit, quae quantum aucta dilatataque sit, omnes nossent. Commemoravit mala, quae Saraceni Turcique patrum nostrorum memoria perpetrassent. Deinde veniens ad tempora nostra Constantinopolitanam cladem ante oculos posuit, ostendens quanta impediunt³ religioni nostrae pericula, nisi furentibus Turcis obviam eatur. Romanum pontificem de tutanda Christianitate sollicitum multa et magna meditatam dixit, se quomodo⁴ ab eo missum primo ad Caesarem, deinde ad regem Hungariae atque ad ipsos regni barones, qui mentes eorum ad succurendum reipublicae Christianae concitaret atque incenderet, commemorans⁵ orationum capita singularum, quas illos apud principes habuisset. Postremo adhortatus est omnes, qui aderant, arma contra Turcos uti sumerent, habituri ex apostolico throno quaecumque ad id negotii necessaria ducerent. Cujus verba Johannes de Lysura in sonum Theutonicum transtulit non sine attentione ac gratia auditorii.

¹ venustate *corr. ex vetustate* O; vetustate W

² *omit.* U

³ impendunt O, W

⁴ quoque K, U, O, V *, W

⁵ commemorando WO

8.3. Oration of the apostolic legate, “*Gravi totiens*”

[134] Afterwards, Bishop Giovanni of Pavia, the apostolic legate, held an oration of great refinement and with vivid and elegant expressions. The purport of the oration was this: since the beginning of time, the devil has hated truth and fostered divisions, errors and schisms, and has stirred up innumerable heresies against the light of truth. The bishop declared the sect of Muhammad to be the most malignant and abominable of them all - all know how much it has grown and spread. The bishop also mentioned the evil deeds perpetrated, in the memory of our fathers, by the Saracens and the Turks. Then, coming to our own times, he put the Fall of Constantinople before our eyes, showing how great dangers threaten our religion if the savage Turks are not resisted. He told us how the Roman Pontiff was concerned about protecting Christianity and had contemplated many and great things, and how he himself had been sent by him first to the emperor and then to the King of Hungary, and to the barons of that kingdom, to rouse them and stir them up to come to the aid of the Christian commonwealth, mentioning the main points in each of the orations he had delivered to those princes. Finally, he urged all who were present to take up arms against the Turks, saying that from the apostolic throne, they would get all they considered necessary for this undertaking. His address was translated into German by Johann von Lysura, to an attentive and sympathetic audience.

[135] Mira res: saepe vili ex loco grandia lumina surgunt. Verum est, quod ille ait: *Summos posse viros et magna exempla daturos, Vervecum¹ in patria crassoque sub aeri nasci.* Cusa {45r} et Lysura in Treveris villulae sunt, haud multo inter se distantes, pauperes ac² nullius antea nominis. Sed alteram illustravit Nicolaus, cardinalis sancti Petri, illinc oriundus, alteram Johannes, de quo sermo est, qui cum ex Senensi gymnasio³ devolasset, apud electores imperii totamque⁴ Germaniam non doctrinae solum, sed prudentiae quoque temporalis opinionem singularis⁵ luminis obtinuit. Creverunt ambo, ita ut in omnibus Theutoniae contionibus primi viderentur atque aurigae rectoresque populi dicerentur, quoniam praeter sapientiam et scientiam litterarum innata quadam eloquentia cunctos excelleret. Sed nulla sine invidia virtus eminent⁶, murmuri subjacet alta probitas. Hinc ab aemulis ortum proverbium est: *Cusa et Lysura pervertunt omnia jura*, quod tunc dictitatum est, cum pontifex Eugenius quartus Basiliensi concilio esset infestus. Nam hi duo adversus elevantem se nimis synodum praecipui bellatores habiti sunt. Postquam locuti sunt omnes, quae voluerunt, visum est, sibi ut quisque tempus deliberandi sumeret atque in alteram diem, quae⁷ meditatus esset, afferret in medium.

[136] Interea Graeculus quidam inflatus opinione sui Ratisponam petit dicitque se cum Caesare apud novam civitatem fuisse, qui se consiliarium suum comitemque creaverit⁸, accedensque⁹ praesidentes aperiturum se modos¹⁰ ait, quibus Turci sine magno negotio deleantur. At jussus¹¹ dicere, quaerit ex praesidentibus, quam possint in armis habere militiam Theutones quemque¹² ordinem servaturi sunt¹³. {45v} Tum illi exploratorem rati capere hominem atque in vincula recipere cogitant fecissentque, nisi prohibuisset Aeneas, qui litteras Caesaris minime violandas ait, quas Graeculus publicae securitatis apud se habuit. Hic tamen paulo post, cum venisset in Sueviam ad Albertum, Austriae ducem, Graecumque alium ibi reperisset, qui se germanum Constantini, Graecorum imperatoris, novissime occisi diceret, cum illo una detentus est.

¹ verne cum U

² et MA

³ gignasio O, W

⁴ tantamque U

⁵ singularisque O

⁶ omit. U

⁷ omit. U

⁸ creavit W

⁹ acceditque U

¹⁰ nodos K, U, V, MA, WO

¹¹ omit. U [blank space]

¹² denique U

¹³ sint K, O, U

8.4. Careers of Nikolaus of Kues and Johann Lysura

[135] It is remarkable how great lights may arise from base conditions. And it is true what the [poet] said: *Men of high distinction and destined to set great examples may be born in dullard air, and in the land of muttonheads.*¹ Kues and Lysura are small villages in the region of Trier, not far from each other, poor and previously of no significance. But one was made famous by Nikolaus, Cardinal of San Pietro, who came from there, and the other by Johann, whom we are speaking of now. When he left the University of Siena,² he gained an extraordinary reputation among the imperial electors and all of Germany not only for his learning but also for his cleverness in worldly affairs.

They both became so great that in all German assemblies they were seen to be the first and said to be the helmsmen and guides of the people since they excelled not only in wisdom and knowledge of letters but also in innate eloquence. But no eminent virtue goes free of envy, and even outstanding rectitude is subject to carping criticism. Thus, people who were jealous of them invented the saying: *Cusa et Lysura pervertunt omnia jura [Kues and Lysura pervert all laws]*, which was often used at the time when Pope Eugenius IV was in conflict with the Council of Basel. For those two were considered the principal opponents of the council which was getting too much above itself.

After all had said what they wanted, they decided that each should take time for reflection and present their conclusions on another day.

8.5. Greek frauds

[136] In the meantime, a presumptuous Greekling³ came to Regensburg, claiming that he had visited the emperor in Wiener Neustadt and that the emperor had made him a counsellor and a count. He came to the presidents and said that he would reveal how the Turks could, without much trouble, be destroyed. But when he was requested to speak, he asked the presidents about the army the Germans could raise and how they would proceed. Believing the man was a spy, they decided to have him seized and thrown into chains, and they would have done so if Aeneas had not prevented it, saying that they could not contravene the emperor's letter which the Greek had on him as a safe-conduct. But when short time afterwards he came to Albrecht, Duke of Austria,

¹ Juvenalis, 10, 49-50

² Apparently, Piccolomini's report is the only source attesting Lysura's studies in Siena – at a time when Piccolomini himself was a student there. Though they may not have known each other then, their common university studies in Siena may have a bond between them (Daniels, p. 13: *seinen ehemaligen Sieneser Kommilitonen, Johannes Hof(f)mann aus Lieser*), and they had shared an important experience when they, on behalf of the emperor and the Archbishop of Mainz respectively, made the declaration of obedience to the dying pope Eugenius, in 1447 (see Report 1 in the present series)

³ "Graeculus"

and there met another Greek who claimed that he was the brother of Constantine, the Greek emperor, recently killed, they were both arrested.

[137] Redierant jam legati Burgundiae ducis ex Bohemia, Vilhelmus Tullensis episcopus et alii plerique nobiles et docti viri, qui multa de rege Ladislao cum laude referebant eumque supra aetatem miro modo sapientem et religioni deditum asserebant, qui quamvis esset undique septus Hussitis atque ab his hominibus gubernaretur, qui ritum quendam habent apostolicae sedi contrarium, de communione calicis inter laicos non tamen se pollui permisit. Fugit ecclesias illorum et quasi pestem abhominatus est Rochezanae sermones. Est enim Johannes Rochezana princeps eorum, qui sub duplici specie communicandum censent Romanamque contemnunt¹ ecclesiam.

[138] Inter alia² vero duo memoratu digna relata sunt, quae nos ab³ ipsis Burgundorum oratoribus audivimus. Aiebant enim Rochezanam⁴, cum processionem cleri populique⁵ agitaret, sacratissimum eucharistiae sacramentum ante regias aedes⁶ detulisse, regem ex fenestra in plateam conspexisse neque inclinasse caput neque cervicem inflexisse nullumque reverentiae signum ostendisse, ejus exinde⁷ exemplum⁸ {46r} ceteros adolescentulos⁹, qui cum eo erant, secutos. Interrogatum autem, quidnam id egisset, correptumque salvatorem, quia minime honorasset, respondisse se non ignorare corpus dominicum veneratu quocumque¹⁰ dignissimum esse, sed cum Rochezana ejus portitor esset, verae religionis hostis, veritum se, si honorem¹¹ sacramento impendisset, ne stultus populus honoratum quoque sacerdotem existimaret atque illius opinioni regem accedere, quam detestaretur.

[139] Alio autem tempore non multis post diebus jussit Ladislaus sacerdotem suum in quadam capella palatio suo proxima rem divinam facere. Is, dum parere vult, a presbytero, qui capellam regebat, excluditur, dicente se velle missam celebrare, posse regem, si velit, se audire videreque celebrantem, atque id non minus esse regiae majestati, quam si capellanum proprium audiat. Erat hic presbyter auditor Rochezanae, sectator opinionum suarum. Haec ubi¹² rex intelligit, marescallum ocus ire jubet sacerdotique dicere regio capellano cedat. Nisi pareat, praecipitem agat ex rupe, quae proxima capellae imminet. Territus hoc nuntio presbyter irae locum dedit. Haec illi de rege Bohemiae, nobilissimo puero, cum laetitia et singulari audientium gaudio affirmabant.

¹ contempnant W

² inter alia : interea U

³ omit. W

⁴ Rokizana... *et pass.* W

⁵ processionem cleri populique : populi clerique processionem W

⁶ omit. W

⁷ omit. O, W

⁸ omit. K, U; *add. in marg.* V

⁹ adulescentulos U, W

¹⁰ quacumque W

¹¹ si honorem : honorem si K, O, U, V *, W

¹² illi U

8.6. King Ladislaus and the Hussites

[137] The Burgundian legates had now returned from Bohemia. They were Guillaume,¹ Bishop of Toul, and many other noble and learned men. They spoke much in praise of King Ladislaus and said that he was wondrously pious and mature² beyond his age. Although he was surrounded by Hussites and governed by men who follow a rite contrary to [that of] the Apostolic See, he would not allow himself to be polluted by communion of the chalice for laymen. He avoided their churches and loathed the sermons of Rokycana, for Jan Rokycana was the leader of those who believe in communion under both species and who scorn the Roman Church.

[138] Among others, we heard two noteworthy things from the Burgundian ambassadors. They told [of an episode where] Rokycana had gone in a procession with clergy and laypeople, carrying the holy sacrament of the eucharist before the royal palace. The king had been looking at the square through a window and had not bowed his head nor his neck and had shown no sign of reverence. The other young men with him had followed his example. When he was asked why he had done so and was rebuked for not honouring the Saviour, he replied that he knew the Lord's body was worthy of every honour. Still, since it was being carried by Rokycana, an enemy of the true religion, he had feared that if showed honour to the sacrament, the foolish people would think that he had also shown honour to the priest and that the king accepted his views which he actually detested.

[139] On another occasion shortly afterwards, Ladislaus ordered his priest to celebrate mass in a chapel close to the palace. When he wanted to carry out the order, he was prevented from doing so by the priest who was in charge of the chapel and said that he himself wanted to celebrate mass. The king could hear and see him celebrate if he wanted to. This would be the same for the king as if he heard his own chaplain. This priest was a follower of Rokycana³ and adhered to his beliefs. When the king heard it, he ordered his marshal to go immediately and tell the priest to yield to the royal chaplain. If he did not obey, the marshall should throw him from the tall cliff next to the chapel. Terrified at this message, the priest swallowed his anger.⁴ These things the ambassadors told about the King of Bohemia, a most noble boy, to the joy and great pleasure of the listeners.⁵

¹ Guillaume Fillastre, later used by the Duke of Burgundy as his ambassador to Pope Pius II

² "sapiens"

³ Jan Rokycana (ca. 1396-1471): theologian and leading Hussite cleric

⁴ Romans, 12, 19: *date locum irae*

⁵ These two episodes Piccolomini would later reproduce in HB, I, 534-535

[140] Inter haec Albertus, marchio Brandenburgensis, grande lumen¹ Theutonici nominis, ex Praga revertitur. Congregantur in praetorium proceres, consilia pro tuenda religione quaeruntur. Legati Caesaris, etsi {46v} multum ac saepe rogatos² principes fecerint, ut quae sentirent in medio proponerent, postquam tamen omnibus audire Caesaris sententiam placet, aliquantisper inter se deliberant et, quae sibi ex usu videntur, in scripturam redigunt³ contionique schedulam hujusmodi praebent eamque dicunt Caesaris esse mentem:

[141] “Ex his, quae nuper hoc in loco dicta fuerunt, intelleximus plane omnes, si rempublicam Christianam adversus inimicos salutiferae crucis praestare volumus, necessarium esse cogi exercitum, qui mense Aprili proximo magnus ac bene instructus in Turcos proruat, aequumque Caesar existimat omnes fideles principes, maxime autem qui sub imperio degunt, exemplum sequi suum. Nam is⁴ ad omnia sese offert, quae pro defensione Christianae religionis necessaria videantur. Singillatim⁵ vero, quae suae majestati ex⁶ republica videantur, inferius annotata sunt vestro tamen et aliorum, qui ad hoc sanctum negotium concurrere voluerint, excutienda et digerenda⁷ iudicio, atque imprimis exercitus triennio duraturus adeo fortis ac numerosus paratus esto, ut nedum resistere⁸ Turcorum conatibus, sed ipsos ultro lacessere ac Europa depellere queat.

¹ nomen W

² rogatus K, U

³ redigant U; redigere W

⁴ his K, WO

⁵ sigillatim W, MA

⁶ e MA

⁷ et digerenda *omit.* U

⁸ resisteret MA, WO

9. Fourth session, 18 May: Crusade against the Turks¹

9.1. Proposition of the imperial legates²

[140] In the meantime, Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg, the great light of the German name, returned from Prague. The nobles gathered in the townhall and were asked for their advice concerning the defence of religion. The imperial legates several times and urgently requested the princes to present their opinions [on the matter], but when all wanted to hear the emperor's ideas, the legates discussed the matter for a while and then put in writing what they thought would be appropriate and presented this note to the assembly, saying that it represented the emperor's thinking³:

[141] "From what has been said recently in this place, we all clearly understand that if we want the Christian commonwealth to prevail against the enemies of the Cross of Salvation, we must of necessity assemble a large and well-trained army to move speedily against the Turks next April. The emperor finds it reasonable that all Christian⁴ princes, and especially those who belong to the Empire, should follow his example for he will contribute to all that seems necessary for the defence of the Christian religion. What the emperor considers should come from the commonwealth is noted singly in the [articles], to be carefully weighed and examined by you and the others who will contribute to this holy undertaking.

First of all, a strong and large army shall be prepared for a three years period to not only resist the Turkish endeavours but also to attack them aggressively and repel them from Europe.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 277 ff.

² RTA, 19, 1, pp. 307-323

³ See Voigt, III, p. 140

⁴ "fidelis": of the Faith

[142] Alimenta et stipendia militum¹ in annum, priusquam exercitus iter arripiat, tum durante² primo expeditionis anno³ in secundum et secundo⁴ in tertium procurata apparataque sunt. Dux exercitus unus vexillum crucis et aquilas {47r} imperii sacri victrices fert. Exercitum Alemania vicinusque populus imperio Romano parens hoc ordine convocato: Triginta viri equitem⁵ unum, rursusque LX pedites duos armis instructos ac bello idoneos suo sumptu in⁶ exercitum mittunt⁷. Hoc pacto credibile est ducenta milia pugnatorum⁸ cogi posse. Quod si facta supputatione minor emerit numerus, sic taxant⁹ viros, summa uti haec impleatur. Instrumenta bellica ac¹⁰ machinas necessarias principes et civitates imperii pro facultatibus administrant et, quantum possint¹¹, suo scripto docent.

[143] Tres viri locis opportunis in Alemania sunt¹² rei militaris periti, qui per sese aliosve, quos delegerint, milites idoneos admittunt, ineptos repellunt. Sex viri, tres ecclesiastici tresque saeculares, locis in Alemania convenientibus annonae ac stipendii militaris curam habent. Horum quoque officium esto inter provinciales onera mittendi militis ac stipendii dandi ita partiri, ut pro facultate cujusque aequa distributio fiat.

[144] Sanctissimus Romane urbis praesul classem adversus Turcos mense Aprili proximo in Aegaeo mari instructam habet, Turchiam ex Metelino insula inquietam reddidit. Alphonsi Aragonum et¹³ Siciliae regis simulque Venetorum et Genuensium vires ad eam rem advocavit. Caramannum Saracenum contra Turcos provocavit. Imperatorem Trapesundarum¹⁴, Hybereorum regem, Albanos, Bulgaros, Ragusinos atque {47v} universos Dalmatas sub eodem tempore arma corripere atque invadere hostes exhortavit. Hungari et Bohemi exercitum simul cogunt atque unum corpus cum Theutonibus efficiunt. Utque milites et instrumenta bellica itemque victui¹⁵ necessaria commodius evehantur, copias contra Turcos ea in parte collocant, qua sunt Danubio propiores.¹⁶

¹ *omit.* W

² tum durante : tamen W

³ *omit.* W

⁴ secundum U

⁵ equitum WO

⁶ *omit.* W

⁷ mittendo U

⁸ credibile est ... pugnatorum : ducenta milia pugnatorum credibile est O, W

⁹ taxando U

¹⁰ et K, O, U, V*, W

¹¹ possit K, U; quisque possit W

¹² sumpto U; *omit.* WO

¹³ ac MA

¹⁴ Tripesundarum W

¹⁵ victu W

¹⁶ propiores K, WO

[142] A year's provisions and soldiers' wages shall be prepared before the army sets out, and then during the first year for the second, and during the second year for the third.

There shall be one leader of the army, carrying the standard of the cross and the victorious eagles of the Holy Empire.

The army shall be mobilized from Germany and the surrounding peoples subject to the Empire, in this way: [Each group of] 30 men shall – at their own cost - send one horse soldier, and moreover [each group of] 60 men shall send two armed foot soldiers, able to fight. In that way, it should be possible to assemble 200,000 soldiers. If further calculations give a smaller number, the assessment shall be modified so that the number of 200,000 is reached.

The princes and cities of the Empire shall provide instruments of war and the necessary machines and – as far as possible - commit themselves to this in writing.

[143] Three men with knowledge of military matters shall be placed in appropriate places in Germany to accept, either by themselves or through others delegated for this purpose, those men who are able to fight and reject those who are not.

Six men, three clergymen and three laymen, shall in appropriate places in Germany have charge of foodstuffs and soldiers' wages. They shall be responsible for distributing the burdens of providing soldiers and paying wages so that the distribution is fair and within the means of everyone.

[144] Next April, The Most Holy Bishop of the City of Rome shall have a fleet against the Turks ready

in the Aegean Sea, which shall harass the Turks from the Island of Metelinum.¹ The forces of Alfonso, King of Aragon and Sicily, as well as those of Venice and Genoa shall be called upon to aid in this venture. The Saracen Karaman shall be called forth against the Turks. The emperor of Trebizond,² the King of Hiberia³, the Albanians, the Bulgarians, the Ragusans,⁴ and all the Dalmatians⁵ shall be exhorted to at the same time take weapons and attack the enemies. The Hungarians and the Bohemians shall gather an army and join up with the Germans to make one body [of soldiers]. To facilitate the transportation of soldiers, machines of war and provisions, troops shall be placed in the regions closest to the Danube.

¹ Mytilene, here = Lesbos

² David Megas Komnenos (ca. 1408-1463): last emperor of Trebizond from 1459 to 1461, when Trebizond was conquered by the Turks

³ = Georgia

⁴ Ragusa = Dubrovnik

⁵ = (more or less) Croatia

[145] Ut autem in hoc opere sanctissimo pax et unitas¹ animorum² stabilior habeatur, contentiones ac lites tota Germania facessant, ex festo nativitatis dominicae, quod primo instat, ad quinquennium inde secuturum. Inter omnes, qui bello dissident, indutiae sunt³. Si quis medio tempore via facti⁴ quemquam molestaverit, imperiali banno subjaceto atque, ubicumque terrarum sub imperio compertus fuerit, tamquam contemptor offensorque majestatis poenam expectato. Idem timeto, qui eum receptaverit sive conductum ei dederit. Actio super debitis tempore profectionis jam contractis adversus eum, qui hoc in exercitu militaverit, expeditione durante in annumque posthac⁵ nulla esto, nisi aut profugerit aut ignominiae causa missus quis⁶ fuerit. Bona et familiae militum, qui hac in expeditione⁷ fuerint, toto quinquennio libera sub protectione imperii sunt.

[146] Haec legati, qui adsunt, suis dominis referunt. Concilium dehinc alterum ad festum sancti Michaelis proximum, si Caesar adesse voluerit, Norimbergae, si minus, Francfordiae⁸ indictum esto. In eo principes {48r} civitatesque super hujuscemodi rebus, quid gerant animo⁹, significanto. Caesar interea temporis, si concilium adire voluerit, notum facito: si nihil intimaverit, apud Francfordiam conventus locum habeto¹⁰. Apocrisarii Caesaris illic¹¹ cum plena potestate¹² veniunto. Ut autem tanto citius atque facilius hostes fidei nostrae Christianis ex finibus propulsentur, quanto¹³ majoribus ac magis unitis viribus in eos itum fuerit, reges¹⁴ ac principes in Christo fideles Romanus pontifex, ut ad haec concurrant, simulque imperator roganto.” Ea cum audissent principes ac legati, qui praesentes fuere, articulorum, qui lecti erant, fieri sibi copiam petiverunt, qua concessa et deliberandi tempus impetravere.

¹ unita WO

² animarum W

³ sumpto U

⁴ facta K, V, MA, WO

⁵ hoc W; haec MA

⁶ missus quis : missusque W

⁷ hac in expeditione : in hac expeditione MA, WO

⁸ Franckfordiae *et passim* W

⁹ animi K, O, V, W, MA

¹⁰ habento MA

¹¹ illuc O, W

¹² plena potestate : pleno mandato W

¹³ quando U

¹⁴ omit. U

[145] And so that in this most holy undertaking there may be firm peace and union of minds, all conflicts and strife in Germany shall cease, from the next Feast of the Lord's Nativity and for the following five years. There shall be a truce between all who are at war. If anybody makes bold to attack someone, then he shall be under the ban of the Empire, and wherever he be found in the lands belonging to the Empire, he shall expect to be punished for contempt of and offence against majesty. The same shall be feared by anyone who receives him or gives him a safe-conduct.

In matters of debts contracted before the departure [of the army], there shall be no action taken against anybody fighting in the army so long as the expedition lasts and for a whole year afterwards, unless he deserts the army or is dismissed in disgrace. Properties and families of soldiers in this expedition shall for a five years period be free and under the protection of the Empire.

[146] The legates who are present shall report these [articles] to their lords. Another diet shall be held on the next Feast of Saint Michael.¹ If the emperor wishes to participate, it shall be held in Nürnberg, if not in Frankfurt. At that diet, the princes and cities shall declare their opinions concerning this matter. In the meantime, the emperor shall make it known if he wishes to come to the diet. If he makes no announcement, the diet shall be held in Frankfurt. The envoys of the emperor shall come there with full powers. Since the enemies of the Faith will be expelled from the lands of the Christians the more quickly and easily the greater and more united are the forces sent against them, the Roman Pontiff and the Emperor shall both request of the Christian kings and princes to contribute to this undertaking."

When they had heard this, the princes and legates who were present asked for a copy of the articles that had been read which they obtained as well as time for consultation.

¹ 29 September

[147] Philippus interea, dux Burgundiae, qui prius lentis febribus tenebatur, gravius aegrotare coepit, non sine timore ac paene desperatione suorum. Cum sanguis ejus minueretur, cruor viridis lividusque simul¹ niger effectus est. Caput ejus² doloribus assidue torqueri, manus ac pedes tremere, nullum membrum suum satis officium facere. Quod cum Aeneas accepisset, sciscitatus est ex caris Philippi, quotus illi principi jam vitae annus³ instaret. Quibus tertium et sexagesimum annum agere illum dicentibus, “Nil⁴ mirum⁵,” inquit, “si vestrum principem morbus habet. *Observatum enim multa hominum memoria*, scribit Gellius, *expertumque esse senioribus plerisque hominibus sexagesimum ac tertium⁶ vitae annum {48v} cum periculo et clade aliqua venire aut corporis⁷ morbique gravioris aut vitae interitus⁸ aut animi aegritudinis*. Augustus quoque in epistolis ad Gajum laetatus est, se tertium et sexagesimum annum evasisse. Alphonsus, rex Aragonum hoc temporis agens ulcus⁹ in genu dolorosum ac paene exitiale sustinuit. Mater mea Victoria - ut *parva magnis aequem* - huc¹⁰ aetatis provecta vicina morti fuit. Tenet natura suam morem, sed confidite: naturae dominus Deus est, cujus hic modo causam gerit. Evadet periculum princeps vester.”

[148] Albertus, marchio Brandeburgensis, inter haec multa cum Prutenis religiosis agitat conventaque cum Bohemis recipi suadere nititur, nam eam esse unicam viam¹¹, qua vendicari Pruscia possit, nec mirum videri debere magnam expeti pecuniam, ubi magna auxilia promittuntur. Homo eloquens et auctoritate praeditus facile omnes in suam sententiam trahit. Religiosi vel inviti marchionis sequi consilium statuunt, at dum quaerunt aurum neque inveniunt, ex proposito excidunt, rursusque consilia legatorum Caesaris et aliorum quaerunt. Fit conventio in praetorio civitatis. Ibi, cum exposita essent ea, super quibus consulendum videbatur, eques quidam, Franco, homo¹² minime malus, “Nescio”, inquit, “quinam¹³ homines Theutones sumus. Juris certe nostri atque communis boni desertores sumus. Omnes, quae sua sunt, quaerunt; nos regni nostri fines ac jura negligimus. Gallici pro jure coronae suae pugnant. Anglici mori malunt, quam de coronae debito quidquam dimittant. Hungari bellum assiduum pro corona gerunt. Bohemi cum Saxonibus de limitibus coronae litigant. Poloni ad coronam suam spectare Prusciam dicunt: et quid nos desides de nostra corona¹⁴ dicimus? Et quae – oro – corona est, cujus vel majora vel digniora sint¹⁵ jura? Nemo coronae nostrae curam gerit. Corona excellens est, sublimis est, sed nemo eam respicit, indefensa desertaque manet.

¹ simulque W

² minueretur cruor ... ejus *omit.* O

³ annis U

⁴ ni W

⁵ nil mirum : nimirum K, U, V, W

⁶ ac tertium *add. in marg.* O; *omit.* W

⁷ corpus U

⁸ interius U

⁹ uulcus U

¹⁰ hac W

¹¹ *omit.* U

¹² *omit.* U

¹³ qui natura MA

¹⁴ nostra corona : corona nostra MA, WO

¹⁵ sunt W

9.2. Illness of the Duke of Burgundy

[147] In the meantime, Duke Philippe of Burgundy, who had previously suffered from slow fevers, fell seriously ill, causing fear and almost desperation among his own people. When he was bled, the blood was greenish, bluish and even black. He suffered from continuous and severe headaches, his hand and feet were trembling, and none of his members functioned properly. When Aeneas heard this, he asked people close to Philippe how old the prince was. When they told him he was 63 years old, he said, “No wonder that your prince is ill. For Gellius¹ writes that *it has been observed during a long period of human recollection, and found to be true, that for almost all old men the sixty-third year of their age is attended with danger, and with some disaster involving either serious bodily illness, or loss of life, or mental suffering.*² Also Augustus³ in a letter to Gaius⁴ rejoiced that he had passed his 63rd year.⁵ At this time in his life, King Alfonso of Aragon had a painful and almost lethal ulcer in the knee. And at that [same] age, my own mother Vittoria⁶ – *to compare small things with great*⁷ – was close to death. Natura takes its course, but be assured: it is God who is the lord of nature, and as your prince is now engaged in His cause, he will escape this danger.”

9.3. Continued negotiations on Prussia and the Teutonic Knights⁸

[148] During this time, Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg was much occupied with the Prussian Knights, endeavouring to persuade them to accept the agreement with the Bohemians, for that was the only way to regain Prussia, and it was not strange at all that a large sum was requested, where large auxiliary troops were promised. This eloquent man of great authority easily convinced all. The knights reluctantly decided to follow the margrave’s advice, but when they looked for money and could not find it, they gave up the plan and again asked for the advice of the imperial legates and others. A meeting was held in the townhall of the city. When they had stated what they wanted to consult about, a knight named Franco, a good man, said, “I really do not know what kind of men we Germans are. We certainly betray our own rights and common good. All men seek their own, but we neglect the borders of our kingdom and our rights. The French fight for the rights of their crown. The English would rather die than give up anything due to the crown. The Hungarians wage continuous war for the crown. The Bohemians fight with the Saxons about the frontiers of the crown. Now the Poles claim that Prussia belongs to their crown, and what do we say, in our indifference to our own crown? But what crown – I beg – has greater or more worthy

¹ Aulus Gellius (ca. 125-ca. 180): Roman author and grammarian

² Gellius, 15, 7, 1

³ Emperor Augustus

⁴ His nephew

⁵ Gellius, 15, 7, 3

⁶ Vittoria Piccolomini (born Forteguerra)(1385-1455): Mother of Piccolomini

⁷ Vergilius: *Georgica*, 4, 176: *si parva licet componere magnis*

⁸ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 280-282

rights? Nobody cares about our crown. It is an excellent crown, a lofty crown, but nobody respects is, and it remains undefended and deserted.”

[149] Tum Gurcensis episcopus “Mirare,” inquit, “ ut video, vir bone, non esse¹, qui coronam nostram tueatur. Tacite, quod illa cingit caput, accusas quasi elingue mutumque sit. Desine – obsecro – mirari, non est capiti nostro, {236v} quod manducet². Ceteri reges ditem cameram habent, hinc jura coronae tuentur. Camera nostra inops nihil regi nostro praebet. Age deinde, qui sunt jura coronae nostrae³ occupantes nisi nostri? Si velit imperator jura coronae⁴ vindicare, suos suos primum principes in jus vocare cogetur⁵, quod quam tutum sit, ipse nosti.”

[150] Vix ea finierat, cum “Recte,” ait Nicolaus cardinalis sancti Petri⁶,” sermo institutus est. Licet dolere, licet flere nostrae nationis statum. Nescimus more⁷ hominum vivere neque caput nostrum in honore habemus. Inde cum eo perimus omnes. Tangit nos illa, quam ferunt⁸, fabula: Aegre fuit aliquando manibus ac pedibus, quod⁹ se¹⁰ laborantibus stomachus omnia consumeret, eorum parta labore. Statuerunt¹¹ cessare ac nihil {49v} ori porrigere. At cessante nutrimento defecere corporis vires, neque pedibus neque manibus vigor inerat. Cognoverunt igitur errorem suum atque cum stomacho in gratiam redeuntes, quae illi necessaria erant, ministrarunt. At¹² nos multo insulsiore sumus, qui etsi videmus statum nostrum in dies deficere, regi tamen nostro¹³, qui stomachi loco est, nihil praebemus. Quod¹⁴ si pergimus hoc modo, actum est de natione nostra. Omnes in circuitu nationes nos invadent erimusque¹⁵ cunctis in *derisum et subsannationem*.” Ibi et Johannes¹⁶ Lysura et ceteri multa locuti sunt, quae ad¹⁷ reformandum imperium ex usu putaverunt. Omnium vero ea sententia fuit, non posse stare rem Theutonicam, nisi capiti consulerent.

[151] Post haec rursus de Prutenis agitatum est, cumque religiosi negarent se posse argentum invenire, quod Bohemis darent, ad sententiam legatorum Caesaris revertum est, qui tractatus amicabile incoeptari suadebant. Cardinalis sancti Petri rogatus hanc provinciam suscipere, prohibitos cardinales ait injussu Romani praesulis cujusvis hominis legationem gerere, neque proficisci quopiam absque dominicae¹⁸ signo crucis. Quod autem vocatu Caesaris Ratisponam

¹ est W

² mandaret W

³ omit. K, V *, W

⁴ nostrae occupantes ... jura coronae omit. U

⁵ cogitur W

⁶ recte ait ... Petri: Nicolaus sancti Petri recte ait O, W

⁷ in ore W

⁸ fuerant K

⁹ vel U

¹⁰ sese MA, WO

¹¹ laborantibus stomachus ... statuerunt omit. U

¹² an W

¹³ tamen nostro : nostro tamen U

¹⁴ del. WO

¹⁵ erimus U

¹⁶ de add. O, W

¹⁷ omit. U, W

¹⁸ dominico U

petivisset¹, id actum esse ex Nicolai pontificis jussione. Diu ventilata res est, nunc hoc, nunc illud contioni videri melius, nusquam tamen pedem figere neque finem invenire {50r} disputationum.

¹ potuisset W

9.4. Renewed debate on the state of the empire¹

[149] Then the Bishop of Gurk² said, “I see, my good man, that you are wondering why no one protects our crown. Thus you silently accuse the head carrying this crown of being silent and mute. Stop wondering - I beg - for our head has nothing to eat. The other kings have a rich treasury, and therefore the rights of the crown are protected. Our penniless treasury can provide nothing to our king. But consider: who have seized the rights of our crown except our own [princes]? If the emperor wants to claim the rights of the crown, he will have first to call his own princes to justice – and you know how safe that would be!”

[150] He had barely finished, when Cardinal Nikolaus of San Pietro said, “It is right to speak of this. Indeed, we may both lament and deplore the state of our nation. We do not know to live like men, and we do not honour our head. Therefore we all perish together with it. They tell a fable which concerns us: Once the hands and the feet were upset that while they were labouring, the stomach consumed everything, though they were the ones doing the work. So they decided to stop and hand nothing to the mouth. But when nourishment stopped, the body grew weak, and neither the feet nor the hands had any strength left. Then, recognizing their error, they became friends again with the stomach and provided it with what it needed. But we are much more foolish, for though we see our state grow worse day by day, we offer nothing to the king, who is in the place of the stomach. If we continue like this, it will be the end of our nation. All the nations around us will invade us, and we shall be *a scoff and derision* to all.³”

Then Johann Lysura and others spoke much about what they thought would be useful for a reform of the empire. And all agreed that the German state could not stand if they did not provide for the head.

9.5. Continued negotiations on Prussia and the Teutonic Knights

[151] Afterwards they again discussed [the matter of] the Prussians, and when the knights said that they could not find the money for the Bohemians, they fell back on the opinion of the imperial legates, who argued for opening amicable negotiations. When the Cardinal of San Pietro was asked to undertake this task, he said that cardinals were forbidden to act as legates of any man unless at the command of the Roman bishop, and that they could not go anywhere without the crucifix.⁴ That he had come to Regensburg at the emperor’s invitation, had only been done at the command of Pope Nicolaus. The matter was debated at length, now one thing pleased the assembly, now another: they could not come to a firm conclusion⁵ nor find an end to the debates.

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 280-281

² Ulrich Sonnenberger

³ Psalm, 43, 14: *Posuisti nos opprobrium vicinis nostris, subsannationem et derisum his qui sunt in circuitu nostro*

⁴ He may be referring to the cross carried before papal legates

⁵ “pedem figere”

[152] Tum Senensis episcopus, “Si mihi auscultatis,” inquit¹, “duos pluresve nomine vestro legatos ad regem Bohemiae transmittatis², qui novitatem Prutenicam huic conventioni molestam damnosamque reipublicae Christianae visam fuisse dicant rogentque³ consiliarios suos ad regem Poloniae una⁴ dirigat⁵, rogatum indutias cum religiosis suo et civitatum Prutenicarum nomine amplectatur velitque Vratislaviae aut alio in loco conventum fieri, in quo de universis controversiis, quae Pruteni quaeve⁶ Poloni cum religiosis habent, per communes amicos transigatur. Eo namque et Romanus pontifex legatum de latere et imperator cum electoribus praestantiores oratores emittent. Vos interea temporis papae supplicabitis id muneris cardinali sancti Petri committat.” Probavit consilium hoc Albertus marchio moxque illud in Theutonicum sermonem vertit. Ceteri omnes assensi sunt. Scriptum est Romano⁷ pontifici, legati quoque delecti, qui ad festum ascensionis dominicae Pragae conveniant.

[153] His itaque⁸ conclusis placet audire, quid principes quidve legati super articulis imperatorio nomine porrectis opinentur. Tum⁹ vafer ille serpens, hostis humani generis, qui omnibus in locis sua venena dispergit, in hoc quoque conventu conatus est litem serere. Ejus enim – ut arbitror – suasu consurrexerunt nonnulli ex Alemanis, qui nullo pacto ferendum dicerent Burgundiae ducem ante principes electores {50v} verbum facere. Credo sciebant¹⁰ ducem multa promissurum, se vero pauca oblaturus, verebanturque post magnifica verba ducis ea loqui, quae viderentur inania. Dicebant autem negotium passagii a Caesare ortum habere, dixisse illum per legatos ex bono, quae putavisset; nunc electoribus dicendi locum deberi, post Burgundiae duci. Legati Caesaris aequum censebant ducem Burgundiae, qui praesens esset, quemadmodum sedendo ita et loquendo legatos absentium anteire. Res aliquandiu mentes procerum conturbavit, sed ubi ad Philippum deducta¹¹ est, “Minime,” inquit ille, “vis haec maligni spiritus erit, ut hac de causa Christi negotium obvertat. Neque ambitiosus veni, neque redibo superbus: dicam vel ultimus, dum religione bene consulatur.”

¹ *omit.* MA

² transmittetis O, U, W

³ regentque U

⁴ *omit.* W

⁵ dirigi W

⁶ quaeque MA, WO

⁷ Romam U

⁸ ita O

⁹ cum MA

¹⁰ sciebam U

¹¹ deductum W

[152] Then the Bishop of Siena¹ said, “If you heed to me, you will send two or more legates in your name to the King of Bohemia. They shall inform him that this assembly considers the Prussian rebellion to be damaging and harmful to the Christian Commonwealth. They shall beg him to send his counsellors to the King of Poland to ask him, in his own name and in the name of the Prussian cities, to accept a truce with the Order and to agree to a meeting in Vratislava or another place, where common friends can settle all the conflicts, which the Prussians and the Poles have with the Order. Also, the Roman Pontiff should send a legate *de latere*, and the emperor together with the prince-electors should send eminent ambassadors. In the meantime, you will beg the pope to entrust this task to the Cardinal of San Pietro.” Margrave Albrecht agreed with this proposal and immediately translated it into German. All the others assented. Then they wrote to the Roman Pontiff and chose legates, who would meet in Prague on the Feast of the Lord’s Ascension.

9.6. Another problem of precedence: the Duke of Burgundy vs the electoral ambassadors

[153] This matter closed, they decided to hear what the princes and the legates thought about the articles released in the emperor’s name.

Then that cunning serpent, the enemy of humankind, who spreads his poison everywhere, tried to also sow strife in this meeting. For under his influence – as I believe – a number of Germans rose and said that it was intolerable that the Duke of Burgundy should speak before the prince-electors. I believe they knew that the duke would promise much, whereas they themselves would promise little, and they feared that after the grand words of the duke their own would seem paltry. But they argued that the whole affair of the crusade had been begun by the emperor and that his legates had expounded his views. Now it was the turn of the electors to speak, and afterwards the Duke of Burgundy would have his say. The imperial legates considered it reasonable that the Duke of Burgundy who was present should speak before the legates of the absent electors, just as he was seated before them. For some time this matter agitated the nobles, but when it was referred to Philippe, he said, “This malicious spirit shall not have the power to obstruct the enterprise of Christ. I did not come here out of ambition, and I shall not leave out of arrogance. I do not mind speaking in the last place if only religion is well provided for.”

¹ Piccolomini himself

[154] Tum viri boni, quibus concordiae studium fuit, vocandos esse consiliarios ducis inter Theutones suaserunt cumque his de capitulis imperialibus conferendum. Hoc peracto compertum est placere duci, quod Theutones super capitulis respondere decrevissent, commissumque est marchioni Alberto verba unus pro omnibus ad legatos Caesaris faceret. Ille autem in conventu generali silentibus ceteris “Audivimus,” inquit, “clarissimi¹ oratores, quae pro tuenda Christiana religione divum Fridericum Caesarem praemeditatum exposuistis. Sapienter et graviter nostro iudicio in tanta re sua {51r} majestas movetur. Philippus Burgundiae, Ludovicus Bavariae duces, regis Poloniae, electorum aliorumque principum et civitatum legati loqui ad haec me² aliqua jubent. Faciam id breviter. Commendamus omnes nostri Caesaris animum gratiasque optimo et maximo Deo reddimus, qui nobis principem hoc tempore praebuit de communi utilitate cogitantem. Illum salvum, illum incolumem praestari quam diutissime reipublicae cupimus. Cogitatus ejus probamus³ laudamusque⁴. Uti⁵ sanctum hoc⁶ propositum totis conatibus prosequatur, obnixè rogamus cum pro salute communi Christianorum, tum pro laude et nomine sempiterno inclitae nationis nostrae⁷.

[155] Super capitulis vero, quae porrexistis, non est cur multa dicamus, quando ex vestra sententia in altero concilio, quod futurum est, ea pressius discutienda sunt. Convenient⁸, uti confidimus, tunc alii complures, qui de Turcis deque rebus⁹ Graecorum ac situ regionum notitiam majorem quam nos habebunt. Ulricus fortasse Ciliae ac Johannes Bistricensis¹⁰ comites aderunt. Ex his cognoscemus, quae multitudo pugnatorum ducenda sit, quo in loco quove tempore invadendi sunt¹¹ Turci, quo genere pugnae, quibus utendum machinis, qua via ducendi sint commeatus, quae recipienda quaeve¹² consilia vitanda videantur. Intelligemus¹³ etiam, quid acturi sint Itali, quid Gallici, quid ceterae nationes. Quod si concurrant Hungari, Bohemi, Poloni et alii Christiani, haudquaquam tantum¹⁴ numerum¹⁵ ex nostra natione deducere oportebit, {51v} quantum vestra capitula innuunt, ne fiat exercitus, qui pasci nequeat, atque, ut de Xerxe traditum est, nedum fruges edentibus sed ipsa quoque flumina potantibus desint. Cetera magno consilio divinaque mente cogitata existimamus atque illud potissimum, quod de¹⁶ pace quinquennali sancendum asseverastis. Utinam inveniri possit perpetua¹⁷! Certum enim est, quia nullus¹ educi² exercitus ex

¹ carissimi U

² omit. W

³ probavimus MA, WO

⁴ probamus laudamusque : probamusque W

⁵ atque W

⁶ sanctum hoc : hoc sanctum W

⁷ inclitae nationis nostrae : nostrae inclitae nationis MA

⁸ conveniunt U

⁹ re W

¹⁰ Vistricensis K, O, U, W; Bristicensis MA

¹¹ sint K, O, V *

¹² quae MA

¹³ intelligimus MA

¹⁴ tamen MA

¹⁵ nunquam MA

¹⁶ omit. U

¹⁷ possit perpetua : perpetua possit U, W, WO; perpetua possit corr. ex perpetua possit V

nostra natione poterit, nisi³ pace inter nos potiamur. Quod autem Caesaris adventum ad concilium alterum in ancipiti ponitis, id nobis triste est. Scimus enim esse complura, quae Caesaris praesentiam exigunt atque hoc maxime, quod de pace dictum est. Si ergo cupit imperator rem contra Turcos feliciter geri, suadete ad conventum veniat. Haec nostra sententia est, hoc consilium suae majestati tanquam fideles principes et obsequentes vassalli praebemus.”

¹ est *add.* W

² duci W

³ insita W

10. Final session, 21 May¹

10.1. Address of Albrecht of Brandenburg

[154] Then good men, desirous of harmony, persuaded the assembly that the counsellors of the duke should be called in together with the Germans and consulted together with them concerning the imperial articles. When that had been settled, they were informed that the duke agreed with what the Germans had decided to say about the articles, and Margrave Albrecht was charged with addressing the imperial legates on behalf of all. So, in a general meeting, while all the others stayed silent, he said, “Distinguished ambassadors, we have heard what you said about the intentions of Holy Emperor Friedrich in the matter of the protection of the Christian religion. We consider that His Majesty is acting wisely and prudently in this great matter. The dukes Philippe of Burgundy and Ludwig of Bavaria and the ambassadors of the King of Poland and of the electors and other princes require me to say some words on this matter, and I shall do so briefly. We all commend the objectives of our emperor and thank the Best and Greatest God that he has, at this time, given us a prince who is concerned about the common good. We wish that he be kept safe and unharmed for the commonwealth for a long time. We praise and commend his intentions. We pray and beg that he may persist with all his might in this holy endeavour both for the common welfare of the Christians and for the praise and eternal name of our illustrious nation.

[155] Concerning the articles you have presented, there is not much to say since you yourselves propose that they should be discussed more closely in another diet to be held later. We are sure that many others will meet there who have better knowledge than us about the Turkish and Greek matters and the geographical conditions. Maybe the counts Ulrich of Cilly and János of Bistrita² will be present. From them, we shall hear how many soldiers to bring, where and when the Turks should be attacked, what kind of battle, what machines to use, by what route the provisions should be transported, and which advice to accept and which to reject. We shall also learn what the Italians, the French, and other nations will do. If the Hungarians, the Bohemians, the Poles, and other Christians join up, it will hardly be necessary to contribute so many soldiers from our nation as your articles stipulate, for then the army will become too big to be fed, and – as told about Xerxes – will not only lack food to eat but even rivers to drink. The other articles we consider to have been thought out with great acumen and a divine mind, and especially what you stated about ordaining a five years peace. Would that it could be permanent! For it is certain that no army can be brought forth from our nation if we do not have peace between us. We are sorry that you are uncertain about the emperor’s attendance at the next diet, for we know that many things require the emperor’s presence and especially what was said about peace. So, if the emperor wishes for the matter [of an expedition] against the Turks to succeed, you must persuade him to come to the diet. This is our considered opinion, and this is the advice we give His Majesty as his loyal princes and obedient vassals.”

¹ RTA, 19, 1, pp. 282-306

² The governor of Hungary

[156] His finitis assurgens Vilhelmus, episcopis Tullensis, qui tum ducis Burgundiae consiliarius imprimis acceptus fuit, litteris ac¹ prudentia memorabilis, in hunc modum locutus est: “Tacerem modo neque post² tantum principem, quantus est marchio Brandeburgensis, hiscere³ auderem, nisi me res novas et alienas ab his, quas ipse attigit, praecellentissimus dominus meus Philippus, Burgundiae dux, in medium afferre juberet. Nam quantum ad capitula pertinet, quae nomine Caesareo producta sunt, copiose ac sapientissime nomine omnium locutus est marchio. Dicta ejus accipit probatque {52r} meus herus⁴ neque adimit verbum. Sed sunt alia, quae dicere me oportet. Vos paululum⁵, quamvis estis audiendo defessi, non mihi, sed meo principi aures accommodate. Sic enim, qui sit animus ejus pro defensione nostrae fidei⁶, plenius intelligetis. Pauca dicam, sed ea neque vulgaria erunt neque indigna hoc auditorio.

[157] Magna et paene infinita⁷ sunt beneficia, quae divina pietas meo principi contulit, qui natus ex alto Francorum sanguine inter nobilissimas orbis progenies educatus est, qui poterat non modo plebejus, sed mendicus nasci. Corpus illi⁸ salubre, procerum robustumque dedit, vitam inoffensam inoffensam et - quantum fas est homini optare - diuturnam, ditionem⁹ populosissimam¹⁰ et amplissimam¹¹, nobilissimas civitates, provincias pares maximis regnis. Quae sint et quantaes opes Philippi omnes scitis, quanta in ejus aula magnificentia, quantus splendor, quanta gloria. Usus est dulcissimo et felici¹² connubio sapientissimae et nobilissimae consortis suae. Filium sustulit, qui jam pubes¹³ est, expectatae¹⁴ indolis, institutione proba, optimis moribus, sibi et¹⁵ conjugii obsequentem. Victorias ejus quis enumeret? Superatis hostibus saepe spolia duxit optima¹⁶. Triumphos ejus ostendunt templis affixa trophaea. Vicini per circuitum aut amicitia aut metu verentur eum. In Gallia, in Germania magnum Philippi nomen, neque terra est *tam barbara, tam inacessa*, quam hujus principis fama non penetraverit. Haec intelligit Philippus {52v} dona Dei esse cognoscitque propterea divino nomini¹⁷ miris se modis obnoxium. Namque si omnes, qui vitam et animam rationis participem a Deo consecuti sunt, agere gratias debent, quia neque brutam¹⁸ sortiti sunt animam neque inter arbores aut saxa dejecti, quanto magis gratum oportet Philippum

¹ et U

² penes MA

³ dicere MA

⁴ heres U

⁵ paulum U, MA

⁶ nostrae fidei : fidei nostre W

⁷ paene et : et paene U

⁸ ille U, W

⁹ *corr. ex* dominia V; dominia O, W

¹⁰ populatissima O, W, populatissimam U

¹¹ amplissima O, W

¹² dulcissimo et felici : felici et dulcissimio O, W

¹³ probus W

¹⁴ expectare U

¹⁵ *omit.* W

¹⁶ optima K

¹⁷ numinis W

¹⁸ *corr. ex* brutalem V; brutalem K, O, W

esse, qui non solum homo, sed nobilis homo, sed princeps homo, sed maximus princeps homo natus est et inter omnes, qui hodie vivunt¹, fortunae ac naturae bonis cumulatissimus homo?

¹ vivunt W

10.2. Oration “*Tacerem modo*” of the Burgundian ambassador

[156] When he had finished, Guillaume,¹ Bishop of Toul, who at that time was an important counsellor to the Duke of Burgundy, a man remarkable for his learning and wisdom, spoke in this fashion: “I would be silent now and not dare to open my mouth after such a great prince as the Margrave of Brandenburg, if my excellent lord, Philippe, Duke of Burgundy had not ordered me to speak on matters that are new and different from those mentioned by the margrave. Concerning the articles presented in the emperor’s name, the margrave has indeed spoken much and wisely in the name of all. My lord accepts and approves of his statements. But I must speak of other things. Though you are worn out by listening, please lend ears for a little while not to me, but to my prince, for thus you will fully understand his intentions concerning the defence of our Faith. So, I shall say a few things that are neither commonplace nor unworthy of this audience.

[157] Great and almost infinite are the favours bestowed by Divine Piety upon my prince. He could have been born as a commoner or even as a beggar,² but he was born of the high blood of the French and brought up among the most noble families of the world. God gave him a healthy, tall, and robust body, a happy and a long life (as much as it is right for men to wish for), a very populous and large dominion, noble cities, and provinces equal to great kingdoms. You all know how great is Philippe’s wealth and how great the magnificence, splendour and glory of his court. He has a harmonious and happy marriage with his wise and noble consort.³ His son⁴ is now an adult,⁵ with the character that might be expected, a solid education, excellent manners, and obedient to the duke and his wife. Who can count his victories? He often brought back rich spoils from defeated enemies. His triumphs are manifested by the trophies hung in the churches. The neighbours around him respect him either out of friendship or fear. In France and Germany, Philippe’s name is held in great esteem, and no country is *so barbarous or remote*⁶ that the fame of this prince has not reached there. Philippe understands that all this is God’s gift, and he knows that in consequence he has extraordinary obligations towards the divine name. For if all who have received their life and their rational soul from God are obliged to thank Him for not having received a brute soul or been thrown down among trees and rocks, how much more ought Philippe not be grateful who was born not only as a man, but as a man who is noble, a man who is prince, even a very great prince, and who among all men living today has been most blessed by fortune and nature?

¹ Guillaume Fillastre

² This passage is reminiscent of a passage in the text of the boy king Ladislaus’ oration to the pope at the emperor’s coronation in Rome two years before. The oration was probably written by Piccolomini, but not actually delivered by the king. See oration “*Quam laetus quamque secundus*” (1452) [18], Appendix: *I am obliged to thank and serve Him [God] more than other people since it is through his bounty that I have been born a king. I could have been born as a commoner or a peasant (Poteram ego unus ex plebe aut unus ex rure pasci)*

³ Isabelle de Portugal (1397-1471): Married Duke Philippe of Burgundy in 1429

⁴ Charles le Téméraire (Valois)(1433-1477): Duke of Burgundy from 1467 to his death

⁵ He was 20 years old at the time

⁶ Cf. Cicero: Pro Sulla, 76: *neque enim ulla gens tam barbara aut tam immanis umquam fuit*

[158] Haec ille secum nonnumquam pectore volvens¹, quamquam nihil est, quod digne homines erga divinam pietatem rependere queant, cogitavit tamen assidue, quo pacto suum obsequium Deo acceptabile redderet², cumque revolveret animo, qua in re³ potissimum Deo suo complacitum ire posset, venit in mentem Jerosolimitana⁴ civitas, quae licet salvatoris nostri sepulcrum in se claudat, in manibus tamen foedissimae gentis Saracenorum existit. Stetit ei ante oculos Antiochia⁵ Antiochia⁵ jamdudum amissa et Alexandria Saracenis parens. Consideravit totum orientem atque ipsum meridiem Maumethi fabulis occupatum, Graeciae majorem partem possidere Turcos, septentrionem gentilitatis errore deceptum, Christianos in angulos⁶ occidentis redactos. Nam quamvis multi per orientem Christiani reperiantur, {53r} non tamen liberi sunt, mancipiorum more vitam agunt, afflicti in⁷ dies⁸ verberibus et contumeliis. Optimam ergo hanc palaestram Philippus existimavit, in qua sese exerceret placeretque Deo, si operam daret, qua Christiani Saracenorum excuterent jugum, ac sacer⁹ domini lectus terraque illa sancta ex manibus infidelium eriperetur.

[159] Statuit igitur toto conatu ad haec incumbere, memor quia et pater suus eodem succensus¹⁰ zelo vocatu Sigismundi, regis Hungariae, qui postea rerum potitus est, forti animo contra Turcos pugnavit, quamvis adversante¹¹ fortuna proelium inauspicatum infaustumque fuerit¹². Sequitur igitur paterna vestigia Philippus. De fide tuenda sollicitus est. Huc suos cogitatus, huc curas omnes convertit. Nihil ei magis menti et cordi est, quam ut exercitus suo tempore instituatur, qui Turcos Saracenosque funditus delere possit. Hinc cum Eugenius pontifex et Vladislaus¹³, rex Poloniae, {240v} qui Hungariam tenuit, contra Turcos arma sumpsissent, classem armavit, quam ex portu Brugiensi¹⁴, qui est in mari Britannico, in pontum Euxinum atque in ipsa ora Danubii per tot inhospitas gentes, per infinita pelagi spatia et innumerabiles sinus emisit. Sed cum eo quoque tempore parum feliciter pugnatum esset, rursusque Hungari exercitum repararent, non destitit Philippus auxilia mittere. Sed heu nostras curas! Perierunt¹⁵ et tunc nostri exercitus, in praedam nostri conatus iere. Non tamen defuit animus Philippo, qui quanto magis affligi Christianos animadvertit, tanto magis assurgendum consulendumque¹⁶ {53v} nostrae religioni putavit. Cumque Turcos vincere neque suum neque Hungarorum intelligeret, decrevit summas Christianorum excitare potentias. Oratores suos ad Romanum praesulem, ad imperatorem, ad ceteros orbis reges transmisit, quanta per orientem Christiani paterentur opprobria

¹ reuoluens W

² reddet W

³ in re : iure W

⁴ Hierosolymitana MA

⁵ *corr. ex* Antiochina ante oculos V; ante oculos Antiochia : Antiochia ante oculos K

⁶ angulum W

⁷ *omit.* K

⁸ in dies : dietim O, W

⁹ *omit.* MA

¹⁰ successu U

¹¹ *omit.* K, U; novercante O; *corr. ex* novercante V; non errante W

¹² querit U

¹³ et Vladislaus : Vladislausque O

¹⁴ Burgiensi W

¹⁵ non destitit ... perierunt *omit.* W

¹⁶ consulendum W

commemoravit, quae impenderent Christiano populo discrimina ante oculos posuit. Obviari malis instantibus, arma recipi, commune passagium fieri supplex oravit seque in propria persona iturum pugnaturumque obtulit. Quod si tunc ejus vox audita fuisset, haudquaquam modo florentissimae urbis Constantinopoleos deploraremus eventum, neque nos modo tantopere¹ Turcorum studia deterrerent.

[158] He often pondered this matter, and although there is nothing men can do to justly repay the Divine Piety, he did constantly consider how he could make his service acceptable to God. And as he was thinking of how to best please God, his thought fell on the city of Jerusalem, which is in the hands of that loathsome Saracen people though it contains the sepulchre of Our Saviour. In his mind, he also saw Antioch, lost a long time ago, and Alexandria, subject to the Saracens. He considered how the whole East and the South had been filled with the fables of Muhammad, how the Turks possessed most of Greece, how the North was led astray by pagan error, and how the Christians had been pushed into the corners of the West. For though there are many Christians in the East, they are not free but live as slaves, being whipped daily and abused. Therefore, Philippe judged that this would be an excellent ground in which to exert himself and please God if he endeavoured to free the Christians from the yoke of the Saracens and wrest the sacred bed of the Lord and the Holy Land from the hands of the infidels.

[159] He, therefore, decided to commit himself wholly to this endeavour, remembering that his own father,² inflamed by the same zeal, fought valiantly against the Turks at the call of Sigismund, King of Hungary, who later became lord of all.³ (Hostile fortune, however, made that battle ill-omened and unlucky.)⁴ So, Philippe is now following in the footsteps of his father. He is concerned about protecting the Faith, to which he now applies his care and thoughts. For nothing is closer to his heart and mind than to mobilize, in his own time, an army that can completely destroy the Turks and the Saracens. Therefore, when Pope Eugenius and King Wladislaw of Poland,⁵ who ruled Hungary, went to war against the Turks, the duke armed a fleet, which he sent from the port of Bruges at the Britannic Sea⁶ to Pontus Euxinus⁷ and the shores of the Danube, passing inhospitable peoples, through infinite stretches of the sea, and countless bays. And when the Hungarians, after their unfortunate fight, had rebuilt their army, Philippe did not fail to send troops. But alas, our cares! Once again, our armies perished,⁸ and all our effort were in vain. But Philippe did not become discouraged, believing that the more he saw Christians being oppressed, the more he should rise and help religion. When he realized that neither he himself nor the Hungarians could defeat the Turks, he decided to arouse the greatest powers of the Christians, sending his ambassadors to the Bishop of Rome, to the emperor, and to the other kings of our world. He related the abusive treatment suffered by the Christians in the East and the dangers

¹ tanto tempore W

² Jean sans Peur (1371-1419): Duke of Burgundy from 1404 to his death

³ I.e. Holy Roman Emperor

⁴ Battle of Nicopolis, 1396

⁵ Wladislaw III (Jagiellon): King of Poland from 1434 and of Hungary from 1440 to his death in the Battle of Varna

⁶ The British Channel

⁷ The Black Sea

⁸ Battle of Varna

threatening the Christian people. He begged that they would confront the evils, take up arms, and organize a common expedition¹, and he offered to go himself on the expedition and fight in person. If only his voice had been heard then, we would not now be lamenting the fate of the flourishing city of Constantinople, and the Turkish drive forward would not frighten us so much.

[160] At iratus iniquitatibus nostris immortalis Deus surdis auribus verba facere legatos Philippi sustinuit. Nemo his auscultavit, nemo assurexit. Quasi somnia, quasi deliramenta visa sunt Philippi monita. Solus autem, cum ipse tanto bello impar esset², maluit quiescere quam frustra niti. Secuta Secuta est exinde Constantinopolis expugnatio eaque Graeciae ruina, quam nunc universi defletis, quaeque totam Christianitatem commovet atque conturbat. Hinc Romanus pontifex excitatus reges ac principes arma sumere jubet. Hinc Caesar irritatus³ de ulciscendo Christianitatis vulnere consilia quaerit, conventum indicit, principes accersit, amissionem maximae civitatis exponit et acerbam orientalis imperii calamitatem. Rogatur inter ceteros principes Philippus, Burgundiae {54r} dux, ne pigeat⁴ huc se conferre, qui paulo ante in Asiam sese militaturum ire promiserat. Is intellecta Romani praesulis atque imperatoris voluntate, maestus de damno Christianorum, laetus de vocatione utrasque palmas ad caelum tollit Deoque gratias refert⁵, qui tandem orbis capita de communi utilitate cogitare compulerit.

[161] Erant ei per id temporis⁶ cum rege Anglorum⁷ non parvae lites, qui ruptis indutiis violataque violataque litterarum fide, missa non parva classe ducis agros populabatur, gladio atque igne quaeque obvia consumens. Ob quam rem nemo fuit, qui Philippum domo excedere suaderet. Consilium unum omnium⁸ erat manere domi principem atque hostem depellere, legatos ad hunc⁹ hunc⁹ conventum mittere. Sed contra Philippo visum est. Resistere Anglicis rem suam duxit, huc accedere negotium Dei putavit plusque¹⁰ se Deo quam sibi ipsi debere iudicavit. Opera sua per vicarios, negotia Dei per se ipsum aggredi statuit. Susceptis igitur, qui tunc apud se fuerunt paucis, comitibus ordinatisque domi rebus ac ducibus, qui bello intenderent Anglicano selectis, itineri se commisit. Ascendit in Burgundiam, deinde ad Suicenses, ad Suevos, ad Bavarios venit, exceptus¹¹ est omnibus in locis volente Deo laetantibus¹² populis. Vix dicere possem¹³, quantos illi honores Albertus Austriae et Ludovicus Bavariae duces simulque comes Virtembergensis impenderint, aut quam magnifice erga eum se civitates habuerint, quae satis intueri vultum ejus nequibant,

¹ "commune passagium" i.e. a crusade

² esse U

³ iratus W

⁴ pigeatur U; pigritetur O, W

⁵ referre W

⁶ tempus W

⁷ per id ... Anglorum : cum rege Anglorum per id temporis MA

⁸ unum omnium : omnium unum W

⁹ ad hunc : adhuc U

¹⁰ plusquam K; plus MA

¹¹ exceptusque MA

¹² laetabundis MA

¹³ possim O; possum W

praevenire sese invicem in honore praebendo¹, beatum se quisque credere {54v} non modo qui Philippum, sed qui vel minimum ex servis ejus in cubiculum recepisset. Albertus autem eo usque Philippum efferre dignatus est, ut se filium ejus appellari vellet, idque sibi licere magni beneficii loco susceperit, quae res ex mente Philippi numquam excident. *Ante leves ergo pascentur in aethere cervi, et freta destituent nudos in litore pisces*, ut Mantuani verbis utamur, quam tot beneficiorum memoria apud Philippum intereat.

¹ exhibendo MA

[160] But angered at our iniquities, Immortal God suffered Philippe's ambassadors to speak on deaf ears. Nobody heeded them, nobody rose up. Philippe's warnings were seen as dreams and delusions. Since he was unable to undertake so great a war alone, he would rather live in peace than strive in vain. Then followed the fall of Constantinople and the ruin of Greece that you are now all mourning and which disturbs and dismays all of Christianity. Therefore, the Roman pontiff has been aroused and orders all kings and princes to take weapons. Therefore, the emperor has been angered and takes counsel about avenging the injury to Christianity, he indicts an assembly, he summons the princes, he relates the loss of this great city and the bitter calamity of the eastern empire. Among the other princes, Duke Philippe of Burgundy is asked to coming here with alacrity, since he had already, not long ago, promised to go to war in Asia. When the duke was informed of the wish of the Roman bishop and the emperor, he, though saddened by the loss to Christianity, rejoiced at the invitation and lifting his hands to Heaven he thanked God for finally compelling the heads of the world to take thought for the common good.

[161] At that time, he had a serious conflict with the English king who, breaking their truce and violating his written promises, sent a large fleet and laid waste to the territories of the duke, destroying everything on the way with sword and fire. Therefore, there was nobody who would advise Philippe to leave from home. All unanimously advised the prince to stay at home and repel the enemy, and send legates to this diet. But Philippe judged otherwise.¹ He considered that resisting the English was his own affair, but coming here was God's affair, and he judged that he owed more to God than to himself. Thus, he decided to handle his own affairs through delegates and God's affairs by himself. Having taking the few [courtiers], who were with him then as his companions, and having arranged his affairs at home and selected captains to conduct the war against the English, he set off on the journey. First, he went up to Burgundy and from there to the Swiss, to Swabia, and to Bavaria. Everywhere, as God willed it, he was received enthusiastically by the people. I can hardly say how much honour he was shown by Duke Albrecht of Austria, Duke Ludwig of Bavaria, and the Count of Württemberg, or how magnificently he was received by the cities: they could not get enough of seeing his face, vying with each other in honouring him and counting themselves blessed if they received not just Philippe but even the least important of his servants in their home². Albrecht even went so far in his compliments to Philippe that he asked to be called his son and was much gratified when this was permitted. Philippe shall never forget these things. In the words of the Mantuan: *Sooner, then, shall the nimble stag graze in air, and the seas leave their fish bare on the strand,*³ before Philippe forgets so many kind deeds.

¹ The contrast to the emperor who chose to stay at home is an implicit rebuke

² "cubiculum"

³ Vergilius: *Eclogae*, 1.59

[162] Venit autem ille in hunc locum vocatu Caesaris praeter honorem Dei et Christiani populi salutem rem nullam quaeritans. Speravit hic cum Caesarem tum principes¹ complurimos² convenisse atque in hoc conventu adversus Turcorum superbiam bellum decerni. Fuit, ut vidistis, et voluntarius et promptus in opus Dei totumque se vestris consiliis praebuit. Nunc quando res³ dilationem recipiunt rursusque⁴ novum concilium habituri estis, quia fortasse⁵ non erit ex re Philippi in eo comparere, jamjam quae sit animi sui sententia prodere mavult, neque enim is est, qui cogitandi tempus exposcat. Deliberatus et animo parato⁶ ad vos venit. Quod dicturus erat imperatore⁷ praesente id modo dicit. Proderit fortasse propositum ejus jam esse vulgatum.

[163] Quantum ad schedulam⁸ imperatoris attinet, nihil addit nihilque minuit Philipus ex his, quae locutus est nomine omnium Albertus marchio. Si accepta fuerit ea via, sequetur⁹ datum ordinem Philippus. Si minus, {55r} - ut testatus¹⁰ sit apud omnes gentes animus ejus - haec pro¹¹ Deo ac vobis¹² inconcussa¹³ fide pollicetur: si Caesarea majestas ducatum exercitus Christiani contra Turcos acceperit expeditionique personaliter affuerit, Philippus ei sub vexillo imperii cum comitatu, quam¹⁴ poterit, maximo¹⁵ et¹⁶ robustissimo in propria persona famulabitur. Id oneris, si recusaverit imperator, volueritque rex Hungariae ac Bohemiae Ladislaus, quamvis puer adhuc, in exercitu pro fide catholica militare, in castris ejus Philippus erit. Rursusque si neque imperator neque is¹⁷ pugnare in Turcos decreverit, et alii Christiani principes arma susceperint apparatusque tanto bello dignum fecerint, his sese Philippus adjunget neque ullo pacto deerit, nisi tali detineatur impedimento¹⁸, propter quod tota Christianitas excusatum eum suscipiat. Quo casu de sanguine suo nihilominus principem aliquem destinabit cum equitatu peditatuque digno, qui Burgundiae ducis videri debeat. Haec me jussit exponere Philippus, ne suae mentis essetis nescii. Ipse die crastina¹⁹ recessurus vos bene valere optat.”

[164] His latine dictis ac deinde sermone Theutonico pronuntiatis legati Caesaris in penitiori se cubiculo²⁰ retrahentes, episcopo Senensi committunt¹, nonnulla ex tempore, quasi pro fine concilii

¹ principem U

² cum plurimos U

³ *omit.* U

⁴ rursusque U

⁵ fortassis MA, WO

⁶ paratus U

⁷ imperator W

⁸ cedula W

⁹ sequitur MA

¹⁰ est *add.* MA, WO

¹¹ pro O, U

¹² nobis U; pro nobis W

¹³ concussa U

¹⁴ quo MA

¹⁵ *omit.* MA

¹⁶ ac W

¹⁷ his U

¹⁸ detineatur impedimento : impedimento detineatur W

¹⁹ crastini O, W

²⁰ se cubiculo : cubiculo se MA, WO

concilii dicat Philippumque ducem commendet. Quibus in contionem reversis, idem episcopus in hunc modum profatus est:

¹ promittunt U

[162] But coming here at the call of the emperor, he seeks nothing but the honour of God and the salvation of the Christian people. He hoped that both the emperor and many princes would have assembled here to decide on war against the haughty Turks. He was, as you have seen, both willing and ready to [undertake] God's work, and he completely accepted your counsel. Since there is going to be a delay and you will hold another diet, and Philippe may not be able to participate in that meeting, he prefers to state his intentions already now, for he does not require time for further thought since he came to you having already considered the matter and with his mind made up. What he was going to say in the emperor's presence, he says now. Possibly it will prove an advantage if he makes known his intentions already now.

[163] Concerning the imperial propositions, Philippe would add nothing and take nothing away from what Margrave Albrecht said in the name of all. If this way is accepted, then Philippe will follow what is decided. If not, he promises (as his intentions have already been made known everywhere) this before God and you, in unshakeable good faith: If His Imperial Majesty accepts the leadership of an army against the Turks and participates personally in the expedition, Philippe will serve in his own person under the imperial banner, with the largest and strongest possible following. If the emperor declines this charge, but King Ladislaus of Hungary and Bohemia, though still a boy, wishes to fight in the army for the Catholic Faith, Philippe will be in his camp. And if neither the emperor nor Ladislaus decides to fight against the Turks, but other Christian princes take weapons and make preparations worthy of such a great war, then Philippe will join them and not be absent unless he is prevented for a reason which the whole of Christianity would consider a valid excuse. In that case, he will send a prince of his blood, with cavalry and infantry worthy of the Duke of Burgundy. This Philippe has commanded me to declare so that you shall not be ignorant of his intentions. He himself will leave tomorrow and wishes you well.

10.3. Closing address of Enea Silvio Piccolomini, "*Tua verba*"

[164] When he had finished his address in Latin, and it had been translated into German, the imperial legates withdrew to a private chamber, where they decided to charge the Bishop of Siena¹ with giving an improvised address to close the diet and to compliment Duke Philippe.² So, when they returned to the assembly, the aforesaid bishop addressed the assembly in this way:

¹ Enea Silvio Piccolomini himself

² Philippe III le Bon (1396-1467): Duke of Burgundy from 1419 to his death

[165] “Tua verba, marchio illustris, que unus pro omnibus fecisti, non sine voluptate accepimus¹, quando ex his cognoscimus imperatoriae serenitatis {55v} propositum de tuenda Christianitate gratum atque acceptum esse. Quae veluti consulendo dixisti, referemus immutilata Cesareo culmini. Nec dubium nos habet, quin² futuro in concilio³ ⁴ Caesar adsit facultas ei modo veniendi fuerit⁵ ⁶, nam hoc est, quod sibi prae ceteris rebus cordi est. Vos modo operam date, ne quid impedimenti tantis rebus injiciatur.

[166] Te autem Philippe, dux inclyte ac magnanime, et ut te nomine tuo compellem, nostri gloria saeculi, qui longo itinere non sine gravi sumptu ac labore, dimisso in discrimine regno tuo, jussioni Caesaris paruisti, ad consulendum ecclesiae catholicae huc profectus, teque liberaliter et supra⁷ modum obtulisti magnifice, quibus commendemus verbis non satis in promptu est. Licebit tamen prae gaudio exclamando dicere: O cor tuum, nobilissimo⁸ sanguine tuo nobilius⁹! O principem laudibus immortalibus efferendum! O Christiane gentis¹⁰ unicum jubar lucemque mirificam! O patris optimi meliorem prolem! Quibus te nunc praeconiis efferemus? Numquam ita magnifice quidquam de te dixerimus, id virtus quin¹¹ superet tua. Tu profecto ita te hodie gessisti, ut imprimis caelesti regi, deinde terreno imperatori, postremo omnibus Christianis de te ipso copiose abundeque satisfeceris, possumque ego de te illud¹² proferre, quod in Julium Caesarem promittit Cicero: *Nulla enim unquam etas de tuis laudibus conticescet.*

[167] Implesti hodie cunctorum, qui adsunt, desiderium mentesque omnium erexisti spemque nobis ingentem praebuisti rerum optime gerendarum, {56r} quando te maximum inter principes nostri orbis jam natu grandiore belli labores¹³ sponte suscepturum pro nostra religione videmus. Nam quid alii faciant, quando te talem tantumque ducem lorica indutum aspexerint et fulgentibus armis? Conduplicasti hodie, quod volebamus¹⁴, namque cum satis esse diceremus te belli participem obtinere, ductorem excitatoremque¹⁵ reliquorum te comperimus. Ingens est haec tua laus, aeternum hoc tibi decus comparasti, qui cum esses ultimus inter Christianos, cui Turchorum gladius extimescendus existat, primus tamen omnium prodis contra Turchos arma sumpturus¹⁶. Et quis erit – obsecro - adeo irreligiosus Christianus, adeo iners, adeo communis boni negligens, qui tuo exemplo non moveatur? Nos quidem tua promissa tuaque facta divo Caesari exponemus,

¹ accipimus U, W

² quando MA

³ consilio WO

⁴ futuro in concilio : in futuro concilio MA

⁵ affuerit MA

⁶ veniendi fuerit : fuerit veniendi MA, WO

⁷ super U

⁸ nobilissimum U

⁹ tuo nobilius : nobilius tuo W

¹⁰ omit. W

¹¹ qui U

¹² de te illud : illud de te MA

¹³ labores U

¹⁴ volebamus W

¹⁵ exercitoremque U, MA

¹⁶ suscepturus MA, WO

quem tanto magis gavisurum¹ certissimi sumus, quanto promissiones tuae et acta tua, quasque² de te spes habuimus, exsuperare videmus. Nunc Virgilianum illud in te dicere possumus³: *in freta dum fluvii current, dum montibus umbrae lustrabunt, convexa⁴ polus dum sidera pascet, semper honos nomenque tum laudesque manebunt.*

[165] Your words, Illustrious Margrave,⁵ spoken on behalf of all, we have heard with pleasure since since they make it clear that His Imperial Serenity's proposals⁶ for the protection of Christianity are welcome and accepted [by the assembly]. The advice you gave we shall pass on to His Imperial Highness unchanged, and we do not doubt that the emperor will attend the next diet⁷ if at all possible, for this matter is extremely important to him. And on your part, you should take care that there be no impediment to this great cause.

[166] And you Philippe, Illustrious and Magnanimous Duke, and – to use an appropriate title – the glory of our age, you have obeyed the summons of the emperor and come here, on a long journey, at great cost and effort, and with risk to your own realm, in order to assist the Catholic Church, and you have made generous and magnificent offers [to the cause]: it is not easy to find words to praise you adequately. But we may indeed cry out for joy: oh, heart of yours, even more noble than your most noble blood! Oh, prince, worthy of immortal praise! Oh, unique glory and wonderful light of the Christian people! Oh son, surpassing a most excellent father! How can we praise you now? Your courage and strength surpass everything we can say about you. Today, you have truly acted in a way which marvelously satisfies firstly the king in Heaven, then the emperor on Earth, and finally all Christians. I can say about you what Cicero⁸ declared about Julius Caesar⁹: Caesar⁹: *no future age shall fail to make mention of your praise.*¹⁰

[167] Today, you have fulfilled the wish of all who are present, you have encouraged all, and you have given us great hopes for success in the coming venture since we see that you, greatest among the princes of this world, freely undertake the hardships of war for our religion, even though you are now of advanced age.¹¹ What, indeed, will others do when they see a great duke like you, coated in mail and with shining arms. Today, you have fulfilled our expectations twofold, for when we said that it was enough if you just took part in the war, we have now heard that you will even lead and arouse others too. Immense will be your praise, and eternal will be the glory you acquire for yourself, since you, who are the last of the Christians who must fear the sword of

¹ gavisuri U

² quas O, U, W

³ possum U

⁴ connexa O, W

⁵ Albrecht III Achilles of Brandenburg

⁶ The formal decisions of the conference, drawn up by Piccolomini

⁷ The diet planned for October in Frankfurt. The emperor did not participate

⁸ Cicero, Marcus Tullius (106-43 BCE): Roman statesman, orator and author

⁹ Caesar, Gajus Julius (100-44 BCE): Roman general and statesman

¹⁰ Cicero: *Pro Marcello*, 3.9: *nec ulla umquam etas de tuis laudibus conticescet*

¹¹ The duke may not have appreciated Piccolomini's remark on his advanced age. Piccolomini, however, applied the figure to himself as pope, in his orations on the Congress of Mantua

the Turks,¹ are the first of all to come forth and take arms against the Turk. And what Christian - I ask - will be so impious, so sluggish, so indifferent to the common good that he will not be moved by your example. We shall certainly relate your promises and deeds to the Holy Emperor: we are sure that he will be overjoyed at how greatly we see them surpass the expectations we had of you. Now we can apply those words of Virgil² to you: *While rivers run to ocean, while on the mountains shadows move over slopes, while heaven feeds the stars, ever shall your honour, your name, and your praises abide.*³

[168] Ad te nunc venio, magne parens ecclesiae Papiensis, quem prima sedes huc legatum misit. Grattissima fuit tua presentia in hoc loco. Ad res bene gerendas eloquentia ac prudentia {56v} tua singularis adjumento non parvo fuit. Agimus ingentes gratias domino apostolico, qui te direxit, teque magnopere commendamus, qui nulla in re defuisti. Quae hic gesta sunt, tuum erit apostolice pietati referre atque hortari, ut, quae suo incumbunt officio, expleat, in altero concilio legatum habeat, opus hoc sanctissimum, quod ferventi⁴ animo inchoavit, ferventiori studio prosequatur. Haec incluta natio Germanica, quae ceteris in rebus apostolico culmini devotissima est, in hoc certe negotio fidei suae sanctitati obsequentissimam se praebebit.

[169] Tu quoque, Casimiri serenissimi regis Poloniae ac magni Lituaniae ducis orator, regem tuum super his, quae gesta hic⁵ sunt, et quae gerenda superant, certiore efficias, cujus mentem ad commune bonum paratam libenter audivimus ejusque propositum Caesariae sublimitati non sine debita commendatione referemus. Praestet autem ipse facto, quod verbo promittit, assurgat totis viribus, quando sua potissimum interest, dum Turci bello premuntur, in Graecia proelium cum Tartaris, in Muldavia sive in Valachia miscere, ne alteri alteris auxilio esse possint. Sic enim disjunctae duae validissimae gentes facilius opprimuntur. Deserat rex tuus Prutenicum bellum, quod Christianis noxium est, atque ad infideles arma sua convertat, unde possit et laudem mereri et fructum capere⁶.

[170] {57r} Similiter et vos, clarissimi ac potentis Sabaudiae ducis oratores, domum redeuntes, quae vidistis et audivistis domino vestro nota efficietis curabitisque, ut ad futurum concilium legatos de sua mente instructos mittat, ut qui nunc dicto Caesaris parens fuit, tum quoque fidelem principem et imperatori obsequentem se⁷ exhibeat.

[171] Idem vos ceteri, qui adestis, sive principum sive civitatum vices agentes, erga eos⁸, qui vos miserunt, efficietis, ut quod bene coeptum est opus, ad honorem divini nominis salutemque

¹ Because of the geographical remoteness of his territories from the Turks

² Vergilius Maro, Publius (70-19 BC): Roman poet

³ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 1.607-609

⁴ fruenti MA, WO

⁵ gesta hic : hic gesta MA

⁶ carpere O, W; suscipere MA

⁷ omit. O, W

⁸ nos U

Christiani populi et hujus inclytæ nationis decus atque imperii sacri gloriam optime consummari possit.”

[168] And now I come to you, great Father of the Church of Pavia,¹ whom the First See² has sent here as legate. Your presence has been a great boon, and your outstanding eloquence and wisdom have been of great help to the good conduct of the whole matter. We give immense thanks to His Apostolic Lordship³ who sent you, and we praise you highly for not failing in any way whatsoever. It will be your charge to relate to His Apostolic Piety what has been achieved here, to exhort him to fulfil the task that is his,⁴ and to send a legate to the next diet. May he pursue with even greater fervour the holy undertaking which he began so fervently. This illustrious German nation, in all other matters so devoted to His Apostolic Highness, will undoubtedly prove completely obedient to His Holiness in this matter of the Faith.

[169] And you, ambassador of Casimir, Most Serene King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania,⁵ you will inform your king about what has been done here and what remains to do. We have heard with pleasure that his mind is focused on the common good, and we shall relate his position to His Imperial Highness with due commendation. May he now translate his words into actions. May he mobilise all his forces since it is in his own great interest that the Turks be opposed militarily and that there be war with the Tartars both in Greece, in Moldavia, and in Wallachia so that they cannot come to help each other. Attacked separately, these two strong peoples⁶ will be subdued more easily. Let your king abandon the war in Prussia⁷ which is harmful to the Christians, and turn his arms against the infidels. Thus he may acquire both glory and benefit.

[170] Similarly you, ambassadors of the noble and mighty Duke of Savoy,⁸ should return home and inform your lord about what you have seen and heard and ensure that he sends legates informed about his intentions to the next diet, so that he, who has now obeyed the emperor, will also then show himself to be a loyal prince, obedient to the emperor.

[171] And the same should all the rest of you who are here as representatives of your princes or cities do towards those who sent you, so that this venture which has begun so well will be accomplished to the honour of the divine name, to the salvation of Christian people, to the credit of this illustrious nation, and to the glory of the Holy Empire.

¹ Giovanni di Castiglione (ca. 1413 – 1460): Bishop of Pavia 1453. Cardinal 1456

² The Apostolic See, i.e. the Papacy

³ Pope Nicolaus V

⁴ I.e., to organize an Italian fleet to support the land army mobilized by the other European powers

⁵ Kasimir IV (Jagiellon) (1427-1492): King of Poland from 1447 to his death

⁶ The Turks and the Tartars

⁷ The war of the Prussian population, supported by the king, against the knightly German Order

⁸ Louis I (1413-1465): Duke of Savoy from 1440 to his death

[172] Haec cum Aeneas latine pronuntiasset, Gurcensis episcopus sermone patrio exposuisset, assurgens legatus apostolicus in laudem Philippi ducis ornatam oratiunculam habuit commendans eum principem¹, qui domo, uxore filioque unico pro Christi nomine tuendo relictis itineri laborioso ac longissimo se commisisset seque prae ceteris principibus in obsequium ecclesiae promptum paratumque ostendisset. Id futurum summo pontifici² acceptissimum nullasque gentes oblationem ejus auditoras, quae nomini suo non benedicant.

[173] Albertus autem marchio Brandeburgensis, quem Theutonicum Achillem nonnulli vocitant, vir corpore atque animo fortis, ubi tantopere³ commendatum Philippum⁴ accepit, cupidus et ipse laudis, suo ac Ludovici Bavariae magni ducis nomine, qui proximus assidebat⁵, {57v} his verbis usus est: “Imples nos hodie summa consolatione summoque gaudio, Philippe, dux inclyte, quando pro Christianae religionis tutela usque adeo te⁶ pronum paratumque dictitas. Audivimus cupide tuum sermonem teque dignum aeternis praeconiis judicamus. Neque tibi in hoc tam probabili desiderio deerimus⁷, neque te solum relinquemus⁸. Cupimus et nos Christi fidem pro virili nostra tueri, qui, nisi velimus a nostris majoribus degenerare, necessario cogimur⁹ pro nostris conatibus Christianam religionem adjutare. Facessat omne dubium, nam et nos, qui adsumus, et¹⁰ complurimi ex absentibus nostrae nationis principes adversus impiam Turcorum gentem arma sumentes in personis propriis militabimus ostendemusque Christianae plebi curam esse nobis catholicae et orthodoxae fidei.”

¹ *omit.* U

² *se add.* U

³ tanto tempore W

⁴ tantopere commendatum Philippum : tanta opera Philippi MA

⁵ assedebat W

⁶ *omit.* W

⁷ decernimus K

⁸ relinquamus K

⁹ coguntur W

¹⁰ *omit.* W

10.4. Address of the papal legate

[172] When Aeneas finished his address in Latin, it was translated into the vernacular by the Bishop of Gurk. Then the apostolic legate rose and held a small but elegant oration in praise of Duke Philippe, commending the prince who had left his home, his wife, and his only son for the defence of the name of Christ and gone on a difficult and long journey. He had, more than the other princes, shown himself willing and ready to serve the Church. This would be most gratifying to the Supreme Pontiff, and no people who heard of his offer would fail to bless his name.

10.5. Address of Albrecht of Brandenburg

[173] When Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg, whom many call the German Achilles,¹ a man of powerful body and mind, heard Philippe being so highly commended, he – also desirous of praise! – spoke thus in his own name and in the name of the great Duke Ludwig of Bavaria, sitting next to him, “Philippe, Illustrious Duke, you fill all of us here today with great consolation and joy, as you declare how far you are willing and ready to protect the Christian religion. We have eagerly heard your address and consider you worthy of eternal praise. We, too, shall not fail you in this praiseworthy endeavour, and we shall not abandon you. We, too, desire to protect the Faith of Christ with all our might since we must, if we do not wish to be unworthy of our ancestors, come to the aid of the Christian religion to our best ability. Let there be no doubt that we, too, who are present and many of the princes of our nation who are absent will go to war against the Turkish people and fight in person and that we shall show the Christian people how much we care about the catholic and orthodox Faith.”

¹ It was actually Piccolomini himself, who had started calling Albrecht the German Achilles

[174] Alacritas his dictis inter omnes mira exorta est, laetari universa contio, nunc Philippo, nunc Alberto benedicere ac bona precari, conferre alterum alteri, Philippum extollere, qui cum¹ magna pace in summis deliciis vivere possit, pro communi tamen bono committere sese laboribus ac periculis velit, Albertum magnificare, cujus animo nihil videri difficile potest, et unus omnium laboriosissimus atque cautissimus videatur, utrumque laudis et gloriae dignissimum praedicare hosque tempestate nostra solos esse dicere, qui {58r} reipublicae Christianae curam gerant. Ludovicum quoque his adjungere, cujus adolescentia bonis initiata principiis spem clarissimi principis exhibet. Atque in hunc modum soluta conventio est². Manebimus deinde Francfordiense concilium, quod, si Deo placitum fuerit, initia Ratisponae habita prosequatur. Finis^{3 4}.

¹ *omit.* W

² conventio est : conuentione W

³ *omit.* O, U, W, MA

⁴ Ex Nova Civitate pridie nonas Augusti millesimo quadringentesimo quinquagesimo quinto *add.* O

10.6. Conclusion

[174] After these addresses, great enthusiasm rose among all. The whole assembly rejoiced and praised and wished the best for Philippe and Albrecht, comparing them, and extolling Philippe, who though he could have stayed at home in great peace, enjoying exquisite pleasures, had wanted to take on hardship and danger for the sake of the common good. They also praised Albrecht to whom nothing seemed difficult, and who appeared to be the most hardworking and prudent of all. They declared both of them to be worthy of praise and glory and to be the only ones, in our time, who [truly] cared about the Christian commonwealth. And they associated Ludwig with these two since he has come into his youth so well that he gives hope of becoming a most illustrious prince.

And thus the meeting was brought to an end. We now await the Diet of Frankfurt¹, which – if it pleases God – will follow the course set in Regensburg. The end.

¹ Apparently, Piccolomini already at the end of the redaction of the report knew that the emperor would be absent from the next diet since he says that the meeting would be held in Frankfurt, and not in Nürnberg, see sect. 146

Appendix: Emperor's letter to the Duke of Burgundy

Revised version (Historia de Ratisponensi Dieta)

Fridericus tertius, divina favente clementia Romanorum imperator, Philippo, duci Burgundiae illustri, salutem. Memores sumus te oratores ante aliquot annos ad nos misisse, qui nobis duras et acerbissimas molestias, quas Christiani per orientem sive a Turcis sive a Saracenis paterentur, non sine quadam commiseratione referentes summopere nos adhortati fuerunt, ut tamquam protectores et advocati fidei catholicae adversus inimicos salutiferae crucis expeditionem institueremus, reges et principes, quicumque Christum colerent, invitantes. Ad quod tam pium et necessarium opus corpus tuum offerebas et dedicabas. Nos tunc id propositum commendantes, cum Romam propediem petituri essemus, cumque res maxima esset, quam nobis suadebas, ac fidem spectaret, respondimus - ut par fuit – de tanto negotio Romanum pontificem consulendum, quemadmodum paulo post Romam venientes in publico consistorio fecimus. Praesul vero Romanus pro verbis nostris hilarior factus et verba nostra et rem ipsam mirifice laudavit, et quoniam nos optime animatos videbat, dixit et aliorum quoque regum nostri orbis se mentes perscrutaturum, quemadmodum rei magnitudo videbatur exposcere. At opus ingens, dum suapte natura tempus ex tempore quaerit, crudelis Turcorum dominus Constantinopolim, orientalis imperii caput Graeciaeque decus, invadit, obsidet, expugnat, diripit.

Original version (RTA, 104-105)

Fridericus divina favente clementia Romanorum imperator, semper Augustus etc., principi nostro, salutem etc. Memores sumus te ante nonnullos annos oratores tuos ad nos misisse, per quos diras et acerbissimas molestias, quas in orientis partibus tam Saraceni quam Turci cultoribus Christi dietim inferebant commemorando et condolendo nos veluti Romanorum principem ad quem potissimum de salute Christiani populi cogitare incumberebat, magnis precibus adhortabare, ut ad passagium contra inimicos crucis instituendum nostras operas ceteros reges et principes ad id ipsum requisitos redderemus, ad quod tam pium et necessarium opus in propria persona profecturum te offerebas. Nos tunc propositum tuum commendatum, cum Romam propediem petire intenderemus cumque res maxima esset, per tuos oratores nobis exposita, et fidem spectaret, respondimus de tanto negotio velle nos – ut par erat – cum summo pontifice verbum facere suaeque sanctitatis et consilium et directionem sequi, quemadmodum paulo post Romam venientes in publico consistorio de hoc ipso negotio sermonem nostro nomine fieri iussimus, ad quam rem non parum inclinatum eundem invenimus pontificem, qui publice nobis respondit etiam aliorum aliorum se regum, ut rei magnitudo videbatur exposcere, mentes perquisiturum ad opus ingens, dum suapte natura tempus ex tempore postulat, crudelis Turcorum dominus Constantinopolim, orientalis imperii caput Graeciaeque decus, invadit, obsidet, expugnat, diripit.

Imperatorem gentis interficit, nobilitatem majori ex parte gladio ferit, innumeras animas in servitutem redigit, templa divino dicata nomini spurcitiae Maumethi subigit, altaria proterit, salvatoris nostri ac matris ejus intemeratae virginis imagines delet, sanctas quascumque reliquias invenit, porcis objectat. Neque contentus his, nactus locum et portum, ex quo plurimum Christiano populo nocere potest, ingentes copias terra marique parat hisque se totum occidentem invasurum subversurumque Christi legem jactitat.

Imperatorem illius gentis interficit, nobilitatem majori ex parte gladio ferit, innumeras animas Christianorum in servitutem redigit, templa divino dicata nomini spurcitiae Maumethi subigit, altaria proterit, salvatoris nostri domini Jhesu et intemeratae matris ejus imagines delet, sanctorum reliquias conculcat. Neque contentus his, nactus locum et portum, ex quo plurimum Christiano populo nocere possit, terra marique copias parat numerosas quibus se totum jactitat occidentem invadere ac legem Christi et evangelium posse subvertere jactitat.

Quod quamprimum cognovimus, mox domino nostro papae litteras dedimus rogantes, ut de modo resistendi tam potentibus inimicis consilium in communi caperet, nam et nos operam nostram in obsequio fidei minime negaremus. Is vero misso legato et intentione sua in tali negotio nobis exposita vehementer atque impense nos hortatus est, ut adversus Turcorum insolentem et perniciosissimam audaciam cum nostris principibus insurgamus, ac veluti primi inter saeculares potestates, quibus de profectu reipublicae Christianae cura et sollicitudo incumbit, ceteros Christiani orbis rectores nostris exemplis et hortationibus invitemus. Nos ergo considerantes rem esse dignam, in qua laboremus, nosque praecipue tamquam imperatorem et advocatum ecclesiae respicere, universorum principum ecclesiasticorum et saecularium cunctorumque nostrorum et imperii sacri subditorum in festo Sancti Georgii proxime futuro in civitate nostra Ratisponensis supra Danubium statuimus habere conventum, in quo comparituri cum his, qui aderunt, de propulsandis hostibus tuendaque nostra religione consultabimus, sperantes et apostolicae sedis legatos et nonnullorum potentum regum, quibus super hoc scripsimus, oratores adfore.

Quod quamprimum intelleximus, mox domino nostro sanctissimo papae litteras dedimus exhortantes, ut de modo resistendi tam potentibus inimicis in communi cogitaret, nostras operas in obsequium fidei prompto animo offerentes. Is vero misso legato et intentione sua in tali negotio nobis exposita magnopere serenitatem nostram hortatus est, ut adversus Turcorum insolentem et perniciosissimam audaciam cum nostris principibus insurgamus, ac velut primi inter saeculares potestates, quibus de profectu reipublicae Christianae cura et sollicitudo incumbit, ceteros reges et principes nostris exemplis et hortationibus invitemus. Nos autem considerantes rem esse dignam, in qua laboremus, nosque praecipue velut imperatorem et advocatum ecclesiae totamque nationem nostram et imperii cunctos principes hoc opus prae ceteris Christianis concernere, universorum principum ecclesiasticorum et saecularium, baronum nobilium et communitatum et ceterorum subditorumque nostrorum ad festum Sancti Georgii proxime futurum in civitate nostra Ratisponensi supra Danubium statuimus habere conventum, in quo personaliter comparituri cum his, qui aderunt, tam de exercitu contra inimicos fidei instituendo quam de ceteris rebus ad defensionem Christianae religionis necessariis deliberabimus et agemus, sperantes et sanctissimi domini nostri papae legatos et nonnullorum potentum regum, quibus super hoc scripsimus, oratores illic invenire.

Cum igitur res haec ad illum finem tendat, super quo nos pridem hortabare, cumque modo non solum utile, sed necessarium sit pro fide nostra consurgere et instantibus inimicis toto conatu resistere, dilectionem tuam requirimus tibi velut imperii sacri principi mandamus, ut tamquam princeps orthodoxus ac fidelis cultur crucis Christi statuto termino ad Ratisponense concilium te conferas neque graveris in tanta necessitate populi Christiani eo proficisci, qui te alias etiam in Asiam transiturum hac ipsa de causa promittebas. Nos enim illic et cum tua dilectione et cum ceteris, qui advenerint, eam deliberationem, si Deus faverit, capiemus, per quam non modo tueri haereditatem domini, id est Christianum populum, sed ultro in suis finibus impias Turcorum manus coercere atque confringere valeamus. Datum in Nova Civitate pridie idus Januarii anno dominicae nativitatis MCCCCLIII.

Cum ergo res haec ad illum finem tendat, super quo prius tuos ambasiatores ad nos misisti, cumque modo necessitas incumbat pro fide nostra consurgere et instantibus toto conatu resistere, dilectionem tuam requirimus tibi velut imperii sacri principi de plenitudine Caesareae potestatis injungius et mandamus, ut tamquam princeps orthodoxus ac fidelis cultur crucis Christi in praedicta die Sancti Georgii omnia mora cessante ad Ratisponam te conferas neque graveris in tanta necessitate populi Christiani eo personaliter proficisci, qui te alias etiam in Asiam velle transitum facere in Dei honorem et fidei tutelam offerebas. Nos enim illic et cum tua dilectione et cum ceteris, qui advenerint, consilium et deliberationem recipiemus, ut adjuvante domino suam causam non solum tueri Christianam gentem, ne ulterius opprimatur, sed ultro in suis finibus impias Turcorum manus coercere atque infringere valeamus. Datum nona Januarii anno etc. 54to.