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Collected Letters of Enea Silvio Piccolomini. Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. Vol. 1: General Introduction and Letters 1432-1441 (nos. 1-33). Preliminary version.

Michael Von Cotta-Schönberg

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**Collected Personal Letters of Enea Silvio Piccolomini.
Edited and translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg.**

Vol. 1: General Introduction and Letters 1432-1441 (nos. 1-33)

Preliminary version

Abstract

Enea Silvio Piccolomini (Pope Pius II) was one of the great letter writers of his century. In the course of his life (as a secretary to bishops, cardinals, an antipope and the emperor), he wrote and received a great many personal letters and, during his years at the imperial chancery, he handled the official correspondence of the emperor and his chancellor and drafted many of their letters.¹ A large part of this correspondence is extant today. It is a unique source of information not only on Piccolomini's own – extraordinary – life but also on important political processes, ecclesiastical affairs, and social developments in the Renaissance. A complete edition of Piccolomini's correspondence has not yet been published. Wolkan's edition (1909-1918) is incomplete, covering only the years from 1432 to 1454, but has ever since been an invaluable source for researchers on Piccolomini in particular and the Renaissance in general. As for translations, only limited anthologies have been published so far.

Index terms

Enea Silvio Piccolomini; Aeneas Silvius; Aeneas Sylvius; Pope Pius II; Papa Pio II; Pope Eugenius IV; Papa Eugenio IV; Pope Nicolaus V; Pope Nicholas V; Papa Niccolò V; Pope Calixtus III; Papa Callisto III; Kaiser Friedrich III (Habsburg); Emperor Frederick III (Habsburg); Letters; Lettere; Epistolario; Correspondence; Renaissance; Church history; Political history.

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¹ The voluminous correspondence of Piccolomini as Pope Pius II

falls outside the scope of the present work.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my grandchildren, Frida, Sara, Sally, and Bjoern.

Foreword

Bilingual editions of classical Latin and Neo-Latin literature are generally desirable. Models of such editions are the Loeb Classical Library and the I Tatti Renaissance Library.¹

As a part of my project to make works of Enea Silvio Piccolomini available in Open Access² bilingual Latin-English editions, I have previously published *Collected orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pope Pius II*, *Collected Diplomatic Reports of Enea Silvio Piccolomini*, and his *De Viris Illustribus*. I have now taken up Piccolomini's letters.

Some of these letters have been published in English or German versions,³ but a complete translation has not been undertaken previously. I have no doubt that an English translation will considerably widen access to this precious historical source.

As for the edition of the Latin text, Wolkan's edition (1913-1918) was a monumental achievement. It has now, for more than a hundred years, provided access to a large number of Piccolomini's letters in an edition based on excellent scholarship, and it is still immensely useful to Renaissance scholars and research on Pius II. Barbara Baldi has said it very well: *À distanza di più di un seculo, Wolkan resta dunque un punto di partenza pressoché insostituibile e in effetti l'importanza et la centralità dell'opera, per quel che riguarda lo studio sia della figura di Piccolomini sia delle sue lettere, sono state più volte sottolineate negli studi.*⁴

There are, however, some problems with that edition.

Firstly, it is not complete since it does not cover the period after 1454, missing the last four years of his life before he became pope, including his time as a cardinal. Moreover, some letters have surfaced since Wolkan's edition. Others may yet appear as the result of an intensified effort to identify Piccolomini's letters in libraries and archives. So, Musumeci's observation from 1991 is still valid: *Manca ancora una raccolta sistematica delle epistole scritte negli ultimi dieci anni della vita del Piccolomini a completamento del lavoro del Wolkan.*⁵

Secondly, Wolkan included Piccolomini's treatises and other literary works published in letter format, although they are not truly letters. He evidently did a great service to research by making these texts available a long time before they appeared in modern critical editions, but since they have done so in the meantime, it is no longer needful to include them in the letter collection.

Thirdly, though Wolkan's edition is based on some of the most important manuscripts, the manuscript basis for his edition is somewhat limited and does not fully reflect the complex formation history of the corpus of Piccolomini's letters.⁶

¹ See also Laurence Bernard-Pradelle's Latin-French edition of Leonardi Bruni's letters.

² To which I am dedicated as a matter of principle / MCS.

³ To only mention the main languages.

⁴ Baldi, p.1

⁵ Musumeci, p. 376.

⁶ See introduction to vol. 2.

And, finally, though Wolkan was an eminent reader and collator of manuscripts, inevitably errors and oversights occurred,¹ mostly due to the conditions of manuscript edition prevailing at that time,² which may be usefully corrected in a new edition though they are usually not serious.

Such problems point to the need for a new, comprehensive edition of Piccolomini's correspondence. Van Heck began such a re-edition with his *Epistolarium*, but it only covers the period 1431 to 1445 and could, apparently, not be continued.

The aim of the present work is, however, not to establish a definitive Latin text of all Piccolomini's letters. That will presumably take a well-funded international collaborative research effort. The aim has simply been to provide a decent Latin text of Piccolomini's personal correspondence before he became pope as the basis for a translation into English and a parallel edition of the Latin and English text in Open Access.³ For the purpose of the present edition, personal letters are simply those written by and to Piccolomini in his own name before the papacy, whether they be private or semiofficial letters (private letters accompanying official letters on the same subject) or official letters (e.g., written in his capacity as papal legate). So, the present edition does not comprise Piccolomini's letters written when he was pope, his letter treatises (e.g. *De curialium miseris*) or other literary works (e.g., poems, and the *De Duobus Amantibus*), the letters he wrote for Emperor Friedrich III, Chancellor Kaspar Schlick, Duke Sigismund and Pope Calixtus III, and the formulaic and other letters he wrote for colleagues in the imperial chancery. His love letter written for Duke Siegmund has been included, however, since it is a special case and caused a stir when mentioned by Gregor Heimburg during a solemn meeting of the Congress of Mantua in 1459. Of letters written to Piccolomini, only those of a personal character have been included, not official letters of appointment etc. In each volume, a list of letters included in Wolkan's edition but excluded from the present is given in an appendix.

A word of caution: As is the case with the I Tatti series, the present bilingual edition is not intended as a study of Piccolomini's letters and letter collections or of the themes and issues treated in them. The introductions and notes only aim at making the text more directly understandable to readers.

Michael von Cotta-Schönberg

1 May 2022

¹ Van Heck: *Nihilominus inter omnes constat editionem venerabilis – ut ita dicam – aetatis compluribus locis corrigendam, supplendam esse* (HE, p. 5).

² Vividly described by van Heck: *Eo tempore, quo Wolkan editioni*

suae incumberet, multa deerant, quae nobis praesto sunt; tunc editor uasis collectis, domo relicta locum petiit, in quo manuscriptus latebat; officio laborioso tandem ad finem perfecto tunc demum domum reuersus sola fide memo-

riae et commentariorum suorum niti poterat (HE, p. 5).

³ With the option of acquiring an on-demand print copy.

I. GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Letters as a humanist literary genre

Letters were one of the genres of humanist literature, which also comprised textbooks, commentaries, treatises, orations, dialogues, translations, history, and poetry.¹ It was an important genre. It often treated the mundane affair of daily life but also served the formulation of philosophical or scholarly ideas and reported – and commented – on important events at the time. And, generally, letters formed the basis of a continental network of information, uniting the European countries in a common exchange of news and ideas.

Humanists' letters were high in demand, and they would often be asked for copies by their friends, as testified by Poggio Bracciolini in a letter to his friend Matteo del Carretto, Bishop of Albenga and an influential member of the Council of Basel: *Edissem ... operam, ut quod petis, copia tibi fieret epistolarum mearum.*² And Erasmus of Rotterdam, in a letter to Beatus Rhenanus of 27 May 1521 wrote that he was forced by his friends to – unwillingly – publish his letters: *Scis enim quam non dextris avibus exierint Epistolae, quae tu primum aedendas curasti ... cujus aeditionem partim extorsit amicorum flagitatio, partim ipsa necessitas, cum viderem accinctos qui quod habebant epistolarum mearum vel invito me essent publicaturi. Atque id facturos esse iam palam litteris a me suis minitabantur.*³

It is not surprising, therefore, that the humanists attached great importance to letter writing. Following classical models,⁴ they even compiled collections of their letters and, like their other works, distributed them to friends and important persons. And if they did not compile their own letter collections, others would do it for them. Thus, we have letter collections from a number of eminent humanists like Francesco Barbaro, Antonio Beccadelli, Giovanni Boccaccio, Poggio Bracciolini, Leonardo Bruni, Pier Candido Decembrio, Francesco Filelfo, Francesco Petrarca, Coluccio Salutati, Ambrogio Traversari, Lorenzo Valla, Guarino Veronese ... and Piccolomini, of course.

Leonardo Bruni, Piccolomini's much-admired model humanist, himself compiled his personal correspondence into an epistolary (8 books), and after his death in 1444, Giannozzo Manetti compiled a ninth volume of his last letters.

In 1438, Poggio Bracciolini published his first collection of letters (to Niccolò Niccoli). He introduced it in a letter to his friend Francesco Marescalco with these words:

Scripsi olim diversis in locis ac temporibus plures epistolas ad Nicolaum Nicolum, Florentinum virum doctissimum et mihi ab ipsa mea adolescentia summa necessitudine ac benivolentia coniunctum. Eae scriptae sunt a me variis de rebus domesticis ac privatis nostris, prout occasio temporum ac negotiorum conditio ferebat ... cum intelligerem nonnullos, sive commotos benivolentia, sive leviora quedam sectandi studio adductos, epistolas meas qualescumque sint, tum quaerere diligenter, tum libenter ac studiose legere, rogatus a multis, ut eas conquirerem ac in volumen conjicerem ad communem rudium utilitatem, satisfeci, et quidem ex parte,

¹ Kristeller, p. 214.

² Bracciolini: *Lettere* (Harth), 2: 351.

³ Erasmus: *Opus*, 4: 1206, p. 498.

⁴ E.g., Cicero and Seneca.

*amicorum voluntati, non quidem ut existimem aliquo in pretio illas apud doctos futuros, sed ne negem petentibus quod parvo labore exsolvi queat.*¹

And when, in 1438, he published the second collection of his letters, he wrote in the introductory letter to Cardinal Scarampo:

*Scripti dudum, posteaquam redii ad curiam ex Britannis, nonnullas epistolas et alia quedam, prout tempora ferebant, que cohortatione amicorum, qui propter suam in me affectionem aliquid in eis esse vel leporis, vel urbanitatis putant, coegi in parvum volumen, existimans etsi non doctis at saltem rudioribus aliqua in re me satis esse facturum. Sunt enim variis de rebus quae paulo accuratius, reliqua vero ut plurimum ex tempore parva admodum diligentia, id quod in eis conspicitur, a me conscripta.*²

Piccolomini possibly knew of Bruni's and Bracciolini's letter collections from his time in Basel, where he had access to the library of Archbishop Pizzolpasso of Milan.³

A major difficulty for humanists desiring to publish collections of their letters was that they often did not possess copies of their outgoing letters. In a letter to Pietro Tommasi of 1443, Poggio Bracciolini wrote:

*Epistola vero, quam petis, nescio an apud me sit, nam saepissime accidit ut litterarum, quas ipse scribo, nullum exemplum servetur, tum negligentia, tum saepius festinatione.*⁴

In another letter to Marescalco, Poggio commented on the difficulty of recovering letters previously sent to his correspondents, *in casu* Niccolò Niccoli:

*Postulas a me volumen epistolarum, quae scripseram ad Nicolaum. Ego jamdudum id fecissem, nisi expectassem quasdam alias ad eum epistolas, quae desunt volumini, paulo quam ceterae uberiores. Binis jam litteris oravi Nicolaum, ut illas ad me mitteret. At ille omnium negligentissimus, qui sua tarditate cochleam superaret, neque misit epistolas neque verbum rescripsit ullum, me suspensum detinens, quo non audeo volumen edere priusquam illae adjiciantur.*⁵

It comes, then, as no surprise that under such conditions, the humanist letter collections only contain a – probably – small part of the total letter production of their authors.

Like their other literary works, these collections of letters would be polished and re-polished over time. Erasmus of Rotterdam even asked his friend, Beatus Rhenanus, preparing an edition of his

¹ Letter of Poggio Bracciolini to Francesco Marescalco of June 1436 (Bracciolini: *Lettere* (Harth), 2: 3-4).

² Letter of Poggio Bracciolini to Ludovico Scarampo of 13

February 1438 (Bracciolini: *Lettere* (Harth) 2: p. 4).

³ Iaria.

⁴ Letter of Poggio Bracciolini to Pietro Tommaso of 12 September 1443 (Bracciolini: *Lettere* (Harth,) 2: 424).

⁵ Letter of Poggio Bracciolini to Francesco Marescalco of 30 November 1436 (Bracciolini: *Lettere* (Harth) 2: 223). Also *ibid.*, p. 357.

letters, to exclude or revise such letters which he found embarrassing or offensive: *Fasciculo ad te misso delectum atque etiam emendandi jus tibi credidi, si quid inesset quod vel offecturum famae meae videretur, vel exacerbaturum vehementer cuiusquam animum.*¹

2. Letters of Enea Silvio Piccolomini

Enea Silvio Piccolomini was a prolific author who cultivated all the genres of humanist literature.² He was also a tireless writer of letters. His correspondence is one of the most important from the Renaissance, throwing light not only on important political and ecclesiastical processes of this time, but also on his personality and extraordinary career, leading to the papal throne.

Erasmus of Rotterdam, speaking about the letter as a *mirror of the character, feelings and experience of the author* and as giving a picture of the general and personale circumstances in which he lives, points to the letters of Cicero as a model, and among the moderns, he names only Piccolomini.³

Many of his letters have undoubtedly been lost,⁴ maybe the greater part, but about 800⁵ of his personal letters have survived, and more may resurface in archives and libraries where they are still lying dormant.⁶

Some of his literary works he published in the form of a letter,⁷ though they were not letters as such. They fall outside the scope of the present edition.

His correspondence may be divided into two main groups: the personal letters written and received in his own name and the public letters written on behalf of the emperor, Friedrich III and his chancellor, Kaspar Schlick, during his years as a secretary at the imperial chancery (1443-1446). Though he formulated these public letters, it was his masters who decided their content and substance, as he clearly expressed it in a letter to Piero da Noceto of 16 January 1444:

¹ Erasmus: *Opus*, 4: 1206, pp. 498-499.

² See COR, 1: sect. 1.2.

³ P.S. Allen quoting Erasmus' letter to Beatus Rhenanus of 27 May 1521 (Erasmus: *Opus*, 4: 1206, pp. 500-501): *Verum autem illud epistolarum genus quod mores, quod fortunam, quod affectus, quod publicum simul et privatum temporis status velut in tabula repraesentat, cuius generis fere sunt Epistolae Ciceronis ac Plinii, et inter recentiores Aeneae Pii ...*

⁴ Piccolomini's correspondence is replete with references to letters

that are not extant. In a letter to the city government of Siena of 17 November / 5 December 1433, he directly referred to many letters received from his friends in Basel, of which none has survived: *But we know all that has happened at the council in the meantime from letters of friends* (letter 14: 1). And similarly in another letter to the city government of 1 July 1434: *I do not know what your Lordships requested but presume that you asked me for news from the council. Such a request I could have satisfied amply and can do as long as the council continues,*

wherever I am, even when not present at the council, since I receive daily letters from my friends informing me about everything (letter 15: 1).

⁵ This number will be revised in the final edition of the present volume.

⁶ For recent discoveries, see Meuthen, Märtil, and Saviano.

⁷ E.g., Piccolomini's letter treatises like *De Liberatorum Educatione* and even the novel *De duobus amantibus*.

In the meantime, I shall ingratiate myself with the king, I shall obey him, I shall follow him. What he shall want, I shall want, too. I shall oppose him in no way or interfere in matters, for it is dangerous to get mixed up in the affairs of another state. Indeed, I am a foreigner, and it shall profit me to take on the office of a Gnatho: When they say yes, I say yes, too, and when they say no, I say no, too, though such behaviour is alien to me. If my masters are wise, they will be praised. If they are foolish, they will be blamed. I shall neither envy them their glory nor lament their shame. I shall write exactly as ordered to, without additions or omissions. I shall not want to appear wise or foolish, myself, but remain silent and obey willingly. If I act otherwise, it will be to my loss (letter 119: 7).

That Piccolomini's masters did not require him to contribute to the content of their letters but only to their style is also shown by a note from the chancellor to Piccolomini in a minute that he was to write up as a letter from Friedrich III to the Polish King Wladyslaw. The chancellor wrote: *Domine Enea, aptetis hoc ornatius effectu non mutato* (WO, 1, 2: p. 50).

The personal letters fall into 4 groups:

- 1) Letters from 1430 to 1442, i.e., his youth and period at the Council of Basel.¹
- 2) Letters from 1442 to 1446, i.e., during his employment in the imperial chancery until he entered holy orders and was ordained bishop;
- 3) Letters from 1447 to 1455, i.e., his time as imperial councillor and top diplomat, and as bishop first of Trieste and later of Siena. This period may be subdivided into
 - 3a) Letters from 1447 to 1453, before the Fall of Constantinople, and
 - 3b) Letters from 1453 to 1455, covering 2-3 years with hectic crusade activity and three imperial diets
- 4) Letters from 1456 to 1458, the years of his cardinalate, before he was elected pope.

Few, if any, of the private letters he wrote as pope seem to have survived or resurfaced.

Apart from the sharing of personal news and views with family, intimate friends, and colleagues, Piccolomini's correspondence was an instrument for developing and maintaining an international network of correspondents for the purpose of exchanging news, favours, ideas, and generally for exerting influence, either on his own behalf or on behalf of his masters.

An analysis of Piccolomini's style in his letters would, of course, be highly interesting but falls outside the scope of the present edition. The reader is referred to the editor's comments on Piccolomini's style in the *Collected Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini*, vol. 1, sect. 7.4, and to van Heck's *Amator vetusti ritus et observator diligens: stile e modelli stilistici di Pio II.*²

¹ With prolonged absences in the service of the Milanese bishop,

Bartolomeo Visconti, and Cardinal Niccolò Albergati.

² See General bibliography.

3. Collections¹

Piccolomini knew that his admired humanist models of literary activity published their own letter collections.² Very likely he, when in Basel, had access to copies of letter collections sent by Bracciolini to his elder friend, Archbishop Francesco Pizzolpasso,³ who had taken the young Piccolomini under his wings and given him access to his library.⁴

As a young man and official at the Council of Basel, Piccolomini did not dispose of secretaries and scribes who could maintain his letter files, and his letters from that period are therefore scattered in various archives and libraries. Only a few of them were the later formal collection of his *Epistolae saeculares*.

As a secretary in the imperial chancery, he had the luck that two of his colleagues were willing to maintain files with his letters, which would become the basis for the collection of the *Epistolae saeculares*, covering, more or less, the period from 1442 to 1446.

When he became a bishop and later a cardinal, he was able to have a staff comprising secretaries and scribes who would maintain files of his letters. Such files became the basis for the collections of his *epistolae in episcopatu* (from 1447 to 1456) and his *epistolae in cardinalatu* (1456 to 1458). There is also a collection of his *epistolae in pontificatu* (during his pontificate from 1458 to 1464), but – as already mentioned – these fall outside the scope of the present edition.

Many of his letters were included in the collections, and of his incoming correspondence only a small part was included. His criteria for including individual letters in his three letter collections (*saeculares*, *in episcopatu*, *in cardinalatu*) are not known, just as it is not known how many letters failed to be included simply because they went missing.⁵

What is known, however, is that he would habitually revise the letter collections, just as he did with the collections of his orations and other of his works.⁶ The revisions can be traced through the critical apparatus accompanying the present edition of the Latin text. It will be seen that the editorial changes made by Piccolomini himself or under his supervision were mostly changes of compilation (order and inclusion/exclusion of letters) and style, though some are clearly motivated by changing political, ecclesiastical, or personal circumstances.

¹ On the formation of the corpus of Piccolomini's letters, see the introductions to Wolkan's and van Heck's editions of the letters, and Genzsch. See also the introductions to the individual volumes of the present edition.

² For the classical models, see letter 98: 2.

³ See letter from Bracciolini to Pizzolpasso in Basel of 20 November 1437: *Cupis habere dialogum a me olim editum in avaritiam. ... Epistolas insuper nonnullas adjiciam, quas arbitror fore tibi non injucundas* (Bracciolini: *Lettere* (Harth) 2: 275).

⁴ Iaria.

⁵ On lost texts of Piccolomini, see COR, 1: sect. 2.3.

⁶ On Piccolomini's revisions of his literary works, see COR, 1: sect. 3.3.

4. Manuscripts

The following is a non-exhaustive list of manuscripts containing collections of letters of Piccolomini from before the pontificate. For information on the manuscripts collated for the present edition, see the list of manuscripts in the individual volumes.

- **Augsburg / Universitätsbibliothek**
II, Lat. 1 2 103
- **Basel / Universitätsbibliothek**
E, III, 15, ff. 46r-161v
HV 12
O II, 35
O III 23, ff. 122v-127r
- **Berlin / Staatsbibliothek**
Lat. quart. 212
Lat. quart. 239¹
- **Bologna / Biblioteca Universitaria**
1200
- **Bonn / Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek**
S 1610
- **Bruxelles / Bibliothèque Royale Albert I**
11949-11955
- **Capistrano**
XIX
- **Citta del Vaticano / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticano**
Chigi I.VI.208
Chigi I.VI.210
Chigi I.VII.251
Chigi. I.VIII.287
Ottob. lat. 341
Ott. lat. 347
Urb. lat. 401
Urb. lat. 402²
Urb. lat. 403
Vat. lat. 1786³
Vat. lat. 1787
Vat. lat. 6941

¹ WO, 1,1: p. xxiv.

² WO, 1,1: p. xxiv.

³ WO, 1,1: p. xxiv.

Vat. lat. 12504

- **Eichstätt / Universitätsbibliothek**
St 613
- **Firenze / Biblioteca Horne**
Ms. 2913
- **Firenze / Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana**
Plut. 54.19
- **Firenze / Biblioteca Moreniana**
Inc. 32
Inc. 33
- **Firenze / Biblioteca Riccardiana**
407
- **Firenze / Museo Horne**
N 5/7
- **Graz / Universitätsbibliothek**
Ms. 251
- **Hohenfurt / Stiftsbibliothek**
47¹
- **Leipzig / Universitätsbibliothek**
1326²
- **London / British Library**
Addit. 21517
- **Milano / Biblioteca Ambrosiana**
D 270 Inf.
Y 42 sup.³
- **Milano / Biblioteca Trivulziana**
873
- **München / Bayerische Staatsbibliothek**
clm 70
clm 5311, ff. 1r-244v
clm 14134
clm 12725

¹ WO, 1,1: p. xxiv.

² WO, 1,1: p. xxiv.

³ WO, 1,1: p. xxiv.

clm 18802¹

- **Paris / Bibliothèque Nationale**
Latin 8578^{2 3 4}
- **Pienza / Biblioteca di Palazzo Piccolomini**
BI-CAS 1332
- **Praha / Národní knihovna České republiky**
XIII.F.112 (Lobkowitz 462)
I.G.34 (310)
- **Roma / Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emanuele**
Vitt. Em. 492
- **Schwaz / Franziskanerkloster**
S.IV/7.335
- **Siena / Archivio Statale**
- **Siena / Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati**
D.VI.5 (prev. C.V. 30)
- **Tortosa / Arxiu Històric Diocesà**
s.n., ff. 1r-52v
- **Trento / Archivio Diocesano Tridentino. Biblioteca Capitolare**
86, ff. 45r-150r
- **Wernigerode / Stolbergsche Bibliothek**
Z a 89⁵
- **Wien / Österreichische Nationalbibliothek**
3365
3366
3389, ff. 80-193v
4760
5104
- **Wolfenbüttel / Herzog August Bibliothek**
Cod. Guelph. 90 (Weiss)

¹ WO, 1,1: p. xxiv.

² *Epistolarum saecularium
Aeneae Silvii Piccolominei, qui
tandem Romano pontificio*

*prefectus Pius II appellatus est
incipit liber.*

³

<https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bt>

v1b84527756/f1.item.r=8578%20
8578

⁴ WO, 1,1: p. xxiv.

⁵ WO, 1,1: p. xxiv.

5. Editions¹

5.1. Early editions²

- *Epistolae familiares*. Edit. Nicolaus de Wyle. Strassbourg: Adolf Rusch, 1470.³
- *Epistolae. De laude poeticae. De differentia inter scientiam et prudentiam et de poetis. De laude litterarum. Cur libri cumulentur*. Köln: Arnold Ther Hoernen, 1470-1471. [ISTC ip00723000].
- *Epistolae in cardinalatu editae*. Roma, Johann Schurener, 1475. Reprint Trieste 2007. [ISTC ip00710000].
- *Epistolae familiares et in cardinalatu editae*. Louvain: Johann Veldenar, ca. 1476. [ISTC ip00715000].
- *Epistolae in cardinalatu editae*. Paris: Louis Symonel et socii, 1476/77. [ISTC ip00710500].
- *Epistolae in cardinalatu editae*. Roma, Bartholomaeus Guldinbeck, 1477. [ISTC ip00711000].
- *Epistolae familiares*. Köln: Johann Koelhoff, 1478. [ISTC ip00715500].
- *Epistolae in cardinalatu editae*. Roma, Johannes Bulle, 1478/79. [ISTC ip00712000].
- *Epistolae familiares. De Duobus amantibus Euryalo et Lucretia. Descriptio urbis Viennensis*. Ed. Nicolaus de Wyle. Reutlingen: Michael Greyff, bef. 1479. [ISTC ip0071600].
- *Epistolae saeculares et pontificales*. Köln: Arnold Ther Hoernen, ca. 1480. [ISTC ip00726500]
- *Epistolae familiares. De duobus amantibus Euryalo et Lucretia. Descriptio urbis Viennensis*. Edit. Nicolaus de Wyle. Nürnberg: Antonius Koberger, 1481. [With later editions of 1486 and 1496]. [ISTC ip00717000, ip00719000; ip00720000].
- *Epistolae familiares*. Louvain: Joannes de Vestfalia, 1483. [ISTC ip00718000].
- *Epistolae in cardinalatu editae*. Roma, Stephan Planck, 1488-1490. [ISTC ip00713000].

¹ In chronological order. Comprises only editions of letter collections, not of individual letters.

² For a survey of the early editions of Piccolomini's letters, see Häbler.

³ Not found in ISTC. In the Royal Library, Copenhagen (Inc. Haun. 3262, 2).

- *Epistolae in cardinalatu editae*. Roma, Eucharius Silber, 1489-1493. [ISTC ip00714000].
- *Epistolae familiares*. Edit. Ambrosius Archintus & Joannes Vinzalius. Milano: Ulrich Scinzenzeler, 1496. [ISTC ip00721000].
- Pius II: *Epistolae familiares*. Edit. Ambrosius Archintus & Joannes Vinzalius. Lyon: Jean de Vinglé, 1497. Repr. 1505. [ISTC ip00722000].
- Pius II: *Epistolae et varii tractatus*. Lyon: Etienne Gueynard, 1518.¹
- Pius II: *Epistolarum liber*. In: Pii II Opera quae extant omnia, pp. 500-962. Basel: Heinrich Petri, 1551. Re-ed. 1571. Anastatic reprod. Frankfurt: Minerva, 1967. [Based on Koberger's ed.]²

5.2. Modern editions³

G. Voigt: *Die Briefe des Aeneas Sylvius vor seiner Erhebung auf den päpstlichen Stuhl, chronologisch geordnet und durch Einfügung von 46 bisher ungedruckten vermehrt, als Vorarbeit zu einer künftigen Ausgabe dieser Briefe*. In: Archiv für Kunde österreichischer Geschichtsquellen, 16 (1856) 321-424.

A. Weiss: *Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini als Papst Pius II. Sein Leben und Einfluss auf die literarische Cultur Deutschlands. Rede gehalten bei der feierlichen Inauguration als Rector Magnificus der K. K. Karl-Franzens-Universität in Graz am 4. November 1896. Mit 149 bisher ungedruckten Briefen aus dem Autogr.-Codex Nr. 3389 der K.K. Wiener Hof-Bibliothek .. sowie einem Anhang*, Graz 1897.

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

- 1, 1: Briefe aus der Laienzeit, 1431 - 1445: Privatbriefe
- 1, 2: Briefe aus der Laienzeit, 1341.1445: Amtliche Briefe.
- 2: Briefe als Priester und als Bischof von Triest 1447-1450.
- 3, 1: Briefe von seiner Erhebung zum Bischof von Siena bis zum Ausgang der Regensburger Reichstages, 23. September 1450 - 1. Juni 1454.⁴

Hartmann, A.: *Basilea Latina. Lateinische Texte zur Zeit- und Kulturgeschichte der Stadt Basel im 15. und 16. Jahrhundert*. Basel, 1931, pp. 78-84.⁵

¹ Not verified in ISTC.

² Incl. the letters from the papacy.

³ In chronological order.

⁴ To the end of the Diet in Regensburg 1454.

⁵ Letter to Juan de Segovia on coronation of Felix V = Wolkan, I, 1, pp. 105 ff.

Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Friedrich III. Dritte Abt., Erster Theil. Hrsg. Wakter Kaemmerer. Stuttgart, 1939. (Deutsche Reichstagsakten; 17, 1).¹

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

S. Mariotti: *La corrispondenza poetica fra Giano Pannonio ed Enea Silvio Piccolomini.* In: *Umanesimo e rinascimento. Studi offerti a Paul Oskar Kristeller.* Firenze, 1980, pp. 45-56. (Biblioteca di Lettere italiane. Studi e testi, 24).

Meuthen, Erich: *Ein frühes Quellenzeugnis (zu Oktober 1454?) für den ältesten Bibeldruck. Enea Silvio Piccolomini am 12. März 1455 aus Wiener Neustadt an Kardinal Juan de Carvajal.* In: *Gutenberg-Jahrbuch* (1982) 108-118.

Davies, D.: *Juan de Carvajal and Early Printing. The 42-line Bible and the Sweynheym and Pannartz Aquinas.* In: *The Library*, Ser. VI, 18 (1996) 193-215.

Forner, F.: *Enea Silvio Piccolomini e la congiura contro Ulrich von Cilli.* In: *Margarita amicorum. Studi di cultura europea per Agostino Sottili.* Cur. F. Forner e.a. Milano 2005, pp. 351-376.² (Bibliotheca erudita, 26).

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

Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III. Fünfte Abteilung, zweiter Teil: Reichsversammlung zu Frankfurt 1454. Hrsg. J. Helmrath & G. Annas. München, 2013, pp. 63-108, 128-152, 342-344, 389-417, 773-813. ((Deutsche Reichstagsakten, ÄR; 19,2).

Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III. Fünfte Abteilung, dritter Teil: Reichsversammlung zu Wiener Neustadt 1455. Hrsg. J. Helmrath & G. Annas., München, 2013, pp. 61-66, 79-130, 181-183, 327-371, 756-764, 773-810. (Deutsche Reichstagsakten, ÄR; 19,3).

Märzl, Claudia: *Neue Texte aus dem Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini (vor 1450).* In: *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters*, 73 (2017) 167-191.³

Saviano, R.: *Il ruolo di Enea Silvio Piccolomini nei rapporti diplomatici tra Siena e Callisto III. Lettere inedite dall'Archivio di Stato di Siena.* In: *Reti medievali – Rivista*, 22 (2021) 1-35.⁴

¹ Some letters from Piccolomini referring to the diets Nürnberg 1443-1444.

² Letter from Niccolò Lisci to Piccolomini of 20 November 1456.

³ Nine unknown letters from 1445-1448.

⁴ 27 unpublished letters to the government of Siena from the years 1455-1458.

6. Translations¹

6.1. German

Enea Silvio Piccolomini: *Briefe*. Hrsg. M. Mell. Jena, 1911. [Reprint, München, 1966]. (Das Zeitalter der Renaissance; I, 3).
[43 letters].

Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Papst Pius II: *Ausgewählte Texte aus seinen Schriften*. Hrsg. & übers. Von Berthe Widmer. Basel, 1960.
[ca. 10 letters].

6.2. English

Selected Letters of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini. Transl. A. Baca. Northridge, 1969.

Reject Aeneas, Accept Pius. Selected Letters of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II). Edit. Th. M. Izbicki. Washington, 2006.²

7. Principles of edition³

7.1. Text

7.1.1. Textual basis

The edition of the texts is based on manuscripts mainly in the Vatican Library, the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, and the Austrian National Library and mostly such as are available in digital format, either on the web or in digital versions provided by the library. Also the main text in the editions by Wolkan and van Heck has been collated.

7.1.2. Lead manuscript

There are two different approaches to the choice of lead manuscript.

¹ Comprises only the main languages and not translations of single letters.

² 75 letters from 1432 to 1453.

³ On principles of edition in recent editions of Piccolomini's writings, see *Pentalogus* (Schingnitz, pp. 38-42); *Historia Austriacalis* (Wagendorfer/Knödler), I, pp.

clxxviii-clxxxiii; *Dialogus* (Henderson), pp. lxiv-lxviii; *Commentarii* (Heck), I, pp. 5-13; (Totaro), pp. xxii-xxvii; (Meserve, vol. 1: pp. 379-381.

One is that the earliest version is to be considered as the fundamental text and that the later versions should be treated as variants in the critical apparatus, as Wolkan and van Heck did in their editions.

This approach may satisfy historians focusing on the original document. However, the humanists, including Piccolomini, considered letter writing as a proper - and important - literary genre, and they freely and continuously revised their letter collections until they reached their final, polished form. Though historians may disagree, it is difficult to deny an author the right to revise and polish his own literary works and to consider the final version the definitive one.

Opposite to the first approach, therefore, the second approach considers the final version of the text as the fundamental version and treats the earlier versions as variants in the critical apparatus. A comment of Meserve in her edition of Pius II's *Commentaries* expresses this view perfectly: *In general we have preferred the readings of B [the manuscript containing the latest version], as they represent what Pius intended to be the final version of the Commentarii.*¹

This is the principle followed in the present edition where the manuscript containing the latest version as edited by Piccolomini/Pius or under his supervision is treated as the lead manuscript and given as the main text, except for obvious errors (indicated in the critical apparatus).

7.1.3. Spelling, orthography, punctuation, and capitalisation

In accordance with the principles followed in the *I Tatti Renaissance Library*, *spelling, punctuation and capitalization have been modernized throughout.*^{2 3}

For proper names, the spelling closest to modern lexicographical usage is preferred.

Orthography

Among the manuscripts containing Piccolomini texts, there are only few autographs, showing his personal orthography. In his article on Pius' orthography, Martin Wagendorfer regrets that modern research has somewhat neglected the study of humanist orthography in general and Piccolomini's in particular: ... *wohin die von ihnen [i.e., the humanists] tatsächlich praktisierte Orthographie nur in Ausnahmefällen – meist in Zusammenhang mit Studien zur humanistischen Schrift – und meist nur en passant analysiert wurde.*⁴

¹ COM (Meserve, 1: p. 379).

² COM (Meserve, vol. 1: p. 379).

³ This practice appears to be quite common, see Wittschier, in his edition of some orations by Giannozzo Manetti, p. 151: *Viele*

der orthographischen Abweichungen sind nicht in den Variantenapparat aufgenommen worden, um diesen nicht unnötig anschwellen zu lassen. And McManamon, *Funeral*, p. xi: *In*

quoting Latin sources, I have decided to standardize orthography and punctuation according to modern criteria.

⁴ Wagendorfer, p. 431.

In any case, a collation of all the orthographical variants in the manuscripts used for the present edition is outside the scope of the edition. It would be prohibitively time-consuming¹ and burden the textual apparatus with so many variants of no interest in terms of semantics and textual transmission that it would become unusable.

A complicating factor is the orthographical inconsistency of many scribes who use alternative forms of spelling in the same text, sometimes even in the same sentence, e.g., *Nihil erit, victa Ungaria, Turcis invium, nichil insuperabile*, and *quo nichil maius, nihil melius* in the manuscript Biblioteca Marciana / XIV 219, f. 19r and 22r.

Moreover, scribes would often employ the form of spelling they were used to rather than the form employed in the manuscript they were copying.

The most common variations in the manuscript texts' of Piccolomini works from modern lexical use are, unsurprisingly:

- doubling of consonants (aufferre)
- dedoubling of consonants (e.g., diferre)
- addition of aspirate (e.g., habundare)
- deletion of aspirate (e.g., exibere)
- ci for ti (ocium)
- cq for dq (e.g., quicquid)
- ch for (michi; nichil)
- e for diphthongal ae or oe (e.g., animee; obedentia)
- ihe-/je- (e.g., iherarchia)
- ii for i (e.g., ii) [single vowels for double vowels in forms of first person demonstrative]
- iu for ju (e.g., ius)
- mpn/mn (e.g., dampnum)
- nq/mq (e.g., tanquam)
- o/u (e.g., jocundus)
- ti/ci (e.g., mendatium)
- u/v (e.g., uolo)
- ut/ud (e.g., aput)
- y/i (e.g., hystoria)(y as graphematic replacement of i/ii]

Numbers are given in the Arab form, with a full stop after cardinals.

Abbreviated words are written in full (e.g. “salutem plurimam dicit” instead of “s.p.d.”).

¹ As Wagendorfer recognises, p. 432.

7.1.4. Presentation, divisioning, headings, and pagination

The Latin text and the English translation are juxtaposed, the Latin text on the left pages, and the English translation on the right pages.

Quotations are given in cursive, including quotations that differ only slightly from the original. In the latter case, the original text is generally given in the notes.

The divisioning into numbered sections is the editor's own. The divisioning serves three purposes: to make the text easier to read, to make it possible to make references to the text both for editor and reader, and to serve as the basis for the indexing of the letters.

The section titles are the editor's own but have only been included in the English translation.

Pagination of the Latin text follows the lead manuscript. The number of a new page (folio r or v) is not indicated in the middle of a word, but after the whole word (e.g., not appro- {33v} batione, but approbatione {33v}). This may not be an "orthodox" solution, but it does improve the reading experience. If the pagination of the digital version is different from the pagination in the manuscript, both are given, the digital pagination in the notes.

7.2. Critical apparatus

7.2.1. Variants¹

The exacting standards of editing a single manuscript have not been followed, since the present edition is of a text contained in many manuscripts. Complete notation of all variations in the manuscripts would be practically impossible and destroy the value of the critical apparatus.

The main function of the collation of manuscripts should be to reveal the various layers of the text as edited and revised by Piccolomini himself.

From the outset, the editor aimed at a selective textual apparatus, indicating only important variants. But as the collation process was an ongoing one, it could not be known in advance if any given variant would be confirmed by a manuscript collated later as important in terms of textual history. Therefore, the critical apparatus actually ended up containing quite many non-important variants, found in one manuscript only.

¹ Concerning variants, the practice in modern editions appears to vary from great to lesser selectivity, the Tatti Renaissance Library repre-

senting a high degree of selectivity and German editions a lower degree, though even the recent RTA-edition of Piccolomini's Reichs-

tagsreden claims only to give important variants (e.g., "mit Berücksichtigung nur markanten Varianten", RTA, 19/2, p. 558).

However, to make the critical apparatus a meaningful tool of analysis,¹ the choice was made to systematically exclude from the apparatus,

- insignificant scribal errors without importance for the textual transmission
- orthographical variants from accepted usage (see above)
- inadvertent repetition of words and passages

As insignificant scribal errors are considered errors such as consist in the deletion, addition or substitution of 1-2 letters in a word which do not change the meaning of the text, but result in “non-existing” words or lead to grammatical incongruence.

In the case of emendations of the lead manuscript, the reading of the lead manuscript is placed in the apparatus.²

7.2.2. Corrections and marginalia

Corrections and marginalia in the collated texts have only been indicated in the apparatus when

- they add information to the text, and/or
- they are shared with at least one other manuscript and throw light on the transmission of the text

7.2.3. Abbreviations

The following abbreviations are used in the textual apparatus:

- *add.*: addition
- *dub.*: dubious text
- *em.*: emendation
- *corr. ex.*: correction from (e.g., “abundans *corr. ex* abundant”). NB: no mention is made of the form of correction (marginal, interlinear)
- *in marg.*: in margine (in the margin)
- *omit.*: omission

¹ In the sense of providing useful information to scholarly readers who may otherwise be tempted to skip over an important data source. Note Tom Keeline’s humorous comment that *it is a*

truth universally acknowledged that no one except textual critics and pedants actually read an apparatus (Keeline, p. 342).

² In variants, the spelling of the manuscripts is used. If different

manuscripts use different spellings, the spelling closest to the lexicographical standard is preferred. Capital letters are only used with proper names.

- *aut.*: or
- *illeg.*: illegible
- *seq.*: sequitur = follows

8. Principles of translation

Generally, the translation is inspired by one of Pius' own literary models, Leonardo Bruni (1369-1447) who, in a letter to a friend, commented on his own translation of Plato from Greek to Latin in these terms: *Of course I much prefer to render a Greek word directly, if it is not clumsy or absurd, but this is not always possible. In such cases, I do not timidly believe that it is an insult to majesty to avoid something which seems nonsensical. In those cases, I use a somewhat different term in Latin, as long as the meaning is kept. It is Plato himself who bids me to do so: he had an exquisite language when speaking to the Greeks, and he does not wish to appear clumsy to the Latins.*¹

In the present translation, these main principles have been followed:

- To give a "close" translation which as far as possible expresses in modern English what Piccolomini wanted to say in classicising Renaissance Latin
- It should not be a text which breaks down the distance between the 21st century and the 15th. Thus the translation may reflect the historical and cultural distance, which should not be eliminated by using language where the author's intended meaning is being diluted or changed just to fit modern conceptions.
- The translation should respect Piccolomini's "ornate" or "classicising" style when he uses it. Thus, the use of colloquialisms and slang is generally avoided, and sometimes terms have been used which have become infrequent today or have acquired a somewhat different meaning (e.g., temple for church).

On the other hand,

- The translation must be easy to read, wherefore heavy Latin structure with many participial and absolute constructions and relative clauses are replaced with direct parallel main clauses, without loss of the temporal sense.
- The translation should not be so close that it directly transposes terms and passages which give no meaning or a different meaning in modern English. Thus, e.g., superlatives, so abundantly used in Renaissance oratory, are toned down in those cases when they would

¹ Bruni: *Lettres* (Bernard-Pradelle), 1: nr. 10, p. 138.

appear artificial, stilted, and *recherchés* in direct translation. Another example is the double negation which has often been dissolved in the translation (e.g., *frequent* instead of *not infrequent*).

Balancing all these considerations, is not always easy. The present translator has been inspired by Ianziti's translation of Decembrio's life of Filippo Maria Visconti¹ that is free-flowing and modern at the same time as faithful to the original sense of the text.²

Sometimes, an expression of a passage is impossible to translate faithfully into a modern language, and compromises must be made. The knowledgeable reader will be able to judge for herself the quality of the compromises made.

As for individual terms, some indications may be useful:

- *Amare*: Mostly translated a "love", though, like his contemporaries, Piccolomini used the term so frequently and indiscriminately that it appears to have a broader meaning (like being fond of / care for) than in modern languages.
- *Apostolicus*: Pius usually does not use the adjective "papalis", but prefers the term "apostolicus", which has been respected in the translation.
- *Caesar*: Mostly translated as emperor. Piccolomini appears to use it interchangeably with *imperator* – and even with *rex* – in texts dating before the imperial coronation of Friedrich III in 1452.³
- *Dominus*: Used by Piccolomini not only in addressing princes and nobles, but also commoners, with the sense of (non-noble) "Sir" or "Mister". In the latter case, it is not translated, since in English it would indicate a higher social position than in the Latin text.
- *Fore*: translated in the present tense according to the context.⁴
- *Legatus*: consistently translated as legate.

¹ Decembrio.

² The present translator, of course, does not aspire to equal Ianziti's elegance of language. / MCS.

³ Example from the *De rebus gestis Basileae* (1450): *...habito conventu Norimberge Germanorum principum per oratores, visus est rem tantam sine presentia cesaris terminari non posse. Decretus est igitur conventus apud Norimbergam, ubi et imperator et*

principes adessent. Johannes Carvajal interim nec principes nec conventus invisitatos dimittebat, dietarum inimicus. Conventus, qui Norimbergae fuit in festo Martini, decrevit, regem adesse in festo purificationis ... (WO 2: 44, p. 205). See also Stieber, p. 114, n. 1: *Since the German kings were normally styled emperor already before their imperial coronation, especially outside the Empire, this less precise usage will be followed*

in this study. Piccolomini's use of "imperator" for the as yet uncrowned emperor is shown in letter to Niccolò Arcimboldi of 20 January 1443: *et nunc praesertim, quando tanto principi servio, quantus est imperator* (letter 121: 1).

⁴ In the later versions of the letters, Piccolomini himself corrects "fore" (with the present tense) to "esse", e.g., letter 108: 8.

- *Magni animi*: according to context translated as proud, great-souled etc.
- *Mortales*: usually translated as “men”, and only in special instances as “mortals”
- *Orator*: consistently translated as “ambassador”.
- *Salutem plurimam dicit*: consistently translated as “sends many greetings”.
- *Tantus/quantus*: Often it has been found unnecessary and burdensome to directly translate tantus/quantus.
- *Vale / vale optime / vale felix*: consistently translated as “Farewell.”
- *Videri/haberi*: often used by Piccolomini with a meaning close to “to be” and translated as such.
- *Vir*: Not translated when used by Piccolomini in direct connection with a person’s name.
- In titulatures, the humanists employed expressions that are difficult to render in contemporary language. The present translator would prefer to translate such expressions closely, but in some cases the result is quite unfortunate, such as “Paternitas tua” (used in addressing high prelates) or “Magnificus” (used in addressing or referring to great officers of state). In such cases, other, current, expressions are preferred, e.g., “Your Eminence”, “Your Excellency”, “Your Reverence”.
- Another difficulty arises when an abstract term, e.g. “benevolentia” takes an agent verb, which is not done in modern language. Also in those cases, some modifications in translation have been necessary.
- Historical present is mostly rendered in the past tense.

When the translation of a word or an expression is very free, the Latin word with quotation marks is given in a note.

For the sake of textual clarity, words that do not correspond directly to words in the Latin text have sometimes been inserted into the translation (between square brackets). Also, in complex sentences, the original subject or object is often given instead of a pronoun.

Names of persons have been retained in the original language¹ (with certain exceptions, see the Index of Persons). It may seem strange to English-speaking readers to read “Emperor Friedrich” instead of

¹ The translation of names is a problem that has been vexing many scholars and historians. Usually, English-language au-

thors translate names into their English form, but to varying degrees, and the practice appears to develop over the years. See the

remarks of Sean Ward in the introduction to *Sophia of Hanover: Memoirs (1630-1680)*. Ed. and

“Emperor Frederick”, but most will now accept “King Louis” instead of “King Lewis” which was used formerly. The practice of using the original form of names has been followed in a spirit of cultural internationalism, for which the editor requests the reader’s tolerance.¹

The same courage, however, was not shown concerning names of places: well-known places like Rome have been given in English. This leads to somewhat inconsequential forms like “Duke Philippe of Burgundy”. In this area, complete consistency appears to be difficult.

Texts from the Bible are quoted from the Douai-Reims edition, sometimes in a form slightly modified to fit Piccolomini’s text. Texts from classical authors are quoted from the Loeb edition, also sometimes modified.

In the notes to translation are given references to quoted literature, excepting common dictionaries.

Rare is the translation in which no unrecognised errors have survived, and this applies, of course, to the present translation, too: the reader’s generous benevolence is solicited.

9. Select general bibliography²

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transl. by Sean Ward. Toronto, 2013. Ian Mortimer solved the problem this way: *Foreign names have been treated in two ways. Members of the French royal family, including royal cousins (e.g. John the Fearless; Philip, count of Vertus) have been given in English. French individuals who were not members of the royal family have been named in French (e.g. Jean Petit, Jehanne*

de Lesparre) with the exception of the one reference to Joan of Arc, whose name is well known in the English-speaking world. Other foreign names have normally been given in the usual spelling in the original language—e.g. Duarte of Portugal, João of Portugal, Juan of Castile, Pedro de Luna, Giovanni Dominici - where possible. However, some Eastern European names have been given in

English, e.g. Lord John of Chlum, Wenceslas of Dubá and Peter of Mladoňovice. (Mortimer).

¹ In the spelling of proper names, the form used in generally available biographical dictionaries are usually preferred (e.g., the *Dizionario Bibliografico degli Italiani* for Italian names).

² For editions and translations of Piccolomini’s letters, see sect. 5-6 above.

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¹ Nine unknown letters from 1445-1448.

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¹ Available in print from Scholars' Press and digitally in HAL Archives

² 27 unpublished letters to the government of Siena from the years 1455-1458.

II. LETTERS 1432-1441 (nos. 1-33)

1. Introduction

1.1. Context

Piccolomini's extant correspondence begins at the end of 1430 when, after an extended travel to educational centres in Northern Italy, he had returned to Siena, presumably to pursue his studies at the university there (letters 1-3). The general situation in the region was uncertain because of a warlike state between Florence and Siena, and Piccolomini therefore, in the beginning of 1432, took the opportunity to leave, as a secretary to Cardinal Capranica, who passed through Siena on his flight from the new Pope Eugenius IV to the Council in Basel. After a dramatic travel (letters 4-7), the cardinal with his household arrived in Basel, but his personal circumstances soon forced him reduce his household, and Piccolomini was discharged from his service. In Basel, he then became the secretary first to Bishop Nicodemo della Scala of Freising, and later to Bishop Visconti of Novara (1432-1435) (letters 8-15), in whose company he went to Milan for an extended stay (1433-1434) and afterwards to Florence (1434-1435) (letters 16-18). There the bishop became involved in a Milanese plot against the pope that failed, forcing Piccolomini to take service, again as a secretary, to Cardinal Albergati. With him, Piccolomini went – via Savoy and Basel – to the Congress of Arras, where the Duke of Burgundy was reconciled with the crown of France. From Arras, Piccolomini was sent by Albergati on a confidential mission to the King of Scotland, after which Piccolomini returned to Basel where he became an official of the council (1435-1439) (letters 19-33). When the papalists left the council on 1438, Piccolomini stayed on and later became a secretary to the council's antipope Felix V (1440-1442) (no letters). During that period, he composed, besides his voluminous correspondence, a number of orations¹ and works on the council of Basel.

1.2. Contents

The present volume comprises 33 letters from the period 1431 to 1441, or rather 1440 since no letters from 1441 are extant. There are no letters from Piccolomini's voyage in Scotland in 1435, presumably because he had no leisure to write letters and no means to send them. More surprising is the scarcity of letters from his conciliar period 1436 to 1439 and the absence of personal letters from his period as secretary to Felix V. Since he would presumably had kept up his intensive epistolary networking during this period, this absence of letters is probably due to the fact that Piccolomini had not yet begun to keep copies of his outgoing correspondence, and so, many of his letters were lost.²

1.3. Correspondents

The letters 1-33 comprise 14 correspondents:

- 5 personal friends: Barnaba (letter 1,5), Socino Benzi (3), Andreuccio Petrucci (5), Giorgio Andrenzio (6), Pietro da Noceto (24).

¹ COR, vol. 2.

² As also happened to his orations, see COR, sect. 2.3.

- 2 secular personalities with whom, at various times, he had become personally acquainted: the two humanists Giovanni Aurispa (2) and Francesco Filelfo (19, 29), and the Sienese podestà in Piombino, Tommaso della Gazzaia (4).
- 3 prelates whom he had met and befriended at the Council in Basel: Cardinal Cesarini (16), Archbishop de Coëtquis (27), and Archbishop Francesco Pizzolpasso (28, 30, 32).
- A colleague from the Council of Basel: Juan de Segovia (33).
- The city government of Siena (8-15, 17-18, 20-23, 31).
- Emperor Sigismund, addressee of a letter that was probably never sent (25), and
- An unknown (26).

1.4. Sources¹

In Piccolomini's 33 letters from the period 1431 to 1441, altogether 49 quotations (or semi-quotations) have been identified.² Of these, more than half (28) are from classical authors (most from Virgil (8), and 6 are from the Bible. The three quotations from contemporary authors (Bruni and Bracciolini) are without acknowledgement of authorship.³

Biblical: 7

Old Testament: 3

- 1. Kings: 1
- Psalms: 2

New Testament: 4

- John: 3
- Matthew: 1

¹ On the sources used by Piccolomini in his orations, see COR, 1: ch. 8.

² Almost all of them by van Heck.

³ On Piccolomini's sharing or plagiarism of sources, see COR, 1: sect. 8.3

Classical: 28

- Cicero: 3¹
- Homer: 2²
- Horatius: 3³
- Julius Caesar: 1⁴
- Juvenalis: 3
- Plinius: 2⁵
- Sallustius: 2⁶
- Terentius: 2⁷
- Ulpianus: 2
- Vergilius: 8⁸

Medieval: 2

- Otto von Freising: 2⁹

Contemporary: 12

- Poggio Bracciolini: 3¹⁰
- Leonardo Bruni: 9¹¹

1.5. Manuscripts¹²

Manuscripts collated directly for the present edition are marked with a siglum.

- **Augsburg / Universitätsbibliothek (AUB)**
II, Lat. 1 2 103
- **Basel / Universitätsbibliothek (BUB)**
H V 12
O II 35
- **Città del Vaticano / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana (BAV)**
Chis. J.VI.208a. 1447. Paper.¹³ (V2a)
Chis. J.VI.208b. *Idem, with a set of corrections from 1447¹⁴ and another from ca. 1457.* (V2b)¹⁵

¹ De republica (1); Epistolae ad familiares (1); Orator (1).

² Iliad.

³ Ars poetica.

⁴ De bello Gallico.

⁵ Historia naturalis.

⁶ Bellum Catilinae.

⁷ Eunuchus (1); Andria (1).

⁸ Aeneis.

⁹ Chronica.

¹⁰ Epistolae.

¹¹ Laudatio Florentinae urbis.

¹² For the relationship between the manuscripts, see vol. 2.

¹³ HE, p. 7; WO, 1, 1, p. xiv.

¹⁴ Cf. note in marg. f. 209: *Thomas qui nunc [1457] est papa Nicolaus V. [Factus cardinalis 1456].*

¹⁵ The distinction between V2a and V2b is made for the purpose of

Chis. J.VIII.287. *Ca. 1460. Paper.* (V3)
 Urb. Lat. 402. *Ca. 1460. Vellum.* (V4)
 Vat. lat. 12504. (V1)

- **London / British Library (BLI)**
 Addit. 21517
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 clm 70. *1460. Paper.* (M3)
 clm 12725. *1443-1446. Paper.*¹ (M1)
 clm 14134. *1448. Paper.* (M2)
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 XXIII, F 112 (prev. Lobkowitz, 462). *Ca. 1445. Paper.*² (L)
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 Concistorio, 80, 97
- **Siena / Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati (BCI)**
 CV 30 (WO, viii)
 D.VI.5 (prev. C.V. 30)
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 3365 (Autographon)
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 4760, ff. 51r-61r
 5104

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establishing the history of the text,
 see vol. 2, sect.

¹ HE, p. 6; WO, 1, 1, p. ix-xiv.

² HE, p. 6; WO, 1, 1, p. viii.

³

http://rm.univr.it/rivista/dwnl/RM_rivista2009.pdf

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¹ <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-03337393>

² <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-03339021>

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1.7. Sigla and abbreviations

¹ Available in print (on demand) from Scholars' Press and digitally in HAL Archives

L = Praha / Národní knihovna České republiky / XXIII, F 112 (prev. Lobkowitz, 462)
M1 = Bayerische Staatsbibliothek / clm 12725
M2 = Bayerische Staatsbibliothek / clm 14134
M3 = Bayerische Staatsbibliothek / clm 70
V1 = Città del Vaticano / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Vat. lat. 12504
V2a = Città del Vaticano / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Chis. J.VI.208. *Before corrections.*
V2b = Idem. *With corrections.*
V3 = Città del Vaticano / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Chis. J.VIII.287.
V4 = Città del Vaticano / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Urb. Lat. 402

Abbreviations

CB = *Concilium Basiliense.*

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

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

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

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

DBI = Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani

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

DVI = Piccolomini, Enea Silvio: *De Viris Illustribus.* Edit. and transl. Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 2021.

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

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

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

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

RTA = Deutsche Reichstagsakten.

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

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

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

* Not collated by MCS.

** Lead manuscript

2. Text and translation

1. Letter to Barnaba da Siena (End of 1431, Siena).¹

Manuscripts: Siena / Biblioteca Comunale degli Intronati (BCI) / D.VI.5, f. 11v. *

Editions: HE, 1, pp. 13-14; WO, 1, 1:1, pp. 1-2; (both editions based on the BCI ms.).

Aeneas salutem dicit Barnabae suo, familiarissimo fratri.

[1] Quoniam familiari usura tecum multos annos usus sum, non te quidem mirari litteras verum inertiam scribendi arbitror. Nudio tertio², cum audissem vecordiam nostram atque minimam studendi voluntatem a magistro Antonio vehementer reprehendi, domum confestim reversus³ vocansque me ad me, “Quis,” cepi, “animus impraesentiarum accidit tibi modo⁴, quae voluntas, quod desiderium? Numquid studiis semper operam dare statuisti? Numquid Palladem tibi nubere decrevisti? Numquid Venerem contra te saevientem ejusdem Palladis clipeo saepius fugavisti? Quid est, quod nunc omnium sis oblitus? An te ipsa scientiae a studio arcet longitudo? Ha, corculum habes! Quid difficillimum est, quod non perficiat assiduus usus? Putasne quemquam Musarum sublimitatem sine summo labore sudoreque anxietate non minima acquirere?

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² nudius tertius WO

³ reversurus WO

⁴ morbo WO

1. Letter to Barnaba da Siena (End of 1431, Siena).

Context: Enea Silvio Piccolomini was born in 1405 and grew up in the village of Corsignano, belonging to an impoverished branch of the Piccolomini family. In 1423, at the age of 18, he began his studies at the University of Siena which he continued until 1431.¹ He mainly focused on classical poets and orators, but towards the end of the period, he studied civil law

.Subject: Piccolomini rebukes himself for being a lazy student.

Enea greets Barnaba², his close friend.

[1] Since we have been close for many years, you cannot be surprised at my slackness in writing letters! The day before yesterday, when I had heard Magister Antonio³ severely criticise our foolishness and insufficient will to study, and had come straight home, I asked myself, “What has now happened to your resolve? Your will? Your desire? Did you not decide to always apply yourself to your studies? Did you not decide to marry Pallas⁴? Did you not often protect yourself against the attacks of Venus with the shield of Pallas? Why have you now forgotten all? Is it the distance from learning that prevents you from studying? Oh, you faint of heart! What is so difficult that it cannot be achieved through perseverance? Do you think you can [reach] the summit of the Muses without much toil, sweat and great anxiety ...

¹ COM, 1: 2; VO, 1: 1, pp. 7-14. Mitchell, pp. 56-59.

² Barnaba da Siena (15th c.): teacher of rhetorics at University of Siena. Composed a biography

of Bernardino da Siena. Friend of Piccolomini.

³ Antonio Roselli (1381-1466): Italian jurist. Taught law at various universities. Teacher of

Piccolomini in Siena. See DVI, sect. 69.

⁴ Pallas Athene: Greek goddess of wisdom and learning.

2. Letter to Giovanni Aurispa (End of 1431, Siena).

Manuscripts: L, f. 21v *; M1, f. 39v; M2, f. 38v¹; M3, ff. 230r-230v²; V2, ff. 132-133³; V3, ff. 61v-62r⁴ **; V4, f. 55v.

Editions: HE, 2, p. 14 (based on L, M1, V1); WO, 1,1: 2, pp. 2-3 (based on M1, V1).

{60v} Johanni Aurispae Siculo Aeneas Silvius salutem plurimam⁵ dicit.⁶

[1] Nescio, quid causae sit, Johannes mi dulcissime, cum⁷ nequeam etiam⁸ parvo tempore immo brevissimo momento immemor esse tui⁹, es enim¹⁰ in memoria semper mea¹¹, et ipsa recordatio¹² gratissima est, qua te absente nihil habeo dulcius. Hoc dum saepius considero, unde procedat, multa cum¹³ enumerare possim, humanitatem tamen tuam potissime ratus sum dedisse causam. Nam cum e Patavo redirem Senas subsisteremque Ferrariae nonnullis diebus, tantum in te urbanitatis esse cognovi, tantum caritatis ac benevolentiae in omnes etiam infimos¹⁴, ut opiner¹⁵, te nullum fore benigniorem facilioremque, nam et¹⁶ me voluisti inter amicos tuos connumerare. Hac de re tanto amore tibi afficior, ut, si quos ad te profecturos comperiam, sine litteris meis vacuos non possim¹⁷ dimittere. In praesentia vero, cum reperissem Nicolaum¹⁸, illustris marchionis nuntium¹⁹, de te diligenter interrogavi, et cum {62r} jucunda omnia retulisset, longe gavisus sum laetorque vehementer, si quid est cordi tibi ac²⁰ jucunditati. Nihil est enim, quod magis affectem²¹ quam te sanum hilaremque esse et me tibi carum fore, ut esse conjectura²² capio atque²³ intelligo. Unum itaque²⁴ oratum volo, ut ostendas scilicet tuam erga me benevolentiam extinctam non esse, quam rem scribendo saepius efficies. Vale et magistro Hugoni et natis suis me commendatum facito.

Ex Plumbino.²⁵

¹ SC, 84.

² SC, 464-465.

³ DV, ff. 71v-72r.

⁴ DV, ff. 64v-65r.

⁵ *omit.* L, M1

⁶ *Titulus:* Aeneas Silvius poeta salutem plurimam dicit Johanni Aurispae Siculo M2

⁷ cum *corr. ex.* ex quo V2b; quo M1, M2; quod V2a, M3, HE, WO

⁸ *ex dub.* M2

⁹ esse tui : tui esse M3

¹⁰ es enim *corr. ex* esque V2; esque V2a, L, M1-M3, HE, WOb

¹¹ *omit.* V4

¹² tui *add.* V3, V4

¹³ multa cum : multaque L

¹⁴ infirmos L

¹⁵ opinor M3, V4

¹⁶ tu *add.* M3

¹⁷ possum M2

¹⁸ *omit.* M3

¹⁹ Nicolaum *add.* M3

²⁰ et M2

²¹ affectam M3

²² coniecturam V4

²³ *corr. ex* immo expresse V2b: immo expresse V2a, L, M1-M3, HE, WO

²⁴ unum itaque : unumque M2

²⁵ *ex Plumbino : corr. ex* ex Vienna V2b; *omit.* M1; etc. M2; *ex Mediolano* M3

2. Letter to Giovanni Aurispa (End of 1431, Siena).

Context: In 1429-30 (probably), Piccolomini made a study tour to Florence and Padua and other cities in Northern Italy.¹ On the way back, he passed Ferrara, where he met the eminent humanists Giovanni Aurispa and Ugo Benci.

Subject: Piccolomini thanks Giovanni Aurispa for his kindness and friendship.

Enea Silvio sends many greetings to Giovanni Aurispa² from Sicily.

[1] I do not know, my dear Giovanni, why I cannot forget you even for a little time and the briefest moment. You are always in my memory, and this recollection is most dear to me, for I have nothing sweeter in your absence. I often consider why this is so, and I can think³ of many things, but mostly I believe that the reason is your humanity. For when I was on my way back from Padua to Siena and stayed some days in Ferrara, I saw that you have so much urbanity, so much charity, and so much kindness towards all, even the lowliest, that nobody, in my opinion, is kinder and more courteous than you, who have wished to count me among your friends. Therefore, I feel such great love towards you that when I hear about people leaving to see you, I cannot let go them without a letter from me. When I heard that Niccolò,⁴ the illustrious margrave's⁵ messenger, was here, I closely inquired him about you, and when he told me that all was fine, I was truly glad, for I am delighted when you are well and happy. For nothing means more to me than that you are in good health and prospering and that I am dear to you, as I gather and understand I am. One thing I beg of you: show me that your affection for me has not died. You may do that by writing often. Farewell and remember me to magister Ugo⁶ and his sons⁷.

From Piombino.

¹ VO, 1: 1, p. 17-18. Mitchell, pp. 57-58.

² Giovanni Aurispa [Picionerio] (1376-1459): Italian humanist. DVI, sect. 50.

³ "enumerare".

⁴ Niccolò: Messenger of the Margrave of Ferrara.

⁵ Niccolò III d'Este (ca. 1383-1441): Marquess of Ferrara and Modena from 1393 to his death. See DVI, ch. 11; EUR (Brown), ch. 52, p. 235.

⁶ Ugo Benci (ca. 1360-1439): Sieneese physician and philosopher, university professor, phy-

sician of princes. Benci was married to Ladia, a sister of Mariano Sozzini. DVI, sect. 50; EUR (Brown), ch. 52, pp. 235-236.

⁷ Among them Socino Benci.

3. Letter to Socino Benci (End of 1431, Siena).

Manuscripts: L, f. 22r *; M1, f. 39v; M2, f. 38v¹; M3, f. 230v²; V2, f. 134³; V3, f. 62r-62v⁴ **; V4, f. 56r.
Editions: HE, 3, p. 15 (based on L, M1, V1); WO, 1,1: 3, pp. 3-4 (based on M1, V1).
Translations: ME, 1, p. 7.

{62r} Aeneas Silvius salutem plurimam dicit Sozino, medico praestanti et⁵ amico optimo.⁶

[1] Quattuor jam mensibus ad te litteras dedi, quas utrum⁷ habueris certum nihil habeo. Sententia tamen earum fuit, ut opusculum esse perfectum scires, quod me⁸ saepius rogaveras editurum. Quod ideo feci, non ut idoneum me fore existimarem condendis operibus auctorem, sed ut intelligeres⁹ amoris erga te mei tantam esse vim, ne quid tibi negare valeam. Absolvi ergo libellum hunc tuo nomini dedicatum versuum ultro¹⁰ duo millia, quem appellavi Nymphilexim¹¹. Eum vidit Nicolaus nostrarum litterarum lator, cui videndum ideo tribui, quo testis esset idoneus, qui de visu referre possit, ut nostrae leges imperitant. Libri autem memet ipsum¹² latorem spero, quoniam istuc brevi proficiscar. {62v} Habeo enim multa¹³ tibi recensere, quae non erant litteris inserenda. Vale et genitori tuo et Johanni Aurispae¹⁴ me commendato verbisque meis germanum tuum¹⁵ ¹⁶ Andream¹⁷ jubeto salvere. Iterum vale.

Ex Basilea kalendis Martii 1431.¹⁸

¹ SC, 84-85.

² SC, 465.

³ DV, f. 72v.

⁴ DV, ff. 65r-65v.

⁵ *omit.* V4

⁶ *Titulus:* Magistro Sozino Senensi Eneas Silvius salutem dicit M1, M2

⁷ num L, M1-M3, V2, HE, WO

⁸ ; ~~de Baptista~~ *seq.* V2b; de Baptista *add.* V2a, L, M1-M3, HE, WO

⁹ intelligas M3

¹⁰ ultra L, M1, M2

¹¹ ~~de laudibus Baptistae tuae profuse loquentem~~ *seq.* V2b; de laudibus Baptistae tuae profuse loquentem *add.* V2a, L, M1-M3, HE, WO;

¹² *omit.* M3

¹³ ~~de Baptista tua~~ *seq.* V2b; de Baptista tua *add.* V2a, L, M1-M3, HE, WO

¹⁴ *omit.* L, M1, M2; *amitae tuae* M3

¹⁵ meum L

¹⁶ dominum *add.* L, M1, HE, WO

¹⁷ *omit.* M2

¹⁸ Ex ... 1431 : etc. M2; *omit.* M1, M3

3. Letter to Socino Benci (End of 1431¹, Siena).

Context: During his stay in Ferrara (see letter 2),² Piccolomini had befriended the Benci family, friends and relatives of his own mentor and friend in Siena, Marino Sozzini. Apparently, he had promised a son of the family, Socino, a letter for his girlfriend, Battista, to whom all references were deleted by Piccolomini in the late version of the correspondence, just as he – successfully – managed, later in his ecclesiastical career to obliterate most of his early love poetry, some of it lascivious.

Subject: Piccolomini informs Socino that he has finished the poem *Nymphilexis*.

[1] Enea Silvio sends many greetings to Socino,³ distinguished doctor and best of friends.

It is now four months since I sent you a letter, and I do not know if you received it. My intention was to inform you that the little work you often asked me to write⁴ is now finished. I did not write it because I consider myself to be an author capable of composing [literary] works, but to show you that the force of my love for you is so great that I can deny you nothing. I have thus finished the little book, dedicated to you, of more than two thousand verses. I have given it the title *Nymphilexis*.^{5 6} It has been seen by Niccolò,⁷ the bearer of this letter, to whom I showed it so he can witness that it is written, as our laws demand. I hope to bring the book to you in person since I shall be coming to your city⁸ shortly, having much to tell you⁹ which I cannot put into a letter. Farewell and remember me to your father¹⁰ and to Giovanni Aurispa¹¹, and greet your brother Andrea¹² from me. Again farewell.

¹ The place and date given in V2-V4 are erroneous since Piccolomini did not arrive in Basel before 15 April 1432.

² VO, 1, 1, p. 17; Mitchell, p. 57.

³ Socino Benzi (1406-1479): Physician. Son of Ugo Benzi. He attended Pius II on his deathbed in Ancona, 1464.

⁴ “about your Battista”: deleted in Late Version (V2-V4). Battista was Socino’s girlfriend.

⁵ Lost poetical work of Piccolomini.

⁶ Here, another reference to Battista has been deleted in the Late Version.

⁷ Messenger of the Marquess of Ferrara, see the previous letter.

⁸ “istuc”.

⁹ A third reference to Battista that was deleted in the Later Version.

¹⁰ Ugo Benci

¹¹ Aurispa added to the Late Version for clarification.

¹² Andrea Benci, a jurist. (Lockwood, p.27). Wolkan’s note (based on Sabadini) about Socino’s brothers appears to be erroneous (WO, 1, 1: 3, p. 4). Piccolomini would later place his nephew Francesco, future cardinal and pope, in Andrea’s household in Ferrara, see letter to Andrea Benci (WO, 3, 1: 227, pp. 416-419).

4. Letter to Tommaso della Gazzia (28 February 1432, Genoa)¹.

Manuscripts: Siena / Archivio Statale / Sala dell Mostra *; VI, ff. 17r-18v **.

Editions: HE, 4, pp. 15-17 (based on both mss.); WO, 1,1: 4, pp. 4-6 (based on the Siena ms.).

Translations: ME, 2, pp. 7-9; RE, 1, pp. 61-63.

{17r} Major mi honorande etc.

[1] Promiseram me tibi relaturum litteris, quoad possem, omnia, quae tam domino meo quam mihi contingerent itinerantibus nobis atque etiam, si qua viderem relatu digna audiremque. Sed meum consilium est nihil in praesentia ad te scribere, nisi quae oculis ipse vidissem tetigissemque manibus. Nam si me ad aliorum referam auditum, oportebit mendacio uti, quod mihi numquam placuit. Hac de re omnia, quaeque a me habes, verissima arbitraris.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

4. Letter to Tommaso della Gazzaiia (28 February 1432¹, Genoa).

Context: In February 1432 Domenico Capranica passed through Siena on his way to Basel to petition the council there to confirm his cardinalate, granted him by Pope Martin V and denied to him by the new pope, Eugenius IV. While in Siena, he engaged that talented young man, Piccolomini, as his secretary, who would then accompany him to Basel and serve him there.^{2 3}

Subject: Piccolomini describes Cardinal Capranica's travel from Piombino to Genoa and reports on naval preparations in Genoa.⁴

Your excellency etc.

[1] I had promised, as far as possible, to inform you⁵ in writing all that happened to my lord and me during our voyage and also if I saw or heard anything else worthy of report. But I have decided, for now, to only write such things as I have seen with my own eyes or, [so to say] touched with my own hands, for if I report what I have [only] heard from others, I risk saying something untrue, which I have never liked. Therefore, you may consider all that you get from me as absolutely true.

¹ The V1 gives the date as 18 February 1431, which is wrong.

² COM, 1: 2 (Meserve, vol. 1, p. 9): *He [Piccolomini] had been attending lectures on this subject [civil law] for several years when a serious war broke out between Siena and Florence, forcing him to interrupt his studies and leave the soil of his beloved native city.*

³ VO, 1: 1, p. 19-21; Mitchell, pp. 58-59.

⁴ In his *Commentarii*, Piccolomini wrote about the travel from Siena to Genoa: *Now it happened that Domenico Capranica was then in Siena, a man of noble character and intellect who had been made a cardinal by Martin V and then repudiated by his successor, Eugenius IV. At the time, a council had been called at Basel, a city of Switzerland on the Rhine. The council was already in session and Domenico, who was in disgrace at Rome, resolved to defend his claims at Basel. He appointed Aeneas his secretary and took him with him to Piombino, a town built on the ruins of the ancient*

Populonia, which some call Populino. There he decided to go to Genoa by way of the Ligurian Gulf, because the road by land was blocked. The ship in which he meant to sail hove into view when suddenly the lord of the place, Jacopo Appiani, who had to this point pretended to be friendly, forbade any boat to give him passage. On learning of this treachery, Domenico left town with a single companion and fled to the coast, where he procured a light skiff and rowed out to the ship as it sailed about on the open sea. When the tyrant heard of this, he let the rest of Domenico's party embark, thinking there was no point in chasing the feathers when he had lost the meat. The next day, after a very chilly night in the open air on the island of Elba, Aeneas, Piero da Noceto (another of Domenico's secretaries) and the rest of the cardinal's retinue joined Domenico aboard the ship. As they were making for Genoa, however, violent gales blew up and drove them off their course to within sight of the African coast.

The sailors were terrified, sure they would end up in a barbarian port. Marvelous and incredible as it sounds, it is nonetheless true that after leaving Italy, in a single day and night they were driven between Elba and Corsica to Africa and then, when the wind changed, drifted rather than sailed back again between Corsica and Sardinia, to put into Porto Venere. Here they procured a galley and had a successful voyage to Genoa (COM, 1: 3, 3 (Meserve, vol. 1, pp. 1-3)). Note that the letter version of 30 years before does not mention the treachery of Jacopo Appiani, and the drama of the sea voyage has grown much with the years! On the affair of Capranica's cardinalate and the travel to Milan, see DRGB (RE), pp. 330-331, and VO, 1: 1, pp. 20-21.

⁵ Tommaso della Gazzaiia (d. 1433): Siennese official, often used as envoy to other communes. Apparently, podestà of Piombino in 1431.

[2] Navem igitur ingressi ventorum importunitate Corsicam partemque Sardiniae circumivimus nocte non amplius una, et summo mane applicuimus ad Portum Veneris. Ibi galeam invenimus armatam cum magna civium comitiva et commissario ducali, quam princeps illustrissimus Philippus Maria pro reverendissimo domino meo armaverat jusseratque illam Plumbinum¹ petere pro eodem reverendissimo domino.

[3] Cum ergo patronus galeae, commissarius ceterique cives obviam navi venerunt, a patrono nostrae navis certiores facti, uti cardinalem illuc traducebat, summo gaudio atque ingenti affecti laetitia clamitarunt jusseruntque tubas canere ac omnia instrumentorum genera, quae pro honorando reverendissimo domino dominus Opizinus miserat. Tendebat quoque ad caelum usque clamor nauticus. Conscendimus tunc galeam, sed quia intractabile erat mare in ipso Veneris portu atque in Spetiae, tribus diebus moram fecimus. Denique quarto die placato mari horis ante diem tribus viam fecimus ita felicibus ventis, ut infra diei quartam horam Januam profecti essemus invenimusque duas alias galeas armatas pro tuenda illa, quae nos traduxerat.

[4] In portu vero ipso Januensium subito occurrit reverendissimo domino meo Januae gubernator locumque tenens Oldradus et dominus Opizinus atque ingens civium multitudo nobilium et ipsum sociaverunt usque ad sanctum Johannem cum magno et campanarum sonitu et instrumentorum dulcedine, ubi domum egregiam omni apparatu ornatam sibi providerant regio quidem luxu atque magnificentia. Hoc in loco a prioribus civitatis copiosissime praesentatus, ut et vini suavissimi et cerae et confectionum omniumque aromatum quantitatem vix homines quinquaginta vehere possent. Euxenia etiam non minora a domino Oldrado suscepit pariterque a domino Opizino, a nobilibus vero innumeris innumera dona sibi missa sunt. Haec sunt, quae huc usque possum² tibi de³ reverendissimo domino meo referre. Ceterum miranda parantur sibi Mediolani, ut accepimus a plerisque, qui omnia sciunt negotia illustrissimi principis, quae cum videro, ad te scribam. De me autem, si qua velis audire, scias me incolumem Januam petisse et⁴ quamvis maris insolentia turbatum hilarem tamen atque jucundum, quoniam domino reverendissimo meo cedere omnia aspicio secunda.

¹ iter *add.* WO

² possim V1

³ a WO

⁴ *omit.* HE

[2] When we had boarded the ship, contrary winds carried us around Corsica and part of Sardinia in less than one night, and late in the morning, we arrived at Porto Venere.¹ There we found an armed galley with a large party of citizens and a ducal commissioner, which the Most Illustrious Prince Filippo Maria² had prepared for my Most Reverend Lord³ with orders to sail him to Piombino.⁴

[3] When the captain⁵ of the galley, the commissioner, and other citizens came to meet the ship, our captain told them that he had brought the cardinal. Then, rejoicing and shouting happily, they ordered trumpets and all kinds of [musical] instruments to sound which Lord Opicino had sent to honour the Most Reverend Lord [Cardinal]. The clamour from the sailors reached to heaven. Then we boarded the galley, but since the sea was stormy at Porto Venere and La Spezia, we were delayed for three days. Finally, on the fourth day, the sea calmed, so we left three hours before dawn. The winds were so favourable that we reached Genoa before the fourth hour of the day and met two other armed galleys [sent] to protect the galley that had brought us.

[4] In the harbour of Genoa, my Most Reverend Lord was soon met by Oldrado⁶, governor and lieutenant of Genoa, Lord Opicino,⁷ and a large crowd of noble citizens, who accompanied him to San Giovanni⁸ with loudly pealing bells and lovely music. There they provided him with a splendid house, beautifully and completely furnished, with luxury and magnificence fit for a king. Here, the priors of the city presented him with such generous provisions of sweet wine, candles, confections, and all kinds of spices that fifty men would barely be enough to carry them. He received just as great guest gifts from Lord Oldrado and equally from Lord Opicino, and also countless nobles sent him countless gifts. This is what I can report to you about my Most Reverend Lord as of now. Moreover, an impressive [reception] is prepared for him in Milan, as we have heard from some people who know all the affairs of the Most Illustrious Prince. When I see it, I shall write to you again. As for me, if you should wish to know it, I reached Genoa safe and sound and – though tossed around by the insolent sea – happy and joyous, since I see how well all has turned out for my Most Reverend Lord.

¹ On this travel, Piccolomini also wrote in COM, 1: 3 (Meserve, vol. 1, p. 13) and in DRGB (RE, p. 331).

² Filippo Maria Visconti (1392-1447): Duke of Milan from 1412 to his death.

³ ³ Domenico Capranica (1400-1458): appointed cardinal *in petto* by Pope Martin V in 1426. His cardinalate was recognised by the Council of Basel in 1432 and by

Pope Eugenius IV in 1434. See letters

⁴ At that time, the Duke of Milan was coming into conflict with the new, Venetian, pope, Eugenius IV, and intended to create an anti-papal alliance with the Council of Basel, already in opposition to the pope. The duke, therefore, had every interest in protecting Capranica, whose cardinalate the pope did not recognise, and sending him safely to Basel to cause trouble for

the pope. Capranica and the pope were later reconciled.

⁵ “patronus”

⁶ Oldrado II Lampugnani (1380-1460): Governor of Genoa

⁷ Opicino Alciati (-1436): Italian condottiero. Appointed the duke’s military commissioner in Genoa in 1425. Killed during a Genoese uprising against the rulership of the Duke of Milan.

⁸ Possibly the Church of San Giovanni di Pré.

[5] Postremo, ut scias, quae hic geruntur, armata indubitanter paratur, triremes quotidie fabricantur. Sed numerus galearum, crede mihi, inferior est, quam diceretur, navium vero major, si vera sunt, quae isti ajunt, naves, quae in portu sunt, armari omnes. Sunt enim quindecim galeae, quidem 20. Sed noli existimare armatam adeo in promptu esse, ut dicebatur. Nam credo prius Martium currere, quam portum exeat. Habent tamen aliunde plures galeas et naves, et tu ipse nosti jam quinque ad orientalem partem missae unamque esse in portu Pisano. Ista ego et scio et vidi. Quae autem audivi, licet miranda et pro statu illustrissimi ducis utilia, silere propositum fuit, ne quid veritati contrarium dicam. Vale.

Ex Janua, die 28. Februarii.¹ Aeneas Silvius Piccolomineus Senensis.

Salutate ser Mino et tucti quei, che sono con voi da mia parte. Orlando Palavisini è accordato col duca et qui s'è facta grande festa de ciò.

¹ 1431 *add. altera manu* V1

[5] Finally, so that you may know what happens here, a fleet is undoubtedly in preparation, and galleys are produced every day. But – trust me – the number of galleys is smaller than what has been said, whereas the number of sailing ships¹ is larger if it is true what they say that all the ships in the harbour are being armed. There are 15 galleys, or even 20. But do not think that the fleet will be ready as soon as has been said, for I believe it will not leave the harbour before the end of March. But they have more galleys and sailing ships elsewhere, and, as you know, five have already been sent eastward, and there is one in the harbour of Pisa. This is what I know and have seen for myself. As for the things I have only heard, I have decided to remain silent so as not to say anything untrue, though they are remarkable and advantageous for the Most Illustrious Duke. Farewell.

From Genoa, 28 February.

Greet ser Mino and all those who are with you from me. Enea Silvio Piccolomini. Orlando Pallavicini² has come to an agreement with the duke, occasioning a great celebration here.

¹ Presumably merchant ships

² Orlando Pallavicini (1393-1457): Italian condottiero and politician.

5. Letter to Barnaba da Siena (24 March 1432, Milan)¹.

Manuscripts: Siena / Biblioteca Comunale / C V 30, f. 11. *

Editions: HE, 5, p. 17; WO, 1,1: 5, p. 6; (both editions based on S1).

Barnabeo amantissimo Aeneas Silvius salutem.

Cum litteras tuas accepi, dum Plumbini essem, maximi amoris nostri summaeque² benevolentiae recordatus sum, grateque et laetissime tui abs te multarum rerum fieri certiore, unde consequens esse existimarem, invicem tibi, si qua haberem memoratu digna, rescribere. Sed nihil habeo, quod scripto opus sit. Omnia enim, quae apud nos in [mentem³] incidunt, arbitror fuisse vobis jam diu notissima. Haec tamen vulgo disseminantur: Venetos scilicet apud orientalem plagam potenti manu superatos esse, caesos partim, partim fugatos, nonnullos captivos esse in loco, qui dicitur Kioe, Rolandum Pelavisinum ad illustrissimum principem defecisse, cujus filium crebro videmus in palatio ducis. Vale et mihi iterum atque iterum scribe. Leonardum amicum nostrum meo nomine saluta.

Ex Mediolano, 9. kal. aprilis.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² simulque WO

³ one word deleted in ms.; em. HE

5. Letter to Barnaba da Siena (24 March 1432, Milan).

Context: On his travel to Basel, Cardinal Capranica visited, with his secretaries and attendants, Milan where they stayed for a short while at the duke's palace.¹

Subject: A Venetian defeat at Kios.

Enea greets his beloved friend Barnaba.

[1] Your letter, which I received in Piombino, reminded me of our great love and intense mutual affection. I was grateful and happy for your information about many matters and thought it appropriate to write back to you if I had something worthy of mention. But I have nothing relevant to write since I believe that all that happens here is already old news to you. However, the rumour is flying that a great force has defeated the Venetians in the East, in a place called Chios, that they have been killed or sent fleeing, and that many have been taken prisoner. Also, Rolando Pallavicini is said to have defected to the Most Illustrious Prince. We often see his son in the duke's palace. Farewell, and write to me again and again. Greet our friend Leonardo² in my name.

From Milan, 24 March.

¹ COM, 1: 3 (Meserve, vol. 1: p. 13): ... [they] went from there [Genoa] overland to Milan, where they saw the great and illustrious Duke Filippo Maria. After a brief

stay, they continued their journey, arriving at Basel by way of the St. Gotthard Alps, where the steep mountains, covered in snow and ice, tower to the skies. See also

VO, 1: 1, p. 21; Mitchell, pp. 60-61.

² Possibly Leonardo Benvoglianti.

6. Letter to Andreuccio Petrucci (24 March 1432, Milan)¹.

Manuscripts: Siena / Biblioteca Comunale / C V 30, f. 13. *

Editions: HE, 6, pp. 18-21; WO, 1,1: 6, p. 7-11; (both editions based on S1).

Translations: ME, 3, pp. 9-14.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

6. Letter to Andreuccio Petrucci¹ (24 March 1432, Milan).

Context: The “*laudatio urbis*” was a genre of classical literature which humanists like Leonardo Bruni (Florence) and Pier Candido Decembrio (Milan) had taken up.

Subject: Description of the city of Genoa, covering the physical environment, the city, the men, the women, sexual mores, nuns, comparison with other cities, political climate. It is really more a description than a *laudatio*. Piccolomini would write other such descriptions (Basel (letter 2), Vienna, and Tabor).²

Description of the city of Genoa

1. Physical environment
2. The city
3. The men
4. The women
5. Sexual mores
6. Nuns
7. Comparison with other cities
8. Permanent civil unrest
9. Conclusion

¹ Andreuccio Petrucci (d. 1449):
Sieneze humanist and official.

² Mitchell, pp. 60-61.

[1] ... optarem¹ in praesentia mecum esses. Urbem enim cerneris, cuius similem non habet orbis universus. Est igitur in colle posita, cui supereminet montes asperrimi ad latus superum, pars vero inferior mari abluitur. Hic portus curvatur in arcum murusque tuetur illum, ne queat tumor pelagi navibus officere, qui, ut est fama, vix pluris redemptus esset, etiam si foret argenteus, tanta est ibi freti profunditas. *Statio* ibidem navibus satis *fida*, ubi plurimae degunt semper ad *instar montium* ingentes, triremesque et alia navigandi vascula praeter numerum. Sedulo et vadunt et veniunt, hae quidem ab orienti, illae ab occidenti sole, ut aspicias quotidie diversa hominum genera incognitosque et incultos mores, mercatores etiam cum universa merce adventare².

[2] Extant quoque magnifica in ipso portu palatia, qua urbem tangit, marmorea undique caeloque minantia, ornamentis columnarum decora nimis, pleraque sculpta figurisve insignita. Subtus vero porticus passuum fere mille longitudinis, ubi quaevis mercimonia possis emere. Urbis autem reliquum in montem tendit. Ibi aedes egregiae sublimesque, ne qua sit, cuius excellentia atque decus non regi sive principibus conveniret, cunctarum quippe regalis pompa, omnium altitudo ingens parumque inter se distant. Semitae quidem angustae duobus tribusve patentes hominibus. Sane templa Deo immortali dedicata, quamvis decora non tamen digna tanta urbe, vero enimvero ditissima sepulturisque nobilium mire decorata. Habent reliquias in magna veneratione. Catinum³, ut ajunt, smaragdinum, quo cenatum salvatorem cum discipulis narrant, ipsum vidi ac mire collucebat. Est praeterea civitas aquarum copiosissima, quae summis dilapsae montibus singulis deserviunt aedibus, dulces valdeque suaves. Haec de situ urbis atque aedificiis notanda existimavi.

¹ *em. ex* tarem HE, WO

² adventare WO

³ catinium codd.

1. Physical environment

[1] ... I wish you were here with me now. Then you would see a city resembling no other city in the whole world. It lies on a hill with towering mountains on the higher side, while the lower part is washed by the sea. The port curves in an arc and is protected by a wall that prevents the swell of the sea from damaging the ships. It is claimed to have cost more than if it had been made of silver, so deep is the strait. The anchorage there is very *safe for the ships*,¹ and many lie there tall like mountains², both galleys and countless other seafaring vessels. They come and go all the time, some from the East and some from the West, so that every day you see various races of men and unknown – even uncouth – manners, and merchants arriving with all kinds of merchandise.

2. The city

[2] Where the harbour meets the city, magnificent marble palaces reach to heaven, with elegant columns and splendidly adorned with many sculptures and statues. Beneath them runs a *portico* nearly a thousand *passus*³ long, where all kinds of wares are for sale. The rest of the city follows the mountain slope. There you find splendid and tall buildings whose elegance and decoration would befit kings or princes, for they are all furnished royally and are immensely tall, with minimal distance between them, the roads being narrow with space only for two or three men. The temples dedicated to immortal God are graceful but not worthy of this great city, though they are richly furnished and wonderfully adorned with the nobles' tombs. They greatly venerate relics⁴: I saw the emerald *catino*, as they call it, which they tell the Saviour used when he ate with his disciples.⁵ It shone wondrously. Otherwise, there is plenty of water in the city. It flows down from the mountains and is led to the individual buildings. It is sweet and clean. This is what I thought should be noted about the city and its buildings.

¹ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 2: 28: *statio male fida carinis*.

² Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 2: 15.

³ Passus: Roman measure of distance, ca. 1,48 meters.

⁴ I.e., relics of saints.

⁵ The so-called "Sacro Catino" is a hexagonal vessel made of green glass, not emerald. It was brought to Genoa by Guglielmo Embriaco in 1101. Legend has it that the plate was used by Jesus to eat the Easter lamb served at the Last

Supper and that it is made of emerald. Also known as the "Genoese Holy Grail", it has always been an object of great veneration and is one of the most important relics preserved in the city.

[3] Superest hominum ritus moresque referre. Sunt itaque viri honesti, corporis longi quoque aspectu graves, ceterum superbi et videntur et sunt. Ingenio plurimum valent, animi magnitudine nullis inferiores gentibus, laborum vigiliarum atque inediae patientes. Incredibile dictu est, quae in mari gerant, quibus se periculis opponantur, aut quantas fortunae superent angustias. Ottobonus Imperialis, triremis nostrae gubernator, vigesimum et tertium in mari annum gerens, numquam intra cameram dormivit, et numquam – ut ajebat – udus aqua vestes mutuavit.¹ Ceterum lucri divitiarumque dulcedo leviora quaevis discrimina reddit. Quod si velis navali proelio aut ipsorum consilio aut uti manibus, ab hisce omnis marina victoria pendet, erisque superior, ubi velint, ubi renuant, nulla tibi supersit victoriae spes. Mari namque imperitant suntque omnes formidini. Vestiuntur² splendide insuper ac magnifice. De operibus mulierum nullus inquirat, magisque ipsi imperio mulierum subditi quam illae virorum. Scientiae parum cupidi grammaticen³ ad necessitatem student, cetera studiorum genera parvifaciunt. Quando quidem de emptione seu venditione respirant, procantur omnes.

[4] Quilibet⁴ suam inter mulieres quaerit, quam amando sequatur. Mira prorsus res est, ut cum omnes aliorum uxoribus afficiantur illarumque jungantur amplexibus, de suis nil sentiant impudice. Quapropter magna est mulierum in hac civitate libertas, quod, si qui paradisum feminarum Januam nuncupent, minus in errorem incidant, quem interpretari aliter nescio nisi locum amoenissimum, quo qui inhabitet, nulla jucunditate careat. Cujusvis modi feminis est Janua, equidem paradisus omnium deliciarum, ubi mulieribus nihil desit ad voluptatem. Accipe igitur mores istarum, de quibus multo facilius principium quam exitum faciemus. Sunt equidem formosae, nostrae tamen magis delicatae. Commendantur vero, quia magnae sunt et candoris non exigui. Utuntur vestibibus sumptuosis argento auroque gravibus ac lapide pretioso. Smaragdis sive adamantibus digitos impediunt, quibus universa Persis atque India verritur⁵. Ornatus enim causa nulli ignoscunt sumptui. Nihil praeterea domi gerunt. Illis curae non acus neque colus est, namque mancipia quaeque domus habet abunde, quae filandi et coquendi studio incumbunt. Memini audisse matronam fuisse quandam, nec quidem ex magnatibus, quae, cum rogaretur a genere, quidnam prandio providisset, jam illi septennio inaditam fore coquinam responderet. Censere potes itaque, magnarum qualis cura mulierum esse debeat. Otiosae sane omnes, ab laboribus alienae, neque festos operiuntur dies, quibus a sollicitudine quietae satisfaciant amatoribus. Continuo sese ornatas ostentant.

¹ mutuavit *em. ex. mouit* HE;
innovavit *em. ex. inovit* WO

² vestiuntur *corr. ex. vestiunt* HE;
vestes sunt *corr. ex. vestiunt* WO

³ grammaticae HE

⁴ quislibet WO
⁵ geritur WO

3. The men

[3] It remains to speak about the manners¹ and character of the people. The men are dignified, tall and serious-looking, and moreover, they are proud and look like it. They are rather intelligent, as ambitious as all other people, and endure labours, vigils, and fasting. Their achievements at sea are incredible, as are the dangers they meet and the great challenges² they overcome. Ottobuono Imperiale, the pilot of our galley, had been living at sea for 23 years and never slept in the cabin, and never – he said – changed clothes when they became wet. Sweet profit and riches make all risks light. If you will use their counsel or hands in a naval battle, all victory at sea depends on them: if they will, you win; if not, you have no hope of victory. For they command the sea, and all fear them. Their clothes are splendid, even magnificent. Nobody is concerned about women's affairs, and the men are more dominated by their women than the women are dominated by their men. They care little for knowledge and only study grammar as far as necessary. The other branches of knowledge they despise, though they all demand them when they relax from buying and selling.

4. The women

[4] Every man seeks a woman to court. It is quite remarkable that while they all have affairs with other men's wives, they do not suspect their own wives of shamelessness. Therefore the freedom of women in this city is great, and if you called Genoa a woman's paradise, you would hardly be wrong – for I do not know what paradise is if not a most charming place where the inhabitants lack no pleasure. Genoa belongs to the women. It is a paradise of all delights, where women lack no sensual pleasure. This is the way of the women there. It is much easier to begin speaking about them than to stop! Where our women have a more delicate beauty, theirs is robust, but they must be commended for being stately and splendid. Their clothes are sumptuous and heavy with silver, gold, and precious stones. They load their fingers with emeralds and diamonds from all of Persia and India, for in matters of adornment, they spare no expense. They have no household chores. They need neither needle nor distaff, for every house has plenty of servants whose job it is to sew and cook. I remember hearing about a married woman – not even from a grand family - who was asked by her son-in-law what she had prepared for lunch and replied that she had not been in the kitchen for seven years. So you can imagine what the grand ladies do at home.³ They are all at leisure, free of work, and they cannot be bothered to wait for holidays where they can satisfy their lovers, free of care.⁴ They always appear in their finery.

¹ "ritus".

² "fortunae angustia": setbacks of fortune.

³ I.e., precisely nothing.

⁴ I.e., they do that all the time.

[5] Profecto cum hanc civitatem magis ac magis considero, in ea sententia firmiter insisto: Venerem scilicet, si hac tempestate viveret, non amplius Cyprum neque Cyteronis montem aut nemus Idalium colere, sed Januam dumtaxat habitare velle. Haec illi - ut opinor - sacrata domus, nam si urbem scruteris attentius, amoris omnes operam dare perspicies. Hinc mares, inde feminas invicem colloquentes, praeberi signa, recipi, quae dono dantur atque alia hujuscemodi, quibus facile cognoscas concordantes inter se fore, alios vero sursum deorsum ire et reverti brevi spatio repetito, hos canere submissa voce, illos quasi amaritudine captos suspiria promere. Redduntur amoris vices. Videbis¹ iniuri foedera, polliceri, indutias peti, excusari interdum. Occipiunt quoque pueri ab ineunte aetate diligere. Discunt amandi praecepta, ne, cum adoleverint, libro illo indigeant, quem de amoris disciplina fecit Ovidius. Namque ipsi adhuc tenerrimi aevi pares sibi sequuntur adolescentulas omniaque agitant amoris consuetudina.

[6] Cerneret etiam propter vestibula, quibus praesident dominae nobilissimae, laqueos fieri, quibus decipiantur, si qui nimium conspiciant illarum vultus. Ex quo fit, ut nonnulli cadant, qui prae forma mulierum laquei sunt immemores. Inest tamen haec mulieribus urbanitas, ut exteris patefaciant insidias. Ego etiam, cum illo errore peccarem, ne plus semitam quam earum ornamenta tuerer, [a²] generosa admodum domina monitus insidias evasi, quibus extemplo cecidissem, ni certior fuisset redditus. Sed illico Januense quodam capto ridere omnes vidi et amentes quasi prae laetitia gratulari. Similiter fit in tota urbe, at non multi cadunt: forensi namque praedicuntur, cives doli gnari caute gradiuntur. Praeterea - si rite animadverti - magis illae viros despectant quam respiciantur ab eis, quasi ad libidinem proclivae nimis, cui valde deserviunt, si non alia mens est ipsarum, quam verba indicent atque oculi.

[7] Virgines quoque Deo sacrae intrusae monasterio minime detinentur. Eunt libere, quo voluntas ducit, quod fieri posse rerum nequeo sine dispendio animarum. Nequaquam tamen - ut fieri a nostris accepi - parentibus maledicunt. Nuptis multo laetiores sunt sine lege maritorum atque imperio, quarum numerus fere infinitus est.

¹ videris WO

² em. HA, WO

5. Sexual mores

[5] Indeed, the more I consider this city, the more I am convinced that if Venus¹ lived today, she would not bother about Cyprus or the mountain on Cythera² or the groves of Idalium³ but would rather live in Genoa. This – I believe – is her sacred home, for if you look more carefully at the city, you will see that all devote themselves to love. Men and women are conversing, giving each other symbolic gifts that easily show they are of one mind. Others keep going up and down and coming back after a short while, some singing in a low voice, others sighing bitterly. Love is returned. You will see them coming to an understanding, making promises, asking for a truce, and sometimes making excuses. Even young boys begin to be amorous. They learn the precepts of love so that they will not, as grown-ups, need the book that Ovid⁴ wrote about the art of love,⁵ and even when they are very young, they follow after girls of the same age and act in the usual ways of love.

[6] You might even see a noble woman be seated before the entrance to her house with snares laid out to catch men who look too closely at her face.⁶ Thus, many men stumble when they forget the snares because of the women's beauty. But the women are so kind as to warn strangers of the snares. I myself, when I made the error of looking more at their adornments than the road, was warned by a noble mistress and thus avoided the trap in which I would have fallen a moment afterwards if she had not warned me. But in the same place, I saw all laugh at a man from Genoa who got caught and congratulate him exuberantly. The same is done all over the city, but not many fall: strangers are warned off, and the citizens themselves know about the tricks and tread carefully. Otherwise – if I have understood the situation correctly – the women are looking at men even more than they are looked at by them, being much inclined to sensual pleasure - unless their mind is different from what their words and eyes say.

6. Nuns

[7] The virgins dedicated to God⁷ are not restrained by the convent they have been required to enter. They freely go where they want to, something I cannot but think must be costly to their souls. But they never curse their parents⁸ - as happens with us. They are much happier than married women, living free of a husband's rules and power. Their number is almost infinite.

¹ Afrodite.

² Cyprus and Cythera (Kythira) were both claimed to be birth-places of Afrodite.

³ Idalion on Cyprus. Centre of worship of Afrodite.

⁴ Ovidius, Publius Ovidius (40-17 BC): Roman poet.

⁵ The *Ars amandi* (*Amatoria*): Ovid's major poem on love.

⁶ Instead of at the road.

⁷ I.e., nuns.

⁸ For having placed them in a convent.

[8] Tenes demum, quae virorum consuetudines quaeve mulierum a me hic potuerunt considerari, quamque ampla et gloriosa dijudicetur civitas, quibus jam te censeo comprehendere magnitudinem ejus ac sublimitatem, nec in dubio quidquam habere tanto praestantiorum Florentia fore Januam, quanto illam Aretio. Sed parum dixi, nam pro merito civitatis hujus omnis laus esset inferior. Quod si magnitudinem ejus atque fastigium ejus velis altius examinare, hoc tibi sufficiat argumento, quoniam Veneti noningentos jam annos in multiplicandis opibus aedibusque construendis explevere, ii fere totidem – ut ita loquar – ad dissipandas copias ac aedificia diruenda. Multo tamen nobilior Janua est quam Venetia, si qualitatem hominum urbisque decus tueri velimus, sed pecuniarum nolo me judicem facere. Unum denique non praetermittam: suburbia videlicet palatiaque civitati adjacentia alteras Venetias Florentiamve construerent, quibus et ipsa Janua cedit.

[9] O urbem fortunatissimam, si civium concordiam habuisset. Verum tanta fuit hominum inter se dissensio, ut pararet alteri quilibet insidias, necem instruere, esse reliquis detrimento, studio vigilaret. Omnibus hujusmodi cura alius alium laedere, trucidare, spoliari patriaque pellere. Ea de re pleraque nobilitas urbis, quae illustrissimo principi erat infectissima, in aedibus exulat alienis. Eo tamen deducta est civitas impresentiarum, quo felicissimum principem Philippum Mariam in dominum recognoscat armavitque in praesentia classem, quam praesto videbis esse formidini universo orbi, maximeque Illirico sinui, cui praefectus est Petrus Spinola, vir nempe et animi pollens et ingenii claritudine, quem Deus ad nostra et sua vota felicitet.

7. Comparison with other cities

[8] Now you know the customs of the men and women I could observe and how large and glorious the city must be considered to be. I trust that you now understand its greatness and excellence and do not doubt that Genoa surpasses Florence as much as Florence surpasses Arezzo. Actually, I have said too little, for any praise of this city is inferior to what it rightly deserves. If you want to examine more deeply its greatness and splendour, this fact will suffice: while the Venetians have now spent 900 years in multiplying their wealth and raising buildings, the Genoese have used as many years in spending their wealth and demolishing buildings. But Genoa is much nobler than Venice if you consider the qualities of the people and the beauty of the city. As for their economy, I cannot judge. Finally, there is one thing that I shall not pass over: the suburbs and the palaces neighbouring the city resemble those of Venice and Florence, and even the [old] city of Genoa must yield to them.

8. Permanent civil unrest

[9] O fortunate city, if there was ever concord between the citizens! But strife between the citizens is so intense that they plot against each other, plan killings, and generally endeavour to harm each other. All seek to wound, kill, despoil, and exile the others. Therefore, a great part of the nobility that opposed the Most Illustrious Prince¹ are living in exile. The city has now recognised the most happy prince, Filippo Maria, as its lord and built a fleet which you will soon see as a threat to the whole world and especially the Illyrian bay.² Its admiral is Pietro Spinola,³ a strongminded and famously intelligent man. May God make him happy and fulfil his own and our wishes.

¹ Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

² The Adriatic Sea. Presumably to harass Venetian shipping.

³ Pietro Spinola: from the Genoese noble Spinola family

[10] Haec erant, mi suavissime Andreocci, quae me scribere compellebant, neque enim poteram in tanta rerum admiratione laetari, nisi tecum gratarer prius. Modo autem jam mihi videor satisfacisse, quare et jucundus sum et laetus teque et precor et obsecro, ut mecum bono animo sis. Aspicias enim quam cito guerrarum exitum optimo fine concludi. Et jamjam omnia secunda cedunt, quorum Senis te dubium reliqui. Haec tibi, dum Januae forem, scripseram, sed non inveni tabellarium, quapropter Mediolanum transtuli. Ibi multos versus inveni editos contra Antonium Panormitam ab his – ut arbitror – qui erant injuria lacessiti. Eos ad te mitto, ut iudicium ex his facias. Vale et Nicolaum Lolli meo nomine saluta, cui scribo, si quid habemus novi.

Ex Mediolano, 9. Kalendas aprilis.

7. Conclusion

[10] This was, my dear Andreocci, what I had to write, for I could only wholeheartedly enjoy this marvelous experience if I shared it with you. But now I think that I have done what I should: I am glad and joyful and ask and beg you to share my good cheer. For very soon, you will see a happy conclusion to the wars, and the things you were worrying about when I left you in Siena will turn out well. I wrote this letter to you while in Genoa, but as I could not find a messenger, I brought it with me to Milan. There I found many verses written against Antonio Panormita¹ by people I believe he had insulted. I send them to you to judge for yourself. Farewell, and greet Niccolò Lolli² from me. I shall write to him when we have news.

From Milan, 24 March.

¹ Antonio Beccadelli (1394-1471): Sicilian poet, scholar and diplomat, later in the service of Alfonso V. Piccolomini is probably referring to his literary feud with Friar Antonio da Rho (1395-1447), who wrote an invective against him. Beccadelli

was a friend of Piccolomi from their time at the University of Siena, and Piccolomini wrote of him: *pro vetusta consuetudine, quam Senis in adolescentia simul habuimus* (letter to King Alfonso V of 27 January 1454, WO, 1, 1:

249, p. 436). See also Voigt, 1, 1: p. 11.

² Piccolomini's uncle, married to his father's sister. He lived with the family during his studies in Siena, and his cousin, Goro Lolli, was one of his closest friends and, later, collaborators.

7. Letter to Giorgio Andrenzio (End of March 1432, Milan).

Manuscripts: L, f. 18v *; M1, f. 39r; M2, f. 38r^l; M3, ff. 229v-230r²; V2, ff. 131-132³; V3, ff. 60v-61v⁴ **; V4, ff. 54v-55r.

Editions: HE, 7, pp. 21-22 (based on L, M1, V2); WO, 1, 1: 7, pp. 11-12 (based on M1, V2).

{60v} Aeneas Silvius⁵ salutem plurimam dicit Georgio⁶ Andrenzio Senensi, amico probo et constanti.⁷

Litteris tuis, quas Plumbini accepi, {61r} utor jucundissime, quas lectitasse milies nequaquam sat est. Scis enim, cum praesentes essemus, nullam potuisse diem praeterire sine colloquio nostro, namque aut⁸ ego te vel tu meipsum quaeritabas, quo magis me tecum vivere fiebat quam cum aliis omnibus. In absentia⁹ vero litterae tuae illo officio funguntur, quo tu olim¹⁰ utebare. Cum eis vitam duco. Hae mihi Georgium, hae mihi te primum inter omnes afferunt. His fruor, has amplector deoscolorque, ex his solatium, si quod habeo, ad me provenit¹¹. Eas cum legi – Deum¹² testor – non valui lacrimas continere; flevi fateor, iterum atque iterum flevi. “En¹³ – inquam – ‘ubi amicus ille meus dulcissimus? Dimisisse ipsum certo scio; si quando revisam, nescio.’” Urgebat autem¹⁴ ad lacrimandum praecipue, quod de genitore meo Silvio narrabas. Tunc enim visum est, nescio¹⁵ quid aculei corculum meum tetigisse. Memineram paterni amoris participabamque cum patre amaritudinem. Sed de his omne nimis, nam cum incido in hanc rem, videor prorsus emori. Te autem patri meo adoptatum gratissime tuli, unde intelligo et illius furorem diminutum et te germanum aquisivisse. Quibus rebus non potui respondere Plumbini, abii namque illico receptis litteris. Nunc Mediolani me scias commorari praestoque¹⁶ Germaniam postulabo¹⁷. Itaque, si quas litteras ad me vis dare, jubebis exponi Basileae. Cetera non habeo, quae scribam. Andreocio Petrucio nostro litteras {61v} dedi¹⁸ amplissimas, ubi Genuam¹⁹ ejusque cunctos mores pro ingenio comprehendo, quas tibi ostendi nomine meo exorabis²⁰. Vale atque iterum vale communesque omnes amicos nostros jubeto salvere, et si quando genitorem meum offendas²¹, verbis tuis solabere, quoad²² potes.

Ex Mediolano²³.

¹ SC, 83.

² SC, 463-464.

³ DV, ff. 71r-71v.

⁴ DV, ff. 63v-64v.

⁵ poeta *add.* M2, M3

⁶ Gregorio V2a

⁷ *Titulus:* Domino Georgio Senensi Aeneas Silvius salutem dicit L, M1, HE, WO

⁸ ut V4

⁹ *corr. ex praesentia* V2b; presentia v2a, L, M1-M3, HE, WO

¹⁰ olim *omit.* M3

¹¹ pervenit L

¹² deos L, M1, HE, WO

¹³ et L; heu V3

¹⁴ me *add.* L, M1, HE, WO

¹⁵ *corr. ex ignoro* V2b; ignoro V2a, L, M1-M3, HE, WO

¹⁶ citoque V3

¹⁷ petam V3, V4

¹⁸ dedi *em.* HE

¹⁹ gemina V4

²⁰ meo exorabis : exorabis meo V4

²¹ offendebas L

²² quod L

²³ 1432 *add.* V2

7. Letter to Giorgio Andrenzio (End of March 1432, Milan¹).

Context: Piccolomini wrote this letter during his stay, with Cardinal Capranica, at the court of Filippo Maria Visconti in Milan before they continued their journey to the Council of Basel.

Subject: Piccolomini is overjoyed at a letter from Giorgio and reveals that his father was hurt and angry at his departure from Siena.

Enea Silvio sends many greetings to Giorgio Andrenzio² from Siena, a good and constant friend.

[1] I was overjoyed to receive your letter in Piombino. Reading it even a thousand times is not enough. As you know, when we were together, not one day could pass without our meeting and talking, for either you sought me out or I you, so that actually I lived more together with you than with any other. But in your absence, your letter has the same function as you yourself had then. I live with it, it brings Giorgio to me, it brings me you before all others. I enjoy it, I embrace it, I kiss it. It consoles me if anything can. When I read it – God is my witness – I could not keep back my tears. I admit that I cried, I cried again and again. Oh, – I said – where is my dearest friend. I know that I have left him; I do not know when I shall see him again. What especially made me cry was your words about my father, Silvio.³ It felt as if some barb had hit my little heart. I remembered his paternal love, and I shared his grief.⁴ But no more about that, for when I think of it, I seem to die. I am delighted that you have been “adopted” by my father, from which I understand that his anger has abated and that you have acquired a brother.⁵ I could not reply to this while in Piombino, for I left immediately after receiving the letter. You should know that I am now staying in Milan and shall very soon continue to Germany. Therefore, if you wish to write to me, send the letters to Basel. I have nothing else to write. I am sending a long letter⁶ to our Andreuccio Petrucci⁷, where I describe Genoa as I see it and all its ways. Ask him from me to show it to you. Farewell and again farewell. Greet all our common friends [from me], and when you meet my father, comfort him in words as [best] you can.

From Milan.

¹ Date: The letter is undated, but since it was written in Milan and the Cardinal Capranica’s party reached Basel on 15 April, the date must have been at the end of March.

² Giorgio Andrenzio: Friend and probably a fellow student of Piccolomini from his study years in Siena.

³ Silvio Piccolomini (-1450): Father of Enea Silvio Piccolomini.

⁴ Presumably, his grief that his son had left.

⁵ Presumably, Piccolomini himself.

⁶ Letter 6.

⁷ Andreuccio Petrucci (-1449): Sieneese humanist and official.

8. Letter to the City government of Siena (1 November 1432, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: VI, f. 3r **.

Editions: HE, 8, pp. 22-24; WO, 1, 1: 8, pp. 12-14; (both based on VI).

Translations: RE, 2, pp. 64-67.

Magnifici ac potentissimi domini, domini mei singularissimi, post recommissionem debitam.

[1] Dedi saepe litteras magnificis dominationibus vestris rerum, quae hic agerentur, plenissimas ratus id gratum duci atque jucundum apud dominos meos, nec ab ea sententia sum hodie alienus, sive quod utile censeo dominationibus vestris magnificis has res non ignorare, seu quod laetitiae iudicem vobis esse, si quae conditio quive status sit intelligatis hujus sacri Basileensis concilii. Et sane, domini mei potentissimi, maximam non solum apud vestras dominationes, sed omnibus Italis arbitror opinionem esse sperare cunctos felicem successum jamque permaxime auctum, nec quidem falso. Res vero fortasse non habetur serie, sed aggredior ipsam.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

8. Letter to the City government of Siena (1 November 1432, Basel).

- Context:* Piccolomini arrived at the Council of Basel, with Cardinal Capranica, on 15 April 1432.¹² The cardinal appealed his case to the council which passed judgment on 31 October and recognised his right to the cardinalate. The present letter is the first extant letter from Piccolomini to the city government of Siena, but he had, apparently, sent them several other letters previously.
- Subject:* Piccolomini reports on the attendance at the council, its recognition by princes, and papal maneuvers against it.

Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords, my Eminent Lords, after due recommendation.

[1] I have often sent letters to your magnificent lordships about events here, believing it to be welcome to the duke³ and agreeable to my lords, and I still feel that it is worthwhile for your magnificent lordships to know about these affairs and the whole situation and state of this holy Council of Basel. And, indeed, my Most Mighty Lords, I believe that not only your lordships but all Italians fervently believe that we must all rightly hope for the council to be successful and grow in numbers. The [following account] may not be quite orderly, but I shall begin anyway.

¹ In his *Commentarii*, Piccolomini/Pius only had little to say about his first period in Basel from 1432-1433: *In Basel Domenico appeared before the Council to press for recognition of his appointment as cardinal. Through the advocacy of Aeneas, he was restored to high office. But Domenico was in financial difficulties (for Eugenius had forbidden his relations to give him any aid), and so Aeneas transferred his services to Nicodemo della Scala, the bishop of Freising, whose father had been lord of Verona. Then, when Nicodemo left Basel, he served Bartolomeo Visconti, the bishop of Novara. Both men put him in*

charge of composing and signing their letters. With Nicodemo he went to a meeting of the electors assembled at Frankfurt (COM, 1: 3, 4 (Meserve, vol. 1: p. 13). On 10 October 1432, the German prince-electors met in Frankfurt to discuss the conflict between pope, council, and King Sigismund. At the meeting, the princes reaffirmed their neutrality in the conflict and decided to send a mission to Basel, which at the end of November 1432 exhorted the council to postpone measures against the pope (Hoensch, p. 387). According to Strnad, the princes' meeting took place in Nürnberg, where della Scala, accompanied by Piccolomini as

his secretary, presented the views of the council. Della Scala was back in Basel on 18 October (Strnad).

² The cardinal and his party arrived at a tense moment: two weeks afterwards, at the 3rd session of the council on 29 April, the pope and his cardinals were summoned to the council within three months, on the pain of being declared contumacious. On 6 September, the pope and 17 cardinals were cited for disobedience against the council.

³ I.e., Duke Filippo Maria Visconti, at the time an ally of Siena against Florence.

[2] Est imprimis numerus praelatorum magnus egregiusque: legatus Sancti Angeli cardinalis, vir et nomine et re singularis; cardinalis Firmanus, cujus injuriae causam concilium tribus iudicibus commisit. Heri lata sententia fuit, declaratus sanctae¹ Romanae ecclesiae verus cardinalis, jussus pilleo uti ceterisque cardinalatus insignibus; patriarcha Antiochenus; archiepiscopus Lugdunensis ac Mediolanensis; episcoporum autem abbatumque copia ingens ex universa Christianitate. Recessit cardinalis Placentinus, relictis procuratoribus et spe data redeundi non sine licentia patrum.

[3] Scriptum cardinali sancti Eustachii, ut se huc transferat. Habita responsio: utilem se concilio in Avinione fore, paratum se tamen ad mandata concilii; si rursus de veniendo scribatur, obtemperaturum. Id iterum est imperatum. Fuere sibi cum legato apostolico dissensiones pro legatione ventumque ad arma, vicit denique auctoritas concilii. Abiit legatus papae omissa civitate comitatuque Venusino, quibus auditis statuit papa discordiam seminare et cardinalem de Fuxo legatum fecit Avinionensem, quod ille multis ante precibus nequiverat obtinere. [*Cont.*]

¹ *omit.* WO

[2] Firstly, there is [now] a large and extraordinary number of cardinals [present here], viz. the Cardinal of Sant'Angelo,¹ the papal legate and a man outstanding both in name and fact; the Cardinal of Fermo,² whose complaint³ the council entrusted to three judges. The sentence was passed yesterday⁴: he was declared a true cardinal of the Roman Church and ordered to use the hat and other insignia of the cardinalate;⁵ the Patriarch of Antioch;⁶ the Archbishops of Lyon⁷ and Milan;⁸ and a large group of bishops and abbots from all Christendom. The Cardinal of Piacenza⁹ has departed – with the Fathers' permission – leaving procurators and hope of his return.

[3] [The council] has written to the Cardinal of Sant'Eustachio¹⁰ to come here. He answered that he could be useful to the council in Avignon^{11 12} but was ready to follow the council's instructions: if they wrote again, he would obey. So they requested it again. He had had disagreements with the apostolic legate¹³ concerning the legation, and there had actually been an armed conflict, but in the end, the council's authority won. The pope's legate¹⁴ left, relinquishing the city and county of Venaissin. When the pope¹⁵ heard it, he decided to sow discord and made the Cardinal of Foix¹⁶ his legate in Avignon, something the cardinal had previously begged for many times but in vain. [Cont.]

¹ Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1398-1444): Cardinal 1426. Papal legate and president of the Council of Basel. VO, 1: 1, pp. 49-51.

² Cardinal Domenico Capranica

³ "injuriae causa": the cardinal's complaint against the pope was that his appointment as cardinal by Pope Martin V had not been accepted by the new pope, Eugenius IV, and that he had been unlawfully prevented from participating in the conclave following the death of Martin.

⁴ 31 October 1432

⁵ COM, 1: 4 (Meserve, vol. 1, p. 13): *In Basel Domenico appeared before the Council to press for recognition of his appointment as cardinal. Through the advocacy of Aeneas, he was restored to high office.* See also DRGB (RE, pp. 331-332). See Stieber, p. 12; VO, 1: 1, pp. 58-59.

⁶ Jean Mauroux (ca. 1367-1439): titular Latin Patriarch of Antioch, appointed head of the council's chancery in 1432. Defender of the conciliarist cause. Müller, 2: 543-572.

⁷ Amédée de Talaru (-1444): Archbishop of Lyon from 1415 to

his death. Envoy of France to the Council of Basel. Created cardinal by antipope Felix V in 1440.

⁸ Bartolomeo de la Capra (ca. 1365-1433): Secretary and referendary to Innocentius VII, Gregorius XII and Alexander V. Bishop of Cremona, 1405. Archbishop of Milan from 1414 to his death. Prominent counsellor and diplomat of both the Duke of Milan and Emperor Sigismund. Friend of mentor of Piccolomini. See DVI, ch. 21.

⁹ Branda da Castiglione (1350-1443): Cardinal, appointed 1411 by Pope Johannes XXIII.

¹⁰ Alfonso Carillo de Albornoz (-1434): Appointed cardinal by antipope Benedict XIII in 1408 and reappointed as such with the title of Sant'Eustachio by Pope Martin V in 1420. He participated in the Council of Basel, but died in 1434. See DVI, ch. 40; Müller, 2: 475-485.

¹¹ The council did appoint him legate in Avignon in 1433, but he only functioned as such for a short while, after which he returned to Basel and died there in 1434.

¹² Avignon and the county of Venaissain had belonged to the

papacy since the early 14th century. The city of Avignon had been a papal residence from 1309-1423 -from 1378 as the seat of the Avignonese papal line.

¹³ Marco Condulmer (1405/8-1459): In 1430, he was appointed Bishop of Avignon by Pope Martin V and governor of Venaissan. His appointment was confirmed by Pope Eugenius IV, his uncle, on 9 January 1432. Condulmer's ineptitude caused a conflict with the Avignoneses, who appealed to the Council of Basel. The council then appointed Alfonso Carillo vicar of Avignon. But Pope Eugenius intervened and appointed Cardinal Pierre de Foix papal legate in Avignon. Condulmer was appointed titular Patriarch of Alexandria in 1444.

¹⁴ Condulmer

¹⁵ Eugenius IV [Gabriele Condulmer] (1383-1447): Pope from 1431 to his death.

¹⁶ Pierre de Foix (1386-1464): Cardinal 1409. Papal legate in Avignon 1333-1464. Archbishop of Arles 1453-1463. Müller, 2: 486-499.

[*Cont.*] Is regi Franciae continuo litteras direxit, quibus arguebat hanc non esse veram synodum nec potuisse cardinalem Sancti Eustachii legatum facere. Petebat sibi auxilium pro capienda possessione. Rex autem jam se dedisse concilio oboedientiam retulit, velle cum concilio vivere morique; legatum Avinionensem sibi consanguineum, eum se paratum cum concilio tueri; habere gentes armatorum, quas pro defensione concilii postulas mittat.

[4] Ad eum missus orator unus, nondum reversus. Legati concilii, qui ad regem Galliae Carolum ivere, reversi ad vota expediti, multis ante laboribus ac sumptibus fatigati. Nec minus egregie munus suum expedivere, qui regem Angliae postularunt. Ab utroque rege ambassata designata est regia, veniunt in dies ab utrisque praelati. Obtinere et qui ad electores imperii Francofordiae congregatos iter fecere. Mira res, omnes oratores concilii redire feliciter expeditos. Gloria Italarum magna. Hi dumtaxat mittuntur ambassiatores, quasi et gloria linguae et animi vis laborumque perpessio solum comperiat apud hosce. [*Cont.*]

[Cont.] Eugenius continually wrote to the King of France,¹ claiming that this is not a true synod and that it did not have the right to appoint the Cardinal of Sant'Estachio legate. He actually asked for [the king's] help to get possession [of Avignon],² but the king replied that he had given his obedience to the council and would live and die with it; that the legate of Avignon³ was a relative, whom he was ready to protect together with the council; and that he had soldiers which he would send to defend the council if required.

[4] To the cardinal has been sent an envoy who has not yet returned. The conciliar envoys⁴ who went to King Charles of France have now fulfilled their mission and returned, worn out by labours and expenses. Those⁵ who were sent to the king of England⁶ have fulfilled their mission just as brilliantly. A royal embassy has been appointed by each of the two kings, and prelates from both will arrive shortly. Also those⁷ who were sent to the imperial electors,⁸ assembled in Frankfurt, were successful. Amazingly, all the conciliar envoys have now returned after fulfilling their mission. The glory of the Italians is great: they alone are sent as envoys as if distinction of language, power of intellect, and endurance in labour were only found in them.⁹ [Cont.]

¹ Charles VII (1403-1461): King of France from 1422 to his death.

² Of Avignon.

³ Pierre de Foix.

⁴ Bartolomeo Visconti [Aicardi] (1402-1457): Bishop of Novara 1429 to his death. Later employer and friend of Piccolomini. See DVI, ch. 5.

⁵ Gerardo Landriani (1390/1400-1445): Bishop of Lodi 1419, transferred to the see of Como in 1437. Cardinal 1439.

⁶ Henry VI (1421-1471): King of England 1422-1461 and 1470-1471.

⁷ Nicodemo della Scala, accompanied by Piccolomini as a secretary and by Thomas Ebendorfer von Hasselbach (see Strnad).

⁸ The prince-electors, Kurfürsten, of the Holy Roman Empire. They had the right to elect the Holy Roman Emperor. Since 1354, there were seven prince-electors:

the archbishops of Mainz, Trier and Cologne, the Count Palatine, the Duke of Saxony, the Margrave of Brandenburg, and the King of Bohemia.

⁹ In his oration "*Audivi*" to the council on 16 November 1436, Piccolomini said: *The Bishop of Novara was sent to the King of France, and the Bishop of Lodi to England. The Bishop of Parma was ordered to far-away Poland when the father of the present king was still alive. ... To the King of Aragon, who then resided in Sicily, was sent Abbot Ricci of Saint Ambrose. Nor were you, mighty Duke of Burgundy, neglected by the Lombard prelates. This mission fell to the Abbot of Cereto, that upright Father ... To me that period seemed to resemble that of the*

apostles when they divided the provinces of the world between them, and each undertook a mission to preach the Gospel there. A similar task was entrusted to the ducal prelates because at that time many other prelates had not yet arrived [sect. 72]. See also a similar passage in his *DRGB* (RE, p. 332). It is no coincidence that these prelates are "ducal prelates", i.e. from the territories of the Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria Visconti. An enemy of Pope Eugenius, he allied himself with the council, now in conflict with the pope, and strengthened it by sending his bishops to Basel and having them undertake conciliar missions to obtain the support of the Christian kings.

[Cont.] Venerunt huc Bohemi duo, rerum praecognitores, qui omnibus rite consideratis laeti abierunt, pollicentes oratores suos brevi venturos. Ambassiatorum papae recessus antiquus, responsio his data 20 cartarum. Diu decretum fuit moriente papa hic elegi debere futurum. Heri additae magnae poenae cardinalibus non venientibus. Dati dies ad veniendum 60. Accusata fuit contumacia domini nostri, nondum pronuntiata. Multa reperta in causa domini Firmani, quae laedunt extimationem papae.

[5] Officia in concilio distributa: legatus praesidens, vicecancellarius patriarcha, thesaurarius episcopus Albiganensis, iudices causarum episcopus Gallicensis, Parmensis, Petracoriensis, praecognitores legatus, cardinalis Firmanus, episcopus Constantiensis Gallicus, et alii tres. Supra registrum Papiensis. Registratores, abbreviatores, bullarum scriptores 28, clerici camerae 6 (tres erant in concilio Senensi), omnes in officio accepti. Venere mercatores plurimi pecuniarumque campsores. Depositariam duo petunt, Florentinus et Veronensis, speratur obtenturum Veronensem.

[Cont.] Two Bohemians¹ arrived² to assess the situation here. When they had diligently examined everything, they left again, promising to send representatives in a short while.³ The pope's envoys^{4 5} have departed. They were given a reply comprising 20 folios.⁶ Some time ago, it was decreed that if the pope should die, the future pope must be elected here. Yesterday, they added severe punishments for cardinals who stay away⁷: they were given 60 days to come.⁸ Our Lord [Pope] has been accused of contumacy,⁹ but it has not yet been declared.¹⁰ In the case of the Cardinal of Fermo,¹¹ much has been found that damages the pope's reputation.

[5] The offices in the council have been distributed¹²: the president is the [papal] legate¹³; vicechancellor the patriarch [of Antioch]¹⁴; treasurer the Bishop of Albenga¹⁵; judges in cases the bishops of Cádiz,¹⁶ Parma,¹⁷ and Perigueux¹⁸; *praecognitores*¹⁹ the [papal] legate, the Cardinal of Fermo,²⁰ the Bishop of Coutances,²¹ a Frenchman, and three others. The Bishop of Pavia²² will be in charge of the registry.²³ There will be 28 registrars, abbreviators, and writers of bulls²⁴, and 6 clerks of the chamber (there were three at the Council of Siena²⁵). All have now been appointed. Many merchants and money changers have arrived. Two men have applied for the office of depositary function, a Florentine and a Veronese – it is hoped that the Veronese will get it.²⁶

¹ Nikolas von Humpolitz and Johann von Saaz arrived in Basel on 10. October 1432. See Fudge.

² 10 October 1432.

³ On 10 October 1431, the council had invited the Hussites to come to Basel and discuss the possibilities for reuniting the Hussites with the Church. In May 1432, representatives of the Hussites and of the council had met in the city of Cheb. The result of the meeting was an agreement known as the "Judgment of Cheb," a policy statement governing the Hussite appearance at Basel (Fudge, p. 256).

⁴ Archbishop Giovanni Berardi di Tagliacozzo of Taranto, a staunch papalist, and others.

⁵ Note the use of "ambasciator" for papal envoy.

⁶ The letter "*Cogitanti*" of 3 December 1432.

⁷ From the election.

⁸ Conciliar decree "*Dudum haec sancta*" of 6 November 1432, COD p. 464.

⁹ Session VI on 6 September 1432.

¹⁰ Stieber, p. 16; VO, 1: 1, pp. 62-63.

¹¹ Cardinal Domenico Capranica.

¹² See Gilomen.

¹³ Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini.

¹⁴ Titular Patriarch Jean Mauroux.

¹⁵ Matteo del Carretto (d. 1448): Bishop of Albenga from 1429 to his death.

¹⁶ Juan González (d. 1440): Bishop of Cádiz from 1429 to his death.

¹⁷ Delfino della Pergola (d. 1465): Bishop of Parma from 1425 to 1463, when he was transferred to the See of Modena.

¹⁸ Berengar de Arpaione (d. 1437): Bishop of Perigueux from 1414 to his death.

¹⁹ *Præcognitores*: officials who together with the vicechancellor controlled the allocation of cases

to the judges (Decaluwe and Christianson, p. 216).

²⁰ Cardinal Capranica.

²¹ Philibert de Montjeux (ca. 1374-1439): Bishop of Coutances from 1424 to his death. At the council, he was president briefly in 1432 and later negotiated the agreements with the Hussites, the Bohemian Compacts.

²² Francesco Pizzolpasso [Piccolpasso] (ca. 1375-1443): Archbishop of Milano from 1435 to his death. Mentor and friend of Piccolomini, whom he gave access to his rich library.

²³ Archival function – copybook.

²⁴ Piccolomini himself was appointed as one of the seven writers of bulls (Gilomen, p. 184).

²⁵ Council of Pavia-Siena, 1423-1424.

²⁶ A Siense would prefer the Veronese to the Florentines, permanent rivals of the Siense.

[Cont.] Johannes de Prato 130 diebus absumptis in carcere dimissus abiit. Mortuus soldanus, creatus alter. Denique omnia in concilio firma, nullus papae metus. Celebrabitur sane et expedietur, ut cunctorum est opinio firmissima. Haec impraesentiarum. Narrabo, si qua in posterum fiant relatu digna, paratissimus ad omnia magnificarum vestrarum dominationum praecepta.

Ex Basilea Kalendis Novembris.

Earundem potentissimarum dominationum fidelissimus servitor Aenes Silvius de Picholominibus Senensis.

[Cont.] Giovanni da Prato¹ has been released after 130 days in prison and has left.² The soldan^{3 4} has died and been replaced.⁵ Now that these matters are settled, there is no fear of the pope: all firmly believe that the council will be held and set to work. This is how things stand as of now. I shall write again if things happen later worthy of report, and I am most ready to [carry out] all the requests of Your Magnificent Lordships.

From Basel, 1 November.

Enea Silvio Piccolomini of Siena, most faithful servant of their Most Mighty Lordships,

¹ Giovanni Ceparrelli da Prato: Arrested in Basel after reading the papal bull dissolving the council.

² In his DRGB (1450), Piccolomini wrote about this episode: *At that time, Giovanni of Prato, a most fluent man who was bearing Eugenius's letters of dissolution to England, was captured near Basel and kept in prison for forty days. Bartolomeo [delle Capra], archbishop of Milan, finally had mercy on him. When he already had granted him liberty, the archbishop said to him, "Giovanni, why do you involve yourself in these affairs, which are*

not honest, to the peril of many?" Then Giovanni said, "Do you not know the saying of the poet, outstanding prelate, 'Dare something near the apex of Gyara and worthy of prison, if you wish to become anything; honesty is praised and neglected'" (Juvenal, 1: 73-74). "I know these verses," Bartolomeo said, "and others of the same poet, 'Believe it the worst impiety to prefer life to shame, to lose a cause in order to live life'" (Juvenal, 8.83-84). Then Bartolomeo cited other verses, "Many commit the same crimes with a different fate: this one

carries a cross as a price of his crime; that, a crown" (Juvenal, 13.102-104). [Della Capra replied, that] "our people will nail you to a cross unless you have me as protector. Depart, and beware of committing crimes similar to this in the future." The archbishop suggested that it is better to bear poverty with praise than to possess riches with infamy, and he sent the man he had freed away (RE, p. 339).

³ The official responsible for keeping order.

⁴ Petrus Macerius

⁵ By Sicianus de Laude.

9. Letter to the City government of Siena (11 November 1432, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: VI, f. 4r. **

Editions: HE, 9, pp. 24-25; WO, I, i, 9, pp. 14-16; (both based on VI).

Translations: RE, 3, pp. 68-69.

{4r} Magnifici ac potentissimi domini, domini mei colendissimi.

[1] Pridie scripsi magnificentiae vestrae et quidem non breviter, dispositionem hujus sacri concilii latissime explicans, quemadmodum reversis oratoribus ejus feliciter expeditis solas regum legationes operiremur. Postea rex Francorum per litteras tarditatem suam excusavit; mors enim archiepiscopi Aurelianensis, qui nominatus erat inter ambassiatores, adventum paululum distulit oportuitque alium ejus loco sufficere. Relatum quoque legationem Scoti regis esse in via. Venere ambassiatores electorum imperii et unius ducis, quem de Monte appellant. Episcopus Parmensis in Poloniam ad regem mittitur, ad reges Hispaniarum jam diu abbas Bonae Vallis profectus. Regis Navarrae redditae litterae cardinalem Illardensem magnopere excusabant, quod pacem inter eos componeret. Epistolae Castellani regis orabant suos expectari oratores, qui non procul agerent.

[2] Retuli officia in concilio distributa: praesidentem, judices, praecognitores, vicecancellarium, thesaurarium, clericos camerae, abbreviatores, scriptores bullarum, notarios, et pleraque hujusmodi.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

9. Letter to the City government of Siena (11 November 1432, Basel).

Context: See letter 8.

Subject: News from the Council of Basel: embassies from the kings, decree on papal elections, Domenico Capranica recognised as cardinal.

Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords, my Right Worshipful Lords.¹

[1] A short while ago,² I wrote at length³ and comprehensively to Your Magnificence⁴ about the organisation of this Holy Council: I related how the envoys have returned successfully and that now we are only concerned about from the embassies from the kings. Afterwards, the king of France,⁵ by letter, excused his lateness: the death of the archbishop of Orléans,⁶ who had been appointed as one of the ambassadors, delayed the matter somewhat since it was necessary to replace him with someone else. It has also been reported that the embassy of the king of Scotland⁷ is on its way. Ambassadors from the imperial electors and from the duke of Berg⁸ have arrived. The bishop of Parma⁹ is being sent to the Polish king,¹⁰ and the abbot of Bonneval¹¹ has left for the kings of Spain¹² some time ago. A letter has been received from the king of Navarra¹³ with many excuses for the cardinal of Lerida,¹⁴ who had been occupied in making peace among them. A letter from the king of Castile¹⁵ requested that they await his ambassadors who were not far away.

[2] I also related the distribution of the conciliar offices: the president, the judges, the judicial examiners, the vicechancellor, the treasurer, the clerks of the chamber, the abbreviators, the writers of bulls, the notaries and other [officials].

¹ The Captain and the Priors of the City of Siena.

² “*pridie*”: Since the first letter is dated 1 November, 10 days before, *pridie* here cannot mean yesterday.

³ See letter 8, which this letter mostly repeats.

⁴ The captain. In the letter, there is some fluctuation concerning the addressee, in some cases only the captain is addressed, in others both the captain and the priors.

⁵ Charles VII.

⁶ As Jean de Saint Michael was (arch)bishop of Orléans from 1426 to his death in 1435, it is uncertain to whom Piccolomini refers,

⁷ James V (1406-1454): King of Scotland from 1406-1437. An ally of France against the English.

⁸ Adolf von Jülich und Berg (ca. 1370-1437): Duke of Berg (and later of Jülich) from 1408 to his death.

⁹ Delfino da Pergola.

¹⁰ Wladyslaw II (Jagiellon) (1352/1362-1434): King of Poland, from 1384 together with his wife, and after her death in 1399 alone. Grand Duke of Lithuania from 1377.

¹¹ Jean Robert (d. 1439): Abbot of Bonneval. An influential member of the Council of Basel (Müller, 2: 659-672).

¹² Or more precisely, Castile.

¹³ Juan II (Aragon) (1398-1464): King of Navarra from 1425, of Aragon from 1458 to his death.

¹⁴ Domingo Ram y Lanaja (d. 1445): Aragonese prelate, politician and diplomat. Bishop of Huesca, 1410. Transferred to the see of Lérida, 1415. Viceroy of Sicily, 1416. Cardinal, 1426. Ambassador of Aragon at the Council of Basel. Archbishop of Taragona, 1436.

¹⁵ Juan II (1405-1454): King of Castille and León from 1406 to his death. He attained his majority in 1419 but assumed the government already at his mother's death in 1418.

[3] Declaratum ultima sessione quoddam decretum, alias juxta morem publicatum, suo sancitum erat, si papam mori contingeret, electionem summi pontificis non alibi quam hic fieri posse. Additum cardinalibus ad veniendum 40 dierum spatium, quibus contumacibus sine ipsis ad electionem posse procedi. Cardinalem Firmanum sententiam pro se obtinuisse, ad omnia cardinalatus insignia, quam primum equitet, utetur pilleo. In causa sua multa inventa, quae domini nostri papae non parum extimationem laedunt, ut potestis colligere ex responsione data ambassiatoribus papae per concilium, quam audio ad regem devenisse ex litteris domini Brunori.

[4] Cardinalem Placentinum cras in civitate habebimus, qui revertitur a duce Mediolanensis, ad quem pridie ex causa iverat. Cardinalem sancti Eustachii in nativitate domini expectamus. Fuerunt hic Bohemi duo pro confirmatione salvi conductus, qui recedentes oratores eorum cum equis 200 brevi venturos affirmabant. Contumacia papae accusata, nondum pronuntiata est. Differtur parumper non sine causa. Haec omnia magnificentiae vestrae verissima scribo, paratissimus ad omnium mandatorum vestrorum executionem.

Ex Basilea, 11. die Novembris 1432.

Ejusdem potentissimae magnificentiae servitor minimus Aeneas Silvius der Piccolominibus.

[3] In the last session, they issued a decree, published in the usual manner, stipulating that if the pope died, the election of the supreme pontiff would happen here and nowhere else. Afterwards, they added a 60-day time limit for the arrival of the cardinals; if they were contumacious,¹ the election could happen without them. The Cardinal of Fermo² obtained a judgement in his favour to use – as soon as he took to horse³ – all the insignia of the cardinalate, including the [cardinal's] hat.⁴ They found many things in his case that seriously damaged the reputation of Our Lord Pope, as you can see from the response given by the council to the papal ambassadors. It has reached the king,⁵ as I hear has been confirmed by letter from Lord Brunoro⁶.

[4] The cardinal of Piacenza⁷ will be with us here in the city tomorrow. He is returning from the Duke of Milan to whom he had gone on some errand a short while ago.⁸ ⁹ We expect the cardinal of Sant'Eustachio¹⁰ at the Lord's Nativity.¹¹ Two Bohemians were here to get confirmation of the safe-conducts. At their departure, they said that their ambassadors will arrive shortly with 200 horses.¹² The pope has been accused of contumacy: a formal declaration has not yet been made but has - for good cause - been postponed a little. All this I write most truthfully to Your Magnificence, being always at your service.

From Basel, 11 November 1432.

Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini, humble servant of his Most Mighty Excellence.

¹ I.e., if they refused to participate in a conclave held by the council.

² Cardinal Capranica.

³ I.e., appeared in public.

⁴ DRGB (RE), 357; Stieber, 12; Mitchell, 61

⁵ Sigismund (Luxembourg) (1368-1437): King of Hungary and Croatia (1387), King of the Romans (Germany) (1411), King of Bohemia (1419), King of Italy (1431), crowned Holy Roman Emperor by Pope Eugenius IV in Rome (1433). At the time, he was

residing in Siena, on his way to Rome to be crowned emperor.

⁶ Brunoro della Scala [Scaligeri] (-1434): Scion of the della Scala family, once rulers of Verona. Trusted counsellor of Sigismund whom he accompanied on his coronation voyage.

⁷ Branda da Castiglione.

⁸ "pridie": Since the cardinal had already left before 1 November, 10 days before, *pridie* here cannot mean yesterday.

⁹ Probably connected with the alliance of duke and council against the pope.

¹⁰ Alfonso Carillo de Albornoz.

¹¹ Christmas.

¹² Fudge, p. 259: *A charter of guarantees respecting the Hussites at Basel was drawn up. The sobering lesson of Jan Hus at Constance nearly two decades earlier prompted detailed precautions on the matter of safe-conducts. More than 200 were issued.*

10. Letter to the City government of Siena (18 December 1432, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: VI, f. 2v **.

Editions: HE, 10, pp. 26-28; WO, 1, 1: 10, pp. 16-18; (both based on VI).

Translations: RE, 4, pp. 70-72.

Magnifici ac potentissimi domini, domini mei gratiosissimi, post recommissionem.

[1] Si de rebus apud concilium gestis non saepe ad vos litterae deferuntur meae, haud mihi imputandum. Scribo enim crebro, neque actum quidquam est, quod litteris non commiserim. Longitudinem vero viarum et guerrarum impedimenta ita meis arbitror litteris obsistere, quemadmodum amicorum meorum ad me directis, quarum accipio paucas, non dicam rarissimas, etsi cuncti se frequenter scripsisse testentur. Sed id fero aegerrime, quod eas recipitis tardiores, si quae mearum aliquando magnificentiae vestrae redduntur. Eam tamen ob rem calamis numquam indulgebo. Impraesentiarum vero, quia res geritur magna ponderosaque, eam statui non semel dumtaxat verum saepius ad vos scribere, ut vel aliqua tandem ad magnificentiam vestram proficiscatur.

[2] Pridie igitur septimo kalendas Decembris cardinalis Sancti Petri ad Vincula, quem diu in America commorantem potuistis audire, profugus et quasi in exilium actus, sic Basileam ingressus est, ut *prius visus quam auditus* fuerit, quae res non minus augmenti concilio dedit quam emissa jam anno evoluta dissolutio detrimenti. Venere post hunc ex Gallia plures praelati, Gratianopolitanus et Silvanectensis episcopi inter alios. Demum, quod insidiae, quas papa in concilium strueret, notiores in dies essent, propositum in generali congregatione quid adversus eum statuendum esset. Sex oratores universitatis Parisiensis ad contionem erecti longam orationem habuere. Videri eis expediens papam collatione beneficiorum privari, quibus plurimos in concilium subornaret. Sic Benedictum olim papam fuisse circumventum, neque amplius expectandum oratoresque ad eum mitti, qui continuis et regis Romanorum et concilii multorumque principum legationibus fatigatus flecti numquam voluisset. Jam annum elapsam, quo dissolutionem emisserit, neque ab eo tempore umquam cessasse concilium perturbare. Procedendum itaque contra eum esse, pronuntiandam contumaciam, omni oboedientia spoliandum.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

10. Letter to the City government of Siena (18 December 1432, Basel).

Context: See letter 8.

Subject: News from the Council of Basel: recognition by princes, measures against the pope, and papal machinations.

Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords, my Most Gracious Lords, after recommendation.

[1] If you do not often receive letters from me on the councils' affairs, I am scarcely to blame, for I write often, and I commit everything that happens here to writing. But I believe that the long distances and the impediments of war obstruct my letters, just as I receive few – if any – of the letters my friends send to me, though they all assure me they have written often. And I much regret that those which Your Excellencies do receive arrive very late. Therefore, I shall never let my pen rest. For the present, since the matter being treated here is great and important, I have decided to write not only once but several times so that at least some of it will reach Your Excellencies.

[2] Some days before 27 November,¹ the cardinal of San Pietro in Vincoli,² whom you may have heard resided for some time in Ameria³ as a refugee and almost an exile, arrived in Basel – *seen before heard!*⁴ ⁵ This raised the status of the council no less than the withdrawal last year of its shameful dissolution.⁶ After him, several prelates arrived from France and among them the bishops of Grenoble⁷ and Senlis.⁸ Then, since the plots of the pope against the council daily became more and more evident, it was put to discussion in a general congregation what measures to take against him. Six envoys from the University of Paris gave a long speech to the assembly. They considered it expedient to deprive the pope of the collation of benefices⁹ that he could use to suborn many against the council. Thus the former Pope Benedict¹⁰ had been circumvented. They should wait no longer but stop sending envoys to him since he had never wanted to heed the frequent missions from the King of the Romans,¹¹ the council, and many princes. A year had already passed since he issued the [bull] of dissolution, and since then, he had never ceased his efforts to disrupt the council. Therefore, it was necessary to proceed against him, declare him contumacious, and deprive him of all obedience.

¹ According to CB, 2: 277, the cardinal arrived on 21 November 1432.

² Juan Cervantes (180/82-1453): Cardinal 1426. A papalist. Some-time employer of Piccolomini.

³ Amelia, a town in Umbria.

⁴ A Virgilian expression much used by Piccolomini, meaning a rapid arrival.

⁵ DRGB (RE), 335.

⁶ By the papal bull *Quoniam alto* of 12 November 1431, revised version of 18 December.

⁷ Aymon de Chissé II (d. 1450): Bishop of Nice 1422. Translated to see of Grenoble 1427.

⁸ Piccolomini probably refers to Jourdan Morin (ca. 1442): Professor of theology at the University of Paris. See Müller, 1: 290-300. In the conciliar protocols, he was erroneously designated as bishop-elect of Senlis. He was

incorporated into the council on 12 December 1432, 6 days before Piccolomini's letter. The actual bishop, Guillaume Hotot arrived later.

⁹ I.e., the granting of ecclesiastical offices.

¹⁰ Benedictus XIII [Pedro de Luna] (1328-1423): Pope (Avignonese obedience) from 1394 to his death.

¹¹ King Sigismund.

[3] Quindecim post haec ambassiatores electorum imperii verentes, ne illud executioni mandaretur, se missuros ex eis Romam aliquos dicebant, qui papam flexuri essent, rogare interim supersedendum. Eadem ducis Sabaudiae oratores petebant atque imperatoriae litterae. Res, quod gravis foret, in deputationibus agitata. Intempesta etiam nocte discussa consilia: hinc principes indutias petentes observandi videbantur, illinc papae machinationibus resistendum. Consilia in diversa vertebantur. Legatus autem, hominum quos habet aetas nostra sapientissimus, se ait viam invenisse, qua foret utrique parti provisum. Decretum esse faciendum, quo papae duo menses adderentur indutiarum, quibus elapsis, nisi concilio adhaeserit, *ex nunc prout ex tunc* sententia in eum lata omni pontificali administratione suspenderetur. Quod et ipsius summa omnium concordia fuisset obtentum, nisi ambassiatoribus electorum ducisque Sabaudiae nimis grave apparuisset. Conclusum denique est propter litteras imperatorias et principum legationes duobus insuper mensibus expectandum. Iterum tamen interea citandum papam, ut infra duos menses concilio adhaereat, alias elapso tempore sine alia vocatione procederetur adversus eum, ut jura volent et spiritus sanctus inspirabit. Super qua re die Jovis futura sessio est cavebiturque decreto nullius momenti futurum concilium, quod fama est Romae per pontificem evocari, excommunicanturque omnes praelati ad illud euntes, subituri omnium beneficiorum privationem eo facto, citanturque omnes officiales Romanae curiae sub poena privationis, si infra dies 80 ad concilium non comparuerint.

[3] Fifteen [days] later, ambassadors from the imperial electors¹ arrived.² Fearing that the proposal would be implemented, they said they would send some of their party to Rome to persuade the pope and asked that nothing be done in the meantime. The same was requested by the ambassadors of the Duke of Savoy³ and by the emperor,⁴ in a letter. Since the matter was serious, it was discussed in the deputations.⁵ The discussions continued into the night: on the one hand, it seemed necessary to heed the princes' request for a delay; on the other, it was necessary to resist the pope's machinations. Conflicting proposals were made. But the legate,⁶ wisest man of our age, said that he had found a way which would accommodate both parties. They should pass a decree adding two months to the time limit for the pope after which, if he did not adhere to the council, a sentence would be passed against him, which *immediately*⁷ suspended him from all papal administration. His proposal would have been unanimously carried if it had not seemed too severe to the ambassadors of the electors and the duke of Savoy. In the end, in consideration of the emperor's letter and the legations of the princes, it was decided to wait for two more months. In the meantime, the pope would once again be summoned to adhere to the council within two months. If he did not, they would not issue further citations but directly initiate proceedings against him, according to the laws and the inspiration from the Holy Spirit. A session on this matter will be held next Thursday when it will preemptively be decreed that a future council in Rome, rumoured to be summoned by the pope, will be invalid and that all prelates going to such a council will be excommunicated *eo facto* and deprived of all their benefices. Moreover, all officials of the Roman curia will be cited to appear at the council and punished with removal [from office] if they do not do so within 80 days.⁸

¹ The German prince-electors.

² Ca. 6 December, counting from the arrival of Cardinal Cervantes.

³ Amédée VIII (Savoy) (1383-1451): Count of Savoy 1391, elevated to duke by the emperor 1416. Elected antipope under the name of Felix V by the rump council in Basel 1439.

⁴ King Sigismund: Note that Piccolomini uses the title emperor, though Sigismund had not yet been crowned as such.

⁵ The Council of Basel had as its members not only bishops and abbots but also doctors of theology, representatives of cathedral chapters, monks, and

clerks of inferior orders who constantly outnumbered the prelates. The Committee of Twelve was a very influential coordinating and supervising body, with rotating membership. Piccolomini was often a member of that body and sometimes chairman, and he was evidently on the committee when the matter of the scrutiny of candidates for episcopal office was treated. Otherwise, the council fathers were members of one of the four deputations (deputationes): the Deputation on Faith (fidei), the Deputation on Peace (pacis), the Deputation of Reform (reforma-

torii), and the Deputation on General matters (pro communibus). Every decision made by three of these "deputations" received ratification for the sake of form in a General Congregation, and if necessary led to decrees promulgated in session. See also Piccolomini's *De rebus gestis Basileae* (RE, p. 333). See also Decaluwe, ch. 7: *Conciliar bureaucracy*

⁶ Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini

⁷ "ex nunc prout ex tunc": a legal term

⁸ On 18 December, the council did require the pope to unconditional annul his bulls of dissolution.

[4] Idibus vero Decembris duo episcopi Cosoronensis et Apamiarum ex parte cardinalis de Fuxo venerunt; hi questi legationem Avinionensem cardinali sancti Eustachii concessam fore, nam eam urbem comitatumque Venusinum ad cardinalem de Fuxo dicebant pertinere ex concessione pontificali; his nondum responsum. Affirmant aliqui ejus bullas falsas. Eodem die lectae litterae Johannis comitis Arminiaci, qui auxilium pollicetur concilio adversus comitem Fuxi, si quam pro Avionione controversiam fecerit.

[5] Sed nihil dubii est, cum regis Francorum adhaesionem habeamus ejusque nomine jam duo oratores sunt in concilio. Ex litteris cardinalis sancti Eustachii accepimus regem Castellae decrevisse concilio adhaerere delegisseque suos ambassiatores, quos affirmant aliqui jam iter arripuisse. Oratoribus regis Angliae missus salvus conductus pro parte ducis Austriae Friderici, quod illis timendus erat regis Gallorum affinis. Litterae Bohemorum pollicentur eorum legationem brevi affuturam. Sunt tamen, qui se vidisse asseverent litteras Eugenii hortantes eos, ne Basileam veniant habituros ab eo audientiam regemque. Quae res licet omni religioni videatur contraria, sancta¹ tamen concilii dissolutio.² Bellum adversus Senenses justissime motum piaeque Braccii sepultura credenda omnia faciunt. Haec in praesentia. Nihil est ulterius, quod mihi scribendum videatur, ad omnia magnificentiarum vestrarum mandata parato.

Ex Basilea, 15. kal. Januarii 1432.

Vestrae celsitudinis servitor et filius Aeneas Silvius Picholominus.

¹ sancti *em.* RE

² *Textus corruptus?*

[4] On 15 December, two bishops, of Conserans¹ and Pamiers,² arrived on behalf of the Cardinal de Foix. They complained that [the council] had appointed the Cardinal of Sant'Eustachio³ as legate to Avignon, for this city and the county of Venaissin belonged to the Cardinal of Foix by a papal grant.⁴ They have not yet been given an answer. Some claim that his⁵ bulls are false. On the same day, they read a letter from Count Jean d'Armagnac,⁶ who promises to support the council against the count of Foix,⁷ if he should raise a controversy about Avignon.

[5] But [the outcome] is not in doubt since we have the French king's adhesion [to the council] and two ambassadors from him are here now. Moreover, a letter from the Cardinal of Sant'Eustachio⁸ has informed us that the King of Castile⁹ has declared his adherence to the council and appointed his ambassadors, reported to have already begun their journey. A safe-conduct has been sent to the King of England¹⁰ on behalf of Duke Friedrich of Austria,¹¹ whom they feared as a neighbour and ally of the King of France.¹² A letter from the Bohemians promises that their legation will arrive shortly. Some, however, claim they have seen a letter from Eugenius exhorting them not to go to Basel since he himself would give them an audience and a king.¹³ This would appear to be against all morality¹⁴, but at any rate, the council is safe from dissolution. The just end to the war against the Sieneze¹⁵ and the religious¹⁶ burial of Braccio¹⁷ ¹⁸ make everything believable. So much for now. I have nothing more to write and await¹⁹ the command of Your Excellencies.

From Basel, 18 December 1432.

Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Your Highness' servant and son.

¹ Gérard II Faidit (d. 1432): Bishop of Conserans (Couserans) from 1425 to his death.

² Gérard de la Bricogne: Bishop of Pamiers, 1431-1434.

³ Cardinal Carillo de Albornoz.

⁴ CB, 2: 291.

⁵ The bulls given to the Cardinal of Foix.

⁶ Jean IV d'Armagnac (1396-1450): Count of Armagnac from 1418 to his death.

⁷ Jean I de Foix (1382-1436): Count of Foix from 1428 to his death.

⁸ Cardinal Carillo de Albornoz.

⁹ Juan II.

¹⁰ Henry VI

¹¹ Friedrich IV (Habsburg) (1382-1439): Duke of Austria (1402),

Count of Tyrol (1406). See DVI, ch. 35.

¹² Charles VII.

¹³ Possibly meaning that he would ensure their access to their king, Sigismund, his new ally, who would be crowned emperor on 31 May 1433, two weeks later.

¹⁴ "religio".

¹⁵ While Sigismund stayed in Siena on his way to be crowned in Rome, he managed to pressure the republic to return the conquered areas to the Florentines and to agree to a peace with them (Hoensch, p. 390).

¹⁶ "pia"

¹⁷ Braccio da Montone [Andrea Fortebraccio] (1368- 1424): Condottiero from Perugia. See DVI, ch. 9.

¹⁸ In the DVI from 1446, Piccolomini wrote about this burial: *He only lived for three days more. Since he had died excommunicate [5 June 1424], his body was brought to Rome, to the church of San Lorenzo fuori le Mure, and buried in unconsecrated earth. Later [in 1432], however, at the request of Niccolò Fortebraccio, who was close to him and mighty in arms, Pope Eugenius gave him absolution and ordered that his body be dug up and buried with great honours in a church in Perugia. When his body, or bones, was carried to Perugia, it was followed by a great storm that devastated all fields and vineyards [sect. 40].*

¹⁹ "promptus".

11. Letter to the City government of Siena (13 May 1433, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: VI, f. 5r **.

Editions: HE, 11, pp. 28-29; WO, 1, 1: 11, pp. 18-19; (both based on VI).

Magnifici atque potentes domini, domini mei colendissimi.

[1] Ex hac, quam nuper pacem cum hostibus fecistis, congratulor patriae meae, quoniam nomen pacis dulce est, et res ipsa cum jucunda tum salutaris, et eo magis laetor, quod illam non sine gloria et securitate permaxima amplexi estis, quapropter apud sacrum concilium magnis laudibus digni reputamini. Sacerrima vero haec synodus pergrato animo et hanc concordiam fert, quae inter duces vosque, Venetos et Florentinos conclusa est, et illam, quae inter summum pontificem et Caesarem perfecta dicitur. Utraque cordi est his patribus, qui pacem persumme colunt neque propter hoc animis defecere, sed ardentiores sunt arbitranturque faciliorem viam esse datam ad omnia perficienda, quae intendunt.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

11. Letter to the City government of Siena. (13 May 1433, Basel).

Context: At the beginning of the year 1433, the fathers of the Council of Basel conducted debates and negotiations with representatives of the Bohemian Hussites (who had proven unbeatable in war) with a view to obtaining a peaceful settlement. The discussions turned out reasonably well and became the foundation of a later agreement called the Bohemian Compacts.

Subject: Further information on the proceedings at the council.¹

Magnificent and Mighty Lords, my Right Worshipful Lords.

[1] I congratulate my fatherland on the peace recently made with the enemies,² for the name of peace is sweet, and the thing itself both happy and salutary. I rejoice even more because the peace [you have concluded] is peace with glory and security. Therefore, the Holy Council considers you to be worthy of great praise. Indeed, this Most Sacred Synod is very happy with the agreement concluded between the duke,³ you, the Venetians, and the Florentines,⁴ and with the agreement said to have been concluded between the Supreme Pontiff and the Emperor.⁵ Both are important to the Fathers here who greatly cultivate peace. Therefore, they are not discouraged by this but, on the contrary, much encouraged, believing that thus an easier road has been given them to achieve what they desire.⁶

¹ In a bull of 4 February, the council had declared that it would continue as a council in Basel.

² See previous letter.

³ Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

⁴ Peace of Ferrara signed in May 1433, which concluded the Third Lombard War.

⁵ The agreement between King Sigismund and the pope was concluded on 4 April 1433.

⁶ Piccolomini is evidently presuming that the peace between emperor and pope would enable the emperor to persuade the pope to come to terms with the council – on the council's conditions, of course. However, the treaty of 4

April was severely criticised in Basel as a betrayal of the emperor's previous promise to support the council (Hoensch, p. 391). This criticism may appear unfair given the emperor's stubborn insistence on reconciliation between pope and council before going to Rome for his coronation (Hoensch, pp. 382-383).

[2] Concilium in dies agetur: 7 sunt hic cardinales, inter quos et Bononiensis ardentissimus; 2 patriarchae, Antiochenus, Alexandrinus; archiepiscopi, episcopi, plurimi abbatesque, oratores regis Franciae, Angliae, Aragoniae, ducis Burgundiae, Sabaudiae, Mediolani, Clivensis, Austriae, Prutenorum, comitis Armeniaci. Sed inter hos oratores Burgundiae ducis nondum sunt incorporati, quia certant de praesidentia Anglici cum Francigenis et Burgundi cum oratoribus electorum imperii, qui sunt incorporati. Bohemi victi excessere et sub spe concordiae petiverunt mitti oratores concilii secum missique sunt 10. Reliqua omitto. Sentietis una dierum grande aliquid.

[3] Concordia inter Gallos et Anglicos desperata est. Pruteni et Poloni grandes exercitus struunt, ut invicem pro veteri odio certent. Comes Fuxi parat exercitum, ut obsideat Avinionem rogatu papae, sed frustra nititur. Validior longe pars nostra ibi est, et comes Armeniaci offert se ad resistendum sibi, immo ad excludendum eum suis sedibus. Reliquum nihil habeo, de quo vestras dominationes faciam certiores, promptissimus ad mandatorum vestrorum executionem.

Ex Basilea, 13. die Maii 1433.

Vestrarum magnificarum dominationum filius et servus Aeneas Silvius de Piccolominibus.

[2] The council grows daily: now there are seven cardinals here and among them the Cardinal of Bologna,¹ a most dedicated man. There are also the two patriarchs of Antioch² and Alexandria,³ archbishops, many bishops and abbots, the ambassadors of the kings of France,⁴ England⁵ and Aragon,⁶ the dukes of Burgundy,⁷ Savoy,⁸ Milan,⁹ Cleve, Austria,^{10,11} the Prussians,¹² and the count of Armagnac.¹³ Of these, the ambassadors of the Duke of Burgundy have not yet been incorporated because the English and the French are fighting about the presidency with the imperial electors, who are incorporated. The Bohemians have been defeated¹⁴ and left¹⁵. Hoping for an agreement, they asked that envoys from the council be sent with them, so 10 were sent.¹⁶ I omit the rest. One of these days, you will hear something great.¹⁷

[3] There appears to be no hope for peace between the French and the English. The Prussians and the Poles are mobilising great armies to fight each other out of old hatred. At the pope's request, the count of Foix¹⁸ is preparing an army to besiege Avignon. He will not be successful, for our party there is much stronger, and the Count of Armagnac has offered to oppose him and even drive him from the places he occupies. Having nothing more to report to Your Lordships. I await your orders.

From Basel, 13 May 1433.

Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini, your Magnificent Lordships' son and servant.

¹ Niccolò Albergati (1373-1445): Appointed cardinal 1426. Later employer and mentor of Piccolomini.

² Jean Mauroux.

³ Vitalis de Mauléon (d. 1435): Latin patriarch of Alexandria 1428 to his death. Bishop of Rodez 1417-1428.

⁴ King Charles VII.

⁵ King Henry VI.

⁶ Alfonso V (Aragon) (1396-1458): King of Aragon from 1416, Count of Barcelona. King of Naples from 1442 to his death.

⁷ Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

⁸ Duke Amédée VIII.

⁹ Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

¹⁰ Duke Adolf I of Cleve (1373-1448): Count, later duke of Cleve from 1393 to his death.

¹¹ Philippe III, Amédée VIII, Filippo Maria Visconti, Adolf I, Friedrich IV.

¹² The Order of the Teutonic Knights.

¹³ Jean IV d'Armagnac.

¹⁴ The Hussite delegates had certainly not been defeated by the conciliar debaters, but apparently, some grounds of compromise had been found, which would later result in the so-called Bohemian Compacts.

¹⁵ DRGB (RE), 337-339

¹⁶ The first meeting between the council and the first Hussite delegation took place on 10 January 1433. The Hussite delegation left Basel on 14 April 1433. A second Hussite delegation was to arrive later.

¹⁷ Piccolomini presumably refers to a final agreement between the council and the Hussites, which would be quite a success for the council and cause a sensation in Europe.

¹⁸ Jean I de Foix, coming to the aid of his brother, the papally appointed governor, Pierre de Foix.

12. Letter to the City government of Siena (24 June 1433, Basel)¹.

Manuscript: VI, f. 6r **.

Editions: HE, 12, p. 29; WO, 1, 1: 12, pp. 19-20; (both based on VI).

Magnifici ac potentissimi domini, domini mei observandissimi, humili recommendatione praemissa.

[1] Die 2. Julii fiet sessio 12. in hoc sacro concilio. Citabitur dominus noster tertio, ut infra dies 60 pure ac simpliciter concilio adhaereat et in dicto termino adhaesisse notificet, quod si negligat *ex nunc prout ex tunc* sententia in eum lata suspensus sit ab omni administratione papali, quod maximi negotii est, et eapropter duxi vestras dominationes advisandas. Hoc in deputationibus et in congregatione generali obtentum est. Recommitto me magnificis dominationibus vestris, paratissimum ad omnia mandata vestra.

Ex Basilea, 24. Junii 1433.

Earundem magnificarum dominationum servulus et filius Aeneas Silvius de Piccolominibus.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

12. Letter to the City government of Siena (24 June 1433, Basel).

Context: In the summer of 1433, the Council of Basel moved decisively against Pope Eugenius in Rome.

Subject: On the council's citation of the pope to adhere to the council.

Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords, my Right Worshipful Lords, after humble recommendation.

[1] On 2 July, the 12th Session of this Holy Council will be held. Our Lord¹ will be cited for the third time to, within 60 days, purely and simply² adhere to the council and before then to notify the council of his adhesion. If he fails to do so, he will be sentenced *immediately* and suspended from all papal administration. This [matter] is so important that I have decided to inform Your Lordships. The measure has obtained the support of the deputations and a general congregation. I recommend myself to Your Magnificent Lordships and am at your service.

From Basel, 24 June 1433.

Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini, your Magnificent Lordships' servant and son.

¹ The pope.

² I.e., unconditionally.

13. Letter to the City government of Siena (2 August 1433, Basel)¹.

Manuscript: VI, f. 7r **.

Editions: HE, 13, pp. 29-30; WO, 1, 1: 13, pp. 20-21; (both based on VI).

Translations: RE, 5, pp. 73-74.

Magnifici ac potentissimi domini, domini mei singularissimi, humili recommendatione praemissa.

[1] Die 13. Julii facta est sessio 12. hujus sacrosanctae Basiliensis synodi, in qua duo decreta publicata sunt, unum de electionibus et confirmationibus ad jus commune reductis, alterum de citatione papae, ut infra dies 60 pure ac simpliciter concilio adhaereat, alias *ex nunc prout ex tunc* suspensus est ab omni administratione papali. Et quoniam omnium spes est eum in sua pertinacia duraturum, sacrum concilium destinavit ad omnes² Christianorum principes et communitates oratores mittere jura sua declaraturos rogaturosque, ut Eugenio contumace atque suspenso concilio potius oboedientiam praestent quam papae. Ex his jam plures iter cepere, dieque 26. Julii egressi sunt urbem istam episcopus Uticensis et abbas Concensis, oratores sacri concilii ad Italiam. Hi prius ducem Mediolani, deinde Venetos, post marchionem Ferrariae ac Mantuae, exinde Florentinos et statim dominationes vestras visitabunt. De qua re volui easdem certiores facere, supplicans humiliter, ut eosdem honorifice, quemadmodum semper soliti estis, recipiatis. Ipsi enim redeuntes in congregatione generali narrabunt, qualiter visi apud quosque fuerint, magnumque decus erit florentissimae urbis vestrae oratores universalis ecclesiae magnificentissime recepisse.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² omnium WO

13. Letter to the city government of Siena (2 August 1433, Basel).

Context: See the previous letter.

Subject: News from the council: Session 12. Conciliar mission to Italy.

Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords, my Eminent Lords, after humble recommendation.

[1] The 12th Session of this Sacrosanct Synod of Basel was held on 13 July.¹ Two decrees were issued. One returned elections and confirmations to common law.^{2 3} The other cited the pope to purely and simply adhere to the council within sixty days, on pain of *immediate* suspension from all papal administration.⁴ And since all expect the pope to persist in his obstinacy, the Holy Council has decided to despatch ambassadors to all Christian princes and communities⁵ to declare the council's rights and request of them to obey the council rather than the pope, now that Eugenius has [been declared] contumacious and suspended.⁶ Several of the envoys have already left, and on 26 July the bishop of Uzès⁷ and the abbot of Conques,⁸ ambassadors of the Holy Council to Italy, left the city. First, they will visit the Duke of Milan,⁹ then the Venetians, afterwards the marquesses of Ferrara¹⁰ and Mantua,¹¹ then the Florentines, and directly afterwards Your Lordships.¹² I wish to inform you of this, humbly begging you to receive them with the customary honours. For when they return here, they will relate in a general congregation how they were received in the various places, and it will be a great distinction for your flourishing city to have received the envoys of Universal Church splendidly.

¹ Stieber, p. 19.

² "*secundum juris communis dispositionem*".

³ Decree *Quemadmodum in construenda*, COD, p. 469.

⁴ Not in COD. The decision may not have had the form of a proper decree.

⁵ I.e., republics.

⁶ CB, 2: 450.

⁷ Bertrand de Cadoene (d. 1441): Bishop of Saint-Flour 1413-1426, and of Uzès from 1427 to his death. Müller, II, pp. 573-584.

⁸ Raimond IV de La Romegüière (d. ca. 1449): Abbot of Conques. An active member of the council, belonging to the conciliarist part (Müller, 2: 672-680). In his *De Gestis Concilii Basiliensis Commentarii* (1440), Piccolomini said about him that *he was particularly skilled in the knowledge of canon law and well-versed in the affairs of the council through his great experience, who had served on many missions for the holy Synod* (Piccolomini: *De gestis* (Hay/Smith), p. 214).

⁹ Filippo Maria Visconti.

¹⁰ Niccolò III d'Este (ca. 1383-1441): Marquess of Ferrara and Modena from 1393 to his death. See DVI, ch. 11.

¹¹ Gianfrancesco I Gonzaga (1395-1444): Ruler of Mantua from 1407 to his death. Obtained the title of Marquess from Emperor Sigismund in 1433. Condottiero. See DVI, ch. 13.

¹² It was later decided to limit the mission to Venice, to persuade it to support the council against the pope (Müller, 2: 675).

[2] Hic autem expectamus infra paucos dies cardinalem Sanctae Crucis, qui jam domum conduxit, similiter cardinalem Arelatensem, qui Januae est, item cardinalem de Cypro, non multo post. Cardinalis de Fuxo, qui Avinionem occupavit, summe optat confirmationem concilii, sed cuncti negant, unde ipsum poenitet factorum, quia privatus est cardinalatu atque omnibus dignitatibus neque restitui potest nisi per concilium. Alia non habeo referenda, paratissimus ad omnia mandata dominationum vestrarum, quibus me humillime facio recommissum.

Ex Basilea, Augusti 4. nonas Augusti 1433.

Earundem magnificarum dominationum servulus Aeneas Silvius de Picholominibus.

[2] Here we are expecting, in a few days, the Cardinal of Santa Croce,¹ who has already rented a house, and also the Cardinal of Arles,² who is in Genoa, and shortly afterwards the Cardinal of Cyprus.³ The Cardinal of Foix,⁴ who has occupied Avignon,⁵ greatly desires the council's confirmation, but all refuse it. Thus he will repent of his actions since he has been deprived of the cardinalate and all his offices and can only be reinstated by the council. Having nothing more to report, I am at the service of Your Lordships, to whom I humbly recommend myself.

From Basel, 2 August 1433.

Enea Silvio Piccolomini, humble servant of your Magnificent Lordships.

¹ Cardinal Niccolò Albergati

² Aleman, Louis (ca. 1390-1450): Bishop of Maguelone 1418 to 1423. Archbishop of Arles from 1423 to his death. Cardinal 1426. Beatified 1527. Dominant perso-

nality and later president at the Council of Basel, leader of French party and the conciliarists.

³ Hugues de Lusignan (1380/-1385-1442): Archbishop of Nicosia (1421), Latin Patriarch of Jeru-

salem (1424), Cardinal (1426). Supported the council against the pope.

⁴ Pierre de Foix.

⁵ See letters 8, 10, 11

14. Letter to the City government of Siena (17 November and 5 December 1433, Milan)¹.

Manuscripts: British Library / Additamenta 21517, f. 7r *

Editions: RTA, XI, pp. 168-170; HE, 14, pp. 30-33 (on the basis of the BL manuscript); WO, 1, 1:14, pp. 21-24 (on the basis of the RTA edition).

Translations: RE, 6, pp. 74-78.

Magnifici ac potentissimi domini, domini mei observandissimi, post recommendationem debitam.

[1] Speravi, cum superiores litteras magnificentiis vestris conscripsi, dominum meum statim Basileam repetiturum, qui ducalis orator eo creatus erat, meque iturum secum, sed sumus adhuc Mediolani. Jussit enim princeps, nisi noviter aliud mandasset, dominus meus ut expectaret dies aliquot. Interea quid actum sit in concilio, amicorum litteris omne tenemus, quod vestris magnificis dominationibus statui omnino aperiendum, ut debeo teneorque.

[2] Post sessionem igitur duodecimam, qua citatus est papa sub poena suspensionis, ut infra 60 dies adhaerere, haec acta sunt. Nam 59. die citationis termini ad instantiam imperatoris 30 dies additi sunt, quarum ultima affuit ipse Caesar per Rhenum navi praecipatus, *prius visus quam auditus*, congregatisque patribus ad 8 dies prorogari terminum obtinuit, quibus varia practicavit, nixus omnino papam in cardinalium gratiam redigere. Quod cum non impetraret², rursus octo dies postulavit, quibus habitis publice singulas deputationes, quae nationum loco sunt, quasi procurator quidam adibat Venetis circumseptus.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² impetraret WO

14. Letter to the government of Siena (17 November and 5 December 1433, Milan).

Context: Since Piccolomini's last letter (nr. 13), his employer Nicodemo della Scala had left Basel, and instead Piccolomini had taken employment as a secretary with Bishop Bartolomeo Visconti. Emperor Sigismund had arrived in Basel on 11 October to put pressure on the council fathers to seek an accommodation with the pope who had just crowned him emperor in Rome. It would be a major embarrassment for the emperor if the council deposed the pope who had made him a legitimate emperor.

Subject: Activities at the Council of Basel from 13 July to 8 November 1433.

Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords, my Right Worshipful Lords, after due recommendation.

[1] When I wrote my last letter to Your Excellencies, I expected that my lord¹ would quickly regain Basel since he had been appointed the duke's² ambassador there, and that I would accompany him³. But we are still in Milan since the prince required my lord to wait some days unless otherwise ordered. But we know all that has happened at the council in the meantime through letters from friends, and I have decided to share this fully with your Magnificent Lordships, as I should and am obliged to.

[2] So, this is what happened after the 12th Session,⁴ in which the pope was cited, on pain of suspension, to adhere⁵ to the council with 60 days. On the 59th day, at the emperor's insistence, another 30 days were added to the time limit of the citation. And on the very last day [of the extended period], the emperor himself appeared after a rushed journey by boat on the Rhine, *seen before heard*.⁶ He gathered the Fathers and obtained another postponement of eight days.⁷ During those days, he manoeuvred intensely, endeavouring to have the pope completely regain the cardinals' favour.⁸ When he did not achieve this, he demanded and got another eight days, during which he publicly as if he was a common procurator – accompanied by Venetians⁹ - attended meetings in the [four] deputations that have replaced the nations.¹⁰

¹ Bishop Bartolomeo Visconti.

² Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

³ Since Piccolomini relates the emperor's arrival in Basel on the basis of epistolary information from friends in Basel, Visconti and Piccolomini must have left Basel before the emperor's arrival on 11 October. Except for a brief visit with Cardinal Albergati in June 1435, Piccolomini would not return to Basel and settle there before Spring 1436.

⁴ 2nd July 1433.

⁵ Within 60 days.

⁶ A Virgilian expression much used by Piccolomini.

⁷ In his DRGB, Piccolomini lets the emperor hold a pretty (fictive)

speech to the council fathers (RE, 340).

⁸ The cardinals were much frustrated by the pope's stance towards the council and even, in a private meeting in Basel during the month of September (probably), discussed his deposition. But as they could not agree on a successor (Albergati vs Cesarini), they did not pursue that course. See DVI, sect. 260.

⁹ CB, 5: 66. During the emperor's stay in Italy in connection with his coronation voyage, he entered an agreement with the Venetians, long-time enemies of the empire, see Hoensch, p. 395. The Germans, less nimble in their

strategy making, were - according to Piccolomini - scandalised at this development.

¹⁰ At the Council in Konstanz, the members had been divided into groups by nation. At the Council of Basel, it was decided, in order to avoid nationalist entanglements, to replace this system with the systems of deputations, see above. This measure, however, would prove ineffective in preventing less formal national groupings and curbing the national interests affecting the council. For Piccolomini's remarks on this issue in the DRGB, see RE, p. 333.

[3] Pollicebatur adhaesurum Eugenium, si concilium repromitteret nihil se de titulo papatus intromissurum. Id precibus, id pollicitationibus, id denique minis extorquere volebat, jamque in ejus sententiam unus ex cardinalibus, ex reliquis plurimi inclinabant metu magis quam ratione inducti. Voluit tum legatus sciscitari, quae foret oppidanorum sententia, libertatem concilii an essent servaturi, quam ut illibatam promiserunt etiam invito Caesare, subito eundem adivit injusta ipsum et turpissima reprehendit postulantem, qui pactum super pontificatu vellet fieri.

[4] Tum, cum instaret dies termini, tertios 8 dies impetravit firmus animo, ut Eugenio quoad posset provideret, securitatem ipsius per fas nefasque extorturus, conatusque est concilium scindere. Convocatis enim Germanis omnibus, sibine - ut par erat - parere vellent, interrogavit. Illi, ut erant odio Venetorum incensi, quos Caesaris utriusque lateri videbant assistere, parituros sese dixerunt, dum justa et licita imperaret et nihil de rebus ad concilium pertinentibus. Nihil hac responsione infractus animi Caesar ardentius propositum persequatur. Tum cardinalis Sancti Petri ad Vincula, vir profecto et animo et consilio praestantissimus, imperatorem domi convenit “Dabis”que inquit “veniam, Caesar, si pauca pro utilitate ecclesiae et honore tuo dixerim?” Atque ut ille annuit, “Admiramur,” ait, “omnes, qui te colimus, Caesar, inconstantiam levitatemque tuam, qui fidem sacro concilio oratoribus, litteris, et aurea bulla praestitam floccifacias illorum maxime impulsu, qui totiens tuo capiti struxerunt insidias. Quod nemo, ut facias, nisi pecunia corruptus, existimat. Sed majori est admiratione dignum, quod tuo statui adverseris, qui olim prudentissimus putabare¹. Quae opinio de te perit, cum adversum te concilio cernimus, quo nemo indiget magis quam tu, cum propter Bohemos tum propter alios plerosque principes, qui tuo statui coronaeque essent infestissimi, ni metu concilii sese tenerent.” Haec et alia multa cum animose constanterque dixisset, sublacrimavit imperator et pauca reddidit. Sed non ante recessit cardinalis ille integerrimus, quam imperatorem placavit concilioque conjunxit.

¹ putabaris WO

[3] He promised that Eugenius would adhere to the council if the council promised not to contest his legitimacy as pope.¹ He pressed on to obtain this through requests, promises and, finally, threats.² Already one cardinal and many of the others were giving in, moved by fear more than by reason. Then the legate³ asked the townspeople [of Basel] about their position: would they uphold the council's freedom⁴ when they promised to keep it intact, even against the emperor, he immediately went to the emperor and rebuked him for demanding unjust and most shameful things in his desire for some agreement concerning the papacy.

[4] But the emperor, unshaken, insisted on and obtained a third postponement of eight days, [endeavouring] to get the best possible arrangement for Eugenius and to extort, justly or unjustly, his security, endeavouring to split the council. He summoned all the Germans and asked them if they would support him, as they should. But they were incensed at the sight of the Venetians at the emperor's side and said they would obey him as long as he ordered just and permissible things in matters not pertaining to the council. Undaunted by this answer, the emperor pursued his goal even more energetically. Then the Cardinal of San Pietro in Vincoli,⁵ a man of remarkable sagacity and circumspection, went to the emperor's residence and said to him, "Emperor, will you allow me to say a few things for the good of the Church and your own honour?" When the emperor agreed, he said, "All we, who revere you, Emperor, are amazed at your inconstancy and fickleness. You are now flouting the promise you made to the Holy Council both by ambassadors, letters, and a golden bull.⁶ You even do so at the instigation of people, who have so many times plotted against you.⁷ All believe that you would only do this if you had been corrupted by money. But it is even more astonishing that you weaken your own position. Once, you were reputed to be a most prudent [prince], but this reputation is fading away as we see you in conflict with the council. For nobody needs this council more than you because of the Bohemians⁸ and because of the other princes, who would act most inimically against you and your crown unless they were restrained by fear of the council." When he had said this and many other things, with ardour and firmness, the emperor was saddened and only said a few words. But before leaving, this most upright cardinal soothed the emperor's feelings and reconciled him with the council.

¹ The emperor was definitely not interested in the council rejecting the pope who had just crowned him since it would weaken his imperial legitimacy and the basis for his policies, e.g., for gaining effective kingship in Bohemia.

² Hoensch, pp. 406-407: *Sigismund verlor keine Zeit ... um die drohende Absetzung des Papstes doch noch zu abwenden und einen Weg zu finden, der es Eugen IV. erlauben würde, unter Wahrung seines Gesichts und der Würde seines Amtes die Kirchen-*

versammlung vorbehaltlos anzukennen.

³ Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini.

⁴ As they had promised by oath before the council.

⁵ Cardinal Juan Cervantes.

⁶ See the DVI, sect. 125 and 128: *The council was greatly encouraged by a golden letter from Sigismund, promising his firm support. But Eugenius adamantly resisted them, relying on Venetian, Florentine, and his own forces. ... Afterwards, he [Sigismund] went*

to Rome where he was crowned emperor and promised Eugenius to recognise him as pope as long as he lived. Some people attributed this to inconstancy since he had previously promised to support the council. See also VO, 1: 1, p. 57.

⁷ I.e., the Venetians.

⁸ The council's settlement with the Bohemian Hussites was a condition of Sigismund's becoming effective ruler of Bohemia.

[5] Placuit tamen, ut aliquid Caesar fecisse videretur, aliam dilationem dari Eugenio, factaque est consensu omnium sessio 14., in qua lectum est decretum tria potissime continens: datur primo dilatio 90 dierum, ut papa adhaereat sub poenis in alio decreto contentis, cum forma tamen, secundum quam debeat adhaerere, paulo mitiori quam prima. Secundo mandatur sibi, ut quandam bullam contra concilium factam uno de tribus modis in decreto contentis revocet et annullet. Et tertio praecipitur, ut omnes processus contra supposita sacri concilii fulminatos et praesertim contra cardinales de Cypro, sancti Sixti et Firmanum irriteret aut annullet. Quae nisi fecerit et annuntiaverit in praedicto termino per bullam plumbeam, suspensus intelligitur ab administratione papatus. Si autem id fecerit, pollicetur concilium se honoratum summum pontificem, quantum cum Deo fieri poterit. Quae verba “quantum cum Deo” nolebant oratores Venetorum et ipsius Eugenii inseri decreto, sed inserta sunt ipsis invitis. Haec acta sunt 7. die Novembris et octava incipit terminus 90 dierum. Fuit praesens ipse Caesar infulatus coronatusque cum pluviali, Veneti noluerunt interesse.

[6] Altera die papalistas ac Veneti recesserunt. Imperator dietim magis cum concilio se conjungit, ex quo creditur res bene successuras, quamquam in maximo discrimine negotium fuit. Sed consuevit navicula Petri, quamvis magnis fluctibus agitata, numquam submergi, ut Jottus pinxit Romae apud sanctum Petrum. Non miremini igitur, magnifici domini, si tot dilationes datae sunt, quoniam in periculo constitutos patres sic oportuit roganti et quoddammodo minanti obtemperare. Sed iudicio omnium hac sessione firmatum est concilium, et ipse jam Caesar Venetorum consortio liberatus concilio pulcherrime favet.

[5] But to make it appear that the emperor had achieved something,¹ they decided to grant another extension to Eugenius. Thus, in the 14th Session,² a unanimous decree³ was read whose three major points were: First, a further extension of 90 days is granted during which the pope must adhere to the council on pain of [the censures] contained in the previous decree, but using a milder formula of adherence than the one in that decree. Second, the pope is ordered to revoke and annul a certain bull against the council in one of three ways set out in the decree. And third, he is ordered to void or annul all the measures he has fulminated against the acts of the council and especially those against the cardinals of Cyprus,⁴ San Sisto,⁵ and Fermo.⁶ If he does not do that and announce it in a bull under the leaden seal⁷ within the stipulated period, he will be considered as suspended from the administration of the papacy. But if he does it, the council promises to honour him as supreme pontiff, as “much as it can with God”.⁸ These words the Venetian and papal ambassadors did not want to be included in the decree, but they were included against their opposition. This was done on 7 November, and eight days afterwards, the extension of 90 days began. The emperor attended the session wearing his imperial crown and mantle.⁹

[6] The next day,¹⁰ the papal envoys¹¹ and the Venetians left.¹² The emperor daily becomes more united with the council, wherefore it is believed that things will turn out well, though the whole matter has been highly perilous. But Saint Peter’s Bark never sinks though tossed around by great waves, as depicted by Giotto¹³ in Rome at Saint Peter’s.¹⁴ So, do not wonder, Magnificent Lords, that there have been so many extensions, for the imperilled Fathers had to accommodate a demanding and threatening emperor. But all consider that the council has been strengthened in this session and that the emperor, now that he is freed of Venetian company,¹⁵ favours the council wondrously.

¹ I.e., a face-saving device.

² 14th Session, held on 7 November 1433.

³ Cf. COD, p. 472.

⁴ Cardinal Hugues de Lusignan.

⁵ Juan de Casanova (1387-1436): Spanish Dominican. Bishop of Bosa (1424), of Elne (1425). Cardinal (1426). A papalist.

⁶ Cardinal Domenico Capranica.

⁷ Conferring the highest degree of authenticity on papal documents.

⁸ “quantum cum Deo poterit”: a traditional expression that indicates some kind of religiously motivated reservation, and therefore unacceptable to the papal party.

⁹ In his DRGB, Piccolomini wrote about the event: *At last, when the affair could not be resolved*

otherwise, Sigismund acquiesced to the council. The Venetians who had come also agreed, and it pleased the council to draft a form according to which, unless Eugenius should send apostolic letters to the council within ninety days, he should suffer the prior penalty. It was decided, however, that the dissolution was to be revoked as less than valid, and that the pope should adhere to the council as properly continued (RE, p. 341).

¹⁰ 8 November 1433.

¹¹ “papalists”: or the papalists. But the general papalist exodus from the council happened later.

¹² One of the Venetians was Andrea Donato, an important Venetian official and diplomat,

who was sent as an ambassador of the council to Rome and was instrumental in negotiating an agreement leading to full papal recognition of the council, see Gulino.

¹³ Giotto di Bondone (ca. 1267-1337): Florentine painter and architect.

¹⁴ The Navicella (literally “little ship”) or Bark of St. Peter. A large mosaic by Giotto da Bondone which occupied a great part of the wall above the entrance arcade of the old Saint Peter’s Basilica. Piccolomini, who refers to the mosaic in other writings, must have seen it when he visited Rome in 1426, see DVI sect. 91 and 100.

¹⁵ The Venetians left the council on 8 November 1433.

[7] Haec sunt, quae verissimis amicorum litterae accepta volui vestris magnificis dominationibus conscribere, quibus me meosque magnopere facio commendatos.

Ex Mediolano, 27. Novembris 1433. Earundem magnificarum dominationum servulus Aenea Silvius de Picholominibus.

Retinui has litteras usque in hanc diem neminem inveniens, cui committerem vestris magnificis dominationibus deferendas. Interea novatas res in concilio fore intelligo, quoniam sententia imperatoris mutatur in dies, de quo firmum aliquid scribere difficillimum est. Cardinales sunt in maximo timore constituti. Morituum se cum papa caesar affirmat clamatque continuo, et licet cardinales morituros se pro fide asserant, timent tamen admodum et, si quo pacto arbitrentur posse inde tute recedere, jam id fecissent, sed nesciunt, quo se vertant. Haec noviter ex Basilea. Ludovicus de Sancto Severino firmiter ad illustrissimum principem defecit a Venetis. Equites mille ducentos, pedites quadringentos habet ad stipendia ducis. Marchio Montisferrati est hic in domo, quae olim fuit comitis Carminiolae. De Romandiola dietim expectantur novitates aliquae. Alia non sunt. Recommitto me dominationibus vestris magnificis.

Ex Mediolano, 5. Decembris.

[7] This is what I have learned from most truthful letters from friends and wanted to communicate to your Magnificent Lordships, to whom I earnestly recommend myself and mine. From Milan, 17 November 1433. Their Magnificent Lordships' humble servant, Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini.

I have kept this letter until now since I could find no one to whom I could give it to bring to your Magnificent Lordships. In the meantime, I understand there are new developments at the council since the emperor continually changes his mind so that it is difficult to write something certain about it. The cardinals are terrified. The emperor maintains and continuously cries out that he will die with the pope, and though the cardinals declare they will die for the Faith, they are in great fear, and if they thought they could depart safely, they would have done so, but they know not where to turn. This I have just heard from Basel.

Luigi da Sanseverino¹ has now definitely defected from the Venetians to the Most Illustrious Prince.² He has 1,200 horsemen and 400 foot soldiers paid for by the duke. The Marquess of Monferrat³ is here, residing in the house that previously belonged to Count Carmagnola.⁴ From Romagna, news is expected every day. There is nothing else. I recommend myself to your Magnificent Lordships.

From Milan, 5 December.

¹ San Severino, Luigi da: Italian condottiero from a military family.

² Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

³ Paleologo, Gian Giacomo (1395-1445): Marquess of Monferrat from 1418 to his death. He stayed

in Milan in 1432 for negotiations in connection with a conflict between Monferrat on the one side and Milan and Savoy on the other, leading to territorial concessions to the two latter states.

⁴ Francesco Bussone [AKA Count of Carmagnola] (c. 1382-1432): Italian condottiero. Had defected from the Duke of Milan to the Venetians.

15. Letter to the City government of Siena (1 July 1434, Milan)¹.

Manuscripts: VI, f. 8r-9r **.

Editions: HE, 15, pp. 33-36; WO, 1, 1: 15, pp. 24-28; (both on the basis of VI).

Translations: RE, 7, pp. 78-82.

[1] {8r} Proximis diebus, magnifici ac potentissimi domini, domini mei singularissimi, cum Basileae forem, quod eo me miserat dominus meus ob nonnulla expedienda negotia, Johannem Massetanum conveni, qui caesaream majestatem pro debita sibi pecunia consequitur. Is retulit habuisse litteras ex consistorio vestro et sibi directa et mihi; meas, cum ibi non essem, misisse se Mediolanum. Illas numquam habui, quapropter nihil admirationis esse debet, si non respondi. Eas autem si habuissem, satisfacissem mandatis vestris pro virili et ingenio meo. Quid autem peterent dominationes vestrae non scio, tantum arbitror, quod novitates conciliares ex me peteretis. Cui rei potuissem abunde satisfacere et potero semper durante concilio, ubicumque sim etiam extra concilium, sic certificor quotidie omnium rerum ex litteris amicorum.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

15. Letter to the City government of Siena (1 July 1434, Milan).

Context: Since the previous letter, Piccolomini's employer, the Bishop of Novara, had been recalled to Milan, and Piccolomini had accompanied him there.

Subject: Piccolomini defends himself against accusations of mendacity. News from Basel and the council fathers' reaction to the Roman uprising against the pope.

[1] Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords, my Eminent Lords, some days ago I was in Basel on some business for my lord, and there I met Giovanni da Massa¹ who is pursuing his Imperial Majesty to get payment of money owed to him.² He told me he had received letters from your consistory both for himself and for me, but that since I was not there,³ he had forwarded mine to Milan. I never received it, though, and therefore it is not strange that I have not replied. If I had received it, I would have carried out your demands to the best of my ability. I do not know what your Lordships requested but presume that you asked me for news from the council. Such a request I could have satisfied amply and can do as long as the council continues, wherever I am, even when not present at the council. For I receive daily letters from my friends informing me about everything that happens there.

¹ Massa, Giovanni: Siennese envoy to the Council of Basel. It was possibly he who had told the Siennese government that Piccolomini's reports were unreliable.

He may not have appreciated Piccolomini's independent reporting to Siena.

² Giovanni had apparently lent money to the emperor to help

finance his coronation voyage to Rome.

³ In Basel.

[2] Quas quidem novitates etiam non requisitus scripsisse libenter et assidue collegio vestro, nisi criminosos quosdam me audivissem apud magnificentias vestras, quod non vera scribebam nec vero similia, increpabantque me plurimi, quod magnificis dominis meis mendacia intimarem notabarque ignominia ex illa re, pro qua debuissim maxime commendari. Sic me certiore fecere hi, quibus carus sum. Ea res magnam mihi bilem commovit miratusque sum admodum mendacem me reputari apud dominationes vestras, qui semper vera consuevi scribere, priusque mori vellem quam mendacia narrare non solum vobis, quos ante omnes magni facio et colo et observo, sed cuicumque etiam vili et inculto homini. Credo omnes litteras meas, quas obsignavi hactenus, extare et servari apud cancellarium vestrum. Ego, ut videatur innocentia mea, cuperem, ut omnes litterae viderentur et relegerentur meae me praesente et obrectatoribus meis, et si quid scriptum a me falso inveniretur, vellem non solum falsi damnari, sed tamquam proditor patriae laesae majestatis puniri, quoniam scio nihil me umquam falso enarrasse dominationibus vestris. Sed hi falsa obrepserunt omnino, qui me mendacem dicunt, sint qui velint, vocentur quibus velint nominibus. Ego sum haec, quae dico, semper ad probandum paratus non vulgaribus testibus sed omni exceptione majoribus. Licet res postea mutatae fuerint, non tamen sequitur falsa fuisse, quae scripsi, quoniam hodie unum fieri potest, cujus contrarium cras concludatur. Non utar pluribus, quia spero dominationes vestras excusatum me fore veritatemque meam et innocentiam in dies vobis notiore futuram. Ego vero quidquid potero sciveroque, dummodo sciam gratum fore, enarrabo dominationibus vestris. Sum enim patriae debitor et ita jure compellor, ut faciam, nisi molestum patriae fuerit. *Jubet enim Plato, si nostro credimus Ciceroni, tantum in re publica contendere, quantum probare tuis civibus possis.* Tacebo itaque deinceps, nisi utiliter laborare me agnoscam.

[3] Nunc volo aliqua de concilio referre, quae forsitan apud vos aliter enarrantur, dicamque verissima, quia pauci dies sunt, quibus ex Basilea reversus sum. Ut primum vox venit Basileam captum esse papam, subitus rumor exortus est, Venetique et alii multi clamitarunt scelestissimum facinus Romanos perpetrasse, qui manus iniecissent *in Christum domini*, qui summum pontificem, qui Christi vicarium, qui unicum in terris potestatem comprehendissent, subitoque facta congregatione praelatorum varii varia loquebantur. Erant qui maximis poenis Romanos vellent afficere, excommunicationibus, interdictis privationibusque dignitatum, nec satis ullam poenam sufficere posse arbitrabantur tanto sceleri.

[4] Cardinalis autem Sancti Angeli, cujus apud concilium summa semper fuit auctoritas, tantum sibi fidei superiori tempore nactus erat, ut etiam in hoc casu pro patria sibi loquenti crederetur. Hic, ubi Romanos suos adeo inhoneste lacerari audivit, “Non est,” inquit, “reverendissimi patres, sine admiratione hic sermo vester a me auditus, qui, cum papam noveritis optime, omnes Romanos accusatis. Et quid enim peccavere Romani? [Cont.]”

[2] Even unasked, I would diligently and regularly have sent such news to your college if I had not heard that some people have accused me to your Excellencies for writing things that were false or improbable: many were complaining that I told lies to your Magnificent Lordships, and I was branded for the very thing that ought to bring me high accolades. This I have been told by people who are dear to me. It angered me greatly, and I am really amazed to be considered a liar by your Lordships as I always wrote to you truthfully and would rather die than tell lies, not only to you whom I esteem, revere, and respect above all but even to any base and vile person. I believe that all the letters I have sent you until now are in your chancellor's keeping. To prove my innocence, I wish all these letters to be reviewed and reread in the presence of myself and my detractors. If it is found that I have written anything false, I should want not only to be condemned for falsehood but even to be punished for a crime against the majesty of my country. But I know that I have never told your Lordships falsehoods. On the contrary, those who call me a liar are complete frauds, whoever they are, and whatever their names. I am always ready to prove what I say, and not with common but with eminent witnesses. Though things I have written may have changed [afterwards], it does not follow they were false [when I wrote them], since something may be done today that turns out differently tomorrow. I shall say no more about this, but I hope that your Lordships will consider me as exonerated and that my truthfulness and innocence will soon become evident to you. If I know that you appreciate it, I shall report all that I can and get to know to your Lordships, for I am indebted to my country and thus rightly obliged to do so unless it is unwelcome to my country. Indeed, if we believe Cicero,¹ Plato² requires citizens *to exert themselves for the state as much as may be acceptable to their countrymen*.³ In conclusion, I shall be silent in the future unless I know that my labours are useful.

[3] Now I will relate some things about the council. The accounts you have heard there may differ from mine, but mine is quite correct since I come directly from Basel. When news of the pope's arrest reached Basel, there was an immediate outcry: the Venetians and many others clamoured that the Romans had committed a terrible crime when they laid hands on *the Lord's anointed*⁴, seizing the Supreme Pontiff, the Vicar of Christ, the most eminent⁵ power on Earth. The prelates gathered hastily and spoke variously, one against another. Some wanted to punish the Romans severely with excommunications, interdicts, and deprivations of office, and they thought that no punishment was enough for such a crime.

[4] The Cardinal of Sant'Angelo⁶ has always enjoyed the highest authority in the council and gained so much trust that he was believed even now when he spoke for his own city.⁷ Hearing his Romans being blamed so unfairly, he said, "Most Reverend Fathers, I am astonished to hear you speak thus, when, knowing the pope full well, you blame all the Romans. How did the Romans sin? [*Cont.*]

¹ Cicero, Marcus Tullius (106-43 BCE): Roman statesman, orator, and writer.

² Platon (ca. 428-ca. 443 BCE): Athenian philosopher. Founder of

the Academic School. Teacher of Aristotle.

³ Cicero: *Ad familiares*, 20: 18.

⁴ 1. Kings, 26: 9.

⁵ "unica".

⁶ Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini

⁷ The Cesarini family was a noble Roman family.

[*Cont.*] ‘Comprehenderunt papam,’ dicitis. Quidni¹? Patienturne prius ad necem deduci omnes, quam manus injiciant pontifici? Vos, si omnia nostis, patientiam potius Romanorum commendare debetis, quam eorum aliquam insolentiam explicare. Vidistis enim hactenus, in quanto periculo Romani fuerunt, quot proelia passi sunt, quot praedas, quot spolia. Armenta omnia Romanis subducta sunt, segetes omnes exustae, villae captae atque incensae, rustici interfecti, feminae singulae stupro subjectae, omnis Campania et Romanorum omnes agri vastati, et, quaecumque foris sunt, ad nihilum redacta. Quae omnia Romani ob reverentiam apostolicae sedis libenti animo passi sunt, quamquam potuissent merito in pontificem insurgere, cujus culpa omnia haec fierent, qui si pacem Italiae voluisset, nihil esset hodie² illa in provincia turbulentum. Vos scitis, qui sit Eugenius, qui longo tempore vobis restitit in concilio congregatis, demumque verbalem, ut ita dicam, non realem neque ex animo adhaesionem fecit. Sed non erat satis Eugenio urbem omnem foris destruxisse, nisi etiam, quae intus essent, incendio et rapinis gladiisque committeret. Parabat enim Eugenius tacitam fugam, jamque illi Florentini triremem miserant, Castrum autem Sancti Angeli arcemque apud Ostia Tiberina per suos custodiri mandaverat, ut illi perpetuo bello Romanos intra urbem afficerent, isti nihil frumenti aut vini ad urbem sinerent naves vehere. Qua re cognita quis affirmabit Romanos errasse, cum papam capiunt, si hac via suae possunt saluti consulere? Nihil enim volunt Romani, nisi ut haec duo castra restituantur, quae illis perpetuum bellum factura erant absente papa. Desinite igitur, patres, Romanos criminari et, quae in eos maledicta precamini, in Eugenium reflectite, qui malorum omnium fuit exordium. [*Cont.*]

¹ quidnam WO

² omit. WO

[Cont.] ‘They seized the pope’s person,’ you say. So what! Must they all be brought to their destruction before they lay hands on the pope? If you knew the whole truth, you would commend the Romans for their patience rather than accuse them of insolence. You have seen in what great danger the Romans have been until now, how many fights they have endured, how many robberies and plunders. Their cattle has been carried away, their crops burnt, their farms seized and set on fire, their farmers killed, their women raped, all Campagna and all their properties laid to waste, and everything outside Rome destroyed. All this the Romans have suffered willingly out of reverence for the Apostolic See, though they would have been in their full right to rise up against the pope, for it was through his fault that all this happened. Had he wanted peace in Italy, there would have been no trouble in that region now.¹ But you know Eugenius, you know how long he has resisted your conciliar assembly, you know that his final adhesion was only formal², not real and sincere.³ But it was not enough for Eugenius to destroy the city on the outside, no, he also wanted to subject the city on the inside to burning, plunder, and murder. In secret, he was preparing to flee, and the Florentines had already sent him a galley. He had ordered Castel Sant’Angelo and the fortress at Ostia Tiberina to be garrisoned by his own men so that those at Castel Sant’Angelo could make permanent war on the Romans inside the city, whereas those at the Ostia on the Tiber could prevent ships with grain and wine from reaching the city. Knowing this, who will claim that the Romans did wrong in arresting the pope to protect themselves?⁴ Indeed, the Romans only want the restitution of these two fortresses that would make permanent war on them in the pope’s absence.⁵ So, Fathers, cease to accuse the Romans and turn your curses against them towards Eugenius, the origin of all these evils. [Cont.]

¹ This very biased account of the troubles in Rome completely fails to mention that those troubles were due to the condottieri who had occupied the greater part of the Papal States, acting on the orders of or in connivance with the Duke of Milan, who again legitimated his actions by a letter from the council asking him to protect it against its enemies, i.e. the pope. The council was largely responsible for the attacks against the papacy, against which Eugenius had to defend himself. See Gill, p. 56: *By the end, then, of 1433, a broad belt of papal territory ... was occupied by Eugenius’ enemies ... and this in the name of the council, which, if it had not authorised them to do it, at least did not disapprove of what was so in harmony with its own behaviour, and, in spite of requests from the Pope and the Emperor of the Romans, did not disown its “agents”.*

² “verbalis”

³ The papal bull “*Dudum sacrum*” (2nd version) of 15 December 1433: *We decree and declare that the said general council from the time of its inception has been and is being legitimately carried on, that it ought to be carried on ... and We continue and purpose to continue the sacred Council of Basel without reserve or condition, with energy and all devotion and favour* (Gill, p. 57).

⁴ The Romans revolted against the pope on 24 May 1434. Eugenius fled from Rome 4 June under dramatic circumstances (Gill, pp. 65-66) and arrived in Florence on 22 June.

⁵ In DRGB, Piccolomini wrote: *Meanwhile, Filippo, duke of Milan, sent Francesco Sforza Visconti against Eugenius, and, a little later, Niccolò Piccinino too with an army, for he had received conciliar letters to this end. They*

went everywhere without a foe, seizing the church’s patrimony for themselves. The Romans, after a servitude of almost five hundred years, during which they had served either the Caesars or the Roman pontiffs, dared with foolish counsel to hope for liberty. Lifting up their horns, they took captive the Roman pontiff, the Christ of the Lord. They put his nephew Francesco, the cardinal of the Venetians, in chains; they set up a new senate and chose new magistrates. Sending letters to Basel, they execrated Eugenius; and, like Tarquin the Proud, drove him from Rome. Those at Basel extolled the constant souls of the citizens and dared to affirm that Rome gloried today in no fewer Brutuses, Scaevolus, Horatiuses, and Catos than once (RE, p. 344).

[*Cont.*] Tantum unum consulo, si qua est vobis rerum Italiae cura, ut legatum unum illuc mittatis, qui terras omnes nomine concilii recipiat, si quae sunt, quae adhuc devotionem servant ecclesiae, ut multas fore non diffido. Atque ut res melius fieri possit, suadeo, ut mittatis primum dominum cardinalem Sancti Petri ad Vincula, virum in primis sapientissimum et nulli partium suspicione notatum. Hic erit ad res perficiendas optimus.

[5] Hac oratione omnes repressi sunt praelatorum animi optimeque atque sanctissime dixisse illum affirmarunt, singulique, qui post eum dicebant, ut fit more scrutinii, sententiae domini legati se jungebant usque ad archiepiscopum Tarentinum, qui non esse mittendum solum cardinalem Sancti Petri dixit, sed duos secum oratores principum, archiepiscopum scilicet Turonensem, oratorem regis Franciae, et episcopum Nivernensem, ducis Burgundiae. Huic sententiae adversatus est episcopus Albiganensis, quod injuriosa esset cardinali, quae sibi tutores daret ut pupillo aut curatores ut adolescenti, quasi non esset ipse ad tantam rem idoneum. Indignari praeterea reliquos principes affirmabat, nisi ex suis quoque mitteretur. Ob quam rem sententia legati vicit conclusumque est mittendum unum cardinalem Sancti Petri. Exinde vereor, ne propter fugam papae sententiam mutaverint. Utcumque sit, patres illi numquam ex concilio discedent, quam sibi ipsis optime consulant et ad manus papae numquam intendunt venire.

[6] Victoriam Bohemorum audivistis, ut opinor. 13 millia caesa sunt, captivi admodum pauci, Procopius interfectus. Est omnium sententiam, nisi obviet imperator, regnum illud ad fidem rediturum. Nec impraesentiarum habeo relatu alia digna. Recommitto me magnificentissimis vestris.

Ex Mediolano, kal. Julii 1434.

Servulus vester Aeneas Silvius.

[Cont.] But I just give you this advice: if you are concerned about the situation in Italy, then send a legate there to take possession, in the name of the council, of all those regions that remain devoted to the Church – I do not doubt that there are many. The best way to achieve is, I believe, to send the Lord Cardinal of San Pietro in Vincoli,¹ a most sagacious man who is not suspected of any partiality. He will be the best man for this enterprise.”

[5] Calmed by this oration, the prelates said the legate had spoken well and justly. Speaking in the order of balloting, those who followed sided with the Lord Legate until they reached the Archbishop of Taranto.² He said they should not send the Cardinal of San Pietro alone but add two princely ambassadors, the Archbishop of Tours,³ ambassador of the King of France, and the Bishop of Nevers,⁴ ambassador of the Duke of Burgundy.⁵ This proposal was opposed by the Bishop of Albenga,⁶ who said it was insulting to the cardinal to give him tutors as to a ward or governors as to a youth - as if he were not perfectly capable of carrying out this important task on his own. Moreover, he claimed that the other princes would then be offended unless some of theirs were sent, too. For this reason, the legate’s proposal won, viz. to send only the Cardinal of San Pietro. I am afraid that later the pope’s flight may have made them change their mind. At any rate, these Fathers will never leave the council. They well know what behoves them most, and they will never join the pope.

[6] I believe you must have heard about the victory in Bohemia.⁷ ⁸ 13,000⁹ have fallen, a few have been taken prisoners, and Prokop¹⁰ was killed. All believe that, unless the emperor opposes it,¹¹ this kingdom will return to the Faith shortly. Having nothing more to report for now, I recommend myself to your Excellencies.

From Milan, 1 July 1434.

Enea Silvio, your humble servant.

¹ Cardinal Juan Cervantes.

² Archbishop Giovanni Berardi di Tagliacozzo.

³ Philippe de Coëtquis (1376-1441): Bishop of Léon 1419, Archbishop of Tours from 1427 to his death. Appointed cardinal by Felix V in 1440.

⁴ Jean Germain (d. 1461): Bishop of Nevers 1430 to 1436, of Chalons-sur-Saône from 1436 to his death.

⁵ This proposal may have been a ploy to prevent the cardinal’s mission: At the time, the King of France and the Duke of Burgundy were bitter enemies because of the murders of Louis d’Orléans by the Burgundians in 1404 and of Jean le Téméraire of Burgundy in 1418 by the Armagnacs. The king at the

time favoured the council, and the duke the pope.

⁶ Bishop Matteo del Carretto. Cf. CB, III, p. 124.

⁷ Battle of Lipany [Battle of Cesky Brod] on 30 May 1434 where an army of moderate Hussites defeated the extremist Hussites (Taborites and Orphans) led by Prokop the Great. It was thus a Hussite victory over Hussites, but it gave the council hope for a settlement with the Hussites and a solution of the Bohemian conflicts.

⁸ In the DRGB, Piccolomini wrote: *Prokop the Bald, when he heard of the loss of Prague, giving up the siege of Pilsen, led his army against the barons of the realm and summoned Meinhart to battle. There were many more heretics*

than Catholics, but Meinhart did not refuse battle. God aided the pious cause. Prokop was vanquished and killed, putting an end to his horrid crimes. Many heretics were slaughtered; and the captives, even after the victory, were burned (RE, p. 344).

⁹ Other sources mention fewer fallen, viz. 7,000.

¹⁰ Prokop the Great [Prokop Veliky] or Prokop the Bald (Prokop Holy) (ca. 1380-1434): Bohemian Hussite (Taborite) general. He led the Hussite army which defeated a crusading army in 1431, and he had been a member of the Hussite delegation to Basel in 1433.

¹¹ It is unclear why the emperor should oppose this.

16. Letter to the Giuliano Cesarini (July 1434, Milan)¹.

Manuscripts: Basel / Universitätsbibliothek / H V 12.*

Editions: CB, 5: 365-373; HE, 18, pp. 36-45; WO, 1, 1: 16, pp. 28-38 (both based on CB).

Translations: ME, 4, pp. 15-27.

Literature: Hartmann; Terzoli; Widmer: Enea Silvius Lob.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

16. Letter to Giuliano Cesarini (July 1434, Milan).

Context: See letter 6 and 15.

Subject: First description of the City of Basel. For Piccolomini's second description, see letter 28.¹

Introductory letter

1. Introduction [1]
2. Request for the cardinal's judgment of Description of Basel [2]
3. Reflections on life and death [3-4]
4. Decision to chronicle the Council of Basel [5-6]

Description of the city of Basel

5. Earthquake of 1356 [7]
6. The Rhine [8]
7. The city [9-13]
8. Fortifications [14]
9. Youth [15]
10. Governance [16-17]
11. Justice [18]
12. Culture [19-21]
13. Agriculture [22]

¹ For comments on this letter, see Heck: *Amator*, pp. 119-120; Izbi-

cki: *Reject*, p. 190; Nuovo, p. 364-365

Reverendissimo in Christo patri et domino, domino Juliano sacrosanctae Romanae ecclesiae diacono cardinali sancti Angeli, sedis apostolicae legati dignissimo, domino meo singularissimo.

Reverendissime in Christo pater et domine, domine mi praecipue post recommendationem.

[1] Majores nostri, pater honorandissime, si quando sua volebant ingenia trutinare, viros et doctissimos et probatissimos deligebant, quibus ingeniorum facienda pericula committerent, quare et ad Platonem plerique et ad Aristotelem recurrebant, multi postea Isocratem¹. Romanorum alii Catonem Laeliumque petiere. Nostra demum aetate Leonardum Aretinum, fratrem Ambrosium et Guarinum Veronensem frequens turba postulare consuevit. At reverendissimam dominationem tuam plurimi quasi oraculum Delphicum consulere. Possem ego memorare multos non ignobiles aut abjecti viri ingenii, qui, cum aliqua scripsissent vel prosa vel carmine, reverendissimae dominationis tuae iudicium exquirebant neque audebant illa sine approbatione tua in lucem dare. Horum sectari consuetudinem et dignum mihi videtur et laudabile.²

¹ Socratem WO

² WO uses 2nd pers. plural throughout.

Introductory letter

To the Most Reverend Father in Christ and Lord, Lord Giuliano,¹ Cardinal Deacon of Sant' Angelo, of the Holy Roman Church, most worthy legate of the Apostolic See, my Eminent Lord.

Most Reverend Father in Christ and Lord, my Eminent Lord, after recommendation.

1. Introduction

[1] Right Honourable Father, when our forefathers wished to exercise their minds, they chose learned and decent men, to whom they submitted their literary drafts.² Thus, many had recourse to Plato³ and Aristotle, and many later to Isocrates.^{4 5 6 7} Some of the Romans used Cato⁸ and Laelius.⁹ In our own time, a great many people turn to Leonardo Aretino,¹⁰ Friar Ambrose,¹¹ and Guarino Veronese.^{12 13} Your Most Reverend Lordship has been consulted by many people as if you were the Oracle of Delphi.¹⁴ I could mention many excellent and intelligent men who, having written something in prose or verse, asked for Your Lordship's opinion and did not dare to publish it without your approval. To follow their practice seems to me to be both appropriate and commendable.

¹ Giuliano Cesarini (1398-1444): Cardinal 1426. Papal legate and president of the Council of Basel.

² Mell translates: *denen sie die Probestücke ihres Witzes vorlegten* (p. 15).

³ Aristoteles (384-322 BCE): Greek philosopher. Founder of the Peripatetic school of philosophy.

⁴ Isokrates (436-338 BCE): Greek rhetorician.

⁵ WO corrects to Socrates. He was not later than Plato and Aristotle. On the other hand, it is doubtful that the young Piccolomini knew much about Isocrates, so it is quite possible that he confused the two.

⁶ Sokrates (ca. 470-399 BCE): Greek philosopher. Teacher of Plato.

⁷ This passage is designed to demonstrate Piccolomini's familiarity with the great authors of Antiquity.

⁸ Cato, Marcus Porcius [the Younger] (95-46 BCE): Roman

statesman, orator and Stoic philosopher.

⁹ Laelius, Gaius (d. after 160 BCE): Roman general and statesman.

¹⁰ Leonardo Bruni [Aretino] (ca. 1370-1444): Italian humanist, historian, and politician. Chancellor of Florence from 1427 to his death. In his *Commentarii* (1462), Piccolomini wrote about him: ... *Leonardo, who was born in Arezzo, but became a citizen of Florence. His eloquence approached that of Cicero and he earned a brilliant reputation for himself by translating many works from Greek into Latin* (COM, 1: 30 (Meserve, vol. 1, p. 323)). Piccolomini was quite an admirer of Bruni, whom he may have met or at least seen in Florence on a study tour during his university years (1430-1431). See DVI, ch. 16.

¹¹ Ambrogio Traversari (1368-1439): Italian humanist and

theologian. General of the Camaldolese Order. Piccolomini probably met him during his visits to the Council of Basel. See DVI, sect. 81: *Ambrogio degli Angeli, master general of the Camaldolese, who translated many Greek works into Latin. He was sent as an orator by Eugenius to Basel, where he held a weighty and elegant oration* (1436).

¹² Guarino Veronese (1374-1460): Italian humanist. See DVI, sect. 50: *Niccolò [d'Este] also summoned Guarino Veronese, a most accomplished speaker in Latin and Greek, to teach his sons, enriching and greatly honouring him.*

¹³ Piccolomini's mention of three humanist luminaries shows his early interest in humanist studies.

¹⁴ In classical Greece, the high priestess, Pythia, of the Temple of Delphi also served as its oracle, and a very influential one (8th century BCE to 4th century CE).

[2] Igitur, cum in hac tempestate novi aliquid edidissem, Basileam et mores hominum perscripsissem, - quaedam enim gerere destinaram - quae negante reverendissimo domino meo cardinale Firmano (justa namque et rationabilis fuit consultatio sua) libenter omisi - idipsum non audebam in publicum condonare, nisi auctoritate tua illud agerem. Non ergo aspernetur, velim, reverendissima dominatio tua, si intra medias concilii gravissimas curas et longissimas ob res gerendas vigilias otii paucillum meis dari litteris precor. Non enim temere aut inconsulte facio, cum aliorum exemplo nitar. Ratus enim utilem rem esse, domine reverendissime, si quam a tantis occupationibus animi corporisque tui laboribus respirationem impetravero. Nequeunt enim homines, si modo homines sunt, continuo fatigari rebusque arduis intendere. Quis namque fuit ille umquam vel datus litteris seu publicae aut militari rei, qui non interdum quietem exoptaret? Et – ut alios omittam – nonne decus ipsum et splendor eloquentiae Latinae Cicero sese ab laboribus crebro retraxit? Profecto auctore Seneca saepe ruribus se tradebat vagusque montibus et silvis studio venandi plurimum incumbibat. Exinde tantis viribus litteris se restituebat, ut non modo nihil perdidisse sed acquisivisse multum desidia videretur. Prodest sane omnibus animum relaxare interdum excitaturque otio vigor et omnis tristitia, quae continuatione pertinacis studii congeritur, intermissionis alacritate discutitur. Relaxantur tamen animi multifariam. Nam qui re publica continetur, repausat quidem, si relicta ea paululum gymnasiis se litterarum praebeat. Immo et qui legali implicatur lectione videtur requiescere, si poetas lectitaverit aut oratores, omnisque studiorum varietas animi quandam relaxationem inducit. Arbitror itaque, si mea legatis scripta, nonnihil tuae reverendissimae dominationi tribuisse respirationis, non elegantia vel suavitate dicendi, quae duo penitus absunt, sed rerum varietate et aliqua remissione curarum tua recreabitur dominatio. Quapropter et oro et obsecro has litteras nonnumquam legere deque his iudicium facere: ita et animus tuus aliquantulum evagabitur et desiderio meo geretur mos, sive probentur scripta seu parvi habeantur, fietque ex dubia certa mens mea. Tantum quippe auctoritati tuae concedo, ut ea mihi omnino de rebus meis sententia sit, quam tua paternitas dijudicaverit habendam. Postremo reverendissimae dominationi tuae me commissum facio precorque, ut infra numerum servitorum suorum me minimum ascribat, cui tandem afficior, ut nihil jucundius audire censeam posse quam illi me carum fore.

2. Request for the cardinal's judgment of Description of Basel

[2] Last summer,¹ I needed to do something and would have written a description of Basel² and the ways of its people, but my Most Reverend Lord, the Cardinal of Fermo,³ did not approve of it (his advice was just and sensible), so I did not want to do it then. [Having written it later], I have not dared to publish it unless supported by your authority. So, I wish that your Most Reverend Lordship will not disdain to spend a little of your free time on my work, though you are fully occupied with the very important matters of the council and spend long nights on affairs. I am not doing this rashly or inadvisedly since I am following the example of others. Indeed, I think it would be good for you, Most Reverend Lord, to take a physical and mental break from these great occupations. Men cannot – being only men – continuously wear themselves out and concentrate on difficult matters. Whoever is so occupied with scholarship or public or military matters that he does not, from time to time, need some peace? Indeed, did not Cicero (not to mention others), that glory and splendour of Latin eloquence, often withdraw from his labours? And the author Seneca⁴ often went to the countryside, wandered in the mountains and went hunting in the forests and thus refreshed himself so vigorously for literary pursuits that he seemed not only to have lost nothing through leisure but even to have gained much. Indeed, it is good for all men to sometimes relax mentally. Leisure restores vigour, and all the weariness that accumulates through a continuous intensive occupation is driven out by a lively interlude. But minds relax in many ways. Those who are occupied with public affairs may relax by letting go of them for a short while and spend time in the arena⁵ of literature. And those who study law seem to rest by reading poets or orators.⁶ Actually, the whole spectrum of studies brings relaxation. So, I think that if you read my work, it will provide some respite to your Most Reverend Lordship, not because of its elegance or gracefulness, since it is lacking in both, but because the variety of the subject and the break from cares will refresh Your Lordship. Therefore, I ask and beg you to sometime read and evaluate this letter and make a judgment of it. Thus your mind will relax somewhat, and you will fulfil my wish: whether you approve of my work or consider it of little worth, my troubled mind will find certitude. I esteem your authority so greatly that I shall completely accept Your Lordship's judgment of my work.⁷ Finally, I recommend myself to your Most Reverend Lordship and beg to be counted the least of your servants. I am so devoted to you that nothing will please me more than hearing that I am dear to you.

¹ Summer 1434.

² Basel, a city in Northwestern Switzerland, on the Rhine. From 1431 it hosted the Council of Basel.

³ Cardinal Domenico Capranica. Piccolomini's master at the time. Since the impoverished cardinal could not afford to pay his wages,

Piccolomini took employment with Bishop Nicodemo della Scala in October 1432 and later with Bishop Visconti of Novara.

⁴ Seneca, Lucius Annaeus (4 BCE – 65 CE): Roman philosopher, author, and statesman.

⁵ "gymnasia".

⁶ Piccolomini may have his teacher and friend, the jurist Mariano Sozzini, in mind, a most versatile character.

⁷ It is not known how the cardinal judged Piccolomini's work, but since Piccolomini went on to publish it, it must have been sufficiently favourable.

[3] Nihil, ut ego arbitror, homini potest esse deterius quam otio vitam tradere atque ignaviae. *Cursus* enim humanae vitae *brevis est*, et idipsum, quo vivimus tempore, multis fortunae casibus subjacet, neque ulla futuri certitudo est neque crastini spes aliqua certa. Innumeri quoque sicuti videmus, vitae sortiti cunabula vel in ipsa infantia vel in adolescentia diem obiere, quo pauci admodum seu virilem aetatem attigerint sive fuerint in senium provecti. Itaque, dum nobis superest otii quidquam, haud illud inertia praeterire debemus sperantes, ut saepe fit, vitae terminum longiorem, quo scribere aut evigilare possimus diu, ne nobis uti plerisque accadat, qui summa negotia differentes in senectutem ea postea deseruere, morte praeventi vel obstante valetudine. Nos enim saepe opinio fallit, nescio qua dementia captos, ut nemo sit, qui sua vivendi spatia Nestoreis annis non iudicet adaequanda, licet exemplo majorum possimus uti amplissimo, quorum vivendi spes saepenumero frustrata fuit. Quam rem profecto, si diligenter intueamur, morituros in dies potius quam victuros semper nos esse censebimus. Ceterum et hoc perniciosum est, namque ubi vicinos leto sese continuo mortales credant, negligetur illico magnarum cura rerum, quibus diutini labores longissimaeque vigiliae convenirent, deformaretur brevi genus humanum, cum nec struerentur urbes nec matrimonia fierent, nullo curam habente sobolis procreandae et replendi liberis civitates, solum sibi victum vestitumque procurantibus, qui tunc vitam agerent. Est igitur adhibenda moderatio quaedam, ne prorsus dietim obire credamus neve aera in aeternum frui, verum formidare unum, alterum sperare minus firmiter. Quae cum ita fiant, et humano generi consuletur, et erit anima nostra nobis curae, neque spe vitae prolixioris bona opera transferemus in senium, nec trepidatione obitus humana omnia negligemus.

[4] Eo pacto reipublicae consultum erit, litterarum studia non deficient, praedia neque rustica neque urbana deserentur, quae nequeunt sine longo sudore custodiri. Haec ergo sunt cuiquam habenda frena, sive reipublicae praesit sive militiam agitet, sive bonarum artium gymnasiis adhaereat vel agriculturae aut alii cuivis mechanicorum exercitio, ut se moriturum semper, victurum semper existimet. Ea mihi satis animo persuadeo neque arbitrari secus valeo, tametsi quae animi sunt parum fortasse in mente geram. Haec tamen efficiunt, ne torpere possim vel cum inertia tempus consumere.

3. Reflections on life and death

[3] I believe nothing to be more harmful to man than living in complete idleness and passivity. The course of human life is short, and the time in which we live is subject to many reversals of fortune. There is no certainty about the future nor sure hope about tomorrow. We have seen countless persons who, when they had left the cradle of life,¹ died in their infancy or during adolescence.² Only very few attain adulthood³ or grow old. Therefore, when we have some free time, we should not let it pass unused, hoping – as often happens – for a long life in which there will be plenty of time to write or study. No, we should avoid the fate of many who postponed the most important matters to their old age and never came to take them up because they were prevented by death or ill health. Seized by some form of madness, we often, erroneously, believe they shall live as long as Nestor, though the examples of our forefathers amply show that their hope of a long life was very often disappointed. If we consider the matter closely, it is more likely that we die shortly than live forever. On the other hand, it is also harmful to men to live always as if death were close, for then we shall stop taking care of those important things that require daily efforts and permanent labour. The human race would soon degenerate if those alive did not build cities, marry, desire offspring, and fill cities with children but only cared about their livelihood and clothes. Thus, we must show some moderation and not believe that we shall die shortly nor draw breath forever. We should not overly fear the first nor hope for the second. If we do this, it will benefit both the human race and our own soul, and we shall neither postpone good works to our old age in the hope of a long life nor neglect all human affairs in fear of death.

[4] In that way, society will benefit, literary studies will not disappear, rural and urban properties that require continuous labour will not be abandoned. Being always conscious that one has both to die and to live will have a moderating influence on all statesmen and military men, and on all who are dedicated to the good arts⁴ or occupied with agriculture and the crafts. I firmly believe this even though, personally, I may not be taking enough care of my own spiritual needs. On the other hand, it means that I could not be idle or spend time doing nothing.

¹ The mother's womb.

² Of Piccolomini's own 17 siblings, only two sisters survived into adulthood.

³ "virilis aetas".

⁴ The liberal arts.

[5] Qua ratione compulsus, quae Basiliensi concilio¹ gererentur describere destinavi. Neque enim rei magnitudinem, licet ingentem, exhorresco, quae nequeat comprehendi neque maturiori sive graviori aetati libet ea servare, ne vel tunc minime possem vel in praesentia tempus incassum ducerem, quando mihi pauca sunt expedienda negotia, ne ceu pecora forsitan cibo atque *somno deditus* esse videar. Quare nihil est a me magis alienum, qui lectitare aliquid semper aut scribere solitus sum sive aliter fatigari.² Nuper ergo, cum Basileae starem, ipse mihi videbar esse fastidio, si die, quae longa esset, fierem otiosus, neque cordi erat de rebus concilio gestis sive gerendis cum eis confabulari, quibus ecclesiasticae curae nulli diligentiae forent, multaue imaginari, quae nec facta erant nec cogitata. Angebat igitur in dies magis, ut ea conscriberem, quae concilio expressa deliberataque certo scirem, ubi vulgo omnia fuissent cognita, quam rem efficere constitui non solum ob eas, quas supra causas memoravi, verum etiam et exercerem ingeniolum meum tentaremque, si quirem in dicendo proficere, ut si quando vellem grandiora componere, et ingenium et dicendi copia suppeditaret. Quae duo solet exercitatio parare, licet ingenio plurimum natura concedat. Fatebor tamen honestius ac decentius mihi fuisse volvere et perscrutari volumina eorum, qui multis ante temporibus scripsere quam perficiendum opus assumere. Ceterum satis excusationis habeo, quoniam neque mihi libri erant neque dormiendum penitus videbatur frugi.

[6] Praeterea censebam, si quae ab hac sacrosancta synodo discussa ac sancita forent, mandarentur ad posteros, neque alterum ea colligentem acceperam, cui potuissem opus³ dimittere hujusmodi. Placuit itaque, nescio si arroganter egi, rem aggredi et omnia memoratu digna referre, quo minores omnium certiores fiant, quae concilio Basiliensi gerantur. Quae quidem auctore Deo expediam, si pauca prius de Basilea retulero deque hominum moribus, quae non incongrue videntur hoc loco dicenda, cum in ea civitate concilium sit initum terminabiturque, si rite opinantur, ut cuncti intelligant, quo loco quosque inter homines acta fuerint, quae colligere destinavi.

¹ consilio WO

² *em.* faticari cod.

³ onus WO

4. Decision to chronicle the Council of Basel

[5] For this reason, I have decided write an account of all that happens of the Council of Basel.¹ I do not fear the immense magnitude of such a task. Though it is difficult, it cannot be postponed until I am more mature and serious. And I certainly cannot neglect it now, when I have little to do otherwise and do not want to resemble cattle *given over to eating and sleeping*.² Indeed, nothing is more alien to me [than idleness] since I usually read or write something or am otherwise occupied. When I was recently in Basel,³ I grew bored when idling away a long day. I did not like to chatter about conciliar affairs with people who were not really interested in ecclesiastical affairs and were inventing many things that had neither happened nor even thought about. As time passed, the urge grew to write down what I knew for sure the council had decided or discussed so that it might be known to all. I resolved to do this not only for the reasons mentioned above but also to exercise my puny intellect and develop my writing skills so that when I should wish to compose larger works, both intellect and eloquence would be in readiness, for they both grow with exercise⁴ though intellect is to a large extent a gift of nature. I do admit, however, that it might be more appropriate and fitting for me to read and study the books of those who wrote in bygone ages than compose my own work, but I have the excuse that no books were available, and there was little profit in sleeping.

[6] As I considered that the decisions and discussions of the Holy Synod ought to be passed on to posterity, I saw nobody else gathering this material to whom I could leave this task.⁵ So, I decided – presumptuously, maybe – to begin the work and to record all that was worth remembering so that our descendants⁶ may know all that happened at the Council of Basel. This I shall begin - with God’s help⁷ - by first relating something about Basel and the ways of people. This is appropriate since the council began and will presumably end in this city: all should understand where and among what people the activities that I have decided to document took place.

¹ Piccolomini must have taken copious notes on the conciliar activities which he would use in his later works, but he never managed to compose a complete chronicle of the council, presumably because his other activities, his personal career development, and his growing doubts about the council did not leave him time and opportunity for such a work, and possibly also because his long absence from the council from 1433 to 1435 made a complete chronicle difficult to achieve. It fell to Juan de Segovia to write such a chronicle, the *Historia gestorum generalis synodi basiliensis*, and Piccolomini would even later provide him with precious information on

the council’s election and coronation of antipope Felix 5. Piccolomini would later write three works on the Council of Basel: the *De gestis concilii Basiliensis commentariorum libri II* and the *Libellus dialogorum* (both from 1440, and both from a conciliarist viewpoint), and the *De rebus Basiliae gestis commentarius* (1450, from a papalist viewpoint.)
² Sallustius: *Bellum Catilinae*, 2: 8: *multi mortales dediti ventri atque somno indocti incultique vitam sicut peregrinantes transire.*

³ See letter 15: 1.

⁴ For a comment on the expression “exercitatio ingenii”, see Heck: *Amator*, p. 119.

⁵ Juan de Segovia had arrived in Basel the year before, in 1433 but had not yet begun to write his chronicle of the council.

⁶ “minores”. For Piccolomini’s use of “minores” in the sense of “descendants”, see *Report on a Diplomatic Mission to Rome*, 1447, sect. 28: *Majores nostri neque ornatui neque cibo ut nos indulserunt. Veniet adhuc lascivius saeculum vitamque nostram minorum vitia commendabunt (Our forefathers did not indulge in ornaments and food the way we do. However, an even more uninhibited age will come, and then our descendants’ faults will commend our own lifestyle).*

⁷ “Deo auctore”

[7] Basilea, ut ajunt, crebris terrae motibus anno jam octogesimo funditus decidit, ne centum ex tanta ruina superfuerint aedes, quam rem probat ipsa modo facies urbis quasi uno contextu edita, nova undique, ne domus ulla vetustatem indicet, nam quae olim a terrae motu superfuere, alia postea ruina ceciderunt, ut nihil vetustum, nihil caducum appareat.

[8] Ea est in Elsatica regione, medium fere inter utrasque tenens. Rheno, fluminum nobilissimo, adjacet eoque in partes duas scinditur. Rheni origo est ab Alpibus, Italiam quae a Germania semovent, longe ultra oppidum Rhinec, venitque exinde Constantiam, ubi Martini papae quinti, pastoris nostri tempestate felicissimi, creatio fuit. Ibi lacum transit, cujus ambitus passuum ducentorum milium affirmatur esse *tractaturque naviculis usque castellum Schaphusa*. Inde *pro ingenti discensu fluminis per montes abruptos et confragosa saxa iter pedibus conficiendum est milibus passuum 10 ad castellum usque, quod supra Rhenum Comprosarthol appellant, quem locum opinantur aliqui propter ejus opportunitatem Romanorum fuisse olim castra*. Est enim colle excelso imminens flumini, quod parvo ponte Galliam conjungit Germaniae. Ibi Rheni casus ab alto monte scopulis interruptis magno *fragore ac sonitu*, ut ipse *queri casum suum* videatur. Ceu narratur *de descensu Nili tam praecipiti*, cujus strepitu ac fragore surdi putantur *circumvicini accolae*, nec mirum, *cum hujus fluminis, qui torrens ad instar Nili potest eo loco existimari, tribus fere stadiis rumor exaudiatur*. Exinde Basileam usque percurrit, portionem quandam civitatis abrumpens, labiturque ad plurimas Germaniae civitates, meatu longissimo mare Oceanum petens, cujus tanta velocitas est, ut ab Argentina urbe nulla redeant aquarum cursui contraria navigandi vascula eaque vel Coloniae vendunt vel Maguntiae. Latitudo Rheni infra urbem passuum ducentorum quinquaginta, ubi ligneo ponte brevior civitas majori conjungitur. Solet interdum aestate maxime fervescente urbem inundare pontemque ipsum evertere, ne qua sit duarum inter se conjunctio civitatum, nivibus Alpium calore in aquam deductis. Piscibus abundant multi generis, salmonibus maxime, quos mira suavitate animantibus aquae ceteris praeponunt. At de Rheno satis.

Description of the city of Basel

5. Earthquake of 1356

[7] They tell that Basel was destroyed by frequent earthquakes 80 years ago.¹ Less than 100 houses survived the destruction, which is proven by the fact that the whole city appears to have been built at the same time and is all new. No house bears signs of age since the houses that survived the earthquake were destroyed later, so that no house today appears to be old or decrepit.

6. The Rhine

[8] The city is situated in the region of Alsace, in the middle between both [countries].² It lies at the Rhine, noblest of rivers, which divides it into two parts. The origin of the Rhine is in the Alps that separate Germany from Italy, not far from Rheineck. From there it flows to Konstanz, where Pope Martin V was elected, the most successful pope³ of our time. There it passes through a lake,⁴ whose circumference is reported to be 200,000 *passus*, and is navigable until it reaches Burg Schaffhausen. Then it has an immense fall, through steep mountains and arduous cliffs, where people have to travel by foot for about 10,000 *passus* to Burg Kaiserstuhl above the Rhine. This place is so well situated that the Romans are said to have had a fortress there, with a high hill overlooking the river and a narrow bridge that joins France and Germany. There the Rhine falls from a tall mountainside, through cliffs and with such noise and roar that it seems to lament its own fall. The same is said about the fall of the Nile which is so steep that the noise and din deafen the people living there. So it is not strange that the noise of this river, a torrent which can be considered as equal to the Nile, may be heard almost three *stadia*⁵ away.⁶ Then the river flows on to Basel, cutting off part of the city, and continues its downward course to many German cities until far away it reaches the Ocean. Its velocity is so great that after Strassbourg it is impossible for smaller boats to sail back against the stream, and so they sell them in Cologne or Mainz. In Basel, a wooden bridge connects the smaller part of the city with the larger at a point where the width of the river is 250 *passus*.⁷ In very hot summers, it sometimes happens that when the snow in the Alps melts, the city is inundated and the bridge breaks down so that there is no connection between the two parts of the city. The river is full of fish of many kinds, but mostly salmon, which they prize more than the others because of their excellent taste. This is enough about the Rhine.

¹ The 1356 Basel earthquake occurred on 18 October 1356. It is the most significant earthquake event in Central Europe in history (magnitude 6 - 7.1). It destroyed the city of Basel and

caused much destruction in a vast region extending from Paris to Prague.

² France and Germany.

³ "pastor".

⁴ Bodensee.

⁵ Ca. 355 m.

⁶ The quoted passages are from a letter by Poggio Bracciolini (*Lettere* (Harth), 1: ep. 46, pp. 129.

⁷ Ca. 370 m.

[9] Urbs quippe trans Rhenum posita ad Priscaudiam respicit vino frumentoque opulentissimam regionem. Rivo aquarum multiplici irrigatur, plana universa, aedibus exornata satis. Spiritualia ipsius episcopi Constantiensis. Altera civitas splendidior ac magnificentior duplici jugo eminet, valle intermedia, artificiose mirificeque structa, ut aequa omnis videatur eunti.

[10] Templata sanctorum decora satis nec vili saxo circumdata, tametsi marmore careant. Populo maxime frequentantur. Ipsa templorum corpora cellulas habent ligno intextas undique, quibus ad orandum singulae cum ancillis sese feminae claudunt. Eas sibi quaelibet pro honore dignitateque sua constituit, ut altiores nobilium quam popularium sint. Quibus aliae nullatenus apparent, aliae caput solum ostendunt, cetera multitudo cernitur pubetenus, quando ad evangelium more Romano stare consueverunt, et in his fenestrellae per plures, quibus videre queant sacra celebrari. Quas res arbitror necessitate inductas magno urgente frigore. Hisdem ecclesiis sanctorum multae reliquiae veneratione et ingenti honore dignae. Altaris ornamenta sacerdotumque minus egregia, neque picturarum decus inest, sicut in Italia templa civitatum habent, neque gentilium aliquo loco vestigia imitantur, imagines si qui aut effigies aemulentur sanctorum. Argenti vero et auri non parva copia, lapillorum multi pretiosi. Tumuli quoque nobilium populariumque sepulturae non inornatae. Scuta etiam clarissimorum affixa parietibus pendent, quae nisi magnates non decet apponere, et ea pro numero morientium affiguntur.

[11] Tecta autem ecclesiarum plerumque vitro nitent variis distincta coloribus, ut radiis solaribus lacessita mirabili splendore nitescant. Quibus similia privatorum multae domus habent, ut spectanti ex alto civitatem pulcherrimam sit tectorum compositionem ornatumque contemplari. Ea pendentia multum, ne collectis fortasse nivibus ruinam nimio pondere minarentur. Cacumina obsident ciconiae, ibi et nidificant et alunt pullos, quibus haec patria gratissima est. Nulli officunt eis libereque et ire et remeare queunt. Solent enim dicere Basilienses ciconias adempto fetu domibus ignem immittere, quo timore nutririculas impune permittunt.

[12] Civium aedes partibus suis mirifice distinctae, politae adeo ac delicatae, ne Florentinis quidem magis. Candore omnes enitent, pictae plerumque. Hortos et fontes et areas singulae domus habent, thermas quoque siccas, quibus cenare solent commorarique nonnulli et somnos captare, ubi vitreae omnes fenestrae, quarum latera thermarum solumque ac tectum abiete velantur. Quo in loco plurimae modulantur aves, calore illo ex hieme servatae magnisque frigoribus, quas audire garrientes¹ et dulce sit et decorum. Tapetis praeterea multis utuntur ornamentisque pannorum. Onerant² mensas multo argento, reliquo mensarum splendore et lota gloria ab Italicis superantur. Vestibula domorum nobilitatem indicant. Ad aedium³ profecto decusque palatiorum nihil iudicatur abesse, quae si magnifica sint, non potest civitas esse deformis.

¹ *em.* WO; querentes HE

² honorant WO

³ *constructio claudit*

7. The city

[9] The part of the city that lies on the other side of the Rhine is close to Breisgau, a region rich in wine and grain. It is watered by many streams, the terrain is even, and it has fine buildings. In religious matters, it is subject to the bishop of Konstanz. The other part of the city is more splendid and beautiful. It lies on two hills with a valley between them but is built so artfully and cleverly that it appears to be level to a person who walks through it.

[10] The temples of the saints are fine enough, and their facades are not made of common stone, but there is no marble. They are much used by the people. Inside the churches, there are small wooden cells where women enter singly to pray, only accompanied by their maids. These cells were made for the sake of honour and dignity, so that the nobles might be elevated above the commoners. Some women are thus invisible, of others you only see the head, and of the rest you see only the upper part until they rise for the reading of the gospel where they stand as prescribed by Roman rite. In the walls of the cells, there are many small windows through which they can see the rites being celebrated. I believe that the cells were originally installed because of the freezing cold¹. In the churches of the saints, they have many relics worthy of veneration and great honour. The ornaments of the altar and the priestly vestments are less than splendid, and the churches are not decorated with paintings like the churches in Italy, nor are there any monuments from pagan times which would rival the images of the saints. But there is much gold and silver and many precious stones. The burial monuments of the noblemen and the tombs of the commoners are not without ornaments. The coats of arms of the noblest families are hung up on the walls. Only the arms of the magnates may be hung there,² because of the [great] number of people dying.

[11] The church roofs are covered with glass in various colours, and when they are struck by the sun's rays, they shine brilliantly. The same is done with many private houses so that when you look at the city from a high point, you see how wonderful is the arrangement and beauty of the roofs. The roofs are rather steep to prevent them from caving in under the weight of the snow. Storks live on the top of the roofs, and there they build their nests and nurse their young, for they love this area. Nobody chases them away, and they can come and go freely. The Basileans use to say that if you take away their young, they will throw fire into the house, fearing which the Basileans let the young birds be nursed in peace.

[12] The buildings of the citizens are remarkably well arranged, well maintained and fine, though not as much as in Florence. They are generally chalked white, but many are painted, and the individual homes have gardens, fountains, and courtyards. The chambers are dry, and there they eat, live, and sleep. All the windows are made of glass. The walls of the chambers and the floor and ceiling are covered with fir wood. They keep many songbirds in their homes, protected by the warmth against winter and frost. It is pleasant and charming to hear them twitter. They use carpets and tapestries much. They deck their tables with much silverware, but their table decorations do not equal those of Italy. The entrances to their houses indicate the social status³ of the family. The houses and mansions are exquisitely decorated, and their magnificence reflects on the rest of the city.

¹ In Winter.

² "affiguntur"

³ "nobilitas"

[13] Calles neque angusti sunt neque ad latitudinem nimiam, ut obivantes invicem currus non impediuntur. Nec teruntur plaustris continuo transeuntibus radiis rotarum ferreis, ut stratarum spectio semper delicata sit huc tendentibus¹ atque illuc. Nec pluviae, quamvis in hac urbe creberrimae sint, nimis officiunt. Plateas enim habet non contemnendas, ubi cives conveniunt, suppellex emitur et alia mercium multa genera fiuntque permutationes et contractus reliqui. Fontes ibi splendidi aquis nitidis dulcibusque effusis. Praeter eos quamplurimi in vicis omnibus. Nec Viterbium, Etrusca civitas, tantis aquarum fistulis irrigatur. Eum nempe, qui Basileae fontes dinumerare velit, domorum quoque numerum colligere oportebit.

[14] Moenia vero et propugnacula, bello structa, duris guerrarum certaminibus et expugnationibus Itolorum, ut censeo, minime obsisterent, neque enim alta sunt neque grosso munita muro. Robur tum civitatis in animorum concordia existimant esse. Cives namque, ubi sint unanimes, nulla hostium multitudine superantur; ubi vero dissidentes, parvo proelio concedunt. Sunt enim in amore civium difficillima munimenta², quae apud eos permaxima inveniuntur. Nullae namque in regendo discordiae. Regimina nullus accusat, emori pro libertate quam superari malunt³. Interior autem civitas muro meliori cingitur, quem fossa ambit undique lapidibus ab latere confecta, qui olim tumulis Hebraeorum tegmina fuerant, inscripti omnes litteris Hebraicis, quae singulorum erant epitaphia. Quod est argumento in hac quondam urbe, sicut in Italia cernimus, plurimos fuisse Judaeorum, quibus demum exactis tumulorum saxa illi officio subiere.

[15] Recentia insuper in civitate multa prata, arboribus contacta viridibus, suo gramine quandam praebent suavitatem, ubi quercus et ulmi ramis a parvis in latitudinem flexis horrentes umbras efficiunt, ut aestuante calore, quamvis non longa sit aestas, hisce sese locis recipere delectabile sit dulcissimumque radios illuc solis effugere. Ad ea loca omnis adolescentium multitudo se confert, ubi festivi aliquid habent, quo vel exultare velint seu ludo intendere. Hic cursu, palaestra *volucrique sagitta* contendunt, equos domitant, currere ac saltare coercent. Alii detorquent jacula, nonnulli validas vires saxa jacentes ostentant. Multi pila ludunt non equidem more Italico, sed area quadam ferreum affigunt anulum certatimque contendunt suam quisque pilam per circulum transmittere; ligno illam non manu, attractant. Reliqua multitudo vel cantat vel coronas ludentibus facit. Hujusmodi conventiculae multae in civitate fiunt. Conveniunt et in plerisque pratis mulieres, ubi et choreas ductant et psallendo laetantur, multaque fiunt alio loco uberius dicenda. At si quis Italus magnitudinem civitatis hujus exquirat, hanc Ferriae similem opinetur Pado adjacenti, politioem tamen praestantioemque, si facies civitatis attendat.

¹ *em.* WO; tendentibus cod.

² monimenta WO

³ volunt WO

[13] The streets are neither too narrow nor too broad: two wagons can pass each other without trouble, and the iron wheels of the wagons continuously driving through the roads do not damage them. So, wherever you go, the streets look nice. It often rains in this city, but it is not a great problem. They have large squares where the citizens meet and buy household goods and many other wares, and where they barter and make other transactions. In the squares, they have splendid fountains, with clean and fresh water. Aside from these, there are many other fountains in all the streets. Even Viterbo, a city in Tuscany, does not have so many water taps as here. Anyone who wants to count the fountains in Basel, can just as well count the number of houses.

8. Fortifications

[14] The city walls and bastions, built for war, would not, I think, withstand the violence of Italian warfare and sieges, for they are neither tall nor thick. They believe that the strength of the city consists in civic harmony: if the citizens are united, no enemy can defeat them; but if they are divided, they easily give up the fight. For the mutual love of the citizens is an excellent bulwark and very strong there. There are no conflicts between the leaders, and nobody criticises the city government. They would rather die for their freedom than be defeated. The inner city is surrounded by a better wall with a moat whose sides are built with stones that once covered the Jews' graves. All the stones have inscriptions in Hebrew letters, which were the epitaphs of the individuals buried there. This shows that just like in Italy there were once many Jews in this city, and that when they were banished, the tombstones were used for this purpose.

9. Youth

[15] In the suburbs, there are many charming meadows with green trees and grass. The branches of oaks and elm trees there are bent from they are small, and [when they grow, they] offer shadow in hot summers - though they are not long here. They are pleasant places for people to visit and enjoy being out of the sunshine. On festival occasions, all the young people gather here for fun or games: they compete in running, wrestling, or shooting *winged arrows*,¹ they train horses, forcing them to run and jump. Some throw spears, and many show off their strength by throwing stones. Many others play ball, although not as in Italy: they put up an iron ring somewhere and compete in throwing a ball through the ring, using not their hand but a wooden bat. The others sing or weave wreaths for the players. There are many gatherings of this kind in the city. Also the women meet in several of the meadows, where they enjoy dancing and singing, and many other things happen that I shall describe more fully elsewhere. An Italian inquiring into the size of the city will find that it is as big as Ferrara on the Po but appears cleaner and more graceful.

¹ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 5: 242.

[16] Erat olim Basilea suo episcopo temporaliter subdita, qui et *gladii potestatem habebat et animadversionem in facinorosos homines*. Postea vero, qua occasione ignoro, ab sese dominium abdicavit, etsi pristinae¹ potestatis veterisque domini quandam recognitionem habeat, annuos enim quattuor denarios ex singula familia recipit. Basilienses vero in libertatem aspiravere, quamvis fateantur Caesarem Augustum eorum esse regem. Gubernatur autem civitas regimine populari. Habet consilia duo: unum quod majus appellant hominum fere ducentorum, alterum quod seniorum dicitur, virorum duodecim. In utroque et nobiles conveniunt et plebeji. Totius enim administrandae reipublicae tertia portio debetur nobilebus.

[17] Plurima sunt genera magistratuum diversis officiis attributa, summam tamen imperii obtinet magister civium, quem nisi militem esse non decet. Neque militiam nisi nobiles capiunt vel forte plebejorum aliqui, quos summae virtutes clarissimaque facinora decorarunt. Nec apud eos facilis est militiae consecutio, sive nobilis eam poscat aut ignobilis, nisi res bello pulcherrime gesta suadeat, quam², si qui consequantur, jure possunt ad summam magistratuum convolare. Scultetum praeterea, qui causis criminalibus praeest, magno honore habent. Is tenetur civitatem malis hominibus expurgare cavereque, ne malificia remaneant impunita. Artes quoque singulae mechanicorum unum sibi praeficiunt, quem *zumpftam* nominant, hisdemque magistrum praeponunt, cujus non parva est jurisdictio. Horum autem munerum tempora sunt indefinita, nam pro meritis quisque perseverat in republica. Hi habent in civitate locum, ubi examinandis consiliis juriq; dicendo congregantur, quae simulac perfecta sunt, cuncti proprias domos revisunt. Nulli ex publico aluntur.

¹ pristini WO

² quem HE

10. Governance

[16] In secular matters, Basel was once subject to its bishop, who had *the power of the sword to punish evildoers*.¹ On some later occasion, I know not which, he renounced this power, though there is still a kind of recognition of his former power and old lordship in that every year he receives four *denarii* from each family.² Indeed, the Basileans aspire to liberty though they recognise the emperor as their king. The city's form of government is democratic. It comprises two councils: one is the Great Council consisting of about 200 men, the other, called the Senior Council, consists of 12 men. There are both nobles and commoners in either council, for a third part of the governmental offices is reserved to the nobles.

[17] There are many kinds of administrative offices, each with its own function. The highest office is that of the mayor, who must be a knight.³ Only nobles can become a knight except a few commoners distinguished by great capabilities and famous deeds. And it is not easy to obtain the knighthood there, neither for nobles or commoners, unless one has distinguished himself in war. Those who become knights have the right to ascend to the highest office. Also the sheriff,⁴ who is in charge of criminal cases, is held in great honour. He is responsible for keeping the city free of evil men and ensuring that crimes do not go unpunished. Each of the various crafts elect a leader, whom they call *Zunft*,⁵ and they appoint a common guildmaster who has great authority. The tenure of the officials is not limited in time, for here, people continue in public office as long as they perform well. They participate in the city's deliberations and court cases, and when these are finished, they immediately return to their own homes. None of them is maintained by the public purse.⁶

¹ The "merum imperium" is a concept of Roman law, as defined by Ulpian (*Liber de officio quaestoris*, II) and quoted in the *Digesta* (II, 1, 3).

² *Political conflicts between the bishops and the burghers begin in*

the mid-13th century and continue throughout the 14th century. By the late 14th century, the city was for all practical purposes, although it continued to nominally pledge fealty to the bishops. (Wikipedia).

³ "militaris".

⁴ Schultheiss.

⁵ "zumpfta": means guild rather than guild leader.

⁶ On the guild and guildmasters, see the second version, where Piccolomini got it right.

[18] Vivunt sine certa lege, consuetudine magis quam scripto jure utentes, sine juris perito, sine notitia Romanorum legum. Ubi e novo casus emergit vel inaudita facinora, pro sua opinione sententias ferunt. Ita eis videri ajunt, talem poenam illi delicto merito convenire. Rigidi tamen ac severi sunt amatoresque justitiae, ut, si quando puniendi sint aliqui, neque pecunia prosit eis neque preces neque amicorum necessariorumque multitudo vel in civitate potentia. Omnes commissi dant poenas. Relegati extra urbem in perpetuum nullam redeundi spem habent, nisi forsitan, cum intransitibus civitatem cardinalibus ingrediantur, quibus ignoscitur, si leviora facinora sunt. Ipsa quoque tormenta, quibus reos afficiunt, atrocissima. Alii namque suspensi rota ossibus infractis diem claudunt, alii immerguntur Rheno, alios cremant, alios viventes mutilant, nonnullos muro tradunt pane modico et aquae tantillo uti concedentes, donec fame pereant aut siti. Ad invenienda etiam crimina saevissimis utuntur generibus tormentorum, quo mori affectabilius sit quam illa pati. Comperiuntur tamen aliqui ea cuncta malentes ferre ac facta vel objecta fateri crimina.

[19] Amant religionem, sacerdotes maxime venerantur, sollemnia missarum cuncti exaudiunt, ut frequententur ecclesiae nedum festis sed etiam continuis diebus. Simulacra sanctorum plurima colunt. Scientias non affectant neque peritiam gentilium litterarum, ut nec Ciceronem nec alium quemvis oratorum nominari audiverint, neque poetarum exoptantur opera. Grammaticae tantum dant operam dialecticaeque. Adventant huc multi ex vicis proximioribus, qui vitam plerumque trahunt ex elemosinis. Illis datur ex publico magister ad grammaticam, logicam musicamque capescendam. Hi sunt, quos postea miramur in Italia grammaticos elemosinam poscere, quorum plerique in Romana curia praelatis serviunt, operientes beneficia, quibus demum aluntur in patria.

[20] Loca insuper a nobilibus constituta sunt aestati altera convenientia, altera hiemi, quibus esse ex symbolis consueverunt. Alibi palatium amplum moliti sunt, ubi choreas frequenter exercent invitantque formosissimas civitatis, quae vestibus, quoad possunt, lapillis, argento auroque veniunt ornatae, quasi ad nuptias celeberrimas videantur accessisse, quarum vestiendi consuetudo pomposa est et pulchra, nisi nobis peregrina nimis videretur. Eo in loco nulli fas est plebeorum incedere tripudio, ni magistratu polleat vel dignitate praeclara seu ditissimus habeatur, quibus aditus minime negaretur.

11. Justice

[18] They live without definite laws, using customary rather than written law, without jurists and knowledge of Roman law. When a new type of case arises, or previously unknown crimes occur, they pass sentence as they see appropriate, declaring that such a punishment befits the crime in question. However, they are severe and harsh lovers of justice so that people to be punished can be helped neither by money, prayers, an abundance of friends and relatives, nor civic influence. So, all who are sentenced undergo punishment. Those who are permanently banished from the city have no hope of return, except possibly if they come back in the company of cardinals entering the city, in which case they are pardoned if their crime was light. The torture of those found guilty is atrocious. Some are hung from a wheel and die after their bones have been broken. Others are drowned in the Rhine, others are burnt, and others again mutilated alive. Many are chained to a wall with only a little bread and water until they die of hunger or thirst. When they investigate crimes, they use forms of torture so savage that it is better to die than to suffer it. Still, some prefer to bear it all rather than confess to crimes they have done or stand accused of.

12. Culture

[19] They love religion and venerate priests greatly. They all go to mass and frequent the churches not only on festdays but also on week days. They worship many pictures of saints. They do not cultivate the various branches of learning nor gentile letters¹, and they have never heard of Cicero or another orator, and they have no desire to read the poets. They only study grammar and dialectics. Many come here from the neighbouring villages and mostly live from alms. They are given a teacher, paid from the public purse, who teaches them grammar, logic, and music. These are the grammarians we are later amazed to see in Italy, begging for alms. Many of them serve prelates at the Roman Curia. There they manage to obtain ecclesiastical benefices that, in the end, provide their livelihood in their own country.

[20] The nobles maintain two houses, one for use in summer and one for winter, where they hold parties.² Moreover, they have built a large and magnificent common hall where balls are held frequently. To these, they invite the most beautiful women in the city, who come dressed in their finery, with precious stones, silver, and gold, as if they were going to a fashionable wedding. Their customary way of dressing is splendid and beautiful but foreign to our taste. Commoners cannot come to these feasts³ unless they are magistrates or other important officials or very rich, in which case they are not denied access.

¹ I.e., classical literature.

² "symbola"

³ "tripudium": in Roman times, a solemn dance to Mars or taking

omens from chickens. Du Cange: gaudium, laetitia.

[21] Viri magno, ut plurimum, corpore sunt urbanique, minus magnifice vestiuntur, delicate tamen. Pauci, forsitan ex militibus aliqui, utuntur ostro, primores vero civitatis, quibus magnae divitiae sunt amplaque suppellex, nigro velantur panno. Cetera multitudo inculta est, lacera atque incomposita, vili tegmine plerumque lineo adumbratur. Horum mores, ut mortalium, varii sunt. Plurimum voluptati declivi, domi splendide vivunt, temporis magnam partem in edendo terunt. Pueri nudis pedibus pergunt, feminae solum pedes calceo tegunt nigro alboque. Cunctarum mulierum una est consuetudo amictus et firma et honesta ut, quae florales sunt, videantur dijudicandae vestales. At de his dicendum alias existimavi. Pauca apud hosce homines vitia nisi Libero fortasse patri vel Paphiae matri assentiantur nimis, quod illi venia dignum censent. Fidem servare solent, negare nesciunt, ubi promiserunt. Viri boni *esse potius quam videri* malunt. Sua custodiunt, aliena non appetunt effrenate, contenti fortuna sua, nisi quibus domi res est angusta nimis.

[22] Sita est autem Basilea in agro feraci et *ubere glaebae*, vino ac tritico jucundissime abundans, ut in foro vili cerealia *Bacchique munera* veneant. Fert pomorum ingentem copiam, ficu caret atque castaneis. Urbem placidissimi colles ambiunt et opaca nemora. Aquarum ipsa regio copiosa terra caeloque, septentrionum flamina gelidissima, ut magna brumarum parte nive omnia videantur albescere. Talia mihi de Basilea videantur referenda, priusquam gesta concilii narrarentur.

Ejusdem tuae reverendissimae dominationis servitor minimus Aeneas Silvius de Piccolominibus Senensis.

[21] The men are mostly big and polite. They dress less splendidly [than the women] but elegantly. Only a few – maybe some knights - use purple, but generally, the leading men of the city, who are very rich and have very well furnished homes and wardrobes, dress in black. The common people are unkempt, tattered, dirty, and mostly clothed in cheap linen. The ways of these people are diverse, as is natural for men. Generally, they are pleasure-loving, live well at home, and spend a lot of time eating. Their children walk barefoot, and the women only wear black or white shoes. The women are dressed in the same proper and modest way so that you may even mistake whores¹ for decent women². I intend to say more about them elsewhere.³ The men have few vices except, maybe, being too fond of Liber⁴ and Mother Paphia⁵ or considering them pardonable. They usually keep faith and never refuse to fulfil their promises. They would rather *be* good than *only appear to be so*. They guard their own property and do not desire others', content with their fortune unless they are destitute.

13. Agriculture

[22] Basel is situated in a fertile country, *wealthy of soil*,⁶ overflowing with wine and wheat so that, at the market, cereals and the gifts of Bacchus are sold cheaply. The land produces an immense amount of fruit but no figs and chestnuts. The city is surrounded by charming hills and shady forests. The region is rich in water, both from the ground and the sky. The north winds are so cold that during a large part of winter all is white, covered in snow.

This is what I thought to write about Basel before chronicling the council's activities.

Enea Silvio Piccolomini, humble servant of your Most Reverend Lordship.

¹ "florales"

² "vestales"

³ He did not.

⁴ = Bacchus = wine

⁵ = Venus = sex

⁶ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 1: 531

17. Letter to the City government of Siena (Ca. 10 March 1435, Florence)¹.

Manuscripts: Trieste / *Bibl. Civica* / II, 44, 1 *; VI, f. 19r-20r **.

Editions: HE, 17, pp. 45-46 (based on VI); WO, 1, 1: 17, pp. 38-39 (based on the Trieste ms.)

{19r} Magnifici domini mei potentissimi.

[1] Onus, quod accepi scribendarum novitatum, his litteris persolvere incipiam, quoniam Florentiam reversus nonnullas reperi novitates, quas ut vobis scriberem dignum duxi. Hae sunt hujusmodi: Franciscus Piccininus cum mille equis Bononiam transivit, iturus Perusium, ut certe scio ex litteris ejusdem datis in sancto Michaele ad dominum Franciscum de Mansuetis. Quid facturum illis in partibus sit, potestis facile considerare, quod si quos latet, omnes non latet. Haec verissima sunt, ob quae papa conquestus est hujuscemodi transitum reprehendens, tamquam concordiae, de qua agitur, minime consonantem. {19v} Sed satisfactum est ei ab ducalibus oratoribus, ne quid timeat etc. Refert tabellarius capitanei post Franciscum venturum esse Petrum Paulum Ursinum cum equitatu suo et alios plerosque. Sed haec non aliter quam ab eo dicta reicipimus.

[2] Dominus Arimini heri hinc recessit non multum a papa contentus neque ab aliquo comitatus nisi ab oratoribus ducalibus et filio marchionis Ferrariensis, licet in adventu suo magnifice receptus fuerit, familia papae, cardinalium et officialibus hujus urbis obviam sibi euntibus. Haec signa sunt parvae concordiae inter eos. Tamen, ut audio a plerisque gravibus viris, conductus est ad stipendia papae cum equis sexcentis. [*Cont.*]

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

17. Letter to the City government of Siena (Ca. 10 March 1435, Florence).

Context: In October 1433, Piccolomini had left Basel together with Bartolomeo Visconti, Bishop of Novara, whose secretary he had become. They mostly stayed in Milan, but they also visited Florence, where the pope resided at the time. In March 1435, they were back in Florence, where the bishop was getting involved in a plot fomented by his master, the Duke of Milan, against the pope's person. From Florence, Piccolomini found time to write news to Siena.

Subject: Piccolomini reports on news of military importance, i.e. a continued Milanese campaign against the Papal States, and the requests of the two pretendants to the kingdom of Naples, René d'Anjou and Alfonso V of Aragon, for papal confirmation.

Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords,

[1] With this letter, I begin the task, I have accepted,¹ of reporting news to you since, after my return to Florence, I have heard several news items worthy of report. They are:

Francesco Piccinino² has passed through Bologna with 1,000 cavalry and will continue to Perugia. This I know for sure from a letter he sent from San Michele³ to Lord Francesco Mansueti.⁴ What he will do there, you can easily imagine: it is hidden to some, but not to all. This news is quite firm and has caused the pope⁵ to complain, criticising his passage as inconsistent with the agreement under negotiation. But the ducal⁶ ambassadors have explained satisfactorily to the pope that he needs have no fear etc. The captain's⁷ messenger says Francesco will be followed by Pierpaolo Orsini⁸ with his cavalry and many others. But we have heard the same from himself.

[2] The Lord of Rimini⁹ left yesterday, not very content with the pope. He was only accompanied by the ducal ambassadors and the son¹⁰ of the Marquess of Ferrara¹¹ though, at his arrival, he was received magnificently by the pope's¹² and the cardinals' households and the officials of this city.¹³ This is a sign that all is not well between them. But I hear from several important men that the pope has engaged him as salaried captain with 600 cavalry. [*Cont.*]

¹ In a letter of 1 July 1434, Piccolomini had complained to the city government of Siena that his letters to them were not believed to be truthful but that he would be happy to continue to write if his letters were welcome (see letter 11: 7). The government had apparently replied that his letters with news were welcome.

² Francesco Piccinino (ca. 1407-1449): Italian mercenary captain in Milanese service- Adopted son of Niccolò Piccinino.

³ Possibly, the San Michele Arcangelo, palaeo-Christian temple in Perugia.

⁴ Francesco Mansueti: Perugian noble.

⁵ Pope Eugenius IV. After a revolt in Rome in May 1434, the pope had fled from the City and taken up residence in Florence.

⁶ Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

⁷ Francesco Piccinino.

⁸ Pietri Giampaolo Orsini (- 1433): Italian condottiero in Milanese service.

⁹ Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta (1417-1468): Lord of Rimini and Fano. Condottiero. In March 1435, he got a *condotta* with the pope (200 lances), and the following month he was appointed

captain of all the papal troops in Romagna and the Marche.

¹⁰ Leonello d'Este (1407 - 1450): One of the three illegitimate sons of Niccolò III d'Este and Stella de' Tolomei, relatives of the Piccolomini family. He was legitimated by Pope Martin V. Marquess of Ferrara and Modena from 1441 to his death. See DVI, ch. 12.

¹¹ Niccolò III d'Este (1383-1441): Marquess of Ferrara from 1393 to his death. Condottiero. See DVI, ch. 13.

¹² Pope Eugenius IV.

¹³ Florence.

[Cont.] Solum sibi pecuniae desunt. Quidquid sit, duci Mediolani affectissimus est atque hero meo multa signa fecit benevolentiae erga ducem suae.

[3] Ex Janua litterae sunt habitae facta regni Siciliae ad vota illustrissimi Mediolanensium ducis succedere {20r} confirmantes. Orator praeterea regni praefati his diebus ad summum pontificem venit supplicans, ut duci Barrensi regnum hujusmodi confirmetur. Is asserit omnes communitates et principes regni dicto duci adhaerere exceptis paucis, fuisseque tractatum quendam in Andriensi urbe pro rege Aragonum, qui nil nocuit trucidatis factionum principibus. Rursusque rex Aragonum suum oratorem ad papam misit, qui Pisas jam venit et expectatur in dies. Papa pro se regnum quaerit. Ex tribus duos excludi necesse est, neque, ut ajunt, duos regnum capit.

[4] Dominus Faventinus 6. hujus mensis die Lugo, oppido insigni, scalas admovit oppidanisque sentientibus cum suo gravi damno atque ignominia recessit amissis expugnandorum oppidorum instrumentis. Alia quae scribam non habeo. Tantum cupio vestris dominationibus haberi carus et commendatus. Vestrarum magnificarum dominationum servulus Aeneas de Picholominibus.

23. Martii.

[Cont.] Only the payment is still lacking. Be that as it may, he is very attached to the Duke of Milan and gave my master¹ many proofs of his sympathy for the duke.

[3] From Genoa, we have received a letter confirming that affairs in the Kingdom of Sicily develop as wished by the Most Illustrious Duke of Milan². An ambassador from the kingdom has come to the Supreme Pontiff³ requesting that the Duke of Bar⁴ be confirmed as king. He declares that with few exceptions all the cities and princes of the kingdom support the duke of Bar. A recent uprising in the city of Andria in favour of the King of Aragon⁵ did not - after the leaders of the factions were killed - damage [the duke's cause]. The King of Aragon, too, has sent his ambassador to the pope. He has now reached Pisa and is expected any day. The pope seeks to gain the kingdom himself.⁶ Two of the three must be excluded. As they say, a kingdom cannot have two [kings].

[4] On 6 March, the lord of Faenza⁷ transported scaling ladders to the fine city of Lugo,⁸ but when the townspeople discovered it, he returned with great loss and shame, having lost his siege machines. I have nothing else to report. I only wish to be dear and commended to your Lordships. Enea Silvio Piccolomini, humble servant of your Magnificent Lordships.

23 March.

¹ Bishop Bartolomeo Visconti.

² Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

³ Pope Eugenius IV.

⁴ René d'Anjou (1409-1480): Duke of Bar 1430 and of Anjou 1343 to his death. In 1435, he inherited the Kingdom of Naples after Giovanna II, but his right to

the throne was contested by Alfonso V.

⁵ Alfonso V.

⁶ Since the Middle Ages, the popes were the feudal overlords of the Kingdom of Naples and formally appointed their kings. Pope Eugenius may have considered to

take over the direct rule of the country.

⁷ Guidantonio Manfredi (1407-1448): Lord of Faenza. Condottiero, at the time in the service of Francesco Sforza.

⁸ A city in Romagna.

18. Letter to the City government of Siena (14 March 1435, Florence)¹.

Manuscripts: VI, f. 10r **.

Editions: HE, 18, pp. 46-47; WO, 1, 1: 18, p. 39-40; (both based on VI).

Translations: RE, 8, p. 83.

[1] Retinui has litteras usque in praesentem diem, quia nullum inveni ad dominationes vestras venientem. Nec ego possum multum spatiari, quia domi aut cum hero meo oportet me esse. Interea relatum est cardinalem Firmanum de Basilea recessisse iter Florentiam versus dirigentem similiterque facturum dicunt cardinalem de Cypro, quod signum est dissolutionis concilii. Haec tamen non scio an vera sint, testes tamen non desunt. Si certius aliud scivero, intimabo dominationibus vestris. Ulterius audivi a nonnullis gravibus viris papam iturum Ariminum, si pax cum principe duce Mediolani non sequatur, quae omnia diligentius investigabo.

Ex Florentia, 14. Martii 1435.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

18. Letter to the City government of Siena (14 March 1435, Florence).

Context: See letter 17.

Subject: With the aid of Cardinal Albergati, Cardinal Capranica had become reconciled with the pope in July 1434. On 9 March 1435, he announced his departure from Basel. News of this development must have reached Florence quickly and have been picked up by Piccolomini. The cardinal did leave Basel later that month and came to Florence. The Cardinal of Cyprus, however, did not leave but was sent as the council's legate to the peace conference in Arras later that year. Piccolomini is right to see these rumours as the signs of a gradual break-up of the council.

[1] I have kept this letter until today since I could find nobody going to Your Lordships. And I cannot write much because I have to stay at home or accompany my master.¹ In the meantime, it has been reported that the Cardinal of Fermo² has left Basel for Florence, and the same is said about the Cardinal of Cyprus.³ This is the sign of a break-up of the council. I do not know if it is true, but witnesses are not lacking. If I hear differently, I shall inform your Lordships. Later, I have heard from important men that the pope will go to Rimini if peace is not made with the Duke of Milan. I shall look closer into all of this.

From Florence, 14 March 1435.

¹ Thus, Piccolomini would not be able to meet with his friends, contacts, and informants in Florence.

² Cardinal Domenico Capranica.

³ Cardinal Hugues de Lusignan.

19. Letter from Francesco Filelfo (27 February 1436, Siena)¹.

Manuscripts: Milano / Bibl. Trivulziana / 873 *.

Editions: Rosmini: *Vita*, I, p. 145; Filelfo: *Collected*, 02.65, I, 168-169; HE, 19, p. 47 (based on Rosmini]; WO, 1, 1: 19, p. 40-41 (based on the Trivulziana ms).

Franciscus Philelphus Aeneae Silvio salutem.

[1] Quae mihi scripsisti verbis reverendissimi cardinalis Sancti Angeli, Juliani Cesarini, perlibenter obirem, ubi sacrum istud concilium intra Italiae terminos, non in Germania ac Basileae celebraretur, Nam me ex universa Christiana republica delectum esse interpretem in tanta orientalium ecclesiarum ac Romani pontificatus dissensione munus mihi profecto esset oblatum honorificentissimum. Verum ego satis diu ac super peregrinatus sum extra Italiae terminos, a quibus me abduci nullo patiar munere. Sin a Germanis ad Italos concilium transfertur, id quod² mihi jam³ videor augurari, utar reverendissimi cardinalis consilio, cui me ut quam diligentissime commendes, maximo opere abs te peto.

[2] Tuas autem duas orationes in Eugenium, pontificem maximum⁴, lectitavi quam accuratissime, quarum elegantiam probo equidem, sed argumentum ipsum non laudo. Vereor enim tibi fore detrimentosum, quod - ut credam - auctoritas facit gravissimi hujus prudentissimique viri Johannis Fagnani, qui Senae legatum gerit pro Philippo Mariae, inclyto Mediolanensium duce. Ait enim ignorare te principis sui mentem erga Eugenium pontificem. Itaque tibi posthac cavendum reor, ne quid scribas, quod ignores. Vale.

Ex Sena, 3. kalendas Martias 1436.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² id quod : ut HE

³ omit. HE

⁴ omit. WO

19. Letter from Francesco Filelfo (28 February 1436, Siena).

- Context:* Since the previous letter (letter 18) Piccolomini had been on a 7-month mission for Cardinal Albergati to the king of Scotland, from where he returned to Basel in the beginning of 1436. He soon became an official of the council and a trusted collaborator of Cardinal Cesarini. At this time negotiations with Greeks concerning a reunion council had begun and the council in Basel was considering its location. The Italians and the papalists at the council wanted it to take place in Italy. Piccolomini apparently informed Filelfo of this development and communicated to him some kind of offer from Cardinal Cesarini to become the official translator between Greek and Latin at such a council.
- Subject:* Filelfo states he would accept an offer of becoming the official translator at a reunion council with the Greeks if it was held in Italy. He also warns Piccolomini that the Duke of Milan is not necessarily the pope's enemy, implying that the duke may not be pleased at Piccolomini's attacks against the pope in his orations at the council.

Francesco Filelfo¹ sends greetings to Enea Silvio.

[1] I should gladly accept the invitation of the Most Reverend Cardinal of Sant'Angelo, Giuliano Cesarini, as expressed in your letter, if the Holy Council should be held in Italy and not in Germany and Basel. To have been selected – out of all Christendom – for the post of translator in this great conflict between the Eastern churches and the Roman papacy is, indeed, a most honourable offer. But I have already been a long – even too long – time from Italy, and no post could bring me to leave it again. But if the council is moved from Germany to Italy, as I now believe it may be, then I shall be interested in the proposal of the Most Reverend Cardinal.² I ask you to please recommend me highly to him.

[2] Your two orations against Supreme Pontiff Eugenius³ I have read carefully. I appreciate their elegance but do not praise their content. Indeed, on the authority of that most grave and perspicacious man, Giovanni Fagnani, legate of the Most Illustrious Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria, in Siena, I fear they may damage you, for he says that you are mistaken about the duke's intentions concerning Pope Eugenius. I think that in the future you should take care not to write about what you do not know.⁴ Farewell.

From Siena, 27 February 1436.

¹ Francesco Filelfo (1398-1481): Eminent Italian humanist, academic and writer. Stayed in Constantinople from 1420 to 1427, where he learned fluent Greek.

² See also ...: *Mentre si trovava a Siena – oltre all'invito rivoltogli, fra gli altri, da Enea Silvio Piccolomini – il Francesco continuò a ricevere molte proposte di trasferimento in altre località.* Filelfo did not, later, become translator at the pope's

reunion council with the Greeks in Ferra-Florence 1438 ff.

³ The two orations are lost, see Pius II: *Collected*, 1, p. 67.

⁴ In a letter to Leodrisio Crivelli of 1 August 1465, after Pius' death, Filelfo wrote: *Existimans igitur Eneas rem Philippo gratissimam se facturum, duas in Basiliense concilio vehementer et peracerbas in Eugenium orations habuit, quam rem Philippus moleste adeo tulit et graviter, ut prepositure beneficium, quod in divi Laurentii templo Scaramuciae interventu in*

eum dono conferri curaverit, quamprimum ablatum Enee in alium transtulit. (Filelfo: *Collected*). There is a problem with this statement, however, since Piccolomini later delivered an oration at the council, the "Audivi" of 16 November 1436, in which Piccolomini – taking Filelfo's advice seriously – both praised the pope personally and the duke's positive attitude towards him (Pius II: *Collected*, 1: pp. 93-100).

20. Letter to the City government of Siena (9 April 1436, Florence)¹.

Manuscripts: V1, f. 11r **.

Editions: HE, 20, pp. 48-50; WO, 1, 1: 20, pp. 41-43; (both based on V1).

Translations: RE, 9, pp. 83-86.

Magnifici ac potentissimi domini mei.

[1] Mirabitur fortasse ex vobis aliquis, quod jam multis exactis mensibus litterarum nihil miserim², sed fui jam septem mensibus extra terrarum orbem in regno Scotiae, quo me dominus meus, cardinalis Sanctae Crucis, transmiserat, quo ex loco nec scribendi facultas erat nec opus erat scribere, cum nihil ibi ageretur ad vestram rempublicam pertinens. Nunc vero ad concilium reversus invenio aliqua fieri, quae vestras dominationes non ignorare permaxime interest. Ideo, quae hic aguntur, statui ad vos scribere.

[2] Multa in hoc concilio edita sunt decreta, unum de electionibus, alterum de annatis non solvendis et alia plura, quae conciliares viri queruntur ab summo pontifice non servari. Est praeterea promissum Graecis ad concilium venientibus³ expensas fieri, quod sine ingentibus pecuniis fieri non poterit, ad quas inveniendas congregandasque statuit hoc concilium, ut indulgentiae darentur omnibus manus porrigentibus adjutrices, quales consequuntur, qui dominicum solent visitare sepulchrum, disputatumque est eas a concilio posse sine papa concedi. Volebant tamen, ut validiores essent et populares facilius moverentur auctoritatem quoque apostolicam intervenire, sed numquam papae praesidentes in hoc consentire voluerunt, multa in contrarium allegantes forte vera.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² miseram WO

³ ~~eis~~ seq. V1; eis add. HE

20. Letter to the City government of Siena (9 April 1436, Florence).

Context: Having returned from his mission to Scotland, Piccolomini joined the Council of Basel and resumed his written reports to the City government of Siena.

Subject: Piccolomini reports on the difficulties between pope and council concerning annates, elections, indulgences, and the choice of another venue for the council. Also, with this letter, he begins his campaign for moving the council to Siena.

My Magnificent and Most Mightly Lords.

[1] Maybe some of you wonder why I have not written for many months. However, for seven months, I have been outside our world, in the kingdom of Scotland, where my Lord Cardinal of Santa Croce¹ sent me.² I had no opportunity to write from there, and neither was there any need to write since nothing happened of any concern to your state. But now that I have returned to the council, I find that certain developments here are rather important for Your Lordships to know. Therefore, I have decided to write to you about what is happening here.

1. Annates, elections, and indulgences

[2] This council has issued many decrees, one concerning elections,³ another concerning not paying annates,⁴ and about other decrees that the council fathers complain are not being observed by the Supreme Pontiff. Moreover, they have promised the Greeks to cover their expenses in coming to the council, which will cost huge sums.⁵ To find and collect them, the council has decided to grant indulgences to all who lend a helping hand. The indulgences⁶ will be the same as those granted to all who visit Our Lord's sepulchre.⁷ The claim has been put forward that such indulgences cannot be granted without the pope. However, to make the indulgences more legitimate and better move the common people [to acquire them], the council father wanted to also have the apostolic authority behind them, but the papal presidents would not agree to this, advancing many – possibly true – reasons against it.⁸

¹ Cardinal Niccolò Albergati.

² COM, 1: 6; VO, 1: 4, pp. 90-95.

³ Decree "*Quoniam salus populi*" of 26 March 1436 (Session 23), COD, pp. 504-506.

⁴ Decree "*In nomine spiritus sancti*" of 9 June 1435 (Session 21), COD, p. 488-489.

⁵ On the council and the negotiations with the Greeks, see Mariano.

⁶ Indulgence: in the Church, a reduction of religious punishment,

on the condition of sincere contrition and some pious act. In the Middle Ages, this pious act would typically be a financial contribution to some holy work, from thence the sale of indulgences which would become a scandalous issue and later contribute to the Reformation.

⁷ In the DRGB, Piccolomini wrote: *The fathers decided to extort this money from the pious liberality of the people, if they*

would give liberally for plenary indulgences, which they would be granted as assistants in leading the Greeks back to unity. The assent of Eugenius was required for this matter (RE, p. 346).

⁸ The problem was that the council wanted to issue the indulgences in its own name with the pope concurring. This was unusual, to say the least, and the papal legates could not assent.

[3] Quibus ex rebus statuerat concilium suos oratores ad papam mittere, qui eum requirerent super observatione dictorum decretorum et ut ad concedendas praefatas indulgentias consentiret, quod ni faceret, minarentur adversus eum procedere. His praeauditis statuit papa suos legatos praemittere, dominum meum cardinalem Sanctae Crucis et cardinalem Sancti Petri, quorum ea demum est auctoritas, ut in facto indulgentiarum conveniant cum concilio, dummodo venientibus Graecis concilium in Italiam transferatur ad locum, in quo sua sanctitas possit interesse, quia Graeci nolunt Basileam venire et petunt, ut locus eligatur summo pontifici accommodus, cujus praesentiam cupiunt in eorum habere disputationibus. De facto annatarum contentus est papa, dummodo sibi et cardinalibus sufficienter provideatur. Electiones dicit se servaturum, quantum commode possit.

[4] Agitur igitur nunc de translatione concilii. Papa et Italici omnes Italiam petunt, reliqui omnes, Latini nominis inimici, venturos se in Italiam negant, nec scio, an erit possibile concilium ad Italiam transmutari, sed spero nostrorum prudentiam pertinaciam istorum superaturum et demum Italiam habituram concilium. Sed quae sit urbs in Italia hoc habitura bonum non satis perspectum habeo. Existimo tamen Mantuam obtinere inter omnes, nam et ille marchio plurima pollicetur, et urbs est tam ducalibus quam Florentinis Venetisque communis et copia victualium satis abundans. Cardinalis Sancti Angeli olim Mantuam ...¹ nihil aliud quaerit, nisi ut illuc eatur, qui cum vehementer aliquid vult, id solitus est obtinere, quodcumque est, neque papae et aliorum cardinalium aliena est ab hoc sententia. Sed dux Mediolani quam maxime resistit velletque in suarum terrarum aliqua² hoc concilium transferri nec minora quam reliqui pollicetur. Sed non videtur his patribus aequum, ut ad sua eatur oppida, quoniam numquam papa suorum se manibus committeret. Ipse tamen in sententia perstat rogatque, ut ad terras eatur sibi amicas, ad quas sui possint facillime convenire.

¹ *one word illegible in ms.*

² aliquam HE

[3] Therefore, the council decided to send ambassadors to the pope to demand that he observe the aforesaid decrees and consent to the aforesaid indulgences. If he would not, they were to threaten him with [conciliar] proceedings against him.¹ Having heard them, the pope decided² to send his own legates [to the council], my Lord Cardinal of Santa Croce³ and the Cardinal of San Pietro,⁴ with authority to reach an agreement with the council in the matter of the indulgences.⁵ However, there was one condition, that when the Greeks come over, the council will be translated to a place in Italy, where His Holiness can attend. For the Greeks will not come to Basel but demand that a venue be chosen which is convenient for the Supreme Pontiff, whose presence in their debates they desire. In the matter of the annates, the pope is content if only adequate provisions are made for himself and the cardinals. Concerning the elections, he says that he will respect them as far as he reasonably⁶ can.

2. Translation of the council to another city

[4] So, now they are dealing with the transfer of the council. The pope and all the Italians ask for Italy, but all the others, being enemies of the Latin name, refuse to go there. I do not know if it will be possible to move the council to Italy, but I hope that our⁷ wisdom will defeat their stubbornness and that Italy will get the council in the end. I do not clearly see which city will get this boon, but I believe that Mantua may prevail since the marquess⁸ promises much, the city is acceptable⁹ both to the duke's men and the Florentines and the Venetians, and there is an abundance of victuals. The Cardinal of Sant'Angelo¹⁰ has once [visited] Mantua and only wants the council to move to that city. He usually gets what he really wants, and moreover, the pope and the cardinals agree with him. But the Duke of Milan resists vehemently and wants the council to move to another place, in his own lands, and he does not promise less [than others]. But it does not seem equitable to these fathers¹¹ to go to the duke's towns since the pope would never entrust himself to his men. But the duke maintains his position and requests that the council be moved to territories friendly to himself and where it is easy for his people to meet.

¹ Gill, p. 76-77.

² On 1 March 1436 (Gill, p. 80).

³ Cardinal Niccolò Albergati.

⁴ Cardinal Juan Cervantes.

⁵ The pope's envoys would accept that indulgences issued in the

pope's name but *with the approbation of the sacred council* (Gill, p. 80).

⁶ "commode".

⁷ Italian.

⁸ Gianfrancesco I Gonzaga.

⁹ "communis".

¹⁰ Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini.

¹¹ Cardinal Cesarini and his party.

[5] Ob quas res cogitabam factu esse possibile, ut vestra urbs pro concilio eligeretur. Non tamen solent huiusmodi res sine labore concedi, existimabamque utile esse, ut vestrae dominationes supplicarent domino duci, quando in aliis suis terris concilium obtinere nequiret, pro Senis vellet instantiam facere. Nam et magis contentus esset dux concilium venire Senas quam Mantuam. Rursus Florentinis esset utile, qui propter vicinitatem multa venderent. Gallici praeterea et Teutonici omnes Senas praeponunt Mantuae et tutiores se ibi futuros putant. Sed duo sunt non parva obstacula. Unum est quod non tot obferre potestis quot marchio Mantuanus; alterum, quia Graeci expresse dicunt ad nullas se venturos urbes, quae communitatibus sint suppositae excepta Ancona. Sed hoc ultimum facile tolleretur, quoniam ista dicunt propter Venetos et Januenses et forsitan propter Florentinos. De vobis nemo est, qui credat eos male contemptari. Utcumque est, non esset turpe vestras dominationes hanc ingredi practicam. Nam et Florentini, quorum res desperatior est, vehementer pro se instant. Ego jam verba cum oratoribus ducis Mediolani feci, qui omnino¹ scripturi sunt domino duci, ut pro Senis velit instantiam facere, quando omnino negatum fuerit in terris suis. Sed opus est, ut vos apud principem et apud concilium sollicitetis et forsitan etiam cum papa.

[6] Ego tamen credo Mantuam praeponi omnibus. Sic video trium legatorum, qui hic sunt inclinatos animos. Multa tamen mutari possunt. Ideo, quantum meum iudicium cernit, non inutile neque indecorum iudicaverim vestras dominationes in hoc laborare neque putetis has res brevi tempore posse concludi, sed aliqui transient antea menses, inter quos habetis spatium providendi. Haec ego dixi, quod hanc utilitatem nostrae patriae concedi vellem. Vos quod utile est atque inutile longe melius perspicietis. Quae scribam, alia non sunt, nisi quod vestris magnificis dominationibus et me et meos officio² commendatos ad vestrarum dominationum obsequia semper paratus.

Ex Basilea, 9. Aprilis 1436.

Vestrarum magnificarum dominationum servulus Aeneas de Piccolominibus.

¹ omnes HE

² officio WO

3. Candidacy of Siena

[5] For these reasons, I have been thinking that your city might possibly be chosen to host the council. But since it usually takes much effort to achieve such things, I believed it would be useful for Your Lordships to ask the Lord Duke to support the candidacy of Siena in case he could not get the council to move to one of his own territories. Indeed the duke would prefer the council to come to Siena rather than to Mantua.¹ It would also be advantageous for the Florentines, who could sell much there because of the short distance.² The French and the Germans all prefer Siena to Mantua and believe they would be safer there.³ But there are two important obstacles. One is that you cannot offer as much as the Marquess of Mantua.^{4 5} The other is that the Greeks have explicitly stated they will not come to cities under democratic rule except Ancona. But the last obstacle may easily be removed since they have taken this position because of the Venetians, the Genoese, and maybe also because of the Florentines.⁶ Nobody believes that the Greeks would disregard Siena. Be that as it may, it would not be shameful for you to enter the fray, for the Florentines, too, are canvassing the council even if their case is worse. I have already spoken with the ambassadors of the Duke of Milan, who will definitely write their lord, the duke, to support Siena if his own lands meet with complete refusal. But you must solicit the prince, the council, and - possibly - the pope.

[6] [At present,] though, I believe that Mantua will be preferred to all others, and I see that the three [papal] legates here are inclined that way. But much may still change. Therefore, as far as I can judge - with all humility - it will be neither useless nor improper for Your Lordships to work in this direction. Moreover, you should not think that this matter will be settled in a short time; it will take some months, during which you will have time to make your preparations. I have said this because I should like our country to be given this opportunity, but you will see what is profitable and not much better than I.⁷ I have nothing else to write, except that I recommend myself and mine to Your Lordships, always ready to be of service.

From Basel, 9. April 1436.

Enea de' Piccolomini, Your Magnificent Lordships' humble servant.

¹ At the time, the marquess of Mantua was an ally of Venice, an enemy of Milan.

² A large international assembly would have to be provisioned from the territories surrounding the host city. In the case of Siena, Firenze would be in a privileged position to provision the members of the council and their attendants not only with foodstuffs but also

with other products, thus gaining a considerable economic advantage.

³ It is not clear why, except for Siena not being a major player in the North Italian power games and therefore less politically risky.

⁴ Gianfrancesco I Gonzaga.

⁵ In terms of a financial contribution needed by the council to cover the expenses of the Greeks.

⁶ Relations between the Byzantine Empire and the commercial

empires of Venice, Genoa, and to some extent Florence had often been difficult, and the Greeks had not yet forgotten the role of Venice during and after the fatal 4th crusade (1202-1204).

⁷ That the city government took Piccolomini's proposal seriously is shown by two entries in the consistorial protocol of 10 and 11 May 1436, see WO, 1: 1, p. 44.

21. Letter to the City government of Siena (6 August 1436, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: Siena / Archivio Statale / Concist. 80, 97 *.

Editions: HE, 21, pp. 50-56; WO, 1, 1: 21, pp. 44-51; (both based on the Siena ms.).

Translations: RE, 10, pp. 86-93.

Magnifici ac potentissimi domini, domini mei colendissimi, post recommendationem.

[1] Redeunte Senas spectato doctore Baptista, oratore vestro meoque praeceptore et benefactore, magno scribendi onere levatum me sentio. Multa enim, quae ipse scripturus eram, ab eodem et audietis plene et intelligetis optime. Siquidem homo est, qui pro suo ingenio dicendique facultate omnia melius ore expressurus sit quam ego litteris aut quivis alius immo quam ego etiam verbis, si ibidem essem, quamvis multa rerum practica instructus. Decreveram enim longissimis uti epistolis terminumque omnium litterarum excedere, ut res, quo se modo haberent, vobis aperirem animumque vestrum ad huiusmodi concilium habendum in civitate vestra accenderem. Sed faciet omnia melius apud vestras magnificentias praefatus dominus Baptista. Aliqua tamen sunt, quae omnino vestris magnificentiis statui conscribere, quamvis neque ipsum haec praeteriturum putem. Spero enim et meas litteras aliquid fidei apud vos² mereri et habere, statimque ad rem ipsam venio, si prius de agitatis per dominum Baptistam aliqua vestris dominationibus retulero.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² et *add.* WO

21. Letter to the City government of Siena (6 August 1436, Basel).

Context: The city government of Siena had apparently accepted Piccolomini's proposal to make a bid to host the reunion council with the Greeks (see letter 20) and had instructed its ambassador to the council to make an offer of 30,000 ducats. Upon learning that this sum was largely insufficient the ambassador had to improvise, but he could not raise the offer he was instructed to make.

Subject: Piccolomini exhorts the city government of Siena to make an offer of the 70,000 ducats needed by the council.

Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords, my Right Worshipful Lords, after recommendation.

1. Compliments to the Sienese ambassador

[1] As the distinguished doctor Battista,¹ your ambassador and my preceptor and benefactor, is returning to Siena, I feel myself relieved of a great burden of reporting. For many things that I was going to write, you will now hear fully from him and understand well. Indeed, he will, by virtue of his intellect and eloquence, explain everything much better by mouth than I or anybody else could do in a letter. He will do so even better than I could do if I were there with you myself, although I am most familiar with the matter. I had already decided to write a long letter, exceeding the ordinary limits of a letter, to explain the situation to you and urge you to hold the council in your city. But now, Lord Battista will do all this better when he is with Your Excellencies. Still, there are some things that I had decided to write to your Excellencies in any case, though I believe he will not fail to mention them. In the hope that my letters both merit and actually have some credence with you, I shall come directly to the matter, even at the risk of mentioning some things to your Lordships that Battista may already have communicated to you.

¹ Cione di Battista Orlandi.

[2] Laudo enim summe proboque vestrum consilium, quod hominem elegistis huic rei non aptum solum, sed necessarium. Ea est enim in illo viro gratia, sive haec a diis data sunt seu fortuna haec hominibus contingunt, ut facile multitudinis animos ad sese alliciat faciatque mirum in modum attentos et benevolos auditores, et – quod est praecipua dignum admiratione – orationem habuit in concilio minime praemeditatam, elegantem tamen et perpolitam adeo, ut stupore affecerit, quicumque audierint, circumstantes, ego quoque¹ permultum admiratus fui, qui sciebam ipsum solum noctem habuisse unam ad cogitandum, quae dicturus erat. Nam quod se dicturum ab initio destinaverat, praetermittere oportuit. Reperit enim aliter se res habere, quam ipse praecogitasset, cumque vestra opinione simul deceptus fuit. Credebat enim summam 30 milium ducatorum necessitatibus concilii abunde satisfacere, quod tamen postea minime verum invenit, sed multo plura esse concilio necessaria cognovit, quam ipse oblaturus esset. Unde² mutare oportuit, quod se dicturum praeordinaverat neque ad rem ipsam spatium longum sed unam – ut praedixi – tantum noctem habuit. Ita tamen se habuit, ut summe omnibus placuerit et expectationi eorum satisfecerit, neque aliquid de opportunis omiserit.

¹ ego quoque : egoque WO

² unum WO

2. The Sieneſe ambassador's offer and the council's reaction

[2] I praise and highly commend your choice of him [as your ambassador] ſince he is not only well-qualified but even neceſſary [for that function]. For he has ſuch grace - whether ſuch things are given by the gods¹ or occur in men by fortune – that he can eaſily attract the minds of a crowd and make his hearers marvellouſly attentive and well-diſpoſed. Moreover – and what is particularly admirable – with minimal preparation, he held an oration in the council ſo elegant and poliſhed that it amazed all thoſe preſent who heard it. I, too, was amazed, eſpecially ſince I knew that he had only had one night to prepare what to ſay. For when he learned that the ſituation was different from what he had thought and that he and you had been miſtaken, he had to put aſide what he had intended to ſay. He believed that a ſum of 30,000 ducats would amply ſuffice for the council's neceſſities, but then he found out that this was not the caſe and reaſiſed that much more was needed than he was [inſtructed] to offer. Therefore, he had to change what he had previously decided to ſay, and – as I have ſaid – he did not have a long time but only had one night to do it. But he did it ſo well that he pleaſed all and ſatiſfied their expectations, leaving out nothing opportune.

¹ Note Piccolomini's reference to the pagan gods.

[3] Aperuit enim in primis, quo animo quoque affectu communitas illa Senensis erga Romanam ecclesiam et sacrosancta concilia semper fuerit, quanto desiderio dominationes vestrae reductionem Graecorum unionemque illam sanctam expectarent, quam laeti contentique fueritis missum esse ad vos dominum Gasparem Perusinum habitamque de vobis in rebus grandibus mentionem fore. Suasit deinde pro parte vestra dominis de concilio, ne pro hujusmodi facto Graecorum aut pecuniis aut laboribus parcerent remque toti Christianitati perutilem commendavit. Adjecit postremo gratissimum fore magnificentiis vestris, si sacrum concilium ad illam urbem se transferre dignaretur. Et¹ ne² pro parte Senensium aliquid deesset, dominationes vestrae 30 milia offerebant mutuo, prout cum domino Gaspare tractatum habuerant. Urbem deinceps civesque omnes ad mandata concilii paratissimos obtulit conatusque est persuadere locum illum pro futuro concilio aptissimum fore, capacitatem urbis, civium humanitatem, libertatem omnium, feracitatem et vini et frumenti ceterarumque rerum commemorans et omnia adducens in medium, quae animos ad civitatem illam inclinarent. Et cum necesse fuerit aliqua dicere pro honore dominationum vestrarum, quae dominum Gasparem tangebant, ita ea temperavit³, ut et honori vestro satisfactum sit et domino Gaspari non videatur injurius illudque denique effecit, quod numquam ego sperare potui.

[4] Ita enim munus vestrum verbis ornavit, ut quamvis vix [ad⁴] necessitatem concilii pronum fuerit, omnibus tamen magnum amplumque sit visum. Ac si verum licet dicere laetioribus animis oblatio vestra 30 milium ducatorum est audita quam Florentinorum, qui 85 milia et obtulerunt et offerunt. Videbatur enim, quod per vestrum oratorem promittebatur sine fraude et dolo offerri, multumque prodest in hujusmodi bonam habere mentem et reputari bonum. Sed certe, si dominus Baptista sufficiens mandatum habuisset, mirum in modum haec sancta synodus exultasset. Nam cum primum auditum est oratores Senenses pro hoc negotio mitti ingenti gaudio omnes repleti sunt et summa affecti laetitiae, quod vel honor⁵ ipsi domino Baptistae impensus indicat⁶, cui huc venienti multi praelati obviam ierunt et laeto vultu susceperunt eumque per civitatem euntem omnes honorarunt. Et quod est admirandum: ad instantiam sui solius facta est congregatio generalis extraordinarie, quod non nisi magnis et urgentissimis de causis fieri consuevit. Postremo cum pro triginta milibus ducatorum impossibile esset rem concludi, summo omnium consensu obtinuit dilationem aut mittendi aut veniendi ad vos⁷ exponendique omnia. Ex quibus rebus summe commendandus est ipse orator vester, qui praeclare se habuit, vos collaudandi, qui talem eligistis virum.

¹ *omit.* WO

² *sicut add.* cod.

³ ~~moderatusque est~~ *seq.* cod.

⁴ *em.* HE, WO

⁵ ~~sibi~~ *seq.* cod.

⁶ *judicat* WO

⁷ ~~pro mandato ampliori~~ *seq.* cod.

[3] First, he expounded the Sieneſe republic's attitude and devotion towards the Roman Church and the Holy Councils; how greatly your Lordſhips deſire the return of the Greeks¹ and the holy union; and how glad and happy you were that Lord Gaſpare da Perugia was ſent to you and that you had been mentioned in this great affair.² Then Battista, on your behalf, urged the council to not ſpare any labour or money in the Greek matter and commended it as thoroughly beneficial to all Chriſtendom. He added that it would make your Lordſhips moſt happy if the Holy Council would deign to move to your city. And leſt nothing ſhould lack on the part of the Sieneſe, he [related] your Lordſhips' offer of a loan of 30,000 ducats, as negotiated with Lord Gaſpare. Then he declared that your city and all the citizens were eager and ready to ſerve the council. He endeavoured to ſhow that this place will be moſt convenient for the future council, mentioning the ſize of the city, the kindneſs of the townspeople, the freedom of all, the abundance of wine, grain, and other things, and pointing to all the things that might incline the [Fathers'] towards your city. And when he had to ſay ſomething about your Lordſhips' honour that concerned Lord Gaſpare,³ he did it ſo circumſpectly that he ſatisfied your honour without insulting Lord Gaſpare. In the end, he achieved what I had not dared hope.⁴

[4] Indeed, he formulated your offer to the council ſo well that although it was barely ſufficient for the council's needs, it appeared great and ample to all. To tell the truth, they heard your offer of 30,000 ducats with much greater pleaſure than the 85,000 ducats the Florentines have offered and ſtill do. For they believed that your ambaffador's offer was made without deceit and guile. In ſuch matters, it helps much to have ſincerity and to be perceived as ſuch. If Lord Battista had had a ſufficient mandate, the Holy Synod would undoubtedly have been overjoyed, for when it was firſt rumoured that the Sieneſe were ſending ambaffadors in this matter, all were filled with immense joy and gladneſs, as evidenced by the honour ſhown to Lord Battista when he arrived: many prelates went to meet him, welcomed him joyfully, and as he paſſed through the city, he was honoured by all.⁵ And, aſtoniſhingly, at his requeſt alone, an extraordinary general congregation was held, which only happens when great and moſt urgent cauſes require it. Finally, when the matter could not be ſettled with 30,000 ducats, he obtained the Fathers' unanimous conſent to a delay making it poſſible for a miſſion to be ſent or come to you to explain all. For theſe reaſons, your ambaffador ſhould be highly commended for acting ſo brilliantly, and you yourſelves ſhould be praiſed for chooſing ſuch a man.

¹ To union with the Latin Church.

² The reunion council with the Greeks.

³ There muſt have been ſome problem, poſſibly of a protocolary nature, between Gaſpare and the city government, but Piccolomini does not ſay what it was. Poſſibly, it was connected with Gaſpare having become a citizen and ſometimes repreſentative of Florence, permanent rival and

often an enemy of Siena, and – in the preſent caſe – a competitor for the reunion council with the Greeks.

⁴ The reaſon for Piccolomini's familiarity with Battista's oration might quite poſſibly be that he had actively contributed to its compoſition or even drafted it, as he did a year and a half later for the Milanese ambaffador to emperor-elect Albrecht II (the "*Quid*

est" of 1438) or even later for the imperial chancellor Kaſpar Schlick (the "*Si putarem*" of 1444).

⁵ The traditional ceremonies of arrival (adventus) of important perſonages or their envoys comprised a welcome outside the city and accompaniment to their lodgings.

[5] Sed magis laudandi eritis, si rem inchoatam perficietis gnaviter¹, in quo negotio me precor paululum audiatis, si servitori vestro et Senensi homini pro patria loquenti aliquid creditis. Sed, quod volo quodque suadeo, facile dictu est, suasu forsitan difficile. Suadeo namque, ut petitionibus concilii abunde liberaliterque respondeatis ostendatisque vos esse, qui semper fuistis, magnificos. Hoc vobis forsitan magnum videtur durumque, quod si hic fuissetis nempe faciliter ad rem hanc omnes inclinati essetis, neque dubito, quin vestrum unusquisque ad hoc, quam ego sum, animatior redderetur, siquidem melius quam ego intelligeretis et majora emolumenta vestra illinc cognosceretis. Sed concedere mutuo 85 milia ducatorum communitati vestrae pergrande videtur, majus tamen fuit ducenta fere milia imperatori dono concessisse atque illinc nulla spes lucri, hinc maxima resultat, tuncque bello in medio eratis undique maximis vexati exhaustique sumptibus, nunc pace tranquillitateque utimini faciliusque modo centum quam tunc 50 milia est recuperare.

[6] Sed dubitatis, ne factis sumptibus concilium evestigio dissolvatur, delusique remaneatis, quem metum omittetis² faciliter, si res ante gestas in hoc concilio memoriae teneatis. Laboravit enim, si meministis, diu summus pontifex omnique studio nixus est concilium dissolvere. Id tamen obtinere numquam potuit, nunc minis, nunc muneribus praelatos corrumpendo. Dominum tamen legatum numquam corrumpere potuit neque aliquos insignes praeclarosque viros, qui se murum pro ecclesia Dei et pro concilio adversus machinationes diversorum opposuerunt. Neque tamen tunc tam ardua res quam est ista Graecorum agebatur. Quod si non potuit, quando debile concilium erat parvumque neque magna tractabat, quomodo poterit modo, quando et validius est concilium et de rebus grandibus fidemque praecipue concernentibus agitur, ad dissolutionem pervenire?

¹ graviter WO

² amittetis WO

3. Siena should raise its offer to the council

3.1. The offer should be raised to 85,000 ducats

[5] But you will be praised even more if you bring the enterprise you have begun to a happy conclusion. In this matter, I ask you to hear me a little if you give any credence to your servant, a Sieneſe, ſpeaking for his home city. What I wiſh and argue is eaſy to ſay but perhaps difficult to argue, for I wiſh to perſuade you to reſpond amply and generously to the council’s requeſts and ſhow yourſelves as magnificent as always. That may ſeem a great and difficult taſk, but if you were here, you would all eaſily incline to this courſe, and I do not doubt that each of you would become even more eager than I ſince you underſtand the matter better than I and realiſe its advantages. Granting a loan of 85,000 ducats may ſeem enormous to you, but you made an even greater grant to the emperor, a gift of almoſt 200,000 ducats.¹ Then you had no hope of any profit, here you will gain a great one. Then you were in the middle of a war, preſſed on all ſides, and out of money, whereas today we have peace and quiet ſo that it is eaſier now to recoup 100,000 than 50,000 ducats then.

3.2. Risk of the council being dissolved

[6] But you worry that if the council ſhould be diſſolved after the money is ſpent, you will be cheated of the repayment. This fear you may eaſily ſet aſide if you conſider what has already been done in this council. As you remember, the Supreme Pontiff has, for a long time, tried by every means to diſſolve the council but could never achieve it though he tried now to coerce the prelates with threats and now to corrupt them with gifts. But he never managed to corrupt the Lord Legate² or other excellent and diſtinguiſhed men, who, like a wall in front of God’s Church and the council, reſiſted the machinations of various parties. But the matter then was not as important as the one today concerning the Greeks. If the pope could not diſſolve the council when it was ſmall and dealt with unimportant matters, how can he do it today when it is ſtronger and dealing with important matters, eſpecially concerning the Faith?

¹ In 1432, on the way to his coronation in Rome, Emperor Sigismund arrived in Siena and

ſtayed for almoſt a year. On this occaſion, the city gave him almoſt 200,000 ducats as a gift.

² Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini.

[7] Quomodo patientur cardinales aliique praelati dissolvi concilium pro reductione Graecorum congregatum? Maximum certe vituperium et singulare hoc dedecus esset ecclesiae occidentalis, si pactiones cum Graecis habitas non observaret et quippe dominus legatus, qui rem hanc inchoavit, prius mori velit quam deficere in promissionibus. Ex alia parte Graeci per bullas aureas et per ratificationes obligati sunt ad Latinorum terras venire, ubi concilio placuerit ex certis nominatis locis scribuntque quotidie numquam se promissionibus defuturos. Oratores quoque concilii, qui Constantinopoli degunt, affirmant per litteras suas Graecos ad veniendum paratos promptosque fore. Sunt praeterea hi domini in tanta cum papa indignatione, ut dissolutionem concilii eo vivo numquam passuri sint, quod nihil aliud esset quam facultatem ulciscendi papae facere. Ex his igitur et aliis rationibus¹, quas referre longum est, satis constare potest concilium hoc neque hic² neque in loco, ad quem se transferet, verisimiliter dissolvi posse.

[8] Velletis forsitan cauti de pecuniis esse, quas concedetis, neque id mirum est. Sed unum, oro, animadvertite, pro 25 milibus ego in primis certam securitatem ostendo. Nam poteritis mittere oratores vestros ad Graeciam super galeis, quae ad Graecos mittentur, cum 10 milibus, quae³ ibi in Constantinopoli remanere debent pro succurrendo, si a Teucris urbs invaderetur. Rursus quindecim milia pro expensis Graecorum a portu Constantinopolis ad primum Latinorum portum. Haec 25 milia vestri oratores non concedent, nisi securi sint et videant Graecos venturos, quo casu impossibile est concilium non celebrari. Quis enim est tam fatuus, qui praesumat Latinos ad concilium non confluere Graecis certissime venientibus? Quod si venire nolint, reducentur pecuniae et illis restituentur, qui mutuum fecerint. De indulgentiis insuper et decimis pecuniae colligentur eritque contentum concilium, quod in civitate vestra duo vel tres depositarii eligantur, apud quos omnes pecuniae deponantur, quae ex indulgentiis decimisque imponendis colligantur et exinde vobis satisfiat, quem securitatis modum jam dux Mediolani pro⁴ se acceptavit.

¹ rationibus WO
² neque hic *omit.* WO

³ qui WO
⁴ per WO

[7] How could the cardinals and the other prelates allow the dissolution of a council assembled to effect the return of the Greeks? It would surely be scandalous and shameful for the Western Church if it did not keep its agreements with the Greeks, and the Lord Legate, who began this whole matter, would rather die than fail his promises. On the other side, the Greeks have committed themselves through golden bulls and ratifications¹ to come to the Latin lands, wherever the council should decide from among the already designated places. They write every day that they will never fail their promises. Also, the council's ambassadors presently in Constantinople confirm in their letters that the Greeks are prepared and ready to come. Finally, the lord [prelates] here are so angry with the pope that they will never allow the dissolution of the council while this pope is alive, which would just give him an opportunity for revenge.² For these and other reasons that would take too long to explain, it is evident that the council cannot be dissolved neither here nor in any other place to which it might move.

3.3. Security for the loan

[8] Perhaps you would be cautious about the money you offer, and no wonder! But take note of this: I can show you how you can get solid security for 25,000 ducats, for you can send your ambassadors to Greece on the galleys to be sent to the Greeks with the 10,000 ducats that must remain in Constantinople for aid in case the Turks³ attack the city. There remains the sum of 25,000 ducats to cover the travel expenses of the Greeks from the port of Constantinople to the first Latin port. Your ambassadors will not release the 25,000 ducats unless they are quite certain that the Greeks will come, in which case it would be impossible not to hold the council. Who is so foolish as to believe that the Latins will not come flock to the council if it is absolutely certain the Greeks are coming? And should the Greeks not want to come, the money will be taken back and returned to those who made the loan. Money will come in from indulgences and tithes⁴ to be imposed. The council will consent to the choice of two or three depositaries from your city with whom all the money from the indulgences and tithes will be deposited. From this sum, you will then be repaid. Such a form of security has already been accepted by the Duke of Milan.

¹ Ratifications of agreements with the council's representatives.

² Against the obstreperous council.

³ Note Piccolomini's use of the term Teuceri for the Turks.

⁴ Tithes: in this case, a form of church tax imposed on clergy,

laity and jews, to finance the reunion council with the Greeks.

[9] Neque vos pudeat magnorum principum sequi vestigia neque velitis tantum bonum contemnere, quale nec umquam habuistis nec, si nunc desit, in futurum forsitan habebitis. Fert enim omnium opinio hoc concilium pergrande frequentissimumque futurum concursu Graecorum Latinorumque. Graeci enim, ut ex ore domini legati audivi, circa centum infulatos deducunt inter abbates et episcopos, oportebitque, ut pro honore suo Latini in duplo vel in triplo superent, ne, dum illos convertere studemus, ab eis convertamur. Erit profecto res pulchra et spectatione digna et illi civitati admodum utilis et honorifica, in qua concilium celebrabitur. O, utinam vos Senenses tantum bonum habeatis! Video enim hoc futurum tempus, quo divites omnes futuri sitis, quo tantum pecuniarum ad vos veniat, ut filii filiorum vestrorum sensuri sint aliquid. Sed timeo, ne tantum bonum vestra culpa amittatis¹. Erit certe culpa vestra, nisi obtuleritis petita per concilium. Quoniam si offerre velitis, quae opus sunt, magnam spem capio concilium hoc ad vos defluere atque eo reverti, a quo habuit initium.

[10] Namque ita se res habent, ut necesse futurum putem ad Italiam transire, quoniam neque Gallici neque Teutonici concilii necessitati satisfaciunt. Solus enim dux Mediolani et Florentini largissime satisfaciunt. Veneti enim, etsi multa offerant, non tamen habetur de eis mentio, quod locus eorum inhabilis videtur. Oportebit igitur vel Florentiam eligere vel terras ducis, magnaetque hinc atque inde contentiones erunt. Pars duci, pars Florentinis favebit. Quod si Senenses in medium venirent cum sufficienti mandato, ut multorum est opinio, credo, obtinerent. Multa enim duci obstant et Florentinis, quae Senensibus non obstant. Florentini enim partiales papae dicuntur, et ejusdem factionis et ligae timendumque, ne pacta rumperent aut papae nimis faverent. Id non potest de Senensibus suspicari aliquis. Florentia cara sterilisque habetur, Sena copiosior et feracior. Florentini astutiores cautioresque atque ideo interdum² fallaces, Senenses puri et veraces creduntur. Ad Florentinorum terras non posse tute accedere praelatos ducis, ad Senensium posse. Duci obstat inimicitia papae, qui juste excusare se possit, si non eat. Is Senensibus et pater est et amicum se dicit, neque honeste poterit jam acceptam urbem repudiare. Duci adversantur Gallici propter regem Renatum, de quo Senenses nihil se intromittunt. [*Cont.*]

¹ omittatis WO

² vixdum WO

3.4. The advantage of hosting the council

[9] Do not be ashamed to follow in the footsteps of great princes, and do not despise this great boon such as you have never had before or shall probably never have in the future if you miss it now. All believe that this council will be very grand and crowded with Greeks and Latins. I have heard from the Lord Legate's own mouth that the Greeks will bring over about 100 mitred abbots and bishops and that it will be necessary for the Latins to summon twice or thrice as many so that we shall not be converted by them while we are striving to convert them. [Thus, the council] will indeed be magnificent, worth to behold and very advantageous and honourable for the city where it is held. Oh, how I wish that you Sieneſe will obtain this great boon! I ſee a future where you will all be rich, and even the ſons of your ſons will profit. But I fear that you will loſe this great advantage through your own fault. For it will certainly be your own fault if you do not offer what the council requires. But if you do offer what is needful, I have great hopes that the council will come to you and return to where it began.¹

3.5. Advantages of Siena vs other cities

[10] As things are now, I believe that the council has to move to Italy for neither the French nor the Germans can ſatisfy the council's needs. Only the Duke of Milan and the Florentines meet them fully. The Venetians offer much, but they are not mentioned ſince their location appears to be unſuitable. So, it will be neceſſary to chooſe either Florence or the duke's lands, which will cauſe much conflict. One party will favour the duke, another the Florentines. If the Sieneſe enter [the competition] with a ſufficient mandate, I believe – as many do – that they will ſucceed, for many things militate againſt the duke and the Florentines but not againſt the Sieneſe. The Florentines are ſaid to ſupport the pope, his party, and alliance, and it muſt be feared they would break the agreements or favour the pope overly. Nobody could ſuſpect the Sieneſe of that. Florence is held to be expensive and barren, whereas Siena is thought to be better ſupplied² and more fertile. The Florentines are conſidered more cunning and cautious and, therefore, ſometimes deceitful, whereas the Sieneſe are conſidered honeſt and truthful. The duke's³ prelates will not be able to enter the Florentine territory in ſafety, whereas they can come ſafely to the Sieneſe territory. As for the duke, the problem is his enmity with the pope, who can reaſonably excuſe himſelf for not going to the duke's lands. On the contrary, the pope is like a father to the Sieneſe and calls himſelf their friend,⁴ and he cannot decently reſuſe this city if it is accepted by the council. The French oppoſe the duke becauſe of King René,⁵ whereas the Sieneſe keep out of that affair. [*Cont.*]

¹ Piccolomini refers to the Council of Pavia-Siena, held in 1423-1424 and after a ſhort time diſſolved by Pope Martin V.

² Therefore, foodſtuffs would be cheaper in Siena than in Florence.

³ Duke of Milan

⁴ He was even biſhop of Siena from 1407 to 1409.

⁵ In 1435, the Duke of Milan and King Alfonſo made an alliance, after which the duke ſupported Alfonſo's campaign for the kingdom of Naples againſt the

claims of René d'Anjou. Thus a royal houſe of France contended with a royal houſe of Spain for this kingdom. As the duke of Milan ſupported the Spaniſh, the French generally oppoſed the duke.

[Cont.] Duci est infensus imperator, Senensibus affectissimus. Inter ducem et Januenses aliosque guerra est, Senenses cum omnibus pacem habent. Quibus ex rebus fit utilius commodiusque celebrari posse concilium Senis quam alibi rursusque patet animos fere omnium ad illam inclinatos urbem. Sed unum solum restat, quod est in vobis situm, magnifici domini, scilicet pecunias usque ad necessitatem concilii offerre.

[11] Est enim opus huic concilio non parva summa, neque putetis concilium multa petere, ut ad pauca veniatur, quia re vera illa summa opus est, quae petitur, velletque libenter concilium minori summa indigere, sed fieri nequit. Idque totum provisum est Graecis, neque in alios usus convertenda est pecunia illa quam pro reductione conversioneque Graecorum tractanda et fienda. Itaque videte in tanta re Christianitati tam utili et tantarum animarum salutem concernenti quam turpe sit desides vos esse et strictas tenere manus, qui non solum mutuo, sed dono sine spe aliqua lucri temporalis offerre deberetis, quodcumque in facultatibus¹ habetis. Neque enim fas est in tam pio negotio multas cautiones quaerere, quando vel perdere temporalia lucrum est animarum. Sed videte, ne, cum pecuniis parcitis, animarum simul et lucri obliti videamini. Neque enim tantum dicere possem commodum, quod exinde capietis, quia² majus accipiatis. Praeterea quam laudabile erit, si dicatur in civitate Senarum unio Graecorum Latinorumque facta est.

[12] Noscunt ista Florentini, homines oculati, atque, ut concilium habeant, nullis parcunt impensis. 85 enim milia liberaliter obtulerunt, quotiens concilio placeat illam urbem acceptare, paratissimi 30 domos gratis dare, galeas quattuor invenire, victualia et pensiones domorum aequo taxare pretio, et, si plura petantur, se minime negare. Eadem dux Mediolani offert et ultra unam ex suis civitatibus cum arcibus et circumjacentibus oppidis in manu concilii ponere, sive Paviam sive Placentiam velit, seu Parmam aut Cremonam³ expetat, taxationes domorum et victualium in manibus domini legati se committere⁴, proque his omnibus sollemni instrumento se obligavit. Non igitur mirari debetis, si ea vobis suadeo, quae dux quaeque Florentini libenter factitant. Et si dicatis Florentinos magis pecuniosos, fateor, si etiam magis indigentes dicatis. Namque etsi plures habent pecunias, etiam pluribus pro servando statu suo indigent, et pro ista summa non minus vos quam ipsi indonei estis, si bursas vestras tangere tantisper velitis, quas mox impleturi exuberantissime sitis.

¹ facultate WO

² qui WO

³ oppidis in ... Cremonam *omit.*
cod. (HE: *unde Wolkan haec*)

verba sumpserit indagare non potui)

⁴ se committere *corr. ex* ponere se
dux affirmat cod. (WO)

[Cont.] The emperor is an enemy of the duke¹ but very sympathetic towards the Sieneſe. The duke is at war with the Genoese and others, whereas the Sieneſe have peace with all. For theſe reaſons, the council can be held more conveniently and ſuitably in Siena than elſewhere, and thus, clearly, almoſt all incline towards Siena. Only one thing remains, and it depends on you, Magnificent Lords: to offer a ſum ſufficient for the council’s needs.

3.6. The ſum required by the council

[11] The ſum needed by the council is certainly not a ſmall one, but do not think it aſks for more in order to ſettle for leſs. The ſum required really is what is needed. The council would be only too happy to demand leſs, but that is impoſſible. It is all deſtined for the Greeks, and the money muſt not be uſed for other purpoſes than their return and converſion. So, you ſee that in this matter, ſo crucial to Chriſtendom, ſo beneficial, and touching ſo many ſouls, it would be ſhameful for you to be indifferent and pariſimonious. [On the contrary,] you ought not juſt to offer a loan, but a free gift as large as poſſible, with no expectation of any material profit. In ſuch a pious matter, it is not right to demand many guarantees ſince material loſs is ſpiritual gain. But beware leſt, ſparing your money, you forget both your ſouls and [material] profit, for I cannot deſcribe how large a benefit you will reap afterwards: it will ſurely be even greater! And moreover, it will be quite pleaſant to hear people ſay that “the union of the Greeks and the Latins has been accompliſhed in Siena.”

3.7. The Florentine and Milanese competition

[12] The Florentines, perſpicacious men, know this and do not ſpare any expenſe to have the council. They have generously offered 85,000 ducats if the council decides for their city. Moreover, they are quite ready to make 30 houſes available at no coſt, to find four galleys, and to provide victuals and houſe rentals at reaſonable prices. If more is required to reſuſe nothing. The Duke of Milan offers the ſame, and in addition, he will give the council control of one of his cities, with the fortreſſes and ſurrounding towns, whether it ſhould want Pavia or Piacenza or aſk for Parma or Cremona. He has even committed himſelf to all this in a formal inſtrument.² So, you ſhould not wonder that I urge you to do as the duke and the Florentines. And if you ſay that the Florentines have more money, I agree, but then you ſhould alſo ſay that they need more money. For though they have much money, they alſo need much money to maintain their ſtate. You are juſt as able as they to raiſe the ſum required if only you will open thoſe purſes of yours that you would ſoon refill to overflowing.

¹ In connection with his coronation voyage to Italy in 1432-1433, the emperor became an enemy of his previous ally, the

Duke of Milan, and inſtead entered an alliance with Venice directed againſt the duke.

² A ſigned and ſealed legal document, poſſibly wiſſeſſed by a notary.

[13] Sed unum inter alia noluerim omisisse: civitati certe nostrae non fuit honor misisse oratorem tamquam ad rem perfectam, cum longissime a concordia tractatus esset. Et licet non vestra culpa, sed alterius fuit, aliquid tamen est verecundiae aut infamiae simile, quod nullo modo expurgari melius potest quam liberalitate, ostendendo, quod si aliter vobis insinuatam fuisset, aliter fecissetis. Velitisque, obsecro, operam dare, ne vestri inimici intentum habeant, qui studentes, ne concilium ad vos declinet, operam per fallaciam dederunt, ne satis offeretis, quos sane reprimetis eorumque obviabitis dolis, si large et festive ad necessitatem concilii respondebitis, ad quam rem ego et scio et debeo vos hortari, qui rebus intersum videoque, ut omnia transeunt, atque manibus paene tango, ut ajunt, concilium istud vestrum esse, nisi vos perdati illud.

[14] Et quia superius dixi concilium hac summa omnino indigere, ex hoc id vobis suasum volo, quod, si patres de concilio res hujusmodi venales haberent et plus offerenti concederent, numquam ad vos veniretur. Florentini enim et dux multa plura, quam haec sint, offerent, sed concilium ultra necessitatem nihil petit aliud. Et cum jam a plerisque sufficientem pecuniam invenerit, supra nihil quaerit, sed de dispositione loci et securitate disserit. Obsecro igitur ad rem istam aequis animis intendite et utilitatem honoremque vestrum et patriae considerate Aeneaeque ex affectu loquenti fidem date, quem invenietis in omnibus veracem et suae civitatis commodum quaerentem neque pro hac re¹, in quantum vestris magnificentiis placeat, aliquid omittentem. Laborabo enim, ut debeo, *manibus et pedibus*, ut res sortiatur effectum. Vos ex parte vestra, quod aequum est, nolite praetermittere. Vellem etiam plura circa hoc dicere, sed relinquo domino Baptistae onus, qui melius longe et ornatius singula reserabit. Ego me vestris dominationibus recomendo ad earundem semper mandata paratum.

Ex Basilea, 6. Augusti 1436.

Earundem dominationumstrarum servulus Aeneas de Piccolominibus.

¹ *omit.* HE

3.8. Sienese diplomatic gaffe

[13] But one thing that I cannot pass over. It was undoubtedly embarrassing that your city sent an ambassador in this matter as if it had already been settled, although it was actually far from an agreement. And though it was not your fault, but another's,¹ it is a disgraceful blemish that can only be effaced by generosity, showing that had you been informed differently, you would also have acted differently. So please, I beg you, do not let your enemies get their way. They are intent on keeping the council from you and have deceived you into not offering enough.² But you may resist them and counter their plots if you respond amply and generously to the council's needs, to which I exhort you in full knowledge of the matter since I take part in and observe all that happens here³ and perceive (as clearly as if touching it with my hands, as they say) that the council is yours if you do not miss [the opportunity].

3.9. Exhortation to make a new and better offer

[14] I said above that the council definitely needs this sum. Please believe me when I say that if the fathers considered the council to be for sale and could give it to the highest bidder, they would never even think of you, for the duke and the Florentines offer much more than this sum. However, the council does not require more than is necessary. And since they have now been offered the required sum by several parties, it demands nothing more but is now discussing the local arrangements and security. So I beg you to calmly reflect on this matter and consider your and your country's advantage and honour. Trust your Enea who speaks out of devotion [to our city] and whom you will find to be truthful in all things, to seek his city's benefit, and to omit nothing in this matter to please your Excellencies. I shall work – as I should - for success with *hand and feet*.⁴ On your part, you should do all that may reasonably be done. I would say more about this but leave the task to Lord Battista, who will speak about these issues far better and more elegantly than I. Recommending myself to your Lordships, I am always at your service.

From Basel, 6 August 1436.

Enea de' Piccolomini, your Lordships' humble servant.

¹ Gaspare da Perugia?

² The Sienese appear to have been given some bad and ill-intentioned advice leading them to offer a

grossly inadequate sum to the council and thus appear as less than solid potential hosts of the council.

³ Piccolomini was rapidly becoming a well-placed though minor official of the council.

⁴ Terentius: *Andria*, 675.

22. Letter to the City government of Siena (25 October 1436, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: VI, f. 12r **.

Editions: HE, 22, pp. 56-60; WO, 1, 1: 22, pp. 51-56; (both based on VI).

Translations: ME, 5, pp. 27-32; RE, 11, pp. 93-98.

Magnifici ac potentissimi domini, domini mei singularissimi.

[1] Heri, cum audissem tabellarium quendam ex Senis venisse litterasque vestras reverendissimo domino legato reddidisse, ad ipsum statim legatum me contuli, qui licet secretas teneret litteras nullique antea ipsarum tenorem aperuisset, sua tamen benignitate rem mihi aperire voluit, quod civi Senensi non reputavit indignum res ad Senenses spectantes ostendere. Dixit ergo mihi, uti litteras receperat, quas tamen noluerat manifestare, quoniam expectationi, quae de Senensibus erat, minime respondebant. Cumque multa hinc inde verba fecissemus, mirari se ait ille dominus, cur non liberaliter ad hanc rem veniretis, ut reliqui large offerentes, quae necessariae sunt, pecunias, nil mirum esse dicens Senenses obtinere, si satis offerrent, dictique hujus rationes attulit. Ab eo denique ita recessi ut ab illo, qui summe cuperet dominationes vestras aliter respondere. Cujus dum ego dicta rationesque considerarem, non inutile putavi, si his etiam litteris aures vestras onerarem, quamvis enim satis abunde alias scripserim. Id tamquam ab Aenea dictum reputastis; nunc vero, quidquid dixero, ex domini legati verbis accepi, ut non me, sed illum possitis aestimare loquentem.

[2] Hortatus sum aliis in litteris, ad rem hujus concilii magnifice intenderetis atque, ut alii faciunt, liberaliter, quae necessaria sunt, offerretis. Nunc vero id vos non fecisse aegre fero cum propter honorem tum propter utilitatem vestram. Video enim maximum honorem cum summa utilitate civitatem vestram amisisse sua dumtaxat culpa. Sum enim quodammodo certus, si concilio ut alii obtulissetis opportune, quod nulli praeter Senenses concilium habuissent. Nam cum magnae sint inter duces, Venetos et Florentinos discordiae, neque Veneti sine injuria ducis aut Florentini, neque dux sine injuria illorum eligi poterat.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

22. Letter to the City government of Siena (25 October 1436, Basel).

Context: See letter 21.

Subject: On behalf of Cardinal Cesarini, Piccolomini - again - urges the Sienese government to make an attractive offer to the council and thus to present itself as a compromise candidate to host the council with the Greeks.

Magnificent and Most Mighty Lords, my Distinguished Lords.

1. Cardinal Cesarini's reaction to Siena's insufficient offer

[1] Yesterday, when I heard that a messenger had arrived from Siena and delivered a letter from you to the Most Reverend Lord Legate,¹ I immediately went to visit him. Though the legate had kept the letter secret and revealed its contents to nobody, he kindly disclosed it to me, not considering it improper to show it to a Sienese citizen as it concerned Sienese affairs. So he told me that he had received a letter, which he had not wanted to make public since it did not answer the council's expectations of the Sienese. We discussed it at length, and the lord said he wondered why you did not approach this matter in an accommodating spirit, generously offering the necessary sum like the other parties had done. He told me that if only the Sienese offered enough, he would not be surprised if they succeeded, and he gave his reasons for this statement. As I left him, it was clear that he greatly wanted your Lordships to respond differently. So, considering his statement and reasons, I decided that it would be useful once again to burden your ears with a letter though I had already written to you abundantly on this matter.² That letter you considered as coming from Enea, but what I shall say now I heard directly from the Lord Legate, so that you may consider him as the speaker, not me.³

2. Siena as the compromise choice

[2] In the other letter, I exhorted you to deal with this council in a spirit of magnificence and, as others do, to generously offer what is necessary. On account of your own honour and advantage, I am disappointed that you have not done so. For I see that your city has lost both a high honour and a great advantage, and only through its own fault. I am sure that if, like others, you had made the council a suitable offer, none but the Sienese would have had the council. For there are major conflicts between the duke,⁴ the Venetians, and the Florentines, so that neither Venice nor Florence could be chosen without injury to the duke, just as the duke could not be chosen without injury to them.

¹ Cardinal Guliano Cesarini.

² See the preceding letter.

³ Note Piccolomini's close relationship with Cardinal Cesarini, still the most important man at

the council. The Sienese government surely took note of that message. It might not have appreciated, though, that, due to his relationship with its president, the

young Sienese was apparently able to intervene in Siena's transactions with the council.

⁴ The Duke of Milan.

[3] Ideoque libenter ad tertium locum communemque concilium declinasset, qualis nullus est in Italia praeter Senas, ubi esse concilium neque Veneti neque Florentini dolerent, neque dux inique id pateretur. Facile praeterea locus ille electus fuisset, quoniam papa in eum consentiebat, quod maxime domini de concilio desiderant, ut majori cum pace negotia queant tractari. Concilium insuper de Senensibus fiduciam habuisset neque vim aliquam aut fraudes timuisset. Suntque multi hic, qui recordantur, ut benigne et humaniter tempore concilii tractati fuerunt, qui nihil magis optant quam eo reverti. Teutonici denique nullum Italiae locum civitati Senensi praeponerent propter impensos Caesari honores, quae res Teutonicos urbi vestrae quam maxime conciliat. Sunt et aliae causae, quae Senenses omnino praeponendos faciebant conciliumque vobis dabant, sed omnibus illis pecuniarum causa praeponderat, sine quibus – ut vulgo dicunt – nihil est, quod recte explicari queat.

[4] Indiget – ut scitis – concilium ingenti pecuniarum summa, opusque est secundum pacta cum Graecis facta per totum mensem Ianuarii misisse ad Graecos duas galeas subtiles et totidem grossas trecentosque arcitenentes sive - ut ajunt - balistarios, item pecunias et oratores, quae omnia ad septuaginta milia ducatorum ascendunt, ut domino Baptistae, oratori vestro, clare ostensum fuit, qui - utinam sanus incolumisque ad vos redisset - forsitan aliter animos vestros incendisset. Etenim, cum de tanto bono tractatur, non video, cur adeo negligentes sitis, cur non alacri et prompto acceditis animo. Numquid videtis agi modo de reductione Graecorum, de conciliandis orientalibus populis cum occidentalibus, de recuperatione infinitarum paene animarum, de exaltatione et gloria nostrae fidei, et ubi – oro – eritis largi, si hic parcos et strictos vos exhibetis? Ubi quaeritis fama, si hic negligetis? Profecto nulla res est, quae vestram civitatem majoribus queat ornare laudibus quam ista. Nescio enim, quid majus quidve gloriosius dici possit quam illa in urbe concilium esse celebratum, quod Graecam cum Latina conjunxerit ecclesiam, quae res certe mandabitur litteris et memoriae hominum sempiternae. Quid igitur pecuniae pro hac re parcitis, pro qua nec vitae parcendum fuerat? Namque si pro fide corpus et animam debemus exponere, quis audeat negare pecunias, quae etiam, si gratis peterentur, negandae non fuerant.

[3] Therefore, the council would gladly have compromised on a third place. Siena is the only place in Italy where the council may be held without the Venetians and Florentines taking offence, and the duke, too, would accept it. Also, the choice of Siena would have been greatly facilitated by the fact that the pope agrees to it, which the lords of the council much desire, wanting matters to proceed in a calmer atmosphere. Moreover, the council would have trusted the Sienese and not feared any violence or deception, and many here remember how kindly and graciously they were treated at the time of the [previous] council¹ and would like nothing better than to return there. Finally, the Germans would prefer no other place in Italy to the city of Siena on account of the honours shown to the emperor,² which make the Germans most sympathetic towards your town. There are other reasons that made them prefer Siena and gave you the council, but the matter of money outweighs them all, without which – as the saying goes – nothing can succeed.

3. Exhortation to Siena to provide the required sum

[4] As you know, the council needs an immense sum. It must observe the agreements with the Greeks and, during the [coming] month of January, send two light galleys and the same number of heavy galleys with 300 archers (or, as you say, arbalists) as well as money and ambassadors, which all together will cost 70,000 ducats. All this was clearly explained to Lord Battista, your ambassador, who would perhaps have inspired you to pursue another course (I wish that he has returned to you safe and sound).³ Given the high importance of the matter, I do not see why you are so indifferent and why you do not approach it with alacrity and enthusiasm. Do you not see that it concerns the return of the Greek, the reconciliation of the Eastern peoples with the Western, the recovery of an almost infinite number of souls, and the exaltation and glory of our Faith? Where will you show generosity if you are miserly and parsimonious here? Where will you seek fame if you neglect it here? Indeed, nothing can win greater praise for your city than this. I cannot imagine a greater and more glorious distinction than that the council which reunited the Greek and the Latin Church was held in this city. It will undoubtedly be written about in books and remembered forever. So, why will you not give your money to this cause, for which one should give one's life?

¹ The Council of Pavia-Siena, 1423-1424.

² Emperor Sigismund, during his stay in Siena on his coronation voyage to Rome, 1432-1433.

³ He had apparently fell sick on the way back to Siena.

[5] Namque si pro fide corpus et animam debemus exponere, quis audeat negare pecunias, quae etiam, si gratis peterentur, negandae non fuerant. Sed nihil dono aut gratis concilium postulat, mutuum rogat, mutuum quidem, quod redditurum omnino sit. Ex indulgentiis enim ac decimis pecuniae colligentur, quae in hanc rem convertentur. Et licet aliqui dicant, nisi papa concurrat, indulgentias decimasque parum reddituras, id nihil obstat, nam si concilium Senis celebrabitur, auctoritas papae omnino concurret poteritque modus dari, quod statim in ipsa loci electione papa approbet indulgentias et decimas. Petit enim papa, ut locus eligatur sibi accomodus nominatque Forum Livii, Mantuam, Bononiam, Florentiam, Senam, Romam. Poterit concilium dicere: “Placet unum ex istis locis eligere, sed volumus, ut nunc statim indulgentias et decimas approbes,” quod papa evitare non poterit, et ista esset via segura, per quam certi essetis recuperare posse pecunias vestras, neque timere debetis, quod pecunias mittitis extra patriam, priusquam concilium ad vos veniat, quoniam certi esse debetis, hoc futurum concilium nullo pacto debere impediri, quod pro tanta re celebrandum est, quanta est reductio Graecorum.

[6] Scire praeterea debetis, quod haec 70 milia ducatorum amittere non potestis, quia vos ipsi ex dicta summa poteritis conducere duas galeas grossas et totidem subtiles, quae pro quattuor mensibus constabunt 8 milia ducatorum, item trecentos ballistarios, qui pro sex mensibus constabunt 6 milia ducatorum, item¹ dabitur oratoribus sacri concilii pro imperatore euntibus Graecorum circa quinque milia ducatorum aut sex milia, et sic sunt solum 20 milia, quae ante oportet exponere. Alia vero 50 milia portabunt galeae in pecunia numerata, poteruntque ire oratores vestri easque pecunias non debent exbursare, nisi Graeci ad veniendum parati sint et galeas intrent, quo casu, si Graeci veniant Talamonem, certi estis, quod concilium celebrabitur in civitate vestra et sic, quod pecunias recuperabitis. Sin vero Graeci venire nolint, tunc revertentur oratores vestri cum pecuniis solumque 20 milia exposita erunt. Una enim res est, quae futurum concilium impedire possit, si Graeci venire nolint, et in hoc casu solum 20 milia potestis amittere. Si veniant, jam in tuto res est, nam neque papa neque alius quisquam venientibus Graecis auderet concilium impedire. Videtisne, quam vobis securitatem ostendo? Profecto, si haec consideratis, nihil periculi est, quominus recuperetis mutuum.

¹ itemque HE

4. Security for the loan

[5] If we must give our body and soul for the Faith, who will dare to refuse giving money, which ought not to be denied even if it were not repaid? However, the council does not ask for a free donation, but for a loan that will be repaid in full: indeed, the money collected from indulgences and tithes will be reserved for this very purpose. Some say that unless the pope agrees, the indulgences and tithes will bring in too little. That is not a problem, however, for if the council is held in Siena, the pope's authority will be added to the council's. A way can be found to ensure that the pope approves the indulgences and the tithes at the same time as the choice of place. The pope demands that a venue be chosen that is convenient for him, and he nominates Forlì, Mantua, Bologna, Florence, Siena, and Rome.¹ The council could say, "We shall choose one of those places, but we want you to approve the indulgences and tithes immediately." The pope could not avoid this, and thus you would have a safe way to recoup your money. So, you do not have to fear sending money out of your country before the council comes to you, for you may be sure that the future council can in no way be prevented since it concerns the important matter of the return of the Greeks.

[6] Besides, you should know that you cannot lose the 70,000 ducats. Out of that sum, you yourselves may hire the two heavy galleys and the two light ones for a period of four months, which will cost 8,000 ducats. The 300 archers hired for a period of six months will cost 6,000 ducats. And finally, you will give the holy council's ambassadors to the emperor² 5,000 or 6,000 ducats. Thus, you must expend only 20,000 ducats in advance. The other 50,000 ducats will be brought on the galleys in cash. Your ambassadors can go [on the ships] and should not pay out the money unless the Greeks are ready to come and board the galleys. In that case, if they come to Talamone,³ you may be sure that the council will be held in your city and you will get your money back. And if the Greeks will not come, your ambassadors will return with the money, and you will just have expended 20,000 ducats. The only thing which can prevent the future council from being held is that Greeks will not come, in which case you may lose the 20,000 ducats. But if they come, the matter is safe, for in that case, neither the pope nor anyone else would dare to impede the council. Do you not see what security I show you? Indeed, if you consider the matter, there is no danger that you will not recover the loan.

¹ CB, 4: 310.

² Johannes VIII Palaiologos (1392-1448): Second-last

Byzantine emperor, reigning from 1425 to his death.

³ A Mediterranean port city about 100 km. from Siena.

[7] Sed quid vobis ostendo rationes, cum aliorum exempla ante oculos habeatis? Dux enim Mediolani concilium petens omnem pecuniarum summam opportunam concessurum se pollicetur, neque aliam cautionem petit, nisi ut semidecimarum indulgentiarumque collectores sibi respondeant. Florentini contentos se dicunt eam cautelam recipere, quam domini cardinales hic existentes ordinaverint¹. Idem Veneti nec secus Avinionenses, qui modo venientes concilium magna cum instantia petunt, pecunias et quaevis necessaria pollicentes. Cur vos etiam non sequimini horum ritus? An errare putatis, cum talium civitatum principumque vestigia imitamini? Venite - oro - cum liberalitate, cum magnificentia, porrigite ad tantum opus largas manus, ostendite nomen illius civitatis, quod jam totum fere per orbem insonuit, non esse vanum. Facite, quod aliae faciunt civitates, nec dicite ditiores Florentini facilius invenire pecunias. Quamvis enim ditiores sunt, majori tamen pecunia indigent, ut² sicut vos redditibus ita etiam expensa superant ac magis expensa quam redditibus. Ego consideratis gravaminibus ducis nihil dubito difficilius esse sibi hanc summam invenire quam vobis. Tamen ille liberalissime offert, qui ut habetur princeps sapientissimus, ita in hoc ejus uti decet exemplo. Et si enim vos imperatori nullo [emolumento³] captato ducenta milia ducatorum concessistis dono, quanto magis hic expendere debetis, unde fructus uberrimus sit resultaturus, unde utilitas maxima et honor inaestimabilis eveniat? Et si in re temporali ac mundana tantam operati estis largitatem, quid denique in spirituali ac divina facietis? Certe non minus Deo quam mundo debetis.

[8] Videtur igitur mihi, et ita consulo, nisi consilium meum contemnitis, ut iterum quam citissime mittatis unum oratorem vestrum cum pleno mandato offerendi summam praedictam sub ea cautione, quae dominis cardinalibus hic existentibus placuerit, qui veniat cum quattuor equis pro minori expensa. Adhuc enim forsitan erit veniendi tempus, priusquam res ista concludatur. Sunt enim hic magnae contentiones, quoniam aliqui Italiam volunt, aliqui Galliam, et priusquam hoc determinetur, fortassis posset nuntius ipse vester accedere, qui si veniret, ut dico, credo obtineret. Ita enim et magnos et mediocres viros sentire video. Interim dominus legatus, vir rarus et vestrae communitatis amantissimus, litteras sibi missas penes se tenebit, donec responsum gratius et honorabilius acceperit, quod non alia de causa faciet, nisi ut vestrum honorem tueatur, quem litterae ipsae diminuerent, si darentur in publicum. Quaerentibus vero, cur Senenses non respondeant, dicetur tarditatis causam esse valetudinem domini Baptistae in itinere remanentis.

¹ ordinarent WO

² et HE

³ em. HE, WO

5. The Florentine, Milanese, and Avignonese competition

[7] But why do I show you reasons when you have the examples of others before your eyes? The duke of Milan petitions to have the council and promises to grant the whole sum needed, and he does not ask for guarantees except that the collectors of the half-tithes and the indulgences should answer to him. The Florentines say they will be happy to accept any guarantee decided by the lord cardinals presently here. The Venetians say the same, as do the Avignonese, who have arrived here, fervently requesting the council and promising money and whatever is necessary. Why not imitate them? Or do you think you will err if you follow the footsteps of such great cities and princes? Come – I beg you – with liberality and magnificence! Reach out to this great work with generous hands! Show that your city’s fame, which has resounded almost through the whole world, is not a sham.¹ Do as the other cities, and do not say that the Florentines are more wealthy and can find the money more easily. Though they are more wealthy, they also need more money. Their revenues may surpass yours, but so do their expenses – and even more so. And to consider the duke’s problems, I do not doubt that it will be more difficult for him to find this sum than for you. Still, he, who is reputed as a most sagacious prince, makes a very generous offer. You should follow his example. And if you gave the emperor² 200,000 ducats as a free gift, how much more should you not spend in this matter, from which there will be abundant fruit, great advantage, and inestimable honour? And if you showed such generosity in that secular and worldly matter, how much more should you not do in a spiritual and religious matter? You do not owe God less than you owe the world.

6. Renewed exhortation to offer the required sum

[8] It seems to me – and this is my advice – that (unless you disregard my counsel) you should again and as quickly as possible send your ambassador here with full powers to offer the aforesaid sum on such conditions as the lord cardinals present here may decide. Let him come with just four horses, to save money. Maybe there will still be time for him to arrive before this matter is concluded. For there are major disagreements here, some wanting Italy and others France,³ and your envoy may arrive before that is settled. If he does, I say and believe that he would gain cause, for that is what I see both great and lesser men believe. In the meantime, the Lord Legate,⁴ an outstanding man who is very fond of your city, will keep your letter until he receives a more acceptable and honourable response. This he does only to protect your honour, which will decrease if that letter is published. Those who ask why the Sienese have not replied will be told that the reason for the delay is Lord Battista’s illness on the road.

¹ Piccolomini probably refers to Siena’s role as host to the Council of Pavia-Siena 1423-1424 and to Emperor Sigismund 1432-1433.

² Siena’s gift to Emperor Sigismund, during his stay in Siena in 1432.

³ As the venue for the council.

⁴ Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini.

[9] Haec sunt, quae impraesentiarum scribenda putavi, non meo solum, sed reverendissimi domini legati praedicti consilio et jussu. Locutus sum ex affectione ardentius forsitan, quam decuit, in qua re, si quid erravi, puto dominationes vestras mihi daturas veniam, quibus me humiliter recommendo.

Ex Basilea, 25. Octobris 1436.

Earundem magnificarum dominationum servulus Aeneas de Picholominibus.

[10] Post scriptas jam litteras reverendissimus dominus legatus reddidit mihi dominationum vestrarum benignas et perhumanas epistolas, quas ut libenter ita reverenter accepi. Ad eas vero per ea, quae supra dicta sunt, satis arbitror esse responsum, itaque pluribus non utor. Supplico autem, in hac re utamini consilio reverendissimi domini legati, qui ut civitati vestrae summe afficitur, ita nihil consulet non bene. Datum ut supra.

[9] This is what I thought I should write to you for now, not on my own behalf, however, but on the advice and order of the aforesaid Lord Legate. Sentiment may have made me speak more forcefully than proper, but if I have erred in this respect, I believe your Lordships will forgive me, to whom I humbly recommend myself.

From Basel, 25 October 1436.

Their Magnificent Lordships' humble servant, Enea de' Piccolomini.

[10] When I had finished the letter, the Most Reverend Lord Legate gave me your Lordships' benevolent and most kind letter, which I received gladly and respectfully. I believe that I have answered it sufficiently above and shall say no more. But I do beg you to heed the advice of the Most Reverend Lord Legate, who is much devoted to your city and only counsels you for the best. Given as above.

23. Letter to the City government of Siena (11 December 1436, Basel).¹

Manuscripts: V1, ff. 14r-14v **.

Editions: HE, 23, pp. 60-61; WO, 1, 1: 23, pp. 56-57; (both based on V1).

Translations: ME, 6, pp. 33-34; RE, 12, pp. 98-100.

{14r} Magnifici ac potentissimi domini mei singularissimi post humilem recommendationem.

[1] Proximis diebus, cum celerem tabellarium inuenissem, scripsi dominationibus vestris de electione loci pro futuro concilio, quae tamen adhuc non erat publicata, scrutinio adhuc penes notarios existente. Sed prout mihi videbatur verisimile, ita scripsi. Postea vero, cum publicata res est, deceptum me in uno reperi. Nam dum scribebam civitatem Avinionensem non habuisse [voces]² sufficientes, erravi. Repertum est enim illam quoque urbem a duabus partibus totius congregationis nominatam fore et sic electam esse simul cum Sabaudia. Sed unum est hic obstaculum, quia dominus legatus noluit concludere pro Avinione, quia non esset in decreto nominata aut comprehensa, et protestatus est illam urbem eligi non posse. Gallici tamen et multi Teutonici volunt electam esse, et sic sunt hic super hoc magnae discordiae. Avinionenses nolunt exbursare pecunias, nisi dominus legatus et cardinalis Sancti Petri consentiant in Avinione, quod ipsi nullo modo volunt facere. Pro Sabaudia vero pecunias nemo offert, immo requisitus dux Sabaudiae de mutuo negat se posse tantam summam exponere. Et sic, quantum ego video, nisi aliud nascatur, oportebit novam electionem facere, et credo Florentiam obtenturam, quia dominus legatus et cardinalis Sancti Petri eam elegit et alii usque ad quattuor et sexaginta ex toto numero incorporatorum, qui sunt trecenti quinquaginta quinque numero inventi. Et sic Florentia post Avinionem et Sabaudiam excedit alias urbes in vocibus.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² *em.* HE

23. Letter to the City government of Siena (11 December 1436, Basel).

Context: Since the previous letter, Piccolomini had on 16 November 1436 delivered an oration to the council fathers advocating for Pavia, in the lands of the Duke of Milan, to be chosen as the host city of the future council. The oration was the first of his extant orations, the “*Audivi*”.¹ He did not do this because he had real hopes for this city to be chosen since he was quite aware that it was unacceptable to the pope and the Greeks as well as to most council fathers, who did not overly trust in the Duke of Milan. He did it only to please the duke and improve his own standing at the Milanese Court, in which he was succeeded. He did not plead for Siena since that city had proven unwilling to put up the sum required by the council.

Subject: Piccolomini makes his final plea to the city government of Siena to make an adequate offer to host the council.

Magnificent and Most Mighty and Eminent [Lords] after humble recommendation.

[1] Some days ago, having found a swift messenger, I wrote² to your Lordships about the election of a site for the future council.³ It had not yet been made public, being still with the notaries,⁴ so I wrote what I thought had happened. However, when it was published, I saw that I had been mistaken about one thing. When I wrote that the city of Avignon⁵ had not had enough votes, I was in error, for, as it turned out, that city had actually been nominated by two parts⁶ of the whole assembly and thus had been chosen together with Savoy. There was, however, an obstacle, for the Lord Legate did not want to decide for Avignon since it had not been named and included in the decree,⁷ and therefore he declared that this city could not be chosen.⁸ But since the French and many Germans want it to be chosen, we have a serious conflict on this matter. The people of Avignon will not pay the [required] sum unless the Lord Legate and the Cardinal of San Pietro⁹ agree to Avignon, which they will absolutely not do. Concerning Savoy, nobody offers the sum required. Indeed, when the Duke of Savoy¹⁰ was asked about a loan, he replied that he was unable to raise such a great sum. Thus – as far as I can see – unless something else happens, they must hold a new election, which I believe Florence will win. The Lord Legate, the Cardinal of San Pietro, and others voted for that city, altogether 64 incorporated members of the council out of a total of 355, which means that after Avignon and Savoy, Florence has more votes than any other city.

¹ COR, II, pp. 6-166.

² The letter is not extant.

³ In a General Congregation held on 5 December, 244 out of 355 council fathers had voted for Basel, Avignon and Savoy (in that order) as the site for the reunion council with the Greeks (Gill, p. 89). Piccolomini himself was present at the meeting and had voted for Siena, Pavia, Parma, Udine and Savoy, but not

Avignon, see CB, 4: 357. See also Voigt, 1: 6, p. 121.

⁴ Responsible for writing up the official protocol and decisions of the council.

⁵ Avignon was the preferred choice of the French, with the ulterior motive of drawing the papacy back to Avignon and France.

⁶ Either two parties, the French and the Germans, or two thirds.

⁷ The council’s decree “*Pia mater*” of 7 September 1434, which had not included Avignon in the list of possible sites for the future council (Gill, p. 88-89).

⁸ See CB, 4: 350.

⁹ Cardinal Juan Cervantes.

¹⁰ Amédée VIII (Savoy) (1383-1451): Count of Savoy 1391, elevated to duke by the emperor 1416. Elected antipope under the name of Felix V by the rump council in Basel 1439.

[2] Civitas vero Senensis non fuit nominata nisi a paucis, quia non erant oblationes sufficientes. Et si dicatur, cur Sabaudia fuerit¹ electa, non est alia ratio, nisi quia Gallici mentiebantur Avinionenses pro Sabaudia mutuatueros fore, quod falsum nunc repertum est. Prius tamen quam ad novam electionem veniatur, oportet expectare per totum mensem Januarii ad videndum, si Sabaudia aut Avinionenses hanc summam velint concedere. Quare videretur mihi, quod dominationes vestrae [velint]² interim mittere ad offerendam hanc summam, quod si feceritis, omnibus praeponemini³. Loquor, nec ex me loquor. Florentini offerunt centum et viginti milia ducatorum, quia intelligunt fructum, quem exinde consecuturi sunt. Nec mirentur dominationes vestrae [quod]⁴ sum totiens de hac re scribens, quia doleo, cum omnes video dominationibus vestris mi[rare cur]⁵ honorem bonumque perdatis, et tamquam patriae affectus scribo. Vos tamen melius forsitan hoc cernitis. Sed hoc sit satis. Recommendo me magnificentiis vestris.

Ex Basilea, 11. Decembris 1436.

Earundem magnificarum dominationum servulus Aeneas de Picholominibus.⁶

¹ non sit HE, WO

² *em.* HE

³ *vera add. per em.* HE, WO

⁴ *em.* HE

⁵ *-rare cur em; dare em.* HE

⁶ *Am Ende der 1. Seite von gleichseitiger Hand der*

Kanzleivermerk: presentatum die 12. jan. WO

[2] The city of Siena was only mentioned by a few¹ because its offers were insufficient. And if you ask why Savoy was chosen, the only reason is the French lie that Avignon would raise a loan on behalf of Savoy, which is now known to be false. However, before a new election can be held, they have to wait for the whole of January to see if Savoy or Avignon is willing to provide the required sum. Therefore, it seems to me that your Lordships should, in the meantime, send a message that you offer the sum required. If you do so, you will be preferred to all others. **I say** this but not on behalf of myself.² The Florentines offer 120,000 ducats since they understand the profit they will gain from it. Your Lordships should not wonder why I keep writing on this matter: it pains me to see that all are wondering why your Lordships would lose this honour and boon, and I write out of devotion to my country. But you may understand the matter better than I do. Let this suffice. I recommend myself to your Excellencies.

From Basel, 11 December 1436.

Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini, humble servant of their Magnificent Lordships.³

¹ Including Piccolomini himself.

² A veiled reference to the Cardinal Legate, Giuliano Cesarini, see preceding letter, sect. 9.

³ According to a chancery annotation at the end of the text, Piccolomini's letter was presented to the city government of Siena on

12 January, a month after he wrote it.

24. Letter to Pietro da Noceto (21 May 1437, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: Wien / Österreichische Nationalbibliothek / 4760 , ff. 51r-61r *.²
Editions: HE, 24, pp. 61-75 (based on W3); WO, 1, 1: 24, pp. 58-76 (based on W3 and other mss.).
Translations: ME, 7, pp. 34-54; RE, 13, pp. 110-116.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² According to Wolkan, this letter is extant in two versions: 1) a longer version (LV), represented by the following manuscripts:

Wien / cod. 4760 [WO = A]; Wien / jus. Canon. 68 (printed in Mansi, Concil., XXXI, 220-221 [WO = B]; Mainz / two unspecified mss. [WO = C, D]; Firenze / Bibl. Riccardiana / cod. 407, ff. 295 ff., and 2) a shorter version (SV),

represented by Stiftsbibl. Melk / 215, ff. 313v-319v [WO = E]; Augsburg / unspecified ms. (printed in Braun: *Notitia de codicibus mss. ad SS. Udalricum et Afram Augustae*, VI, pp. 121-129 (WO, 1, 1: p. 58).

24. Letter to Pietro da Noceto (21 May 1437, Basel).

- Context:* The conciliar conflict concerning the choice of venue for the reunion council with the Greeks had developed into a full-blown conflict between the Italian dominated papalist party and the French dominated conciliarist party. The two parties clashed repeatedly during the first months of 1437 and definitively on 7 May.
- The neutral tone of the letter, however, may be due to its purpose, i.e., to inform Cardinal Albergati through his secretary Pietro da Noceto - and through the cardinal the Papal Court – of events in Basel, possibly preparing for the possibility of a return to the cardinal's service and a transfer to the papal court, such as his mentor Cardinal Cesarini and several of his friends in Basel were how preparing for.*
- Subject:* Piccolomini describes events at the Council of Basel from the general congregation on 5 December 1436 until the general congregation on 7 May. The French wanted the council to move to Avignon, subsidiarily to Savoy, whereas the Italians wanted to move to an Italian city, as both the Greeks and the pope wanted. The final decision was made in a general congregation on 7 May 1437, where the two parties clashed tumultuously, and the French majority carried a decree in favour of Avignon and the Italian minority a decree in favour of an Italian city. Later the same month, the pope and the Greeks assented to the minority decree, and the way to a new schism in the Church was opened.¹

¹ On the events related in this letter, see: LD / Dialogues 4 and 6, and DRGB (RE, pp. 348-356);

NB: there is not mention of them in Pius II's *Commentarii*. See also: Decaluwe and Christianson, pp.

23-24; Gill, pp. 88-93; Mariano, p. 316; Stieber, pp. 35-37; Voigt, I, 6, pp. 120-129.

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Aeneas Silvius Petro suo salutem.

[1] Credo me non solum heri mei¹, reverendissimi² cardinalis Sanctae Crucis³ ac magistri Thomae, sed tuis etiam accusationibus reum esse⁴, quod tunc maxime scribendi consuetudinem interruperim, cum esset praecipue necessaria cumque scitu digniora et apprime gravia in concilio gererentur⁵. Fateor enim antehac ex toto paene orbe ad concilium defluxisse novitates, nunc eas⁶, quasi depositum reddat⁷, ex concilio in universum decurrere. Sic est - ut ajunt - *omnium rerum vicissitudo*. Sed feci, ut plerisque mos est, qui menstruas debentes pecunias in annuam convertant et⁸, quod divisim⁹ debuerunt¹⁰, summatim exsolvunt. Neque enim, ut non¹¹ scriberem, tacui, sed ut totum scriberem¹², quod¹³ semper pendeat aliquid notione dignissimum. Nunc vero, quia res est non - ut puto - extincta, sed in dies aliquos¹⁴ sopita, fuit animus¹⁵ omnia hero scribere. Timui tamen¹⁶, ne molestum me diceret, qui non epistolis sed codicibus agerem, quod est apud hominem¹⁷ occupatissimum ridiculum temptare¹⁸. Idem mihi cum magistro Thoma erat metus.

¹ *omit.* C [WO]

² domini *add.* C [WO]

³ domini mei *add.* C [WO]

⁴ credo me ... esse : scio me tacitum increpas SV [WO]

⁵ contingerent B [WO]

⁶ easdem E [WO]

⁷ quasi depositum reddat *omit.* E [WO]

⁸ sic E [WO]

⁹ divisum WO

¹⁰ habuerunt C, D [WO]

¹¹ *omit.* C [WO]

¹² *omit.* C, D [WO]

¹³ A, B [HE/WO]; quia C, D, E [WO]

¹⁴ aliquot B [WO]

¹⁵ cujus B; omnia C, D, E [WO]

¹⁶ timens B [WO]

¹⁷ presertim *add.* C, D [WO]

¹⁸ reputare E [WO]

Enea sends greetings to his Pietro.¹

1. Introduction

[1] I consider myself guilty of having failed not only My Lord, the Most Reverend Cardinal of Santa Croce,² and Master Tommaso³ but also you since I stopped writing⁴ at a time when the council was dealing with especially urgent and important affairs, surely worth knowing. Before that, news had flowed to the council from almost everywhere in the world, but now they flow back from the council to the whole world like a deposit returned. *All things are subject to change*,⁵ as they say. But I have done as many do who convert their monthly payments into a yearly sum and pay the whole sum instead of many small instalments. And I did not stay silent because I did not want to write, but because I wanted to write it all, and all the time, something else happened worth knowing. But now that matters have somewhat calmed down (though I believe [the conflict] is not ended), I have decided to write all to My Lord. I feared, however, that he would say I burdened him with volumes, not letters, which it is foolish to do to a very busy man. And I feared the same with Master Tommaso.

¹ Pietro da Noceto (1397-1467): Master of the papal household under Pope Nicolaus V. Fellow secretary and close friend of young Piccolomini. Later, da Noceto appears to have somewhat distanced himself from Piccolomini, and the friendship cooled

to the point that da Noceto was not employed by Piccolomini when he became pope.

² Cardinal Niccolò Albergati.

³ Tommaso Parentucelli (1397-1455): Master of Cardinal Albergati's household. Bishop of Bolo-

gna 1444, cardinal 1446. Pope as Nicolaus V from 1447 to his death.

⁴ Piccolomini's previous letters to Noceto and Albergati are not extant.

⁵ Terentius: *Eunuchus*, 276.

[2] Quid ergo? Tacuissemne, an non¹ potius² omnia tibi enarassem, quem unum³ numquam inveni meis litteris negotiosum? Sic sunt tibi plus, quam satis⁴ est, acceptissimae, cujus⁵ facit humanitas⁶, ut horrescam⁷, et in tergo scriptum et nondum finitum ad te mittam ea tamen lege, ut heri copiam sibi facias, quam primum vacatio fuerit⁸, etsi est in tanto viro rarissima. Quod si hoc non detur, tu meus Orestes esto, ut⁹ quod ex lectione illius tibi compertum fuerit, communi¹⁰ domino exponas succincte. Habebis enim ex me rerum seriem et molestias omnium patrum¹¹ cognosces. De rebus namque conciliaribus non minus libenter scribo, quam tu legis. Vellem tamen, ut¹² quietiores forent et magis ex voto. Qualescumque tamen noscendae sunt, quia etsi non laetae ac magnae sunt, easque¹³ malo ex me tibi¹⁴ notas fieri quam ex alio, qui vel non totum vel non verum scriberet. Ego rem omnem aperiam et, ne verbis teneam, jam incipio.

[3] Cum transferendum esset Graecorum causa concilium aliumque oporteret locum eligere, Avinio hoc modo obtinuit, ut si rogati Graeci Basileam renuerent, ad Avinionem invitarentur¹⁵; rursus, si ibi¹⁶ non posset esse concilium, in Sabaudiam ducerentur. Fuit et adjecta conditio, si triremes parassent quattuor, si trecentos conduxissent arcitenentes (sive, ut ajunt, ballistarios), si 70 aureorum milia intra¹⁷ mensem mutuo concessissent aut Avinionenses aut eorum loco, quicumque forent.¹⁸

[4] Sed neque intra mensem solutio facta est ulla neque praeparatio. Dixere igitur¹⁹ plurimi electionem expirasse esseque iterum eligendum, quod neque obtineri potuit neque ad deputationes deduci, quoniam tam Gallici quam alii plures in sententia perseverabant neque divelli ab Avinione poterant, vexantes id dies et nuntiis et litteris Avinionenses, ut solverent, quibus omnino²⁰ duris aut²¹ certe nimis ad solutionem tardis utile visum est oratores mitti, qui sopitos animos excitarent et ad solvendum inducerent. Erant electi ad Graeciam quattuor episcopi ex nationibus quattuor²²: Lubicensis, orator imperatoris, Visensis, regius, Parmensis et Lauseanensis, solum conciliares. Hos mittendos Avinionem dicebant, ut ibi pecunias reciperent et ingressi mare ad Graecos enavigarent.²³

¹ *omit.* WO

² *omit.* C [WO]

³ virum C, D, E [WO]

⁴ sat WO

⁵ quare A, B [WO]

⁶ tua *add.* A, B [WO]

⁷ horrescerem A; Orestem B [WO]

⁸ fuit D [WO]

⁹ *omit.* C, D [WO]

¹⁰ cum C, D [WO]

¹¹ partium WO

¹² *omit.* C, D [WO]

¹³ tamen *add.* D [WO]

¹⁴ ex me tibi : tibi ex me D [WO]

¹⁵ inmittarentur A [WO], HE

¹⁶ si ibi : ibi si A [WO], HE

¹⁷ *infra et passim* WO

¹⁸ aut Avinionenses ... forent *omit.* HE

¹⁹ ergo D [WO]

²⁰ animo WO

²¹ ac A

²² nationibus quattuor : quattuor nationibus C, D [WO]

²³ navigarent B-E [WO]

[2] So, what to do? Should I remain silent, or should I not rather report all to you, whom I have never found to be too busy to [read] my letters? Indeed, you receive them with much greater pleasure than they deserve, and your kindness is such that I must blush! So, I am sending this letter to you, though written front and back and unfinished. However, there is one condition: you must make a copy for the lord as soon as you have some free time which is most rare with such a great man [as your master]. And if you are not given free time, then be my Orestes¹ and inform our common lord briefly about what you have learned from reading. From me, you will hear the sequence of events and the troubles and difficulties of all the Fathers. I write about conciliar affairs as gladly as you read about them, but I do wish that they would be less upsetting and more seemly. But whatever they are, they should be known even if they are not happy and great, and I prefer you to hear them from me rather than from somebody else who would not write it completely or truthfully. So, I shall tell you all, and – lest I become verbose – I begin right now.

2. The decree of 7 December 1436²

[3] When, due to the Greeks, the council had to relocate and it became necessary to choose another site, Avignon obtained that if the Greeks, when asked, refused Basel, they would be invited to Avignon, and if the council could not be there, either, they would be brought to Savoy.³ The following conditions were added: four galleys should be made available; 300 archers (or, as they say, arbalists) should be hired; and the Avignonese (or somebody else in their place) should provide a loan of 70,000 gold ducats within a month.

3. Developments January – February 1437⁴

[4] But no payment was made within a month, and there were no preparations for it, either. Therefore, many said that the term of the election had expired and a new election should be held. But they succeeded neither in this nor in getting the matter referred to the deputations⁵ since the French and some others maintained their position and could not be deflected from [their choice of] Avignon. So, they daily urged the Avignonese, by messengers and letters, to pay, and as these proved stubborn or at least too slow to pay, it was decided to send ambassadors to arouse the passive and make them pay. Four bishops from four nations had been elected [to travel] to Greece: the Bishop of Lübeck,⁶ the emperor's ambassador; the Bishop of Viseu,⁷ a king's ambassador; and the bishops of Parma⁸ and Lausanne⁹, ambassadors of the council only. These, they said, should go to Avignon, receive the money, and afterwards take sail for Greece.

¹ Orestes: Greek legend. Son of Agamemnon and Clytemnestra. Piccolomini may be thinking of his friendship with Pylades.

² Gill, pp. 88-90; Stieber, p. 35; Mariano, p. 324.

³ This had been decided in the General Congregation on 5 December 1436, see the previous letter.

⁴ Gill, p. 90.

⁵ The four standing committees of the council except for the Committee of Twelve. Involving the deputations was a necessary procedure step to force through a decision in a General Congregation.

⁶ Johann Schele (ca. 1390 - 1439): Bishop of Lübeck from 1420 to his death.

⁷ Luís do Amaral: Bishop of Viseu from 1431 to 1439. Ambassador of King Joao I.

⁸ Delfino della Pergola.

⁹ Jean IV de Prangins (d. 1446): Bishop of Lausanne from 1433 to 1440.

[5] Orta est subito inter patres de instructionibus discordia, tum¹ maxime super decreto, quod Gallici publicare volebant, de facta electione, de imposita clero decima deque portu, ad quem applicare Graeci deberent. Vidisses duas in concilio partes, hinc Gallicos cum paucis Germanis Hispanisque², inde alios omnes. Interim Johannes Dyssipatus³, id est bis consul, Graecorum orator venit, cujus oratio majorem adjecit scrupulum: repudiavit enim expresse Avinionem, quod neque in decreto cum Graecis edito contineretur neque papae placeret, neque ad Sabaudiam teneri Graecos⁴ dicebat, quae citra montes⁵, sed quae ultra Alpes est in Italia, quod territorium est ducis Sabaudiae in Italia situm dici Sabaudiam crediderunt, cum⁶ in decreto consenserunt.⁷ Hunc corruptum apud Venetias dicebant Gallici⁸, quod⁹ de re ignota non potuisset instructiones habere; ante enim ex Constantinopoli constabat illum recessisse, quam¹⁰ Avinio esset electa,¹¹ seu quam notitiam habere potuisset¹². Ideoque nihil a proposito partes declinarunt, sed isti celerius mittendos, illi diligentius retinendos oratores putabant, augebanturque dietim discordiae.

[6] Fuisset tunc aperta divisio, nisi medios sese Hispani et nonnulli alii ad concordiam obtulissent, quorum cura in hoc denique¹³ conventum est, ut irent oratores Avinionem, et si intra dies XXX pecunias haberent intimarentque legitime intra 12¹⁴ dies sacro concilio a die recessus eorum ex Basilea, tum¹⁵ subito decretum sanciri¹⁶ super electione loci, super decimis superque¹⁷ facultate nominandi portum oratoribus data¹⁸ deberet, continuarentque oratores ad Graecos iter. Si minus, liberum esset sacrum concilium, tenereturque alterius loci electionem facere hocque auctoritate deputationum et nullo umquam¹⁹ dissentiente approbatum²⁰ est.

¹ tamen C, D [WO]

² omit. C, D [WO]

³ Dissipatos B [WO]

⁴ teneri Graecos : Graecos teneri E [WO]

⁵ Alpes C [WO]

⁶ cui HE

⁷ consenserent C, D, E [WO]

⁸ dicebant Gallici : Galli dicebant C, D [WO]

⁹ uniter creditur quia E [WO]

¹⁰ ante enim ... quam : antequam ex Constantinopoli constabat recessisse antequam A [WO; not in HE !!]

¹¹ seu quam notitiam habere potuisset add. A [WO]

¹² seu quam ... potuisset omit. B-E [WO]

¹³ in hoc denique : denique in hoc E [WO]

¹⁴ dies add. C, D [WO]

¹⁵ tunc B

¹⁶ B-E fieri [WO]

¹⁷ super HE

¹⁸ dari C, D [WO]

¹⁹ nullo umquam : numquam ullo D [WO]

²⁰ probatum B-E [WO]

[5] But a conflict about these instructions immediately ensued, especially about a decree, which the French wanted to issue concerning the choice [of city], the tithe imposed on the clergy, and the port, to which the Greeks should sail. You would then have seen two parties in the council, one consisting of the French and a few Germans and Spaniards, and another consisting of everybody else. In the meantime, Johannes Dishypatos¹ (it means twice consul²) arrived as ambassador of the Greek. His oration added a major problem, for he expressly rejected Avignon since it had not been mentioned in the decree issued with Greek consent³ and was not acceptable to the pope. Moreover, he said that the Greeks were not obliged to go to Savoy, for when they consented to the decree, they thought that Savoy was in Italy, whereas the Duke of Savoy's territory actually is on both sides of the Alps. The French claimed that Dishypatos had been bribed by the Venetians, for he could not have had instructions concerning Avignon since he left Constantinople before that city's election or before he could have heard about it. Thus, the two parties stayed firm, the French party wanting to send the ambassadors as soon as possible and the other wanting – out of diligence - to delay their departure. The conflict grew stronger with each day.

[6] It would have come to an open division unless the Spaniards⁴ and others had offered to mediate. Thanks to them, they finally agreed that the ambassadors should go to Avignon.⁵ If they received the money within 30 days and formally informed the Holy Council within 12 days more from their departure from Basel, a decree would be carried immediately on the choice of place [for the union council], the tithes [on the clergy] and the ambassadors' power to appoint a port [for the arrival of the Greeks]. Afterwards, the ambassadors would continue to Greece. If they did not receive the money, the Holy Council was free and would have to hold another vote concerning the place [of the union council]. This was approved by authority of the deputations with no dissent at all.

¹ John Dishypatus: Ambassador of the Greek emperor to the council of Basel.

² A family name derived from an older Byzantine court dignity.

³ The "Pia mater" of 7 September 1434. See Mariano, p. 324.

⁴ Alvaro Nunes de Isorna (d. 1448): Bishop of of Cuenca from 1419 to 1445; Alonso de Cartagena (1384-1456): Bishop of Burgos 14325 to his death. In his DRGB, Piccolomini wrote: *Juan II of Castile had as solemn envoys the bishops of Cuenca and Burgos.*

... These two laboured exceedingly to allay discords, but they accomplished nothing (RE, p. 352).

⁵ 23 February 1437 (Gill, p. 90). See also Mariano, p. 325; VO, 1: 1, p. 122.

[7] Missi igitur extemplo oratores, quos licet ex fide gessisse non dubitem, mandatum tamen praeteriisse non negaverim. Sed inordinatae multitudini facile est illudere, apud quam ridiculum est, quod in bonis civitatibus capitale censetur. In egressu civitatis hujus Graecum oratorem, ut secum iret, sunt hortati, quo negante Avinionem celeri cursu petiverunt consumptis tamen apud Sabaudiensem principem nonnullis diebus. Gratus fuit Avinionensibus eorum accessus, difficile tamen erat aurum invenire. et, qui daturi erant, securitatem de restitutione volebant maximumque rei momentum¹ est creditum, si decimarum exactionem per totam Galliam rex Franciae promitteret². Itum est ergo ad eum in Montepesulano tunc existentem tantumque impetratum quantum petium. Interea³ et apostolici nuntii Avinionem applicant. Ne pecunia tradatur⁴, praecipunt, quod neque Graeci neque papa in Avinionem consentiant. Monent, ne unius cardinalis quondam⁵ suasu male percussi, modo alterius suggestionibus desolentur. Nec defuerunt, qui primum illum cardinalem Sancti Eustachii, secundum esse Arelatensem interpretarentur. Ingens, ut accepi, inter cives discordia fuit, quod parere aliqui⁶ summo pontifici volebant, aliis subveniendum esse sacro⁷ concilio videbatur. Sed quod plerumque assolet, major pars meliorem⁸ vicit, fierique omnino mutuuum deliberatum est.

¹ monimentum WO

² permitteret E [WO]

³ interim B [WO]

⁴ pecunia tradatur : pecuniam
concedant E [WO]

⁵ quodam B-D [WO]

⁶ alii B [WO]

⁷ *omit.* HE

⁸ minorem B-D [WO]

4. Conciliar ambassadors' mission to Avignon¹

[7] The ambassadors were dispatched immediately. Although I do not doubt that they acted loyally, I would not deny, either, that they overstepped their mandate. Trickery and deceit come easy to an unruly mob who scoffs at things that would be a capital offence in well-ordered cities. When they left Basel, the ambassadors invited the Greek ambassador² to accompany them, but when he declined, they made a rapid journey to Avignon – although on the way, they spent several days with the Duke of Savoy.³ Their arrival pleased the Avignonese, but it proved difficult to obtain the money, and the lenders wanted a guarantee, considering it of the utmost importance that the King of France⁴ should promise that the tithe [on the clergy] would be exacted in all of France. So, they went to the king in Montpellier, where he was staying at the time,⁵ and obtained what they sought. Meanwhile, also apostolic envoys reached Avignon. They forbade handing over the money since neither the Greeks nor the pope agreed to Avignon [as a venue for the union council].⁶ They warned them not to suffer misfortune through the proposals of one cardinal, as they had previously been gravely hit because they had heeded another. Some claim that the first was the Cardinal of Sant'Eustachio⁷ and the second [the Cardinal] of Arles.⁸ As I have heard, a great controversy arose among the townsmen: some wanted to obey the Supreme Pontiff, others to support the council. As often happens, the larger part defeated the better, and it was decided to grant the loan.⁹

¹ Gill, p. 90. DRGB (RE, pp. 349-350).

² Johannes Dishypatos.

³ Amédée VIII.

⁴ Charles VII.

⁵ March-April 1437, see Contamine, p. 233.

⁶ In his *Libellus Dialogorum* from 1440, Piccolomini lets Stefano

Caccia de Fara say: *Pulchra, me hercule, diligentia legatorum! Querebantur in concilio Avionionenses non dare pecuniam, et illos, ne darent, in Avinione crebris epistolis et nuntiis deterrebant, missumque illuc Cretensem archiepiscopum ab Eugenio constat, qui daturos*

pecuniam modis omnibus prohiberet (LD, p. 31).

⁷ Cardinal Alfonso Carillo de Albornoz, see 8:3 and 10:4.

⁸ Cardinal Louis Aleman, leader of the French party at the Council of Basel.

⁹ VO, 1: 6, pp. 122-123.

[8] Erat interim omnium fere¹ opinio Avinionenses non esse satisfacturos², iterumque eligendum omnes arbitrabantur, parabantque diversae partes diversa undique³ auxilia. Galeazius Mantuanus ad electores usque imperii descendit, ut mitterent, qui papae in concilio faverent, alii ad alios principes, dux quoque⁴ Mediolanensis magnum huc clericorum⁵ numerum festinabat mittere, sed tardiuscule advenerunt. Venit etiam⁶ alius Graecus orator, primo illi⁷ Dyssipato per omnia consentiens. Cumque jam finis instaret termini, Tarentinus archiepiscopus affuit, missus etiam ipse⁸ a domino nostro propter loci electionem, homo, ut eloquentiae non vulgaris, sic animi constantis atque intrepidi⁹.

[9] Avinionenses autem¹⁰ lapso jam termino cum oratoribus concilii certo modo convenerunt eosque in hanc fere sententiam ad concilium jusserunt¹¹ scribere: securos se fore pecuniam omnem sibi dari a civibus, quamprimum per concilium mitteretur decretum electionis et decimarum.

¹ omnium fere : fere omnium D

² acturos B-D [WO]

³ *omit.* C-D [WO]

⁴ dux quoque : duxque WO

⁵ electorum D [WO]

⁶ et B-E [WO]

⁷ illo WO

⁸ *omit.* C, D [WO]

⁹ Eloquentia non ... intrepidi : multum animi constantis atque intrepidi, eloquentiae vero non singularis C [WO]; multum animi

constantis atque intrepidi sit, tamen eloquentia u. v. D [WO]

¹⁰ *omit.* C, D [WO]

¹¹ convenerunt eosque ... jusserunt *omit.* C, D [WO]

5. Mobilisation of support

[8] Almost all [in Basel] believed that the Avignonese would not fulfil the requirements and that it would come to another vote [concerning the venue for the union council]. The various parties sought help from all sides. Galeazzo from Mantua¹ travelled to the imperial electors [and asked them] to send men to the council to support the pope, while others went to other princes. The Duke of Milan quickly despatched a large number of clerics, but they arrived late.² Also, another Greek ambassador arrived, but he agreed entirely with the first [ambassador], Dyshipatos.³ And right before the expiration of the term,⁴ the Archbishop of Taranto⁵ arrived, sent by Our Lord [Pope] in the matter of the vote on the location [for the union council], a man of outstanding eloquence as well as constancy and fearlessness.⁶

6. The letter from Avignon

[9] After the expiration of the term, the Avignonese came to a firm agreement with the council's ambassadors and requested them to write to the council in this sense: They were sure that the whole sum would be given them by the citizens as soon as the council sent the decree on the choice [of location] and the tithes.⁷

¹ Galeazzo de' Captiani: Decr. D., clerk of the Apostolic Camera, envoy of Eugenius IV in the Empire, 1437. Stieber, pp. 122, 499.

² Incorporated into the council, they would vote as required by the Duke of Milan, who – still an enemy of the pope - supported the Avignon solution. In his DRGB, Piccolomini wrote: ... *the city of*

Avignon, which he [the duke], when he could not obtain Pavia, ordered chosen out of hatred of the Venetians and the Florentines (RE, p. 349).

³ Mariano, p. 325: *In early April the council received a letter from the basileus and the patriarch of Constantinople. They let it be known that they refused Basel as the site for the union council.*

⁴ The 42-day term for the Avignonese response.

⁵ Archbishop Giovanni Berardi di Tagliacozzo.

⁶ Stieber, pp. 35-36; VO, 1: 1, 124

⁷ Mariano, p. 325: *Once the period of forty-two days was over and no precise answer had come from Avignon ...*

[10] Erat terminus certificandi concilium 12 dierum post 30, qui ad solutionem dati erant. Venerunt igitur oratorum litterae 11. Aprilis, quae dies erat ultima¹ terminorum sequentique luce in generali contione² sunt lectae. Fremere igitur universa³ congregatio, et tamquam integra esset facta solutio, gestire, fiendumque decretum acclamare. Quasi omnes legati contra nihil amplius Avinionibus concedendum, qui tanto temporis spatio nihil egissent: litteris oratorum non solutionem, sed ostentationem⁴ pecuniarum ab Avioniensibus factam significari, monere⁵ igitur, ad novam electionem patres venirent⁶. Habuit orationem cardinalis Sanctae Sabinae non ex sua⁷ consuetudine pacatam sed torrentem festinantemque. Interruptionem namque continuo verebatur, quam neque⁸ potuit effugere, nam cum aliqua verba nomine sedis apostolicae vellet expromere⁹ acclamante multitudine praepeditus¹⁰ est, dubitatumque a multis est, ne dissolutionis concilii mentio fieret. Varias hac die inter patres dissensiones fuere. Archiepiscopus Lugdunensis in collegam suam episcopum Dignensem amare invectus est, et quamvis manus uterque¹¹ continuit, nullum tamen opprobrii genus est omissum. Inter oratores quoque Aragonenses contentio fuit, in unam partem archiepiscopo Panormitano, in aliam Ludovico protonotario declinante¹². Nolo per singulos discurrere, sed tanta inter minores¹³ vociferatio erat, ut modestiores in taberna vinaria cernas bibulos.

¹ erat ultima : ultima erat WO

² congregatione E [WO]

³ tota B-D [WO]; tota cepit E [WO]

⁴ cunctationem B [WO]; ostensionem D [WO]

⁵ mane B [WO]

⁶ veniant WO

⁷ omit. C, D [WO]

⁸ non B-D [WO]

⁹ exprimere WO

¹⁰ impeditus E [WO]

¹¹ utcunque B [WO]; utriusque C, D [WO]

¹² declinantes WO

¹³ majores B [WO]

7. General congregation of 10 April 1437¹

[10] The term set for the ambassadors' notification of the council was the twelfth day after the 30 days granted for the payment of the sum. The ambassadors' letter arrived on 9 April, the very last day of the time limit, and the next morning the letter was read out in a General Congregation. A general uproar arose in the assembly, and as if the Avignonese had paid the whole sum, people clamoured that the decree should be passed. On the contrary, almost all the [papal] legates were against giving anything more to the Avignonese who had done nothing for such a long time: the letter meant that the Avignonese had not actually paid the required sum but only indicated that the money was available. They, therefore, demanded that the Fathers proceed to a new vote on the matter. The Cardinal of Santa Sabina² delivered an oration, not in his usual calm manner but torrentially and hastily, fearing interruptions that he could not avoid, for whenever he wanted to say something on behalf of the Apostolic See, he was shouted down by the crowd since many feared that he would declare the dissolution of the council. On that day, there were various altercations between [council] fathers. The Archbishop of Lyon³ bitterly attacked his colleague, the Bishop of Digne⁴, and though it did not come to a fist-fight, they used all kinds of insults against each other.⁵ There was also a quarrel among the Aragonese ambassadors, opposing the Archbishop of Palermo⁶ and Protonotary Ludovico.⁷⁸ I shall not go into details, but so great was the ruckus among the lower-ranking [members of the council] that you see better-behaved drunkards in a wine tavern.

¹ Mariano, p. 325; VO, 1: 1, p. 124.

² Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini whom Piccolomini in his previous letters had called the Lord Legate. Possibly this change of title reflects the fact that Cardinal Luis Alleman had now become the de facto leader of the council.

³ Archbishop Amédee Talaru.

⁴ Pierre de Versailles (ca. 1380 - 1446): Bishop of Digne 1432 to 1439.

⁵ Müller, p. 177: *Der Bischof von Digne war in Basel der einzige Franzose von Rang, der offen der Minoritätspartei zuneigte.* Müller, p. 65: *... in Basel sollte Talaru ... den mittlerweile zum Bischof von Digne beförderten Pierre de Versailles wegen dessen Eintreten für Eugen IV. auf der Synode heftig bekämpfen.*

⁶ Niccolò Tedeschi (1386-1445): Archbishop of Palermo 1435 to

his death. Appointed cardinal by antipope Felix V in 1440.

⁷ Ludovico Pontano.

⁸ Their quarrel was one of precedence: Pontanco claimed that as a protonotary he ranked higher than the archbishop. The council decided for the archbishop. See their arguments in DRGB (RE, p. 351-352).

[11] In sequentibus vero deputationibus multa tumultuose gesta sunt. Avisamenta 12 ambigua erant¹. Ponebant² enim in deliberatione, an fiendum decretum esset, an iterum eligendum. Deputatio pacis, quia plurimum ibi Gallici possunt³, fiendum decretum jam censuerat⁴, aliae inter deliberandum⁵ erant. Tum et legati quasdam cedulae hujus fere tenoris in singulis deputationibus aperiri legique jusserant, quod, quia Avinionenses in tempore non satisfecerant⁶, nova omnino fienda⁷ esset electio, eligebantque Florentiam vel Utinum aut⁸ aliam quamcumque terram in decreto comprehensam, papae et Graecis accomodam, ut earum⁹ illa esset electa, quae prior mutuam fecisset et navigia praeparasset. Portum vero nominabant Venetias, Ravennam ac¹⁰ Anconam vel eorum, qui gravior esset Graecis. Quinquaginta fere in hanc sententiam¹¹ cum legatis convenerunt¹², pauci dubii nulli partium adhaesere, reliqui omnes decretum fieri malebant.

[12] Forte fortuna evenit, ut praesidentes trium deputationum cum legatis sentirent¹³. Praesidebat in fide Johannes Polomar, regis Aragonum orator, homo et scientia et prudentia memorabilis, qui rogatus, ut de more secundum majorem partem¹⁴ concluderet, secundum cedulam legatorum conclusit dixitque majorem esse partem, quae cum legatis convenisset, nam, qui non elegissent, non haberent illa die vocem. Idem fecit abbas de Malumbrono¹⁵, qui praesidebat in deputatione communi.¹⁶ Bosanus¹⁷ vero episcopus in reformatorio praesidens¹⁸ erat neque pro aliqua parte concludere voluit, sed Tarentinus ibi pro legatis¹⁹ conclusit, pro aliis Albiganensis. In fide, cardinalis Arelatensis pro decreto, de²⁰ communibus patriarcha Aquilegiensis concludere. Moxque privati sunt²¹ praesidentes, alii loco eorum suffecti, illis tamen neque locum cedentibus nec se potuisse privari asseverantibus.²²

¹ *omit.* B [WO]

² ponabatur B [WO]

³ pacis quia ... possunt : deputatio communis quoniam ut plurimi Gallici D [WO]

⁴ deputatio pacis ... censuerat : deputatio quamvis plurimum ibi sunt Gallici C [WO]; deputationum quidem plurima, ubi Galli possunt, fiendum decretum censebant D [WO]

⁵ inter deliberandum : in deliberando B [WO]

⁶ facerent C [WO]

⁷ facienda B [WO]

⁸ et B [WO]; vel [D] [WO]

⁹ eorum HE

¹⁰ aut WO

¹¹ hanc sententiam : hac sententia C-E [WO]

¹² convenere B [WO]

¹³ consentirent D [WO]

¹⁴ partium D [WO]

¹⁵ Mulbrunno E [WO]

¹⁶ communium B [WO]

¹⁷ Bosanensis B [WO]

¹⁸ presens A, E [WO]

¹⁹ legato B [WO]

²⁰ in B [WO]; pro D [WO]

²¹ privati sunt : sunt privati C, D [WO]

²² asserentibus B-D [WO]

8. The meetings in the deputations

8.1. The proposition of the Committee of Twelve

[11] The subsequent [meetings in the] deputations¹ were tumultuous. The proposition of the Committee of Twelve² was ambiguous, posing the question of whether to pass the decree or to proceed to a new election [of place]. The Deputation of Peace, where the French dominate, had already voted for the decree, but the other [three deputations] had yet to discuss it. The legates ordered a formal note to be opened and read in each deputation to the effect that since the Avignonese had not fulfilled the conditions in time, a new election had to be made, and they elected Florence or Udine or any other place mentioned in the [previous] decree³ which would be convenient for the pope and the Greeks. That city would be elected, which first granted the [required] loan and made the ships available. The legates nominated the port of Venice, Ravenna, or Ancona, whichever the Greeks preferred. Fifty [council fathers] agreed with the legates, a few were undecided, and all the others voted for passing the decree.

8.2. Rival conclusions and presidents in the deputations

[12] By coincidence, the presidents of three of the deputations agreed with the legates. The president of the [Deputation on] Faith was Juan Palomar,⁴ a man of eminent learning and wisdom and an envoy of the King of Aragon. Asked to conclude as usual according to the majority, he instead concluded according to the legates' note. He said the majority had sided with the legates, for those who had not participated in the [previous] election⁵ could not vote on that day. The same was done by the Abbot of Maulbronn,⁶ who presided in the Deputation on Common [Affairs]. But the Bishop of Bosa,⁷ president of the [Deputation on] Reform, would not conclude for either party. Therefore, Taranto⁸ concluded for the legates and Albenga⁹ for the others. In the [Deputation on] Faith, the Cardinal of Arles¹⁰ concluded for the decree, as did the Patriarch of Aquileia¹¹ in the [Deputation on] Common Affairs. The presidents were soon deposed¹² and replaced with others but did not cede their place, claiming that they could not be deposed.¹³

¹ There were four deputations in the council: on peace, on reform, on faith, and on general matters

² Committee of twelve: The steering committee of the council, responsible, among others, for submitting recommendations to the deputations.

³ The "Pia mater"

⁴ Juan Palomar (fl. 1441-1443): Auditor of the papal palace. Trusted collaborator of Cardinal Cesarini. Papalist.

⁵ On 7 December 1436, presumably.

⁶ Johann von Gelnhausen (d. 1433): Cistercian abbot of Maulbronn.

⁷ Giuliano de Tallada (d. 1445): Bishop of Bosa from 1435 to his death. Envoy of King Alfonso V.

⁸ Archbishop Berardi di Tagliacozzo.

⁹ Bishop Matteo del Carreto.

¹⁰ Louis Aleman.

¹¹ Ludwig von Teck (- 1439): From a Swabian noble family.

Patriarch of Aquileia from 1418 to his death. DVI, sect. 62.

¹² By the majority.

¹³ In his *Libellus Dialogorum* from 1440, Piccolomini gave a closer analysis of this chain of events with a view to determining if the council was later legitimately translated by the pope to Ferrara or if the council remaining in Basel was the legitimate one. (LD, Dialogus IV)

[13] Sicque septem praesidebant: in pace unus tantum, in singulis aliis deputationibus bini. Visa est statim facies schismatis¹, et nisi melior concordia fiat², illud initium divisionis dicitur.³ Gravior Teutonibus visa divisio est agendumque de pace opinati⁴ sunt, ne, dum unire Graecos concilio esset studium, Latini ipsi dividerentur. Obtulerunt igitur se concordiae medios, de qua pluribus diebus⁵ incassum agentes, rem tandem infectam dimiserunt.

[14] Rursus ergo ad deputationes venit. Ibi Gallici cum adhaerentibus formam decreti approbant, generalem congregationem in crastinum edicunt et sequenti luce sessionem. Idem legati cum suis statuunt, aliud et ipsi promulgaturi decretum⁶. Tumultuosa omnis deputatio est. Hinc Gallici⁷ legatos increpant⁸ conciliorum infringentes ritum, hinc legati queruntur Gallos frangere⁹ fidem. Maxima in deputatione fidei contentio erat. Quantum enim doctiores ibi¹⁰ sunt viri, tantum etiam dissensiones acriores. Sed praecipua¹¹ inter cardinales Sancti Petri Sanctaeque Caeciliae fuit altercatio¹². Verum, ut est cardinalis Sancti Petri vir ratione ducilis¹³ et amator pacis, compromissurum se in duos tresve religiosos viros¹⁴ obtulit staturumque se de tota lite ipsorum iudicio, quod est omnino ab diversa¹⁵ parte repudiatum sive¹⁶ timore fraudis sive fiducia virium. Solutis deputationibus post meridiem partes seorsum congregati sunt, habitaque hinc inde concilia separata.

[15] Congregatio quoque generalis tunc praecipue fastidiosa fuit eratque triste spectaculum duas videre conclusiones fieri¹⁷ sibi invicem repugnantes. Erat cardinalis Sanctae Sabinae praeclusa oratio. Sed, ut est homo inter sapientes nostri temporis prudentissimus, dicendi¹⁸ locum callide occupavit multa¹⁹ raptim et furtive²⁰ quodammodo²¹ de suo jure²² disseruit. Tanta est humanarum mutatio rerum vanusque²³ ipse multitudinis favor. Non aliter²⁴ olim sua oratione moderare hic concilium solebat quam Cicero quondam senatum, nec minus isti suam eloquentiam suam Athenienses Demosthenis mirabantur orationem²⁵. Nunc loquenti²⁶ omnes perstrepunt contemnuntque²⁷ tacentem²⁸. Sed non idcirco minor virtus, nam et honorificentissime ab his receptus est Christus, qui eum²⁹ mox necandum conclamaverunt³⁰. Taceo de protestationibus ea die adversus decimam factis.

¹ scissurarum B [WO]

² fiet WO; fieret B [WO]

³ diceretur B [WO]

⁴ optati C, D [WO]

⁵ pluribus diebus : diebus pluribus C, D [WO]

⁶ novae electionis *add.* C, D [WO]

⁷ contra *add.* C, D [WO]

⁸ *omit.* C, D [WO]

⁹ Gallos frangere : frangere Gallos WO

¹⁰ doctiores ibi : ibi doctiores C [WO]

¹¹ praecipue WO

¹² fuit altercatio : altercatio fuit WO

¹³ ducibilis WO; vir rationis B [WO]

¹⁴ *omit.* C, D [WO]

¹⁵ adversa WO

¹⁶ sed B, E [WO]

¹⁷ fidei B [WO]

¹⁸ *omit.* C, D [WO]

¹⁹ multa WO

²⁰ in furore B [WO]; furore C, D [WO]

²¹ *omit.* WO

²² dicendi quodammodo *add.* C, D [WO]

²³ vana A [WO]; vanus E [WO]

²⁴ alias B [WO]

²⁵ oratorem A [WO]

²⁶ capite B [WO]

²⁷ contemnitur B [WO]

²⁸ tacere B [WO]

²⁹ qui eum : quem B [WO]

³⁰ conclamarunt WO

[13] So, now there were seven presidents in the deputations: one in the Deputation on the Faith, and two in each of the other [three]. The face of schism immediately showed itself, and if greater harmony is not achieved, this will be said to be the beginning of the division [of the council].¹ It was considered most grave by the Germans. They wanted to make peace lest, while the Latins were endeavouring to unite with the Greeks, they would themselves become disunited. So, they offered themselves as mediators but having laboured in vain for several days, they finally gave up.

9. New meetings in the deputations²

[14] Then, the matter was referred back to the deputations. There, the French and their adherents approved the text of the decree and announced a General Congregation the next day and a public Session the morning afterwards. The legates, with their adherents, decided the same but would proclaim a different decree. The meetings in the deputations were tumultuous. On the one side, the French accused the legates of breaking conciliar rules; on the other, the legates complained that the French were breaking faith: the more the men there were learned, the more acrimonious the dissensions. The altercation between the cardinals of San Pietro³ and Santa Cecilia⁴ was especially [bitter]. However, as the Cardinal of San Pietro is a reasonable and peace-loving person, he offered a compromise to be formulated by two or three religious⁵ and to settle the whole conflict based on their judgment. This was absolutely refused by the opposite party, either because they feared deceit, or because they were confident in their own strength. In the afternoon, when the meetings in the deputations had ended, the two parties assembled apart, and from then on, they held separate deliberations.

10. General Congregation⁶

[15] The General Congregation was a distasteful affair. It was sad to see two conclusions presented that were mutually exclusive. The oration of the Cardinal of Santa Sabina⁷ was obstructed. But since he is one of the wisest and most intelligent men of our time, he cleverly occupied the podium and held forth, hastily and almost furtively, on his rights. Great is the volatility of human affairs, and fickle the crowd's favour. He used to rule the council by his orations just as Cicero once did the senate, and they admired his eloquence just as much as the Athenians admired an oration by Demosthenes⁸. When he speaks now, they heckle him, and when he is silent, they scorn him. But this does not weaken his resolve⁹, for Christ [himself] was received most honourably¹⁰ by those who would soon clamour for his death. I pass over the protests against the tithes made on that day.

¹ VO, 1: 6, P. 125: *Mit diesem Schisma des Concils begann eigentlich das zwölfjährige Schisma der abenlandes.*

² VO, 1: 6, pp. 124-125.

³ Cardinal Juan Cervantes, Piccolomini's employer.

⁴ Cardinal Louis Aleman.

⁵ I.e., members of religious orders.

⁶ VO, 1: 6, pp. 125-126

⁷ Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini.

⁸ Demosthenes (384-322 BCE): Athenian statesman and orator.

⁹ "virtus".

¹⁰ Jesus' entry into Jerusalem at Easter when he was welcomed enthusiastically by the people.

[16] Soluta congregatione particularia¹ concilia sunt habita de modo sessionis, utraque parte deliberante utile pro suo jure. Cuique videbatur altare ab se teneri missamque a suis celebrari, quasi ejus partis sessio diceretur, cujus fuisset altare. Galli pro maturando negotio tenendas summo mane deputationes arbitrabantur, addituras decreto, ut si infra certos² dies Avinionenses non solverent,³ ex tunc Parma aut Vienna esset electa, quae prior satisfecisset. Et nihilominus celebrandam⁴ missam cardinali Arelatensi mandarunt. Parabatur utrimque horribile monstrum facinusque neque⁵ visum ante⁶ neque auditum umquam, promulgatio⁷ duorum decretorum inter se penitus adversorum⁸. Quid de decretis ploro⁹? Accingebatur unum ad altare duo sacerdotes celebraturi cathedramque sibi uterque pararat¹⁰. Venit *infanda dies*, verius dicam sancta, neque enim *scelus admitti* sustinuit. Petunt Galli statim deputationes, ad sessionem evestigio reddituri¹¹. Occupavere interim¹² legati locum, jamque Tarentinus missae accinctus¹³ erat.

¹ peculiaris B [WO]

² constitutos B [WO]

³ solverint B [WO]

⁴ dicendam WO

⁵ *omit.* B [WO]

⁶ nunquam B [WO]

⁷ provulgatio A [WO]

⁸ adversantium B [WO]

⁹ pro loco B [WO]

¹⁰ parabat WO; unum ad ... parabat : duo sacerdotes unum ad alta-

re celebraturi parant utrique cathedram B [WO]

¹¹ redditur WO

¹² iterum B [WO]

¹³ assidens A [WO], HE

11. Preparations for the final decision¹

[16] After the congregation, they held separate meetings on how to conduct the [coming] Session, each party intent on its own advantage and planning accordingly. Each party wanted to hold the altar and have the mass celebrated by one of its own, as if the session belonged to the party that held the altar. To speed up the matter, the French wanted the deputations to meet in the early morning and add to the decree that if the Avignonese did not pay up within a certain number of days, then Parma or Vienne² would be chosen, whichever first fulfilled the conditions. They requested the Cardinal of Arles³ to celebrate mass. Thus, both parties prepared for the [concurrent] publication of two mutually exclusive decrees, a horrible and monstrous deed, never seen or heard before. But why deplore the decrees? [Even worse,] two priests prepared to celebrate [mass] at the same altar, and a [celebrant's] chair was made ready for each. The *day of horror*⁴ came – or maybe I should say holy since the *crime* was not *committed*⁵ on that day. The French met early in the deputations and then continued directly to the meeting. Meanwhile, the legates occupied the place,⁶ and Taranto⁷ had already vested for mass.

¹ VO, 1, 6: 125-127

² In Southeastern France; not Vienna in Austria. See LD, p. 152

³ Louis Aleman.

⁴ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 2: 132: *Iamque dies infanda aderat, mihi sacra parari ...*

⁵ Juvenalis, 10: 340: *si scelus admittas.*

⁶ The Cathedral of Basel served as the meeting place for the formal sessions of the council.

⁷ Archbishop Berardi di Tagliacozzo.

[17] Tempus admonet, ut principes partium tibi describam, ne, quo se iudice quisque tueatur, ignores. Cardinalis Sancti Petri, hominum, quos umquam novi, rectissimus, primus in parte legatorum habetur. Post cardinalis Sanctae Sabinae, quem¹ vulgo Sancti Angeli appellant², vir non minus industrius quam constans. Huic succedit Tarentinus, post Dignensis, plus animi habens³ quam eloquentiae. Mox Portugallensis, regis sui orator. Ludovicus quoque Romanus⁴, protonotarius, juris consultorum memoriosissimus⁵ cum iisdem sentit. Huc etiam et Tiburtinus episcopus et Bosanus. Et nescio, qui Teutones accedunt, praecipue tamen industriae inter Alamannos Nicolaus de Cusa censetur, homo in omni genere litterarum tritus. Ambassiatores etiam⁶ electorum imperii eadem sapiunt. Coloniensis tamen nullarum partium. Teutonici quoque abbates in parte sunt⁷ legatorum⁸.

¹ qui B [WO]

² appellatur B [WO]

³ habentes A [WO], HE

⁴ sedis apostolicae B [WO]

⁵ jure consultissimus B [WO]

⁶ *omit.* B-D [WO]

⁷ sint B [WO]

⁸ togatorum B [WO]

12. The principal actors

12.1. The papal party

[17] It is now time to tell you about the leaders of the [two] parties so that you will know how they all defend their position. The Cardinal of San Pietro,¹ the most upright man of all I have ever known, is considered the first in the legates' party. Then comes the Cardinal of Santa Sabina,² commonly called the Cardinal of Sant'Angelo,³ a man just as energetic as constant.⁴ He is followed by Taranto⁵ and then by Digne,⁶ who has more courage than eloquence. Then comes Portugal, envoy of his king.⁷ Also, Protonotary Ludovico Romano,⁸ who has the greatest memory of all jurists,⁹ sides with them. In that party, there are also the bishops of Tivoli¹⁰ and Bosa.¹¹ I do not know which Germans support them, except for Nikolaus von Kues,¹² reputed for his remarkable industriousness, a man well-versed in all branches of literature. Also the ambassadors of the imperial electors side with them. Cologne¹³ keeps neutral. The German abbots side with the legates' party.

¹ Cardinal Juan Cervantes.

² Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini.

³ He was first appointed Cardinal Deacon of the Roman titular church of Sant'Angelo (1426, published 1430), and later, Cardinal Priest of Santa Sabina, and in 1444 further promoted to Cardinal Bishop of Frascati. The promotion to Santa Sabina is often dated to 1440. Piccolomini's letter of 21 May is the first in which he uses the cardinal's new title. In his letters from 1432 to April 1436 (see letter 20: 4), he calls him the Cardinal of Sant'Angelo, and in the later letters of 1436, he simply calls him the Lord Legate. This indicates that Cesarini's promotion to the titular church of Santa Sabina must have happened in the beginning of 1437. The show of papal favour was quite possibly

intended to smoothen Cesarini's transition from the conciliarist to the papalist camp (cf. letter 21: 6).

⁴ Apparently, by then Cardinal Albergati must have left Basel to join the papal court. This is supported by the fact that the letter is addressed to Pietro da Noceto who was the cardinal's secretary, and who could not have been in Basel since Piccolomini wrote to him. Cf., however, the DBI article on Niccolò Albergati by Edith Pásztor, according to whom Albergati, in Basel, *assistette, perciò, senza poter reagire, alle penose vicende del 7 maggio 1437*.

⁵ Archbishop Giovanni Berardi di Tagliacozzi.

⁶ Pierre de Versailles, a papalist who courageously opposed his French fellow prelates.

⁷ António Martins de Chaves (d. 1447): Bishop of Porto (Portugal) from 1423 to 1447. Cardinal 1439.

⁸ Ludovico Pontano [Romano] (1409-1439): Celebrated Italian jurist.

⁹ See DVI, ch. 6: *Lodovico's memory was phenomenal: he remembered all he had read*.

¹⁰ Niccolò Cesari (d. 1450): Bishop of Tivoli from 1423 to his death.

¹¹ Juan de Casanova.

¹² Nikolaus of Kues (1401-1464): Cardinal 1448. Prince-bishop of Brixen 1450. One of the participants in Piccolomini's *Libellus Dialogorum*.

¹³ Dietrich II von Mörs (ca. 1385-1463): Archbishop of Cologne from 1414 to his death

[18] In alia parte princeps¹ est Arelatensis cardinalis, homo et² famis³ et laboris⁴ patientissimus et illa praesertim laude⁵ commendandus, quod nemo minus eo injurias sentiat. Duo patriarchae, Antiochenus alter, Aquilegiensis alter, extremo senio uterque confectus⁶. Archiepiscopus deinde Lugdunensis sequitur, qui ut parum videt, sic multum intelligit. Mox archiepiscopus Panormitanus jam non modicus, sed partis suae facile princeps et⁷ quem potissime⁸ Galli secuti sunt, namque, ut est utriusque juris scientia praeditus, sic etiam consilio plurimum creditus⁹ est callere¹⁰. Inde Albinganensis¹¹ episcopus, multarum rerum exercitatione peritissimus.

[19] Sed quid tibi omnes enumerem? Illud tibi persuasum volo, longe plus hic praelatorum esse. Probitatis vero unde sit plurimum, alia ratio est.¹² Theologorum major pars ad legatos deficit.¹³ Non tamen ideo plus illic crediderim¹⁴ esse fidei. Sunt enim plerique¹⁵ mendicantes vellentque aliqui manducantes fieri. At si meam petis sententiam, paucissimos ex utraque parte numerarem, quos credam sola moveri justitia¹⁶. Multum tamen non apud me solum, sed apud totum concilium auctoritatis habet Johannes de¹⁷ Sagobia, qui, quamvis adhaeret¹⁸ legatis, nullam tamen ex toto probat opinionem. Oratores¹⁹ regis Castella, et ipsi quoque²⁰ viri consultissimi, nullarum partium sunt habiti enixeque pro concordia semper²¹ laborare. Archiepiscopum Mediolanensem per id temporis invalidudo absentem fecerat simul et horror tanti spectaculi schismatis, quod seminarium ex duobus decretis de eadem re contrariis et parti suae, quinnimo concordiae non parum abrogavit. Namque, ut est praecipuae auctoritatis oculatus pacis amator et vigilantissimus, magis facto quam ostentatione pius pater, sed acerrimus quidam hujusmodi duplicitatis improbator, sic et re et consilio²² profuisset. Papiensem autem²³ episcopum nonnulli dicunt ideo²⁴ defuisse²⁵, quod hinc metus inde²⁶ urgeret conscientia, quae tamen deprehensa est inclinatio jugiter cum legatis apostolicis. Sed, ut praetereamus plebem, iis fere adjunctis utraque pars in proelium descendebat.

¹ *omit.* B [WO]

² *omit.* WO

³ fame B [WO]

⁴ laborum B [WO]

⁵ parte B [WO]

⁶ potissime Antiochenus *add.* B [WO], HE

⁷ ut B [WO]

⁸ potissimum B, C [WO]

⁹ eruditus WO

¹⁰ tale B

¹¹ Albiganensis B; Albiginensis E

¹² ratio est : est ratio C, D [WO]

¹³ defert C, D [WO]; defecit E [WO]

¹⁴ crederem B [WO]

¹⁵ plerumque C, D [WO]

¹⁶ conscientia B [WO]

¹⁷ *omit.* E [WO]

¹⁸ adhaeserat B [WO]

¹⁹ quoque *add.* C, D [WO]

²⁰ etiam C, D [WO]

²¹ *omit.* C, D [WO]

²² per id temporis ... consilio : dum ista geruntur, valetudo retraxit, quod et parti suae non parum nocuit, namque ut est oculatus et vigilantissimus pater, sic suis et re et consiliis [WO]

²³ quoque WO

²⁴ nonnulli dicunt ideo : ideo dicunt WO

²⁵ abfuisse HE

²⁶ hinc HE

12.2. The French party

[18] The chief of the other party is the Cardinal of Arles.¹ He is a man who patiently endures both hunger and labour, and he is especially to be recommended for being less affected by insults than anybody else. Then there are the two patriarchs of Antioch² and Aquileia³, respectively, both very old. Then comes the Archbishop of Lyon,⁴ weak-sighted but quite perceptive. The Archbishop of Palermo⁵ is no ordinary member but easily one of the leaders of that party. The French greatly depend upon him, for he is a specialist in both laws⁶ and considered to give splendid counsel. And then there is the Bishop of Albenga,⁷ a most qualified and experienced man.

12.3. Opportunists, neutrals and undecided

[19] But why list them all? Just know that there are many more prelates here.⁸ But whether there is also much decency and honesty is another matter. The theologians mostly side with the legates. However, I do not believe that this means there is more Faith there, for many of them are mendicants (mendicantes) some of whom would also like to eat (manducantes).⁹ But if you ask about my opinion, I could only count a very few in each party who are only motivated by justice. But Juan de Segovia¹⁰ carries considerable authority not only with me but with the whole council. He adheres to the legates but does not entirely agree with their views. The ambassadors of the King of Castile¹¹ are also expert men, belonging to no party and tirelessly working for concord. The Archbishop of Milan¹² was kept away, during this time, by ill health as well as horror at the spectacle of the great schism produced by two mutually exclusive decrees on the same matter, which greatly damaged his party and, indeed, concord. For he carries great authority and is a perspicacious and most attentive lover of peace, a Father whose piety is authentic and without ostentation. He keenly disapproves of any duplicity, and he would have been a great help both in acts and in counsel. Also, the Bishop of Pavia¹³ was absent. Many said that it was partly because of fear and partly because of his conscience, which is thought to mostly favour the apostolic legates. With such men (to pass over the rabble), each party went into battle.

¹ Cardinal Louis Aleman.

² Patriarch Jean Mauroux.

³ Patriarch Ludwig von Teck.

⁴ Archbishop Amédée de Talaru.

⁵ Archbishop Niccolò de' Tedeschi

⁶ "utriusque juris" = of both laws, i.e., both canon law and civil law.

⁷ Matteo del Carretto.

⁸ The higher the number of prelates, the greater the legitimacy of the council.

⁹ Meaning that the poor monks seek profit for their order or themselves (e.g. by ecclesiastical preferment).

¹⁰ Juan de Segovia (ca. 1395 - 1458): Castilian prelate and theologian. Chronicler of the council.

¹¹ The bishops Alvaro Nunes de Isorna and Alfonso de Cartagena.

¹² Francesco Pizzolpasso.

¹³ Enrico Rampini (ca. 1390 - 1450): Bishop of Tortona from 1413 to 1435, and from 1435 to 1443 of Pavia. In 1443 appointed Archbishop of Milan. Cardinal 1446.

[20] Jamque legati sacram aedem tenebant, Galli in deputationibus confluerant, quibus - ut relatum est - Tarentinum ad missam parari, solutae sunt deputationes, factusque ad templum¹ concursus. Clamores ad caelum elati, sermonesque jam non praelatorum, sed vilissimae plebis vociferationes audiebantur, pressusque erat viro vir, et, quia manus pressura impediabat, pectoribus sese urgebant. Maledictis undique certamen² erat, neque digitum ori suo quisquam imposuit. Objiciebantur utrimque scissurae, crimen³ vultusque illi horrendi⁴ belli videbantur, neque transacta sine sanguine res fuisset, nisi cives in medium defluxissent partesque comminationibus retraxissent.⁵ Ridiculum prorsus, ut, qui daturi orbi pacem convenerunt⁶, iis ea opus sit, ut tradatur⁷, et qui dare concordiam laicis sese jactant, a laicis illam expectent⁸. Ducti ergo primores partium in domum Concensis episcopi, est enim aedi maxime valde propinqua. Stabat Tarentinus sua in sede non intrepidus modo, sed immobilis, tamquam non virorum, sed puerorum illum esse tumultum existimaret⁹, sive quod magno esset et admirando animo fretus, sive quod jure suo maxime confideret objurgantesque¹⁰ et minas quodammodo inferentes patientia magis vicit quam contentione. Sed hortantibus denique civibus et legatis¹¹ suadentibus ipse quoque cessit et cum aliis apud Concensem fuit.

[21] Ibi multa ex iracundia¹² dicta, ut¹³ in absentem quoque papam nonnulli invecti sint¹⁴ et indigna relatu expuerint, neque locus ibi erat¹⁵ pacis, sed augendae magis discordiae. Satius¹⁶ igitur visum est quam paucos ex ambabus eligi partibus¹⁷, qui apud Praedicatores tam Hispanos quam Teutones audirent, si quid haberent ad pacem inventi. Creditum est apud Praedicatores facilius inveniri concordiam, sive quod¹⁸ ibi ab initio concilii generalis congregatio semper quietata fuerat, sive quod nondum tangentia nationes tractata sunt negotia, sive quod ignotum aliquid ibi¹⁹ inhabitavit²⁰ numen pacis et concordiae custos. Cum igitur apud Minores saepe ante²¹ et²² frustra de pace actum esset, domicilium modo Praedicatorum partes²³ repetebant, si exultantem forsitan ibidem reperirent pacem. Sed neque plus a beato Dominico quam a divo Francisco est impetratum. Sex nempe²⁴ diebus quaesita ibi pax est²⁵, inventa numquam, opinioni suae utrisque nimium forsitan inhaerentibus.

¹ templa A, C-E [WO]

² clamatores B [WO]

³ undique *add.* D [WO]

⁴ certamen B-E [WO]

⁵ represisset B [WO]

⁶ convenerint A [WO]; convenerant B [WO]

⁷ ut tradatur *omit.* B-E [WO]

⁸ exciperent B [WO]

⁹ existimabat C, D [WO]

¹⁰ objurgationesque WO

¹¹ legatibus A [WO]

¹² ex iracundia : et iracunda B [WO]

¹³ et C, D [WO]

¹⁴ sint C, D [WO]

¹⁵ esset B [WO]

¹⁶ satis C, D [WO]

¹⁷ eligi partibus : partibus eligi C

¹⁸ quoniam B [WO]

¹⁹ *omit.* WO

²⁰ inhabitaret B [WO]

²¹ antea E [WO]

²² *omit.* WO

²³ praedicatorum partes : praedicatorum patres C-E [WO]

²⁴ namque C, E [WO]

²⁵ quaesita ib ... pax : quesita pax C [WO]

13. Open conflict between the two parties

[20] The legates now occupied the shrine,¹ while the French had assembled in the deputations. But when they heard that Taranto was preparing for mass, they ended the meetings and hastened to the temple. Their clamours rose to Heaven, and you heard not the voices of the prelates but the shouts of the rabble. Man was pressed against man, and since the congestion prevented the use of hands, they pushed against each other with their breasts. Everywhere they fought with curses, and nobody put a hand over his mouth. Each side accused the other of divisiveness, and the crime and face of horrible war showed itself. It would have ended in bloodshed if the citizens [of Basel] had not come between them and forced them with threats to withdraw. How ridiculous that those who had gathered to give peace to the world needed others to give it to them, and that those who boast of giving concord to the laity should get it from them. At any rate, the leaders of the [two] parties were brought to the house of the bishop of Cuenca,² right at the cathedral. Meanwhile, Taranto³ was standing not just intrepid, but motionless at his chair, as if he considered it all a ruckus of boys and not of grown men, whether he possessed great and admirable courage, or he had supreme confidence in his own right and overcame those who cursed and threatened him with patience rather than pugnacity. But in the end, he gave in to the citizens' exhortations and the legates' persuasions and joined the others in the house of Cuenca.

[21] There, they argued angrily, and several attacked the absent pope and spewed forth things that do not bear repeating. Peace was not fostered there; instead, the conflict grew worse. In the end, they decided it would be better to choose a few from both parties to meet at the Dominican convent⁴ and hear if the Spaniards and Germans could come up with anything to make peace. It was thought that it would be easier to find concord at the Dominicans⁵, either because since the beginning of the council, general congregations held there had always been tranquil, or because no matter concerning the nations had been treated there,⁶ or because the place was inhabited by the spirit of peace and the guardian of concord. At any rate, since they had often negotiated in vain about peace in the Franciscan⁷ convent, they now sought the Dominican convent, as if they would find peace exiled there. But they did not get more from Saint Dominic⁸ than from Saint Francis,⁹ ¹⁰ for though they sought a peaceful settlement there for six days, they did not find it since each party stubbornly clung to its own views.

¹ The cathedral of Basel.

² Alvaro Nunes de Isorna.

³ Archbishop Giovanni Berardi di Tagliacozzo of Taranto.

⁴ Dominikanerkloster in Basel, on the other side of the river from the town centre and the cathedral. One

of the meeting places of the council.

⁵ "praedicatores", Preachers, i.e. Dominicans.

⁶ Whenever issues involving nationality came up, tempers flared.

⁷ "minores", Friars Minor, i.e. Franciscans.

⁸ Saint Dominic (1170-1221): Founder of the Dominican Order.

⁹ Saint Francis of Assisi (ca. 1181 - 1226).

¹⁰ A sarcastic joke!

[22] Durum fortasse tibi videtur¹ solos legatos cum paucis adversus reliquam concilii partem congregari, sed audi breviter, qua se quisque ratione tueatur. Dicunt legati partes in concilio duas fuisse dissidentes convenisseque ambas, ut, nisi² Aviniones solvissent, nova esset, prout supra tetigimus, omnino fienda electio, ut non solvissent Avinioneses requisitas partes eligere sed juxta conventionem elegerint.³ Noluisse alios remansisse in eis, quamvis paucis, jus eligendi, quod sine consensu suo conventio cum eis facta dissolvi non potuerit. Nec se partem minorem videri volunt, tametsi pauciores fuerint. Minoritatem enim ac⁴ majoritatem non ex numero personarum censi ac ex devolutione ad eos juris, ut inquit,⁵ sed ex meritis et dignitate. Contendunt secum esse cardinales oratoresque principum et, quod majus⁶ est, papam, quorum voces nequaquam fas sit⁷ cum privati cujusque hominis suffragio ex aequo pensare, nam et papam cum curia toti concilio aequalere⁸ argumentantur. Graecos praeterea⁹ nolle Avinionem venire nec papam egredi posse Italiam.

¹ videretur BC-E [WO]

² si A [WO]

³ ut nisi ... elegerint *inintellig. text. corr.* HE

⁴ et C, D, [WO]

⁵ ac ex devolutione ... inquit
omit. B-E [WO]

⁶ magis B-E [WO]

⁷ *omit.* C-D [WO]

⁸ aequalem B-E [WO]

⁹ propterea C-D [WO]

14. Positions of the two parties

[22] Perhaps you find it problematic that only the legates with a few companions met with the other party at the council. At any rate, hear now briefly the arguments of each party.

14.2. Legatine party

14.2.1. The agreement and decree of 7 December 1436¹

The legates said that the two dissenting parties in the council had agreed that if the Avignonese did not pay, another city would be chosen [among those mentioned in the decree], as we mentioned above. Now that the Avignonese had not paid, the council could not choose completely new cities, as it was bound to [the cities mentioned in] the agreement.² Moreover, the right to make the choice fell to their own party, though they were few, for an agreement made with them could not be annulled [by the other party] without their consent.

14.2.2. The status of majority

Moreover, though they were fewer in number, they did not accept being considered the minority, for minority and majority should not be based on the number of persons (and the devolvement of rights upon them) but on their merits and rank.³ They declared that the cardinals and the ambassadors of the princes are with them, and – what is more important – the pope. It would not be right to consider the votes of private men as equal with theirs, for the pope with the curia is worth as much as the whole council, they argued.

14.2.3. Position of the Greeks and the pope

Finally, the Greeks did not want to come to Avignon, and the pope could not leave Italy.

¹ See above, sect. 3

² The Latin text is corrupt.

³ "dignitas"

[23] Galli contra atque alii majorem se fore partem¹ consuetumque in omni re publica id servari, quod majori parti collibisset, secumque, licet vulgari sint multi, plures tamen ex omni gradu praelatorum fore, praeterquam ex cardinalibus, quod alii duos, ipsi unicum habeant. Quod si inter solos praelatos res transigatur, se tamen esse longe superiores neque obligatum fuisse concilium eligere, quod, quidquid a concilio fiat, a concilio quoque posse dissolvi², non sit ambigendum. Nec obstare conventionem judicant, quod non solum ab una parte sit contraventum, sed ab alterius quoque partis parte majori. Ajunt³ enim cum conventio fieret⁴ et Lombardos et plerosque alios in parte fuisse legatorum, qui nunc et cum Gallis sentiant et a conventionem discedant, unde et omnino apud eos jus extare⁵ Praeterea non ideo Avinionem ab imperatore Graecorum et patriarcha repudiari dicunt, quod oratores Graeci id fecerint, neque enim habere id⁶ potuerunt⁷ in mandatis, cum, sicut supra relatum est, ante recessissent ex Constantinopoli, quam electa esset Avinio. Cum autem papa Avinionem se neget iturum, ajunt, sibi non bene persuaderi, quod et sua sit urbs⁸ nec difficilius eo sit⁹ quam per totam Italiam proficisci.

¹ dicunt *add.* C-D [WO]

² absolvi A [WO]

³ dicunt B [WO]

⁴ fuerit C-D [WO]

⁵ unde et ... extare *omit.* B-E [WO]

⁶ habere id : id habere D [WO]

⁷ potuerant C-D [WO]

⁸ sit urbs : urbs sit D [WO]

⁹ egro A [WO]

14.3. French party

14.3.1. The status of majority

[23] On the contrary, the French and some others claimed that they were the majority and that it was customary in all societies to respect the decisions of a majority. Though many low-ranking men were with them, they actually had more prelates of every rank except the cardinals, where the legatine party had two¹ and they themselves one.² If the matter was to be decided by the prelates alone, their party was much larger.

14.3.2. The agreement and decree of 7 December 1436

Moreover, the council must not necessarily make a new election, for what the council had done, it could undoubtedly undo. Also, the agreement was not an obstacle since it was not repudiated just by their party but also by a majority of the legatine party, for when the agreement was made, that party comprised the Lombards³ and many others who had now joined the French and abandoned the agreement. Thus, right was completely on their own side.

14.3.3. Position of the Greeks and the pope

Finally, they claimed that Avignon had not been refused by the Greek emperor⁴ and patriarch⁵ but by the Greek ambassadors, who could not have had any instructions on this issue since – as mentioned above – they had left Constantinople before Avignon had been elected.

As for the pope, they declared that it would be ill-advised of him not to go to Avignon since that city is his own,⁶ and it is just as easy for him to go there than to travel through all of Italy.⁷

¹ Juan Cervantes and Giuliano Cesarini.

² Louis Aleman.

³ I.e., members from the territories of the Duke of Milan, who now preferred Avignon since the council would not move to Pavia.

⁴ Johannes VIII Palaiologos

⁵ Joseph II (1360-1439): Patriarch of Constantinople from 1416 to his death.

⁶ The popes moved to Avignon in 1309 and bought it from Queen Giovanna I of Naples in 1348. In 1377, the pope moved back to Rome, but a schismatic line of

popes continued to reside in Avignon until the end of the Great Western Schism in 1417. After that, the papacy continued to have possession of the city.

⁷ I.e., to go to a city in Northern Italy.

[24] Sed *retraho pedem*, poenitetque de rationibus partium incoepisse tractatum. Nam¹ et opus paene infinitum esset, et multa sunt, quae sine indignatione plurimorum nequeant explicari. Necessarium tamen est alterutram² partem³ seorsum⁴ defendere, cum plus uno verum esse non possit. Apud quem tamen sit veritas, Deus viderit, ego non video, neque, si video, scribere ausim. Tanta est autem utrique parti in suo jure fiducia, ut neutra velit cedere. Quid cedere? Vix flectere sese aliquantillum⁵ voluit.

[25] Ideoque infecta pace rursus de sessione temptatum est, legatique apud minores, Gallici⁶ apud Arelatensem congregati suae parti seorsum consulebant. Ex Teutonibus quotidie plures ad legatos deficiebant⁷. Agitatio erat utriusque partis, quonam pacto in sessione praeveniret⁸. Dicturus missam Teutonicus quidam abbas ab legatis erat electus, lecturus decretum episcopus Portugallensis.⁹ Ab Gallicis missae Arelatensis, decreto Albiganensis destinatus erat. Sed cum abbas Teutonicus venit, jam sedentem in cathedra Arelatensem altarique proximum comperit. Et licet esse nobilibus necessariis circumseptus possetque vi¹⁰ locum petere, dignitatem tamen cardinalatus maluit venerari. Antea etiam domi consenserat legatus Arelatensi¹¹ cedendum¹². Portugallensis quoque, cum vellet ambonem ascendere¹³, prohibitus est. Erat enim¹⁴ ab altera parte praemunitus jam locus. Nihil cum¹⁵ his exterriti¹⁶ cardinales, sed publicaturi et ipsi decretum affuere.

¹ *omit.* C, D [WO]

² alteram A [WO]

³ partium D [WO]

⁴ solum WO

⁵ aliqua tantillum D-E [WO]

⁶ Galli C, D [WO]

⁷ defluebant C, D [WO]

⁸ praeveniretur B [WO]

⁹ episcopus Portugallensis : Portugallensis episcopus D [WO]

¹⁰ *omit.* WO

¹¹ *em.*; Ardelatensis cod.

¹² antea enim ... cedendum *omit.* B-E [WO]

¹³ conscendere A [HE]

¹⁴ jam *add.* C, D [WO]

¹⁵ tamen ex B-E [WO]

¹⁶ perterriti D [WO]

[24] But I shall stop¹ here and regret that I began this account of the parties' arguments. For that is an endless task, and much cannot be explained without angering many people. Moreover, it would be necessary to defend one of the two parties, for only one can be right. Which of them has the truth only God may know; I do not, and if I did, I would not dare to write it. Such is each party's confidence in its own cause that neither will yield. Why do I say yield? They would not even bend just a little!

15. Renewed preparations for the Session

[25] Having failed to make peace, they again began to prepare for the Public Session. The legates met at the Franciscans, and the French in the house of Arles², holding separate discussions. Every day, more Germans defected to the legates. Each party discussed how to forestall the other party during the session. The legates chose a German abbot to say the mass and the Portuguese bishop³ to read the decree. The French chose Arles⁴ for the mass and Albenga⁵ for the decree. When the German abbot arrived, he found Arles already sitting in the celebrant's chair, next to the altar, and though he was accompanied by noble relatives and could take the chair by force, he chose to respect the cardinal's dignity instead. (Before, at home, the legate⁶ had actually consented to his yielding to Arles.) And when the Portuguese bishop wanted to mount the pulpit, he was prevented from doing so, for the other party had already occupied the place. Undeterred by these goings-on, the cardinals⁷ arrived to publish the decree.

¹ "retraho pedem": Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 10: 307 (*retrahitque pedes simul unda relabens (the ebbing wave sucks back their feet)*).

² Cardinal Louis Aleman.

³ António Martins de Chaves.

⁴ Louis Aleman.

⁵ Matteo del Carretto.

⁶ Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini, who had foreseen what might happen and decided that the abbot would have to yield to the cardinal. Possibly, the legatine party chose a lower-ranking prelate (the abbot)

for the mass rather than one of their own two cardinals as a face-saving device to avoid a scandalous confrontation between two cardinals.

⁷ Juan Cervantes and Giuliano Cesarini.

[26] Cives autem, qui haec cognoverant¹, non parvam populi manum in armis habebant, quorum consules distributis² per stationes armatis³, in contionem cum antistite suo prodire. Supplicavit⁴ antistes, ut pacem inter se patres⁵ haberent neve urbem suam templumque suum scissionis crimine macularent. Consulatus autem sermo Teutonicus fuit, cujus verba in latinum conversa hujuscemodi paene fuerunt, quod in⁶ Senensi concilio Basilea fuisset electa nullo tamen Basiliensium interveniente rogatu, venissentque deinde ad concilium patres certaue cum civibus foedera percussissent, quae usque in hanc diem servata esse arbrarentur. Datum a se salvum conductum, quem⁷ hactenus etiam custoditum scirent. Stetisse in urbe sua diu concilium eduliumque copiam et quietam semper civitatem habuisse. Facta esse in concilio sanctissima opera: reductos ad fidem Bohemos, regnum Franciae pacificatum, pacatas fore provincias, edita salubria decreta, reformatos plerisque in locis mores. Orare igitur, ne tot bonorum splendorem infamia schismatis obscurarent⁸, ne Graecorum quaerentes unionem Latinorum facerent scissionem, quod aegerrime in urbe sua fieri viderent, ne tantam eis ignominiam afferret schisma, quantam Constantiensibus gloriam unio attulisset. Supplicare ergo⁹, ne duorum decretorum publicatio fieret, sed quidquid esset litis in Caesarea majestate compromitterent. Quodsi omnino publicare esset animo, caverent omnes ab injuria, nemo vim faceret, continerent singuli manus. Consulatum¹⁰ unicuique libertatem praestare scirent, qui, licet utrimque requisiti fuissent¹¹, non tamen uni adhaerere¹² magis quam alteri parti statuissent¹³, quod inter tot doctissimos viros¹⁴ non ipsi essent, qui decernere possent. Se tamen salvi conductus formam custodituros ad unguem, nullamque aliunde violentiam permissuros. Suadere tamen ex congregatione dimoveri familiares, ne dominorum verbis calefacti, ut minus sunt prudentes, magis essent injurii.

¹ haec cognoverant *omit.* C, D [WO]

² distributi A, B [WO]

³ armati A, B [WO]

⁴ supplicabat C, D [WO]

⁵ pacem inter se patres : patres inter se pacem C, D [WO]

⁶ hunc tenorem praeferunt ut *add.* B

⁷ quam WO

⁸ obscuraret WO

⁹ igitur B [WO]

¹⁰ consulatam WO

¹¹ requisiti fuissent : requisitus fuisset C-E [WO]

¹² uni adhaerere : adherere uni D [WO]

¹³ statuisset C-E [WO]

¹⁴ doctissimos viros : viros doctissimos C-D [WO]

16. Intervention of the city

[26] When the townsmen heard this, the magistrates¹ armed a large group of men and stationed them in various places. Then they came to the assembly together with their bishop², who entreated the fathers to have peace between them and not disgrace his city and his temple with the crime of schism. Afterwards, the mayor³ spoke in German. His address, translated into Latin, ran something like this: The Council of Siena⁴ chose Basel⁵ without the Basileans requesting it. Later,⁶ the Fathers had assembled for the council and made some agreements with the citizens, which they considered had been kept unto this day. They knew that the safe-conduct issued by them had thus far been observed. The council fathers had now stayed in their city for a long time, having abundant victuals and an always tranquil city. The council's achievements were most holy: the Bohemians had been brought back to the Faith,⁷ peace had been given to the Kingdom of France,⁸ the provinces had been pacified, salutary decrees had been issued, and morals had been reformed in many places. They asked the fathers not to darken the splendour of such excellent achievements with the infamy of a division and not cause a schism between Latins while seeking union with Greeks (which his city would take very badly). Such a schism would bring his city shame just as much as the union had brought glory to Konstanz.⁹ Therefore, they begged them not to publish two decrees but to refer their conflict to his Imperial Majesty's¹⁰ arbitration. And if they insisted on publishing their decrees, they should at least do it without insults to anyone. Nobody should resort to violence; all should stay their hands. They should know that the magistrate would ensure the liberty of all. Although the magistrates had received solicitations from both parties, they had decided not to favour one over the other since they were unable to decide between so many most learned men. But they would observe the safe-conduct to the letter¹¹ and not allow anybody to use force. They urged the Fathers to remove servants and attendants¹² from the assembly to avoid that, being less prudent, they would be stirred to violence by their masters' words.

¹ "consules".

² Friedrich von der Pfalz (d. 1436): Bishop of Basel from 1437 to 1451.

³ Arnold von Bärenfels (?), Mayor of Basel from 1435.

⁴ Council of Siena, 1423-1424.

⁵ As the venue for the next council.

⁶ About 6 years later.

⁷ Finally confirmed by the Compacts of Iglau on 5 July 1436.

⁸ At the Congress of Arras in 1435, to which the council and the pope had each sent a cardinal legate (Lusignand and Albergati, respectively).

⁹ In 1417, the Council of Konstanz (1414-1418) ended the Great Western Schism by deposing three popes and electing a new pope.

¹⁰ Sigismund.

¹¹ "ad unguem".

¹² "familiares".

[27] Iis responsurus statim Lugdunensis assurrexerat¹, sed increpatus a legato responsum ad se spectare dicente fassus est verbo et facto cedere digne debere legato subticuit.² Tum legatus gratias egit civibus³, quod libertatem tuerentur salvumque conductum custodirent dixitque libenter se accepturos, quam ipsi concordiae⁴ viam obtulissent, addiditque libenter se in electores imperii compromissurum. Fuit ejus oratio plena pacis, et ut est homo ad movendum miseriam gnarus⁵, sic pluribus excussit lacrimas. At eo finiente Lugdunensis statim⁶ incoepit multaque de majore parte praedicavit neque incaute jus suum defendit nunc cardinales, nunc cives oratione sua compellens. Nec cardinalis Sancti Petri tacendum duxit. Placere sibi imprimis pacem ait. Videri sibi jus pro se fore, velle tamen a jure suo pro pace in parte cedere. Nihil tamen se movere, quod de majori parte diceretur. Secum enim non majorem partem concilii, sed totum concilium esse, cujus conclusionem ipse sequeretur. Volebat etiam plura⁷ subdere, sed vociferante multitudine minime valuit⁸.

[28] Oratores deinde Hispaniae suam in scriptis sententiam dederunt: nulli se dissidio consentire⁹, sed, quocumque Graeci venirent, se ituros¹⁰. Suspensa erant omnium¹¹ corda, nec talem sessionem laetis quisquam oculis intuebatur. Tum¹² porrectae in medium schedulae¹³, non omnino ingratum¹⁴ concordiae medium¹⁵ ostendebant, ut fieret decretum pro veteri electione irentque in Graeciam oratores volentesque Graecos secundum electionem ducerent. Quod si nullum ex locis electis Graeci acceptarent¹⁶, scriberent oratores ad concilium ibique expectarent. Concilium vero unum ex his¹⁷ locis eligeret, Viennam, Budam, Bononiam, Parmam, Vercellas, quoniam nullum istorum verisimile esset Graecos fugere. Hac causa fuit, ut traherentur in angulum primores, deinde ut¹⁸ celebrata missa consessus dissolveretur¹⁹. Iterum²⁰ igitur de pace agitatum est, sed vani omnes conatus inventi, sive bonum aliquod in hac discordia latet sive peccata nostra id exigunt.

¹ surrexerat WO

² fassus est ... legato *omit.* B-E [WO]

³ egit civibus : Deo et civibus egit C-D [WO]

⁴ *omit.* WO

⁵ gravis D [WO]

⁶ Lugdunensis statim : statim archiepiscopus Lugdunensis C, D [WO]

⁷ plus WO

⁸ voluit WO

⁹ *omit.* B [WO]

¹⁰ sed quocumque ... ituros *omit.* A-D [WO]

¹¹ partium *add.* D [WO]; patrum *add.* C [WO];

¹² tunc C, D [WO]

¹³ *em.*; cedulae codd.

¹⁴ ingratham C, D [WO]

¹⁵ viam C, D [WO]

¹⁶ acciperent B [WO]

¹⁷ is WO

¹⁸ fuit C, D [WO]

¹⁹ dissolvitur C, D [WO]

²⁰ interim A [WO]

[27] Immediately, Lyon¹ rose to answer. However, when admonished by the legate² that it was his prerogative to respond, he said it was right to yield to the legate both in words and in deeds and said no more. Then the legate thanked the citizens for protecting the [Father's] freedom and observing the safe-conduct. He said that he would gladly accept the way to concord they had proposed and added that he would be happy to refer the matter to the imperial electors' arbitration.³ His oration was entirely amicable, and since he knows how to appeal to people's sentiments, he moved many to tears. But when he finished, Lyon immediately began to speak, profusely, about the majority. Adroitly defending his rights, he put pressure on both the cardinals and the citizens. Also, the Cardinal of San Pietro⁴ decided to speak. He said that for him, the most important was peace. He knew that he was in the right, but he was willing to partly yield his right for the sake of peace. He was, however, unmoved by the arguments concerning the majority, for though the majority was not with him, the council as a whole was, whose conclusion he would follow. He wanted to say more but was prevented by the clamours of the crowd.

17. Spanish compromise proposal

[28] Then the Spanish ambassadors⁵ gave their opinion in writing: they would not agree to any dissension but go wherever the Greeks would come. All hearts were in suspense, and nobody could look forwards to such a session with happy eyes. Then they handed over their note, describing an acceptable way to concord: following the decree on the previous election, the ambassadors would go to Greece⁶, and if the Greeks consented, they would bring them over as stipulated by the election [decree]. But if the Greeks accepted none of the chosen places, the ambassadors should inform the council and wait there. Then the council would choose one of the following places, Vienne,⁷ Buda,⁸ Bologna,⁹ Parma,¹⁰ Vercelli.¹¹ Most likely, not all of them would be rejected by the Greeks. This proposal caused the leaders to withdraw to a corner and then – after mass had been celebrated – to dismiss the assembly. So, again they negotiated about a peaceful solution, but all attempts were in vain, whether there is some good hidden in this disagreement, or our sins demand it.¹²

¹ Amédée de Talaru, Archbishop of Lyon.

² Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini.

³ Note that the mayor had recommended the emperor's arbitration, whereas Cesarini said

he would accept the imperial prince-electors'.

⁴ Juan Cervantes.

⁵ Alfonso de Santa Maria de Cartagena and Alvaro Nunes de Isorna.

⁶ I.e., to Constantinople.

⁷ In French territory.

⁸ A nod to the emperor.

⁹ Where the pope was in residence.

¹⁰ In Milanese territory.

¹¹ In the Italian territory of the Duke of Savoy.

¹² I.e., as a punishment.

[29] Pridie itaque nonas Maii apud Arelatensem congregatis Gallis cives interfuere iterum de pace supplicantes. His responsum est sequenti die futuram in ecclesia missam liberumque fore et civibus et aliis inter celebrandum de reconciliatione tractare, plus temporis inutiliter non esse absumendum. Recesserant jam Graeci, Galeaziusque Mantuanus Bononiam et Simon de Valle Venetias ierant¹ electionem legatorum executuri, quae res² Gallos ad sessionem fiendam magis sollicitabat. Neque enim sine decreto exequi quidquam³ poterant.

[30] Studium erat utrique, quo pacto praeveniendum esset. Misit archiepiscopus Tarentinus ex suis quendam monachum, qui occuparet atque occupavit locum⁴, ubi legi decreta consueverunt, sed mox adversariorum opera est invasus et soldani, magistri carceris⁵. Cumque moleste instaret, ferro et vi⁶ repulsus et captus ductus⁷ est fuissetque graviter confossus, nisi gladium lorica exclusisset⁸. Eum tamen vapulasse non est ambigendum. Armati cives interim ad magnum numerum in platea adfuere tumultum, si quis fieret, oppressuri.

[31] Ad sextam horam omnes in templo comparuerunt⁹. Arelatensis vero¹⁰ duabus fere horis praevenerat missaeque sesse accinxerat insomnisque illa sibi effluxit nox. Compertum enim habeo secunda ipsum post medium noctis hora isse cubitum¹¹, assurrexisse tertia, nec mihi est verisimile in tanta rerum agitatione somnum fuisse suum sed quandam somni nebulam. Quo magis magisque miror tanta eum fuisse patientia, ut horis non minus octo onustam gemmis atque auro mitram recta¹² cervice gestare potuerit¹³, ut inter viros heroicis hoc praecipue facto sit numerandus¹⁴. Sed verum est, quod vulgo dicitur: *Nihil est amanti difficile*. Cupiebat enim fieri omnino¹⁵ decretum.

¹ ierat B [WO]

² *omit.* A

³ exequi quidquam : quidquam exequi C [WO]

⁴ locum occuparet: occuparat atque occupavit locum : locum occuparet B-E [WO]

⁵ mox adversariorum ... carceris : invenit jam ab adversariis praemunitum B-E [WO]

⁶ et vi *omit.* B-E [WO]

⁷ et captus *omit.* B-E [WO]

⁸ aliis persuasum est monachum in possessione loci fuisse vique ab adversariis expulsum. Mihi veritas ignota est *add.* B-E [WO]

⁹ cardinalis *add.* C, D [WO]

¹⁰ *omit.* C, D [WO]

¹¹ cubatum WO

¹² insertam WO

¹³ portavit usque ad finem *add.* C [WO]

¹⁴ mirandus C, E [WO]

¹⁵ fieri omnino : omnino fieri C, D [WO]

18. 6 May 1436

[29] On the sixth of May, the citizens appeared at a meeting for the French in the house of Arles¹ and again begged for peace. They were told that the next day there would be a mass in the church and that the citizens and others would be free to discuss a reconciliation during the celebration of the mass, but otherwise no more time would be spent, uselessly, on this issue. The Greeks had already left, and Galeazzo of Mantua had gone to Bologna² and Simone de Valle to Venice to expedite the legates' choice. This made the French even more intent on holding the session since they could do nothing before a decree was passed.

19. 7 May 1436

19.2. Preparations

[30] Each party now wanted to be first [in the cathedral]. The Archbishop of Taranto³ sent a monk from his household to occupy the podium where the decrees usually were read out. He actually managed it, but soon afterwards he was charged by the adversaries accompanied by the Soldan, jailer [of the council]. When he resisted, they fought and captured him and led him away, and he would surely have been badly wounded if his mail coat had not deflected a sword. There is no doubt, however, that he was beaten. In the meantime, a large number of armed citizens came to the [cathedral] square to quell any disturbance.⁴

[31] At six o'clock in the morning, all came to the temple.⁵ But Arles had arrived almost two hours before and vested for mass, spending a sleepless night. I have heard that he went to bed about two in the morning but rose again at three. Most likely, he was so agitated that he could not sleep but only doze. I much admire his endurance, for – with a straight neck - he wore a mitre heavy with precious stones and gold for at least eight hours, a deed which gives him a place among the heroes. But it is true what they say: *Nothing is difficult for a lover*⁶ - and he badly wanted the decree.

¹ Cardinal of Arles, Louis Aleman.

² The second largest city in the Papal States, where the pope resided at the time.

³ Archbishop Giovanni Berardi di Tagliacozzo.

⁴ The version in ms. A is different from the version in the other mss.: According to A, the monk had

definitely occupied the podium and was dragged away by force. According to the other mss., it was doubtful whether he had actually occupied the podium or if he was prevented from occupying it. To drag someone away with force from a place is presumably worse than preventing him from getting

to that place, so the version in A is more critical of the French party, which might indicate that A is the later version, less friendly to the conciliarist party.

⁵ The cathedral.

⁶ Cicero: *Orator*, 10:34.

[32] Aderant igitur¹ ambae partes nec inter celebrandum de pace omissum est. Sed ubi vani tractatus visi sunt, utraque pars mitras et alia ornamenta tamquam sessionem factura suscepit, quasi videres² duos exercitus invicem pugnuros³ arma induere, quibus instructis nihil dubites proelium esse futurum. Nec defuerunt, qui ex utraque parte amare flerent, mihique non videtur Christiano censendus⁴ nomine, qui ea die non indoluit. Multus tamen in ore singulorum pallor apparuit, quod tantum inviti omnes⁵ spectabant scelus. Ideoque placitum est aliquantulum de pace repetere, si qua res animos immutasset⁶, vocatisque primoribus prope altare, sicuti erant ornati, usque ad horam post meridiem primam de concordia agitatum est expectante jejuna⁷ in sessione multitudine⁸ interdum sperante pacem, interdum plurimum expavescente.

[33] Jamque in unam sententiam consonatum⁹ erat, ut publicaretur pro Avinione decretum. Si quo tamen nova opus esset electione, extunc Bononia electa esset, in manu duorum ponenda, quorum altera papa, alterum concilium nominaret. Quando autem nova opus electione intelligendum esset, duorum declarationi commissum erat, pro parte legatorum cardinali Sancti Petri, pro alia parte cardinali Arelatensi. Nec restabat nisi publicatio, cum subito alius injectus est¹⁰ scrupulus. Neque enim duobus his cardinalibus voluere Galli acquiescere¹¹, sed loco cardinalis Sancti Petri decanum Lubicensem, loco Arelatensis archidiaconum Metensem nominabant, quae res omnem concordiam vertit¹² vicinamque quasi pacem nec plus duobus tribusve remotam digitis omnino¹³ exclusit¹⁴, rursusque ad consessum¹⁵ patres rediere.

¹ etiam B [WO]; itaque C [WO]

² videretur A

³ pugnantes A

⁴ Christiano censendus : censendus Christiano C, D [WO]

⁵ homines B-D [WO]

⁶ Here A inserts the passage *Archiepiscopum Mediolanensem ... profuisset*, which obviously belongs in section 18 and was placed there by HE and in the present edition

⁷ jejunia WO

⁸ expectante jejunia ... multitudine omit. C, D [WO]

⁹ consultatum B [WO]; consumatum ac concordatum C, D [WO]

¹⁰ alius injectus est : injectus est alius C, D [WO]

¹¹ voluere Galli acquiescere : Galli acquiescere voluerunt D [WO]

¹² concordiam vertit : vertit concordiam C, D [WO]

¹³ omit. WO

¹⁴ Here A inserts the passage *Papiensem autem episcopum nonnulli dicunt ideo defuisse, quod hinc metus inde urgeret conscientia, quae tamen deprehensa est inclinatio jugiter cum legatis apostolicis*, which obviously belongs in section 18 and was placed there by HE and in the present edition.

¹⁵ Confessum A; consensum B [WO]; concessum D [WO]

19.3. Last-minute negotiations at the altar

[32] Both parties were now present in the church, and during the mass, they continued to negotiate about a peaceful solution. But when negotiations failed, each party donned their mitres and vestments¹ in preparation for the session.² It felt as if you were seeing two armies getting ready to do battle as soon as they had been placed in battle order. Some in both parties were crying bitterly, and I believe that every man worthy of the Christian name grieved on that day. All were stark pale as they unwillingly witnessed this evil event. Then it was decided to try one more time for peace, in case the approaching reality had brought about a change of minds. The leaders were asked to meet behind the altar, in their vestments, and their discussion continued there until one o'clock in the afternoon while the crowd was waiting, still fasting, now hoping for peace, now despairing.

19.4. A failed compromise

[33] At one point, they agreed to publish the decree for Avignon,³ [but on the condition], that if a new election would become necessary,⁴ then Bologna was the chosen city, to be placed in the hands of two men, one appointed by the pope and another by the council.⁵ The decision on whether a new election was needed would be entrusted to two men, the Cardinal of San Pietro for the legatine party and the Cardinal of Arles for the other. It only remained to publish this [compromise], when suddenly another difficulty was raised: the French would not agree to the two cardinals but nominated the Dean of Lübeck⁶ instead of the Cardinal of San Pietro and the Archdeacon of Metz⁷ in the place of the Cardinal of Arles. This overturned the compromise and completely prevented a peaceful solution that was only two or three fingers away. The Fathers then returned to their places in the assembly.

¹ "ornamenta"

² At the formal sessions, the prelates would be wearing the copes and mitres.

³ In principle, a major concession by the legatine party, but in effect a small one since they knew that the Greeks would not go there.

⁴ In case the Avignonese solution fell through.

⁵ Since the pope resided in Bologna, and Bologna was the second-largest city in the Papal States, this would have been a major concession by the French, which easily explains why it fell through after a moment of further consideration.

⁶ Nikolaus Sachau (ca. 1385-1449): In 1437 he was Dean of

Lübeck cathedral chapter. Speaker for the German nation at the meeting on 7 May in Basel. Later, Bishop of Lübeck and Archbishop of Hamburg-Bremen.

⁷ Guillaume-Hugues d'Estaing (d. 1455): Archdeacon in Metz. Later, cardinal.

[34] Expalluit¹ tota contio, nec tantum facinus laetis quisquam oculis intuebatur. Fluebant sponte lacrimae et a suspiriis abstinuit nemo. Mira profecto res, ut invitis auctoribus tantum mali perpetratum sit. Duo illa die mihi mostri similia visa sunt: vidi enim armatam multitudinem summa proprietate ac tutela communi², in qua nemo fuit, qui tantum nefas non procedere non cuperet³, sed quod appetebant⁴ singuli, non ausi sunt universi⁵. Inter praelatos rursus⁶ nemo erat, qui contrarias approbaret decretationes, quod tamen displicuit singulis, fecere universi. Quis non hoc⁷ monstrum dicat, ut volentes illi non faciant, isti vero nolentes faciant, cum esset utrisque voluntati non adversa potestas?⁸

[35] Imploraverunt⁹ igitur utrique spiritum sanctum majoribus fletibus quam cantibus, de cujus adventu est a pluribus dubitatum, qui divinam illam mentem excellentissimamque majestatem sola existimant concordia gaudere.

¹ expavit B-D [WO]

² summa proprietate ac tutela communi *omit.* B-E [WO]

³ tantum nefas ... cuperet : commaculare sacerdotali sanguine manus non cuperet B-E [WO]

⁴ voluerunt B-E [WO]

⁵ ausi sunt universi : placuit universis WO

⁶ *omit.* C, D [WO]

⁷ non hoc : hoc non C [WO]

⁸ congruisset, si quidem alterum pia praesumptio prohibendo, alterum vero salutare id non effici, quod utrimque ex sacerdotio improbabant *add.* A

⁹ implorabant D [WO]

[34] The whole assembly was pale and drawn, and nobody witnessed this great outrage gladly. Tears were flowing freely, and nobody could hold back his sighs. It was indeed amazing that so great an evil was committed by unwilling people. On that day, I saw two astonishing things. One was a crowd armed with reason and desire to protect all,¹ in which each person wanted to prevent this great injustice from happening,² but what they wanted to do singly, they did not dare to do as a group. The other was the group of prelates, where no one wanted to publish the conflicting decrees, but what they did not want to do singly, they did as a group. Who will not call it astonishing that the first did not do what they wanted to, whereas the others did what they did not want to – when they both had the power to do as they wanted?

19.5. Prayers to the Holy Spirit³

[35] So, they prayed to the Holy Spirit,⁴ more with tears than with song. Many doubted that He would come since the divine mind and supreme majesty is believed to only approve of concord.

¹ *With reason ... all:* from ms. A. Not in the other mss.

² This passage is from ms. A. The other mss. have: *all wanted to*

stain their hands with priestly blood.

³ On the liturgy followed at the sessions of the Council of Basel, see Cadilli, pp. 343-346.

⁴ Various prayers and the hymn *Veni, creator spiritus.*

[36] Finitis vero de more orationibus ad decretorum ventum est promulgationem. Inde Albiganensis loco alto atque eminenti¹ et legentibus² destinato decretum suum inchoavit, hinc Portugallensis suum, impediabatque alter alterum, neque ullus erat concurrentium inter se³ vocum⁴ intellectus. Prius tamen Portugallensis finivit, quod⁵ longe brevius decretum habuerit⁶, quod et sui approbarunt et hymnum ex consuetudine cecinerunt. Paulo post et Albinganensis peregit, cujus et approbata⁷ est lectio et cantibus⁸ excepta⁹ hymnusque ille *Te Deum laudamus* per ora omnium insonabat tamquam sacrificium Deo aliquod¹⁰ acceptissimum consumavissent. Verum illud prae ceteris mea sententia admiratu¹¹ videtur dignum: vidi enim alios plures de malo suo ignorantes¹² ridere. Et olores fama est in morte concinere, sed uberibus¹³ cantare aliquem lacrimis mihi antehac penitus erat invisum, quod ista sessio nunc ostendit. Hic enim cantus aspexi eorum lacrimis et singultibus mixtos, qui scissuram ecclesiae tenerrime deplorabant.

¹ atque eminenti *omit.* C

² ad legendum C, D [WO]

³ inter se *omit.* C, D [WO]

⁴ *omit.* C [WO]

⁵ qui D, E [WO]

⁶ habuit D, E [WO]

⁷ a suis *add.* C

⁸ cantationibus B [WO]; cantantibus C, D [WO]

⁹ acceptata WO

¹⁰ *omit.* D [WO]

¹¹ admiratione B [WO]

¹² gaudentes D [WO]

¹³ verberibus A [WO]; uberius D [WO]

19.6. Promulgation of decrees

[36] After the customary prayers, it was time for the publication of the decrees. To the one side, Albenga¹ began to read his decree² from the high podium assigned to readers, and to the other side, the Portuguese³ read his.⁴ Thus, each disturbed the other's reading, and not one word of the two contestants could be understood. The Portuguese finished first since his decree was much shorter. It was approved by the men of his party, who began to sing the customary hymn.⁵ Shortly afterwards, Albenga finished, and his reading was approved, too, and received with singing. The hymn *Te Deum laudamus* was chanted by all as if they had performed a sacrifice most acceptable to God. In my opinion, this was the most amazing of all: I saw several people laugh as if ignorant of their own misery, whereas those who bemoaned the schism in the Church⁶ were crying profusely while singing, mixing their song with tears and sobs (something I had never seen before) – like swans that sing when they die.⁷

¹ Matteo del Carretto.

² The decree of the majority (the French party) says: ... *haec sacrosancta synodus decernit ... futurum oecumenicum concilium in Basiliensi, aut, illa recusata, in Avinionensi civitatibus, alioquin in Sabaudia ... debere celebrari* (COD, p. 511).

³ António Martins de Chaves.

⁴ The decree of the minority (the legatine party) says: *ad hanc ... in generali congregatione conclusionem devenit, ut videlicet civitas Florentina, aut Utinum in patria*

Fori Iulii ponenda in manu concilii, seu quicumque alius locus tutus in decreto comprehensus, summo pontifice et Graecis accomodus pro oecumenio concilio eligatur; ille videlicet de praedictis, qui citius paraverit et expedierit galeas, pecunias et alia necessaria, datis etiam securitatibus necessariis ... (COD, p. 513). Note that the city of Florence is named first.

⁵ The *Te Deum* which traditionally followed the promulgation of a conciliar decree.

⁶ The event was rightly perceived by the participants as the beginning of a schism. It lasted until 1449 with the abdication of the antipope elected by the council in 1439. Voigt, 1: 6, p. 128: *So entstand das Schisma. Lange hatten beide Theil ... vor dem letzten Schritte sich gescheut. Energisch und heftig drängten sie jetzt, die notwendigen Konsequenzen daraus zu ziehen.*

⁷ Cf. Plinius: *Historia naturalis*, 10: 23, 32.

[37] Sed quid opus est in adversum niti? Humanorum actuum magna est in sideribus vis, neque sapientes agnosco, quibus famulari astra debeant. Immo et sapientes ipsi, cum insaniunt, omne genus superant fatuorum, sicut ex mero optimo¹ fit acetum perfectum. Data sunt haec desuper, et occulta vis influit siderum². Illudque quis non miretur bis in die inchoatam sessionem, bis conatus cecidisse. Quis non gloriosae illi ac sanctissimae virgini hoc attribuat, quis non illi referat gratias, quod *inconsutilem nati tunicam* in dicatis sibi diebus nequaquam dividi tulerit, at³ ferus ille discordiarumque pater⁴ Gradivus libenter in sua die admisit scelus⁵ concordiamque omnem disripuit, quod non tantum ab eo discordiae causa factum puto, quanto ut Florentiae⁶ prodesset suae⁷, quam sub tutela Martis a veteribus fuisse conditam non est obscurum. Ne igitur tractatus pacis Florentiam excluderet⁸, amplexa est a Marte discordia. Nonisque⁹ enim Maii Martisque die acta sunt haec. Adde, quod omnia in scissuram astra consentiunt, namque, si verum est, quod astrologorum quidam asseverant, is modo planeta regnat, sub quo illud exordium habuit schisma, quod Constantiense concilium extirpavit, sub quo et Mahumeti secta incoepit, Jove scilicet in cauda Scorpionis agente.

[38] Quae utinam fabulae sint¹⁰ et somnia¹¹ potius quam veri alicujus vati praesagia. Nobis tamen negare non licet duo esse in una sessione publicata decreta, quorum alterum ab altero irritetur¹², neque in hoc extinctus furor, nam et major circa plumbum exorta concertatio est¹³ contumeliosioresque habitae deputationes sunt, quibus temptatum est praesidentes papae deponere, collationes beneficiorum ad ordinarios redigere¹⁴, 16 ex quattuor nationibus praelatos super libertate et auctoritate¹⁵ concilii conservanda cum plena potestate eligere. Super primis solum avisatum, super ultimo etiam¹⁶ conclusum. Nec legati in tanta re dormiebant, sed suas et ipsi conclusiones moliebantur.

¹ corrupto C, E [WO]

² sideris D [WO]

³ sed C, E [WO]

⁴ mars *add.* C [WO]

⁵ admisit scelus : scelus admisit C, D [WO]

⁶ Florentia D [WO]

⁷ parti *add.* D [WO]

⁸ Florentiam excluderet : Florentia excludatur B [WO]

⁹ novaque D [WO]

¹⁰ sunt WO

¹¹ sentina A, B [WO]

¹² et olores [sect. 35] ... irritetur *omit.* C [WO]

¹³ concertatio est : est concertatio C [WO]

¹⁴ redire D [WO]

¹⁵ ibertate et auctoritate : auctoritate et libertate B-E [WO]

¹⁶ est C [WO]; *omit.* D [WO]

19.7. Supernatural influences¹

[37] But why fight adversity? The stars have great power over human affairs, but I do not see why intelligent men should be slaves to the stars. Indeed, when such men become irrational, they surpass all fools – like excellent vinegar is made from good wine. These things are given from above, under the hidden influence of the stars. Who would not be amazed that two sessions began and two attempts failed in a single day? Who will not attribute to and thank the Most Holy and Most Glorious Virgin² that she did not allow her son's *seamless tunic*³ to be divided on days dedicated to her?⁴ But I believe that Gradivus,⁵ ferocious father of strife, happily allowed this crime to happen and destroyed all concord on his own day. He did so less to cause conflict than to protect Florence,⁶ known to have been founded by the ancients under the protection of Mars. Mars embraced Discordia⁷ lest Florence be omitted from the peaceful settlement,⁸ for these things happened on Tuesday 7 May. Add that (if the astrologers' claims are true) the constellation of stars portend a schism. For Jupiter is entering Scorpio's tail, and Jupiter was the planet under which the schism began that was ended by the Council of Konstanz and under which Muhammad's sect was born.

20. Aftermath

[38] Whether or not these are fables and dreams rather than the prophecies of a true seer, we cannot deny that two mutually exclusive decrees were published in the same session. Moreover, the furious commotion did not cease then, for a great controversy about the leaden seal arose. Stormy meetings were held in the deputations where attempts were made to depose the presidents [of the council], return the granting of ecclesiastical benefices to the local bishops,⁹ ¹⁰ and elect 16 prelates from the four nations with full powers to maintain the council's liberty and authority and to choose [the future venue for the council]. On the first issue, there has only been a recommendation; on the last, a decision has been taken. Meanwhile, the legates have not been sleeping but are planning their own conclusions.

¹ In the following passages, Piccolomini bundles together the stars, the Virgin Mary, and the pagan god Mars as supernatural, divine influencers of human destiny. In later years, he was rather sceptical of astrology, but he continued, even as a pope, to mix Christian and pagan references.

² The Virgin Mary.

³ John, 19: 23. The seamless tunic was used as a metaphor for the Church.

⁴ Saturdays and special feastdays.

⁵ Epithet of the god Mars.

⁶ Florence was named first in the decree of the legatine party but was not named in the decree of the other party.

⁷ Roman Goddess of strife.

⁸ Between the two parties.

⁹ "ordinarii"

¹⁰ Interestingly, on the very day of his election, on 6 March 1447, Pope Nicolaus V, who had certainly not been a supporter of the Council of Basel, told the imperial

ambassadors, including Piccolomini, that *to me, it seems that the Roman pontiffs have extended their limits exceedingly by not leaving any jurisdiction to the other bishops. On the other hand, the Basileans have exceedingly limited the reach of the Apostolic See.* (CDR, 1, sect. 53).

[39] Cum tamen generalis congregatio est habita, plus est inventum concordiae quam speratum. Electi sunt enim cardinalis Sancti Petri, archiepiscopus Panormitanus episcopusque Burgensis, quibus omnibus de plumbo commissa est controversia sine praeiudicio rei principalis. His visum est decretum Gallorum cum plumbo archidiacono Metensi et auditori camerae¹ Avinionensibus portandum committere, qui civibus illis infra certos² dies pecunias dantibus decretum libere dimittant, si minus statim reportent. Illi 13. kalendis Junii aggressi sunt iter, nos in expectatione remansimus, non pacem, sed belli observantes indutias³, quod licet modicum videatur, nonnihil tamen est aegrotanti continue febris horam detraxisse⁴. Sitque jam satis nec plura ex me⁵ require, quamquam ne ista sint nimis. Deinceps superos rogato, ut gratior detur scribendi materies. Vale.

Ex Basilea⁶, 12. kalendis Junii 1437⁷.

¹ et auditori camerae : ut audiat et audiatur B [WO]

² terminatos B [WO]

³ Statim post recessit patriarcha Antiochenus vir volens Avinionem et in via defunctus est. Post vero 6. Junii episcopus Argentinensis de Ungaria serenissimi domini Sigismundi ambassiator in

congregatione proponens supplicabat, ut patres inter se pace haberent et plura alia ibidem ex parte Caesarum majestatis proposuit, quae multorum de parte legatorum terruerunt. Tarentinus autem archiepiscopus papae orator dictum episcopum Argentinensem increpans dixit, quod talia non

haberent verba in mandatis, quae propalavit. Interim pars papae suum decretum secreta bullavit, under error et concertatio orta est *add.* C [WO]

⁴ quod licet ... detraxisse *omit.* C

⁵ jam *add.* C, D [WO]

⁶ etc. *omit.* C [WO]

⁷ XX. ... 1437 *omit.* C [WO]

[39] However, when the [subsequent] general congregation was held, they achieved more agreement than hoped for. The Cardinal of San Pietro,¹ the Archbishop of Palermo,² and the Bishop of Burgos³ were entrusted with the controversy on sealing the decree,⁵ without prejudice to the principal matter.⁶ They decided to charge the Archdeacon of Metz⁷ and the cameral auditor⁸ with bringing the sealed decree of the French to the Avignonese. If these paid over the required sum within a certain number of days, they would hand over the decree. If not, they would bring it back immediately. They departed on 18 May while we were left in suspense, not having peace but observing a truce,⁹ which though it may seem brief, nonetheless brought some relief to a patient suffering from continuous fevers. Let this suffice, and do not demand more from me - as if this is not already too much. Pray to the heavenly beings that there may come happier matters to write about. Farewell.

From Basel, 21 May 1437.

¹ Juan Cervantes.

² Niccolò de' Tedeschi.

³ Alonso de Cartagena.

⁴ The first was from the legatine (papal) party, the second the French party, and the third was neutral.

⁵ With the council's leaden seal.

⁶ Which city to choose if the Avignon solution failed.

⁷ Guillaume-Hugues d'Estaing.

⁸ Rudolf von Rüdeseim (1402-1482): Cameral auditor of the council. Later, trusted collaborator of Pius, Bishop of Laval, and Archbishop of Breslau.

⁹ Here ms. C adds a passage mentioning, among others, the furtive sealing of the minority (legatine) party's decree with the council's official leaden seal. On this affair, Piccolomini wrote in

his DVI: *Since the decree of the minority could not be sealed with a bull publicly, it was expedited under the seals of the [apostolic] legates and sent to the Greeks. When, later, a letter sent from Rome required this decree to be sealed with the leaden bull [of the council], Bartolomeo Battiferro, secretary of Giuliano, and Roberto Martelli of Florence, audacious youths and ready to commit any offence, bribed the sealer of documents, sealed the bull, and, with the knowledge of Giuliano, gave it to the Archbishop of Taranto. Then the decree was sent to Eugenius in Rome [Bologna] with some letters, but it was intercepted together with several letters. Taranto and Giuliano were*

*accused of having committed a crime. Bartolomeo saved himself by fleeing. Roberto, being a layperson, gave surety. Giuliano swore in the assembly that he had not ordered this deed. Taranto declared that he had not done it, but he approved of it and considered it legitimate. The twelve bishops appointed to investigate the matter ordered Taranto to not leave his home. Realising that the Fathers were angry with him and considering that large groups are prone to harsh judgments, he summoned the Margrave of Roeteln while the Fathers were meeting, mounted a horse, and left the city for Florence. (Piccolomini: *De Viris*, sect. 1). On this affair, see also LD (Iaria), pp. 50-52.*

25. Letter to Emperor Sigismund (23 May 1437,¹ Basel).

Manuscripts: M2, ff. 122v-123v²; V2, ff. 284-288³; V3, ff. 135v-138r⁴ **; V4, ff. 120v-122v.

Editions: HE, 25, pp. 75-77 (based on V2); WO, 1, 1; 25, pp. 76-78 (based on the RTA-edition); Cugnoni, p. 135; RTA, XII, pp. 225-227.

Translations: RE, 14, pp. 117-120.

{135v} Serenissimo ac sacratissimo imperatori Sigismundo semper Augusto Stefanus de Novaria obedientiam et fidelitatem.^{5 6}

[1] Habeo tibi, clementissime Caesar, non solum ego, qui vermiculus sum, gratias ingentes pro tua erga concilium caritate, sed totus tibi orbis tenetur, quod labi ecclesiam non sinis. Quis enim tuam hanc non laudet diligentiam, qui audita {136r} statim discordia ad reconciliandum mittis? Taceo, quae in Constantiensi egeris synodo⁷. Taceo, quae in tota vita tua perfeceris. Adeo enim magnae res sunt, ut mirari magis quam scribere illas debeam; sunt tamen tua majestate dignissimae. Quid enim Caesareo convenientius culmini quam unire Christicolae? Quid Augusto proprius⁸ quam fines imperii dilatare? Fecisti hactenus, ut decuit, sed numquam magis te orbis indiguit quam modo. Numquam magis tua opus diligentia fuit, nec majoris umquam gloriae occasionem habuisti: quanto enim turbatiores res sunt, tanto est illas componere laudabilius. Circumspice regiones Christianas. Nihil usquam⁹ pacatum aut bene moratum occurret, sed foeda omnia aut bello infecta aut haeresibus videbis. Nec te fugit celebrandi concilii has fuisse rationes.

¹ Wolkan gives the date as 15 June, without stating why.

² SC, 254-256.

³ DV, ff. 147v-149v.

⁴ DV, ff. 138v-141r.

⁵ Stefanus de Novaria ... fidelitatem *add. in marg.* V2

⁶ Serenissimo ... fidelitatem : incertus auctor in factis ecclesie M2.

⁷ concilio V2, V3

⁸ propius V4; magis proprium *em.* HE

⁹ unquam HE

25. Letter to Emperor Sigismund (23 May 1437, Basel).

Context: In the preceding letter to Pietro da Noceto, written 3-4 weeks before, Piccolomini had been careful not to express commitment to any of the two conciliar parties. In the present letter to the emperor, he asks the emperor's support for the council against the pope, showing that he was still a determined conciliarist - though he did not agree with the French party in its choice of a French venue for the council rather than an Italian. The occasion for the letter was provided by the emperor sending a legate to the council to exhort it to peace and harmony (see critical apparatus to letter 26, sect. 38). Also, the letter is clearly a riposte to and inspired by a letter from Ambrogio Traversari to the emperor, asking the emperor to support the pope against the council. In the three manuscripts collated here, Traversari's letter directly precedes Piccolomini's letter. In the later versions (3-4), Piccolomini's authorship is disguised under the name of a friend, Stefano de Caccia. The letter was probably never sent to the emperor. Also, it is unlikely to have been published since its anti-Florentine and anti-Venetian stance would alienate these important cities.

Subject: Piccolomini exhorts the emperor to support the council against the pope and to intervene in the matter of the venue for the future council with the Greeks. He claims that a council in Florence would be under the pope's control, which the pope would use to annul the decrees of Basel on free elections of bishops and the abolishment of annates to Rome. He further warns the emperor against the territorial ambitions of the Venetians, the emperor's recent allies.¹

To the Most Serene and Most Holy Emperor Sigismund, always August, Stefano de Novara [sends] obedience and fidelity.

1. Praise of the emperor

[1] Most Clement Emperor, not only I, a little worm, but the whole world owes you immense thanks for your devotion to the council and for not allowing the Church to fall. Who does not praise your diligence in sending letters to reconcile the parties at the council as soon as you heard of its conflicts? I pass over what you did in the Council of Konstanz. I pass over what you have achieved in your whole life, for these things are so great that I should admire them rather than write about them – but they are most worthy of Your Majesty. For what is more appropriate for the Imperial Highness than to unite the Christians? What is more proper for an emperor than to extend the frontiers of the empire? Until now, you have done what you should. But today, the world needs you more than ever. Never was there a greater need for your diligence, and never have you had a greater opportunity for glory: the more disordered matters are, the more praiseworthy it is to settle them. Look at the Christian lands. Nothing is peaceful or well-managed, all are in a terrible state, plagued with war or heresies. As you know, that was the reason for holding the council.

¹ For comments on this letter, see Vollman: *Enkyklikos*, p. 6

[2] Frustra tamen conatus omnes sunt, frustra concilium jubeat, nisi et cogere possit. Quomodo autem concilium cogat, cui perpetuum sit cum summo pontifice discidium, ut, quod patres vetent, ille permittat, et quem¹ isti damnent², ille absolvat? Audis forsitan aegre de papa hoc, qui tibi coronam dederit, sed habeas a papa coronam, dum te regnum a concilio habere non neges; immo et coronam tua tibi virtus et concilium dedit. Benignum namque papam solus concilii metus effecit³. Audi⁴ igitur non minus concilium quam papam, nec moleste feras, si adversatum { 136v } concilio papa⁵ dico, quod mihi non esset magnopere dolendum, nisi et intra viscera concilii seditionem fecisset et patres hujus concilii in sese furere⁶ coegisset traxissetque aliquos in sententiam suam.

¹ quod M2
² clament V4

³ fecit V3
⁴ haud V4

⁵ nec moleste ... papa *omit.* V4
⁶ fuere V4

2. Exhortation to support the council against the pope

[2] However, vain are all our efforts, and vain are the orders of the council if it has no means of coercion. How can the council enforce its decisions if there is a permanent conflict with the Supreme Pontiff so that he allows what the Fathers forbid and absolves those they condemn. Maybe you do not like to hear this about the pope who gave you the crown, but even if you have the crown from the pope, you will not deny that you have the kingdom¹ from the council. Indeed, it was not only your own virtue and strength but also the council that gave you the [imperial] crown, for it was fear of the council that made the pope amenable. So, do not heed the council less than the pope, and do not take it badly if I say that the pope opposes the council. I would not overly regret this if he had not also sown dissension in the very heart of the council, forced the Fathers to rage against each other, and drawn others to his views.²

¹ Here, Piccolomini refers to Bohemia, one of Sigismund's kingdoms (besides Hungary and Germany), which the council ensured for Sigismund by its compromise deal with the Hus-

sites, the Hussite Compacts promulgated at Iglau the year before, clearing the way for Sigismund to return to Bohemia as its ruler.

² In contrast to his letter to Pietro da Noceto of 15 May 1437 (see

letter 24), Piccolomini here shows his undisguised support of the conciliarist (French) party against the pope.

[3] Impedivit enim Avinionenses, ne solverent et ne necessitatibus ecclesiae subvenirent, induxitque aliquos, qui Florentiam eligerent et locum esse oecumenici¹ concilii vellent, unde tantus erupit furor, ut duo contraria decreta unica sessio publicarit, alterum pro Avinione, alterum pro Florentia, quamquam decretum dici non potest, quod est a minori parte publicatum. Utcumque est, intentionem suam pars quaeque prosequitur, et dum unire Graecos volunt, seipsos diviserunt, unde est ab omni fere sancto opere cessatum frustra vel reformationem vel pacem orbis expectat.

[4] Tua est ergo et pacificandi et reformandi cura, te vocat ista labor, sed vide ubi concilium esse velis. Florentiam Graeci et papa et cardinales petunt. Tunc cum his Florentiam ibis, an celebrari sine te concilium feres? Certe neque² secundum te velle arbitror, nec primum tibi expedire, quod sine te concilium ibi³ formidandum et Florentiam tibi suspectam non ignoro. Tunc⁴ Florentiam eas, Florentiam dico, quae est Guelphorum caput? Intelligis, quid Guelphi nomine significetur? Guelphus est, qui resistit imperio, Ghibellinus, qui paret. Sed quae magis imperio {137r} civitas rebellis est, quam Florentia? Quae magis aemula? Lectae sunt noviter in concilio litterae, quibus Florentini nullum se dominum recognoscere jactitant. Scis, cum Romam peteres, quo te vultu exceperint, scis quibus te Ferrariae muneribus visitorint. Sed heu, decus imperii! Non sufficit Florentinis imperium abnegare⁵, imperiales etiam occupant civitates, quas non ad jugum, sed ad exterminium subjiciunt, ut testimonio est Aretium et splendor ille quondam Tusciae Pisana civitas, nunc ruina et vile equorum stabulum, cujus instar modo etiam redigenda infelix Lucana civitas obsidetur.

¹ icumenici codd.

² ne V4

³ tibi WO

⁴ tunc WO

⁵ negare V4

[3] He prevented the Avignonese from paying [the required sum] and providing what was needful for the Church.¹ He also persuaded others to choose Florence as the place of the ecumenical council, which caused such furious disorder that two mutually exclusive decrees were published in the same session, one for Avignon and the other for Florence – though the last one cannot properly be called a decree since it was published only by a minority.² At any rate, now each party pursues its own course, and though they all want union with the Greeks, they have themselves become divided. This has caused its holy work to cease, and in vain the world is now waiting for [Church] reform and peace.

[4] So, your care should now be to promote peace and reform. This is the task that requires you. But do also consider where you want the council to be. The Greeks, the pope, and the cardinals want Florence. Will you go with them to Florence or will you accept the council to be held without you? I believe that you do not want the latter,³ and the former is not to your advantage since I know that you will have to fear a council held there in your absence and that you are suspicious of Florence. So, will you really go to Florence, the capital of the Guelphs? Do you know the meaning of "Guelph"? Guelph is someone who opposes the empire, and a Ghibelline is someone who obeys it.⁴ But what city is more rebellious against the empire than Florence? More invidious? Recently, a letter was read to the council in which the Florentines boasted that they recognize no lord.⁵ You know how they received you on your way to Rome.⁶ You know what gifts⁷ they presented to you in Ferrara. But - alas for the honour of the empire - it is not enough for the Florentines to deny the empire, they even occupy imperial cities⁸ which they subject not just to rule them but to destroy them, as evidenced by Arezzo⁹ and the city of Pisa,¹⁰ formerly the splendour of Tuscany, today a ruin and a sordid stable for horses. And now they besiege the unhappy city of Lucca, to treat it in the same manner.¹¹

¹ In his *Libellus Dialogorum* from 1440, Piccolomini lets Stefano Caccia de Fara say: *Pulchra, me hercule, diligentia legatorum! Querebantur in concilio Avinionenses non dare pecuniam, et illos, ne darent, in Avinione crebris epistolis et nuntiis deterrebant, missumque illuc Cretensem archiepiscopum ab Eugenio constat, qui daturos pecuniam modis omnibus prohiberet* (LD, p. 31). See letter 24, sect. 6.

² See letter 24, sect. 36-37.

³ The council to be held in the emperor's absence.

⁴ Ten years later, Piccolomini would, in his *De Viris Illustribus*, write about Emperor Sigismund's visit to Milan in 1432 that *The Ghibellines [in Milan] were suspected of siding with Sigismund because of the Empire,*

whereas the Guelfs were in power (DVI, sect. 128).

⁵ The letter of the Florentine government to the council of 24 December 1436 only stated that Florence was not dependent on the pope but only owed him the honour and respect generally due to the pope (Ceconi, I, nr. 100). If it is this letter, Piccolomini refers to, as Wolkan presumes, his statement to the emperor is exaggerated, not to say mendacious.

⁶ In the DVI, sect. 126, Piccolomini wrote: *Sigismund arrived, unimpeded, in Lucca, but then the Duke of Milan stopped his monthly financial contributions, and the Florentines let Micheletto, of the Sforza family, attack his army in Tuscany. Thus, Sigismund was deprived of all support. Retreating would be shameful,*

and advancing would be risky. However, he chose the hard way: with his people in battle formation and against the will of Florentines, he crossed the Arno.

⁷ Presumably insignificant gifts.

⁸ Like Milan and Venice, Florence sought to extend its borders to secure a state, Tuscany, large enough to maintain and defend itself against the other powers in Italy.

⁹ Arezzo was annexed by Florence in 1384, never to regain its independence.

¹⁰ The Appiano lords of Pisa sold it to Florence in 1392. Florence subsequently imposed harsh measures on Pisa, leading to a severe depopulation and impoverishment of the city.

¹¹ Despite a series of Florentine attacks, Lucca managed to stay independent of that city.

[5] Inde ad urbem tuam Senensem proelium transferetur, posteaque tantum ab urbibus ecclesiae abstinebitur, quantum vixerit Eugenius. O¹, miseram igitur Italiam atque infelicem! Sicne² Romanorum imperium in te ruere sinis, sicne libenter popularium³ jugo cervicem paras?

[6] Sed quid ego Italiam alloquor? Tuum est hoc videre, imperator optime, tuum est obviare. At nescio, quo pacto obvies, dum Venetos juves, quos longe magis timeo quam Florentinos, qui, ut sunt potentiores, sic magis ad imperium aspirant, quod sibi datum ea die dixerunt, qua creatus est Eugenius papa⁴. Hunc enim tot ex Venetis creaturum existimarunt cardinales, ut semper in Venetis papatus esset, cujus auxilio etiam imperium occuparent, fuissetque id de cardinalibus jam completum, {137v} nisi concilium restitisset. Finito tamen concilio video nos ad idem redituros. Sed de imperio, quaeso, quid Veneti fabulentur, attendas. Ajunt ex Trojanis duos quondam Italiam petiisse, Aeneam atque Antenorem, illumque Lavinii consedissee, istum Patavi, Aeneaeque⁵ ⁶successores *Romanos rerum* semel esse potitos. Nunc sibi⁷ deberi imperium, quibus sit ab Antenore origo. Somnia ista, ut videntur, ita sint, Deum quaeso. Timeo tamen non parum videoque illum animum Venetorum Italiae dorso imminentem. Video Venetos potentissimos suo dietim⁸ aliquid imperio subjungentes, ad quorum exaltationem et papa et Veneti et Januenses⁹ foedera percusserunt. Nec video post duces Mediolani, cui paritura sit Lombardia, nisi¹⁰ Venetis. Et¹¹ licet Florentini provincias cum eis partiti sint, totum tamen ad Venetos defluet¹². Sed tu dominantes Italiae Venetos, ut cum venia dicam, non bene sentis, si quieturos sentis.

¹ *omit.* WO

² *siccine* WO

³ *populorum* V4

⁴ *omit.* V4

⁵ Antenorem illumque ... Aeneae-
que *omit.* M2

⁶ Aeneae V4

⁷ tibi V4

⁸ in dies V4

⁹ Genuenses V4, WO

¹⁰ quam M2

¹¹ *omit.* M2

¹² deflet V3

[5] Then the fight will move to your city Siena¹, and afterwards, they will only keep away from the cities of the Church as long as Eugenius is alive. Oh, poor and unhappy Italy! Will you really let the Roman Empire fall with you? Will you willingly offer your neck to the yoke of a popular regime?

[6] But who am I to speak about Italy? It is, after all, your duty, Eminent Emperor, to see to this and prevent it. But I know not how you will do it when you help the Venetians, whom I fear much more than the Florentines, for since they are stronger, they aspire more to rulership, which they say was given to them the day Eugenius was made pope. They believed that he would create so many cardinals from Venice that the papacy would always be in Venetian hands.² With his help, they would also have taken over the empire. He would already have created the [Venetian] cardinals if the council had not resisted, but we shall have the same situation when the council ends. And concerning the empire, I ask you to take note of the Venetian fables. They say that once upon a time, two Trojans came to Italy, Aeneas³ and Antenor.⁴ The first settled in Lavinium,⁵ the second in Patavium.⁶ Aeneas' Roman successors became *lords of the world*.⁷ Now the empire is due to the successors of Antenor. I beg that these dreams will be seen for what they are. But I greatly fear and see an ambitious Venice coming ever closer to the ridge of Italy.⁸ I see the mighty Venetians daily subjecting some new territory to their rule. I see that the pope, the Venetians and the Genoese have made a pact⁹ that favour Venice. And I do not see whom Lombardy would obey after the Duke of Milan if not the Venetians. And though the provinces have been divided between them and the Florentines, it will all eventually come to Venice. You do not – forgive my frankness – understand well how the Venetians dominate Italy if you think they will settle down.

¹ On the way to Rome for his coronation some years before, the emperor had stayed for almost a year in Siena, which was also a city formally belonging to the HR Empire.

² This supposition was quite farfetched, cooked up in the hotbed of antipapal propaganda in Basel, but since something similar had actually been done by French popes during the papacy's stay in Avignon, it was not an impossibility.

³ Aeneas: mythical prince and survivor of the fall of Troy (Homer) and founder of Rome (Virgil).

⁴ Antenor: mythical prince and survivor of the fall of Troy (Homer) and founder of Padua (Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 1: 42; Livius, 1: 1.).

⁵ Port city of Latium (Lazio).

⁶ Padua.

⁷ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 1: 282: *Romanos rerum dominos*

⁸ The Apennine mountain chain separating Eastern Italy, dominated by Venice, from Western Italy (with Tuscany). Piccolomini implies that the Venetians will eventually seek to conquer also Western Italy to become the lords of the whole peninsula.

⁹ On 5 August 1435, at the sea battle of Ponza, the Genoese won a complete victory over King Alfonso of Aragon whom they took prisoner together with his brother. The Duke of Milan had the august prisoners transported directly to Milan where he treated them royally. And, in a complete

reversal of policies, he then entered into an alliance with Alfonso, thereby creating a strong North-South power axis in Italy. This was a serious setback for Genoa as well as a mortal insult. So, on 27 December 1435, the Genoese defected from the duke and again became an independent republic. A war resulted, which was the background for the Genoese joining forces with Venice and Florence in a league directed against Milan. The League Treaty was signed on 29 May 1436. Piccolomini had also mentioned it in his oration "*Audivi*" to the council of 15 November 1436.

[7] Maxima tamen harum rerum momenta ex concilio pendent. Quod si secundum eos fiat, ocius ad intentum pervenient; si secus poterunt impediri. Etenim per Deum rogo immortalem, ad quid peti concilium Florentiae credis, nisi ut papa concilio dominetur, fiantque destinati cardinales, et perpetuetur in Venetis pontificatus maximus, per quem etiam imperium nanciscantur. Etenim¹ remanente sine concilio papa multum ejus vires {198r} accrescunt, qui, ut est Venetus, non ecclesiae, sed Venetis acquirit.

[8] Quaeritur etiam concilium Florentiae, ut decreta in hac synodo promulgata irritentur, quod esset nationi tuae permaxime dispendiosum.² Vellet tamen ista Florentiae papa subvertere et faciet, nisi tua majestas occurat.

[9] Ad quam rem nihil esset utilius quam te citissime petere Basileam, faceres enim de concilio, quod velles. Audio enim parum spei esse Avinionenses solvere, tot eos exterruit minis papa. Quod si ita est, totum concilium te sequetur, et ubi volueris esse, ibi erit, cujus favore tantus eris, quantus esse studebis. Prius tamen Graecos de tua mente monendos utile arbitrarer deque concilii animo certificandos, qui est penitus a Florentia alienus. Concilium in manu est tua, quocum facile poteris et pacem in Christianitate componere et fines imperii propagare. Multa restant, quae vellem dicere, sed vereor, ne ista sint nimis.³

Ex Basilea, 10. kal. Junii 1437.^{4 5}

¹ nam *corr. ex* etenim V3; nam V4, WO

² ~~quid enim magis expedit Alamanniae quam liberas esse electiones? quid magis nocet quam annatarum ad curiam mittere pecunias, quorum alterum concilium jussit, alterum prohibuit seq. V2a; quid enim magis expedit Alamanniae quam liberas esse~~

~~electiones? quid magis nocet quam annatarum ad curiam mittere pecunias, quorum alterum concilium jussit, alterum prohibuit add. M2~~

³ ~~nomen tuum offensiva. Nomen meum non sinit metus scribere, servulus tamen sum majestatis tuae invictissimae seq. V2; nomen tuum offensiva. Nomen meum~~

~~non sinit metus scribere, servulus tamen sum majestatis tuae invictissimae add. M2~~

⁴ 10. kal. *corr. ex* 15. V2

⁵ Ex Basilea ... 1437 : etc. M2

[7] To a very large extent, this whole matter depends on the council. If the Venetians have their way, they will soon achieve their aims. If not, they can be prevented from doing so. For why - I ask you by eternal God – do you think they want the council to move to Florence? Because then the pope can dominate the council, appoint the [Venetian] cardinals as planned, and create a permanent Venetian papacy, through which they will also acquire the empire. For if the pope is freed of [the present] council [in Basel], he will become much stronger, and as he is a Venetian, the Venetians stand to gain from it, not the Church.

[8] They also want to move the council to Florence in order to annul the decrees promulgated by this synod.¹ In Florence, the pope would abolish these decrees, and he will do it unless You Majesty opposes it.

[9] To [settle] this matter it would be most useful if you came quickly to Basel. There you could do with the council as you wish, for I hear there is small hope the Avignonese will pay up since the pope has threatened them severely. If this is correct, the whole council will follow you and be where you wish it to be, and you will enjoy its favour as much as you want. However, I believe that it would be useful to first advise the Greeks of your intentions and inform them about the council's position, which completely rejects Florence. The council is in your hands, and together with it, you could easily make peace in Christendom and extend the borders of the empire.² There are many other things I should like to say, but I fear that I have already said too much.³

From Basel, 23 May 1437.

¹ Here, the early version (M2, V2a) added: *quid enim magis expedit Alamanniae quam liberar esse electiones? quid magis nocet quam annatarum ad curiam mittere pecunias, quorum alterum concilium jussit, alterum prohibuit* (This would be extremely harmful to your nation, for what benefits Germany more than free

elections, and what burdens it more than having to send payments of annates to the curia: the council ordered the first and forbade the second).

² Two major, traditional obligations for an emperor. It is uncertain, though, how the emperor would use the council to extend the boundaries of the Empire

³ Here, the early version (M2, V2a) added: *nomen tuum offensiva. Nomen meum non sinit metus scribere, servulus tamen sum majestatis tuae invictissimae* (offensive to your reputation. Fear prevents me from signing with my name, but I am Your Unvanquished Majesty's obedient servant.)

26. Letter to an unknown (11 January 1438, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: Siena / Archivio Statale / Carte dei particolari / Piccolomini *

Editions: HE, 26, pp. 77-78; WO, 1, 1: 26, pp. 79-80; (both based on the ms. in Siena).

Translations: ME, 8, p. 55.

Spectabilis vir, major honorande,

[1] Ut sciatis, quomodo res se habeant, aviso vos, quod terminus papae datus expirat 18. die instantis mensis et volunt isti patres omnino suspendere eum administratione papali. Dominus legatus vellet dilationem habere pro papa, et quia obtinere non potest, vult recedere et abibit, ut fertur, hodie aut penitus cras, offertque pecunias et equos cunctis secum abire volentibus. Sed pauci trahuntur. Dominus Sancti Petri est in monasterio Maris Stellae ad 7 miliaria hinc distans neque per hiemem inde recessurus. Electores etiam imperii dilationem² pro papa petunt, sed tepide et frustra, et hoc mane negativam reportant, ob quam rem stat omnium sententia contra papam procedere.

[2] Nec curant, quod Graeci ad papam veniant, postquam pacta cum concilio facta fregerunt negantes Sabaudiam se venturos. Credo, quod multos fallat opinio cogitantes in brevi dilabi concilium, non enim desunt favores. Deus bene vertat omnia. Vos, si potestis, hujus litterae copiam ad Senenses destinate, obsecro, ut et ipsi sentiant, quae apud nos fiunt. Valete optime.

Ex Basilea, 11. januarii 1438.

Aeneas, praepositus Sancti Laurentii Majoris Mediolani.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² delationem WO

26. Letter to an unknown (11 January 1438, Basel).

Context: In the autumn of 1437, Piccolomini was faced with the choice between remaining at the (soon to be a schismatic) council in Basel or leaving together with the papal party and trying his luck at the curia or elsewhere. It was not an easy decision, but he eventually decided to stay in Basel, partly out of conviction and partly (presumably) because of his connection with a Milanese plot against Pope Eugenius in 1435 and his later very negative and public stance against the pope, which might make him unwelcome at the papal court.

After the debacle at the Council of Basel in May 1437, the pope, by the decree “*Doctoris gentium*” of 18 September, transferred the council to the City of Ferrara, in the neutral territory of the Margraves of Este. On 12 October, the council fathers in Basel annulled the decree, previously having declared the pope contumacious. On 9 December, Emperor Sigismund died, and with him an important moderating influence on the council. The pope’s council in Ferrara was opened on 8 January 1438 by Cardinal Albergati, and Cardinal Cervantes left Basel for Ferrara the next day.¹ The Greek emperor, patriarch and council delegates were on their way to Ferrara.

Subject: Undaunted by the pope’s success, the fathers remaining in Basel were preparing to suspend him.

Distinguished and honourable sir,

[1] So that you may know how things stand here, I inform you that the term given the pope expires on the 18th of this month and that the Fathers intend to suspend him from all papal administration. The Lord Legate² wanted an extension of the term for the pope, but as he could not obtain it, he wishes to leave and will, it is said, depart today or at the latest tomorrow. He offers money and horses to all who will leave with him, but few are tempted. The Lord [Cardinal] of San Pietro is staying in the Monastery Maris Stella³ ca. 7 miles away and will not be returning all winter.⁴ The imperial prince-electors,⁵ too, demand an extension for the pope, but lukewarmly and in vain, and this morning they will get a negative reply. Therefore, all wish for proceedings to be initiated against the pope.

[2] They do not care that the Greeks are going to the pope - after breaking their agreement with the council and refusing to go to Savoy. I believe that many will be proven wrong who think that the council will collapse shortly, for it still has support. May God turn all this into the best. If you can, please send a copy of this letter to the Sienese so that they, too, may hear what happens here. Farewell.

From Basel, 11 January 1438.

Enea, provost of San Lorenzo Maggiore in Milan.⁶

¹ Gill, pp. 99-104.

² Cardinal Cesarini.

³ The Cistercian monastery at Wettingen in Canton Aargau.

⁴ Cardinal Cervantes had left Basel for Ferrara and would not return.

⁵ Of Germany.

⁶ After his oration “*Audivi*” (16 November 1436) to the council fathers in support of the Duke of Milan’s city Pavia as the venue for the future council, Archbishop Pizzolpasso obtained Piccolo-

mini’s appointment as provost of San Lorenzo Maggiore in Milan. However, Piccolomini never managed to get possession of the benefice – though not for want of trying.

27. Letter to Archbishop Philippe de Coëtquis with Second Description of Basel (28 October 1438, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: Augsburg / Universitätsbibliothek / II Lat 1 2 103 *; Basel / Universitätsbibliothek / O III, 35 *
Editions: Hartmann, pp. 49-62 (HA); Preiswerk, pp. 4-17 (PR); HE, 28, pp. 86-96; WO, 1, 1: 28, pp. 86-96 (on the basis of Preiswerk).
Translations: WI, pp. 349-371.
Literature: Helmrath, p. 172; Müller, I, p. 256; Preiswerk, pp. 4-17; Widmer: Enea Silvius Lob.

Reverendissimo in Christo patri Philippo, archiepiscopo Thuronensi, Aeneas Silvius salutem.

[1] Divisionem, quae nunc urget ecclesiae, nec te ferre arbitror non moleste, nec bonum aliquem virum. Horribile namque est miseris mortalium animas ad inferos catervatim deferri et ipsam *inconsutilem* Christi *tunicam* in particulas laniari, imprecatusque saepe illum² sum malum, qui schismati causam dedit et tantam discordiarum excitavit molem. Soleo tamen in hac turbationum congerie meipsum recolligere et, cur tam multis tempestatibus affligamur, excogitare. Nec me fugit, quia peccata nostra etiam poenas exigunt. Venit tamen in mentem quiddam aliud meminique scriptum esse *necessaria esse scandala*. Quaero, unde originem ista necessitudo assumat. “Dic,” inquam - meipsum rogo - “cur est scandalum necessarium? An bonum aliquod ex scandalo gignitur?”

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² illi HE

27. Letter to Archbishop Philippe de Coëtquis¹ with Second Description of Basel (28 October 1438, Basel).

- Context:* During 1438, the Council of Ferrara held theological debates between the Latins and the Greeks, while the Council in Florence was busy with its process against the pope. In March, the German prince-electors, having elected the new emperor, Albrecht II (Habsburg), declared their neutrality between Pope Eugenius and the Council in Basel. In July, King Charles VII of France issued a Pragmatic Sanction, recognising – with modifications – the decrees of the council and severely curtailing papal rights in France. On 27 October, the day before the present letter, the council issued another formal declaration “that Eugenius was in contempt of its authority”.² Almost no Piccolomini letters are extant from this period, so little is known of his activities that year, except that, at the beginning of April, he addressed the council fathers in a sermon on Saint Ambrose.³ Later the same month, he accompanied the Milanese ambassador, his former employer, Bishop Bartolomeo Visconti, to Albrecht II in Vienna.⁴ Apparently, he also made an oration to the council on the appointment of bishops.⁵
- Subject:* The letter contains a second description of the city of Basel, the first one from 1434 (see letter 16) having offended the citizens of Basel because of some very frank and somewhat disobliging observations, which almost caused him to be denied return to the city.⁶

Enea Silvio greets the Most Reverend Father in Christ, Philippe, Archbishop of Tours.

[1] I believe that neither you nor any good man approves of the division that now afflicts the Church. Indeed, it is horrible that the miserable souls of countless men are led to Hell, and the *seamless tunic*⁷ of Christ is torn apart. Often have I cursed the evil one⁸ who caused the schism and provoked all these conflicts. In this chaotic disturbance, I often collect myself and reflect on why we are disturbed by so many upheavals. On the one hand, I am aware that our sins demand punishment. On the other, something else has occurred to me, for I have remembered that it is written that *scandals are necessary*.⁹ So I ask from where this necessity arises. ‘Tell me,’ I say to myself, “why is the scandal necessary?” Is it because something good may arise from the scandal?

¹ Coëtquis had been in Basel as one of the French king’s ambassadors in 1434-1435 and returned as such towards the end of October 1438. From the tone of Piccolomini’s letter it would appear that the two men had become friends during Coëtquis’ first stay in Basel.

² Stieber, p. 51.

³ See oration “*Si quis me roget*” of 4 April 1438 (COR, II, 2, pp. 167-232).

⁴ See oration “*Quid est*” of 27 April 1438 (COR, II, 3, pp. 233-273).

⁵ See oration “*Si ea quae justa*” of 1438 (COR, II, 4, pp. 273-337).

⁶ For comments on this letter, see Vollman: *Enkyklikos*, p. 6

⁷ John, 19: 23.

⁸ The devil? The pope?

⁹ Matthew, 18: 7: *it must needs be that scandals come (Necesse est enim ut veniant scandala).*

[2] Ubi, dum sileo nec, quid restituam, scio, occurrit Athanasius heros et tamquam mihi dormienti. “En ego,” ait, “Aenea, tam clarus essem aut tam multa eruditissime conscripsissem, nisi me Arius¹ veritatis aemulus excitasset? Quam multa Nestorius ac Macedo, dum scandala faciunt, ingenia excuderunt? An non Helvidius et Vigilantius, dum alter perpetuam Mariae virginitatem impugnat, alter sepulchra martyrum prohibet visitari, Jeronimi tubam inflant? Num Augustinum complures haeretici atque Ambrosium evigilant? Quid tu scis, an haec quoque tribulatio afferat fructum, an ex hac contentione emergant et expoliantur ingenia, quae aliter perpetuo latuissent?” *Nec plura locutus evanuit.*

[3] Tum puer studiolum meum ingressurus venturum te esse regium oratorem ad synodum inquit. Exulto statim tam felici nuntio. “En,” inquam, “hoc non praedixisti, Athanasi. *Mel* etiam ex *petra* sugam: redditur mihi Philippus, redditur pater, meum suavium, mea vita, soloque audito Philippi nomine revivisco et experior, quia non solum publicas, sed privatas quoque utilitates afferunt scandala.” Namque, ut ad te redeam, decus pontificum, quo ego te umquam sine hac tribulatione vidissem?

Sit tamen - obsecro - felix tuus adventus, et utinam nobis pacem apportes, qui stante divisione venisti. Utrumque est jucundum, et jucundus sum tuo reditu et mirum in modum alacer, paravique tibi munusculum, non quale merearis, sed quale potui descriptionem istius urbis, in qua nec pompam verborum nec oratorum lenocinia quaeras volo, sed² nudam et sua dumtaxat laude contentam aspice³ veritatem, sitque hujusmodi apud te pignus mei amoris, quo tibi in primo congressu audeam et felicem precari adventum et prosperum. Vale.

Ex Basilea, 5. kalendas Novembris anno 1437.

¹ arcus PR, WO

² scilicet PR, WO

³ aspicere PR, WO

[2] While I remained silent, not knowing how to answer, Athanasius,¹ a hero of mine, came to me as in a dream and said to me: ‘Enea, would I have been so famous and written so many learned works, if I had not been aroused by Arius², envious of the truth? How many intellects did not flourish because of the scandals created by Nestorius³ and the Macedonian?⁴ Did not Helvetius⁵ and Vigilantius⁶ give breath to the trumpet of Jerome⁷, the first by denying the perpetual virginity of Mary and the other by forbidding visits to the martyrs’ tombs? Were not Augustine⁸ and Ambrose⁹ stirred up by many heretics? How do you know that this tribulation will not carry some fruit and that intellects will not arise and be refined by this conflict that would otherwise have stayed permanently hidden?’ *Saying no more*,¹⁰ he vanished.

[3] Then a boy entered my study and told me that you were coming to the synod as a royal ambassador. I rejoiced at this happy message and said, “This you did not foretell, Athanasius. I shall suck *honey from the rock*.¹¹ Philippe will be returned to me, my father, my delight, my life. Just hearing Philippe’s name makes me revive, and I see that scandals bring not only public but also private benefits.” But to come back to you, jewel among bishops, how would I ever have seen you again without this tribulation?¹²

May your return be auspicious – I pray – and hopefully, you will bring us peace, coming at the time of the present division. Each one is joyful!¹³ Happy and enthusiastic at your return, I have prepared a small gift for you, not such as you merit but such as I can: a description of this city. Please do not look for pompous words or oratorical blandishments but look for the naked truth, content with its own praise. Let it be a pledge to you of the affection I conceived for you at our first meeting, making me dare to pray for your happy and prosperous arrival. Farewell.

From Basel, 28 October 1438.

¹ Athanasios (ca. 396-473): Patriarch of Alexandria. Doctor of the Church.

² Arius [Arius] (ca. 250-336): Priest in Alexandria. Heresiarch.

³ Nestorius (ca. 386-450): Patriarch of Constantinople. Heresiarch.

⁴ Piccolomini is probably referring to Macedonianism, also called Pneumatomachian heresy.

⁵ Helvetius [Helvidius]: was the author of a work written prior to

383 against the belief in the perpetual virginity of Mary.

⁶ Vigilantius (fl. ca. 400): Christian priest who wrote a work against a number of catholic practices.

⁷ Seneca

⁸ Aurelius Augustinus (354-430): Bishop of Hippo. Doctor of the Church.

⁹ Aurelius Ambrosius (ca. 340-397): Archbishop of Milan. Doctor of the Church.

¹⁰ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 7: 599.

¹¹ Psalms, 80: 17: *and filled them with honey out of the rock (et de petra melle saturavit eos)*.

¹² Meaning that Coëtquis would not have been sent back to the council if a schism was not threatening.

¹³ The archbishop’s return and the peace he brings.

Descriptio II urbis Basileae

Description II of the City of Basel

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[4] Basilea, sicut mihi videtur, aut Christianitatis centrum aut ei proxima est. Extremos namque Christianorum Pannonios ad orientem habet, ad meridiem Siculos - taceo Cyprios magis Graece quam Romane sapientes. Occiduam partem vicini Gadibus¹ Hispani colunt, septentriones Daces et Gethae. Nec ultra hos populos recte colitur Christus, veraque his finibus clauditur religio. Quorum si ex aliquo Basileam petas, non magis te Hungarum cupias esse quam Hispanum, nec Getham quam Siculum, ut aptissimam profecto generali concilio urbem iudices, et quo facillime² Christiana ecclesia possit convenire.

[5] Provinciam circumjacentem Alsatiam nominant, et quia, sicuti veteribus placuit, Galliae fines Rhodanus et Oceanus ac rursus Pyrenei montes et Rhenus efficiunt, Basileam constat satis Gallici esse soli. Et³ licet hodie dicatur Bisuntinae provinciae, non tamen ejusdem nationis habetur, sed, ut sermo Germanus est, nationis etiam Germanicae urbem dicunt.

[6] Eamque nationis haud injuria Christianitatis mediam reputaverim portionem, nec errorem⁴ crediderim, si hanc unam nationem et plus soli et plus hominum habere dixerim quam Italiam, Galliam, Hispaniam, nec istae quidem nationes tantum⁵ inter se differunt, quantum⁶ sola Germania a se discrepat. Continet enim latissimas terras et, ut Scotiam in septentrionem fugientem taceam, tribus omnino diversis utitur linguis, Dalmatica, Pannonica et Theutonica, quae ultima longe lateque patet, tantumque a se distant, ut non melius alterutrum se intelligant quam Gallici atque Italici. Et, si recte inspicias, licet Britanni quintam se esse velint, nescio quomodo⁷, nationem, aut Theutonicum sermonem aut Theutonico similem [habent⁸] (nec tamen Britannus Australem intelligit) ac⁹ esse linguam eandem mihi manifestissima ratione deduco. Austriam mihi omnes Theutonicam esse concedunt. Huic finitimi¹⁰ Bavari sunt, mox Suevi usque ad Rhenum succedunt. [*Cont.*]

¹ Gradibus PR, WO

² facillimum HA, PR, WO

³ at HA

⁴ errare me HA

⁵ plus *add. em.* HA

⁶ quam HA

⁷ quam *add.* HA, HE

⁸ finiti PR, WO

⁹ at HA

¹⁰ finiti PR, WO

1. Geography¹

[4] As far as I can see, Basel is either at the centre of Christendom or very close to it.² The Christian people to the furthest east of Basel are the Pannonians,³ to the south the Sicilians – I pass over the Cypriots since they belong more to the Greek than the Roman sphere. The Spaniards, close to Cádiz, inhabit the western part, and the Danes⁴ and the Getae⁵ the northern. Beyond these peoples, Christ is not worshipped right, and the true religion lies within these boundaries. If you go from one of these places to Basel, you would not prefer to be Hungarian rather than Spanish, nor one of the Getae rather than a Sicilian,⁶ and you would judge Basel to be the city most convenient for a general council and as most accessible to the [whole] Christian Church.

[5] The surrounding province is called Alsace. According to the ancients,⁷ the boundaries of Gaul are formed by the river Rhône, the Ocean, the Pyrenean Mountains,⁸ and the Rhine. Thus, Basel clearly lies on Gaulish territory. But though, today, it belongs to the region of Besançon, it is not considered as belonging to the French nation, for its language is German, and thus it is considered as a city belonging to the German nation.

2. Language

[6] I would justly consider this nation to be situated in the middle of Christendom, and I believe that I would not be in error when I say that this one nation covers more land and has a larger population than Italy, France, and Spain. Moreover, these nations are not so different from each other as the Germans are from each other, for Germany comprises vast territories and uses – not to speak of Scotland lost in the north – three completely different languages, Dalmatian, Pannonian and German. The German language is spoken far and wide, and the Germans do not understand each other better than the French and the Italians. If you look closer, the Britons – though they claim to be the fifth⁹ nation¹⁰ (I do not know how that could be) – speak the German language or a language similar to it (even if a Briton does not understand an Austrian), and for quite convincing reasons I conclude that English and German are the same language. All admit to me that Austria is German. Their neighbours are the Bavarians, then the Swabians as far as the Rhine. [Cont.]

¹ Much material in the following notes has been taken over from HA, HE and the translation by Widmer.

² This observation serves as an argument for Basel as the location of the council.

³ = Hungarians.

⁴ "Daces".

⁵ Daces and Getae: cf. Piccolomini: *De Europa*, 28: (*Cherso-*

neus Cimbrica) quam hodie Daciam vocant. And in 33: Daciam Teutones hodie Danorum appellant Marchiam, i.e., Dänemark = Danmark = Denmark.

⁶ Meaning that they have about the same travel distance to Basel.

⁷ Like Caesar and Strabo.

⁸ Cf. Caesar: *De bello Gallico*, 1: 1, 5-7.

⁹ The fifth European nation besides Italy, France, Spain and Germany.

¹⁰ HA, p. 50: *Neben d. deutschen, franz., ital. u. span. Nation wünschten d. Engländer 1434 als eigene Nation anerkannt zu werden. Dagegen protestierten d. Franzosen u. d. Spanier: "nam reputant eos tanquam partem nationis Germanice.* (CB, 1: 245).

[*Cont.*] Minima inter istos discretio sermonis est seque invicem recte audiunt. Suevos autem Rheni accolae usque ad Moguntiam facile suscipiunt. Moguntinos autem neque Confluentia neque Colonia respuit.¹ Coloniam vero qui aliquandiu coluerunt, nec Brabantiae linguam abhorrent nec Flandrensem². Illic Oceanus haud magno gurgite Britanniam a continenti disterminat. Ceterum, si Flandrensem tecum in Angliam duxeris aliquem³, non inepte ipso uteris interprete, adeo namque vicinis inter se verbis utuntur, ut sine ullo negotio in alterius linguam alter concedat. Scotus vero, quantum ego meis fatis in eam plagam deductus perpendi, non plus ab Anglico quam Australis a Bavaro distat, ut hanc Theutonicam linguam nexu et concatenatione quadam ab Austria usque in Scotiam facile productam videas. Scotus vero, quantum ego meis fatis in eam plagam deductus perpendi, non plus ab Anglico quam Australis a Bavaro distat, ut hanc Theutonicam linguam nexu et concatenatione quadam ab Austria usque in Scotiam facile productam videas.

[7] Existimo tamen sermonem Theutonicum solos in Angliam Saxones transtulisse, quos eam invasisse insulam diuque possedissee non est ambiguum. Sed hanc linguam cum multum auxerit natura caeli frigida⁴ et fecunda hominum alitrix, tamen⁵ maxime ampliavit potentia principum, qui innumerabilibus septi populis alienas terras pulsus veteribus habitatoribus coluerunt. Theutonicos namque saepe transisse Rhenum ibique oppida plurima sui moris ac sermonis condidisse, nonnulla vero in suam linguam vertisse constat.

[8] Eoque modo satis mihi persuadeo Basileam quoque - ut eo redeam, quo sum digressus - principium habuisse, nam neque veteres eam historiae nominant, neque vestigium in urbe aliquod aut signum vetustatis apparet, licet aliqui Basilium quendam Romanum, a quo Basilea sit dicta, urbis hujus aut legerint aut somniaverint auctorem.

¹ Moguntinos autem ... respuit
omit. WO

² Flandrensi HA
³ aliquando PR, WO

⁴ fida HA
⁵ tum PR, WO

[Cont.] There is only very little difference in language between them, and they understand each other well. People in the Rhine region understand the Swabians as far as Mainz – indeed, people Koblenz and Cologne well understand those from Mainz. And those who have stayed for some time in Cologne are not strangers to the language of Brabant and Flanders. There the Ocean separates Britain from the continent by a small channel. If you bring a Fleming with you to England, he would be an adequate interpreter, for the words they use are so similar that they can easily switch to each others' language. But [in the matter of language,] the Scots do not – as far as I could ascertain when destiny brought me to that land¹ – differ more from the English than Austrians from the Bavarians. From this, you can easily see that the German language reaches from Austria to Scotland through an unbroken chain.²

[7] I believe that it was the Saxons who brought the German language to England since it is certain that they invaded the island and long possessed it. This language spread much due to the cool climate, a fertile nurse of men, but even more, it was propagated by the power of princes, who, surrounded by innumerable people, settled in foreign lands after expelling the former inhabitants. For it is known that the Germans often crossed the Rhine and, maintaining their own customs and language, founded many new towns on the other side and made many other towns adopt their German language.

[8] Returning to my point of departure, I am sure that Basel began in that way, for it is not mentioned in the old history books, nor are there any remains or other signs of antiquity in that city, though some have read or imagined that Basel was founded by a Roman called Basilius, after whom the city was named.³

¹ On a secret mission from Cardinal Albergati to King James I of Scotland in 1435.

² Piccolomini's observation was correct: the Austrian, Bavarian, Saxonian, Dutch, English and Scottish dialects and languages are indeed all Germanic.

³ For three other explanations of the name, see sect. 29.

[9] Hanc urbem perlabitur Rhenus duasque in partes scindit, fluvius quidem tam libris historicorum quam versibus poetarum illustris. Hujus origo [ab¹] Alpibus est, quae Germaniam ab Italia terminant. Ideoque inter asperrimos montes plurimasque valles fluitans apud oppidum Reneck, lacum tota Germania famosum, influit², quem licet plurima in ipsis ripis jacentia castella nobilitent³, praecipue tamen Constantia memorabilem efficit, quae circa ejus exitum sita maximam aetate nostra coegit synodum tam Johannis ejectione quam⁴ Martini assumptione insignem. Ibique adeo lacus coarctatur, ut ripas utrasque non maximo ponte conjungat, sed modo amplus, modo arctus ad Stein, id est lapidis oppidum, veniens ad naturam denique fluminis revertitur iterumque suo nomine Rhenus agnoscitur potestque usque *Schaffhusen tractari naviculis*. Ex hinc vero *ingentem descensum* habet, ut *per confragosa saxa abruptosque* colles sese praecipitans neque navigio neque ulli vecturae efficiat⁵ locum. *Castellum* his situm est locis, quod Theutonici *Kaisersthul*, Latini vero *Caesaris* dicunt *sedem*, quem *locum* opinantur aliqui tam *propter* ejus *opportunitatem* quam propter convenientiam nominis *Romanorum olim fuisse castra*.

¹ *em.* HE

² *em.* HE (cf. Caesar: *De bello Gallico*, 1,8 etc.: *non longe a*

mari quo Rhenus influit); inflat
WO; intrat HA

³ nobilitant HA, PR, WO

⁴ sicque PR, WO

⁵ efficit PR, WO

3. The Rhine

[9] The river Rhine runs through this city, dividing it into two parts. This river is well-known from the books of historians and the verses of poets. Its origin is in the Alps that separate Germany from Italy. From there, it flows through craggy mountains and many valleys until, at the town of Rheineck, it reaches a lake¹ famous in all of Germany, notable for the many castles on its shores but especially by Konstanz, situated at the river's exit from the lake. In this city, a large council assembled in our own age, famous for deposing Johannes² and appointing Martin.³ There, the lake narrows so much that the two shores can be connected with a small bridge. The river continues, sometimes broad, sometimes narrow, to Stein⁴ (meaning a city of stone), where it regains the form of a river and is known again by the name Rhine and *can be navigated with small boats unto Schaffhausen*. From there, it has a *great fall*, rushing through *arduous cliffs and steep hills*, and cannot be used by ships and or any other vehicles. Here lies the *castle* called *Kaiserstuhl* by the Germans and *Caesaris Sedes* by the Latins. *Because of the location's convenience* and the similarity of the names,⁵ some believe that the *Romans* once had a *fortress* there.^{6 7}

¹ Bodensee.

² Johannes XXIII [Baldassare Cossa] (ca. 1370-1419): Elected pope by the cardinals in Pisa, 1410. Forced to resign by the Council of Konstanz 1415. See DVI, sect. 302.

³ Martinus V [Odo Colonna] (1368-1431): Pope from 1417 to his death. Restored the Roman papacy after the end of the Great Western Schism.

⁴ Stein am Rhein.

⁵ The name Kaiserstuhl is first documented in the 14th century. It derives from an earlier German

Roman Emperor and has no connection to the old Romans.

⁶ *Unter Claudius überschritten römische Truppen den Rhein bei Sasbach und eroberten große Teile Süddeutschlands bis zur Donau. Sasbach und Riegel spielten bei der Eroberung Süddeutschlands also zentrale Rollen. Sasbach war der Brückenkopf zu Frankreich. Riegel war der Kreuzungspunkt zwischen den beiden Fernstraßen Basel/Mainz und Colmar/Donau-tal. Damit blieben die Römer bis zum Ende des 4. Jh. am Oberrhein die herrschende Macht. Als wichtigster Ort der Römerzeit hat Riegel*

zu *gelten.*
<https://www.kaiserstuhl.eu/geschichte/besiedlungsgeschichte/>

⁷ Bracciolini: *Lettere* (Harth), 46: 38-45: *Cum deinde propter ingentem fluminis descensum per abruptos montes et confragosa saxa iter eset pedibus conficiendum milia passuum decem ad castellum applicuimus, quod est supra Rhenum, nomine "Caesars-toul", hoc est eorum lingua "Caesaris sedes". Hunc locum opinor ex eius nomine propter opportunitatem ... quondam Romanorum castra fuisse.*

[10] Huc priusquam Rhenus adveniat, *ex alto monte scopulis interruptis tanto fragore ac sonitu se dejicit, ut ipsemet fluvius suum conqueri casum lamentarique videatur, et fidem iis¹ praestet², quae [de]³ Nilo scribuntur, cujus collisione et strepitu circumvicini accolae surdi⁴ creduntur. Nec mirum, cum hujus fluminis, qui torrens eo loco instar Nili potest existimari, tribus fere⁵ stadiis rumor exaudiat⁶.* Post haec sive transacto cautior malo sive futuri periculi timidus haud solus pergere ausus⁷ non prius sese ultimo praecipitio credit, quam venientes ex Alpibus amnes et viarum comites suscipit et incrementa⁸. Quibus connisus Lauffenburgentia saxa et asperrimos egreditur scopulos, moxque velut multo labore domitus et rapidissimis casibus fatigatus humilem se ac navigii sustentem praebet. [Ut⁹] insuetus tamen adhuc ponderis et sicuti post longam vacationem reductus ad frenum equus nonnumquam sessorem¹⁰ excutere nititur, sic antequam Rinfelden, hoc est Rheni Campum, fluvius videat, navigia interdum disturbat et quasi graviore pondere laesus indignari¹¹ atque recalcitrare videtur. Locus est enim, quem nautae horrendo nomine Helhoc, id est Uncum Inferni, vocitant, ubi carinam saepe mordentibus saxis, quo minor est aqua, majus discrimen adducit. Exinde inferioris Alamanniae urbes excurrens et paludibus exceptus Hollandiae nomen prius amittit, quam Oceano misceatur.

[11] Hunc olim fluvium et Germani et Galli bibebant suamque quisque ripam tenebat. Hodie vero totus est Theutonicus, nec usquam Rheni ripas sermo contingit Gallicus, ejusque rei Ottonis – ut ego puto – auctor potentia fuit. Etenim cum diu Franci Galliarum et Germaniae imperium¹² tenuissent, regnumque suum in orientalem et occidentalem Franciam divisissent, ultimus ex Francorum genere orientalem Franciam, id est Alamanniam, rexit Conradus. Quo mortuo Henrici Saxonis filius Otto et regnum et Romanum imperium Theutonicorum primus suscepit, regnante adhuc in occidentali Francia Ludovico, Karoli filio. Hic igitur Belgas Rheni transitum prohibentes in fugam dedit totamque Belgiam ferro et flamma vastavit, adversus quem, cum magnum incolarum odium excitaretur, speravit Ludovicus provinciam hanc paterno tempore amissam posse recuperare Alsatiamque ingressus ab Ottone repellitur, qui progressus in Belgiam omnia in deditionem¹³ recepit. Unde per longa pacis¹⁴ tempora a regibus Theutonicis illa provincia est obtenta, ut etiam hodie sermo testatur. Etenim¹⁵ in Belgia quidquid est¹⁶ inter Mosam et mare Alamannum sermonem observat, nec nos fugit ducatum Brabantiae non a Francorum rege sed ab imperio dependere.

¹ hiis PR, WO

² prestant PR, WO

³ *em.* HA, HE

⁴ sordi PR, WO

⁵ vero PR, WO

⁶ exauditur PR, WO

⁷ cursus PR, WO

⁸ discrimina PR, WO

⁹ *em.* WO

¹⁰ sessorium PR, WO

¹¹ indignare PR, WO

¹² ipsum PR, WO

¹³ deductionem PR, WO

¹⁴ patet PR, WO

¹⁵ est enim PR, WO

¹⁶ *em.* HA, HE

[10] Before the Rhine arrives there, it throws itself *from a high mountain, over cliffs*, with such a noise and roar that the river *itself seems to bemoan and lament its fall* and gives credence to *what is written about the Nile*, that the locals are *deafened* by the din and the crash.¹ *It is no wonder since the noise of this river, rushing along there like the Nile, can be heard three stadia away.*² Afterwards, whether calm again after the disturbance or fearful of future danger, it does not dare to continue alone or take a new fall before it is joined and enlarged by lesser rivers coming from the Alps. Straining forward together with them, it exits the cliffs and craggy rocks at Laufenburg, and soon it becomes submissive and navigable as if worn down by much toil and the rapid falls. But – just as when you put reins on a horse not yet accustomed to carry weight and having run free for a long time, it often tries to throw the rider – the river often, before reaching Rheinfelden (Rhine Field), tries to disrupt navigation, seeming angry and recalcitrant, as if annoyed by the great burden [of boats]. For there is a place which the sailors give the horrible name of Höllhaken (Hell's Hook), where the cliffs often bite the boats, the shallow river being more dangerous. Then it runs through the cities of Lower Germany and, entering the marshes of Holland, it loses its name before it meets the Ocean.

[11] Formerly, both the Germans and the French drank from this river, and they held a shore each.³ Today, it is all German, and the French language nowhere reaches the shores of the Rhine. I believe that this is due to Otto's strong [rule].⁴ When the Franks had ruled the empire of Gaul and Germany for a long time, they divided it into Eastern and Western Francia.⁵ The last one of the Frankish family to rule Eastern Francia⁶ (Germany) was Konrad.⁷ When he died, Otto, son of Heinrich of Saxony,⁸ was the first German to rule the Kingdom and the Roman Empire, while Western Francia⁹ was ruled by Ludwig,¹⁰ son of Charles.¹¹ Once, when the Belgians would prevent him from crossing the Rhine, Otto put them to flight and wasted all of Belgium with iron and fire. As the inhabitants became furious with Otto, Ludwig hoped to regain this province, lost in the time of his father, and invaded Alsace.¹² However, Otto defeated him, continued into Belgium and accepted the surrender of the whole region.¹³ Thus during a long period of peace this province belonged to the German kings, as shown by the language spoken there today. For the whole region between the Maas and the sea speaks German, and we know that the Duchy of Brabant is not subject to the French king but to the empire.¹⁴

¹ Cicero: *De republica*, 6: 19.

² Bracciolini: *Lettere* (Harth) 46: 45-52: *Hoc in itinere Rheni vidimus casum ex alto monte scopulis interruptis magno fragore ac sonitu, ut ipsummet casum suum queri ac lamentari possis existimare. Tum mihi venit in mentem eorum, que feruntur de Nili descensu tam precipiti, nec miror accolas circumvicinos propter admirabilem illius strepitum et fragorem surdos putari; cum hujus fluminis, quin torrens existimari potest instar Nili, tribus fere stadiis ex eo loco rumor exauditur.*

³ The Eastern shore being held by the Germans, and the Western by the Gauls.

⁴ Otto I (912-973): King of East Francia (Germany), 936-973, and Holy (German) Roman Emperor, 962-973.

⁵ Treaty of Verdun, 843.

⁶ Germany.

⁷ Konrad I (ca. 881-918): King of East Francia, 911-918. First king not of the Carolingian dynasty.

⁸ Heinrich I der Vogler (876-936): Duke of Saxony from 912 and King of East Francia from 919 to his death.

⁹ France.

¹⁰ Louis IV (ca. 920-954): King of West Francia from 936 to his death.

¹¹ Charles IV (879-929): King of West Francia from 893/896 to 923.

¹² Lorraine, 940.

¹³ For this section, see Otto von Freising: *Chronica*, 6: 17-19, esp. 19, used here by Piccolomini: *Hic ... Belgas ... sui transitum Rheni prohibere nitentes in fugam vertit ac tota terra ferro flamma-que vastata ... Igitur Lodewicus Karoli filius Belgicam, quam pater suus, ut supra dixi, perdiderat, hac occasione recipere gestiens Alsatiam ingreditur. ... Rex vero rursum Belgicam ingreditur totamque in deditionem accepit.*

¹⁴ Even though, by virtue of heritage, it had been taken over by Duke Philippe III of Bourgogne, of the French royal house, in 1430.

[12] Sed ut ad Rhenum redeam, nusquam est tota Europa fluviis tam frequentibus oppidis tamque amplissimis urbibus circumseptus. Magnitudinem ejus plurima exsuperant flumina, nobilitatem et amoenitatem circumjacentis patriae nulla, namque - ut taceam clarissimas Argentinam, Spiram, Wormatiam et alias quamplures - quid satis de Agrippina dicamus¹? Hanc olim² urbem Aegidius Romanus, qui expulso Hilderico regnavit in Galliis, tenuit, sed redeunte illo *Romanis* extrusis *ex Francorum incolatu Coloniae nomen accepit*, cujus urbis, si quis magnificentiam splendoremque contempletur³, non mercatorum aut privatorum civium, sed regiam urbem dijudicet. Quid de Moguntia, quae⁴ pulchro⁵ fluvio dominatur? Contra impetum amnis rara supra Moguntiam navigia trahuntur⁶. At qui⁷ vero inter Moguntiam et Coloniam pressus hoc loco incedit⁸ et, quasi cursum ejus vicini utrinque montes retinere vellent, coarctata apud Moguntiam valle parum defuit, quin conjuncti invicem meatum fluminis interdicerent, nec ausus esset Rhenus tam artis faucibus se committere, nisi hortante Mogano et se socio promittente audaciam recepisset. Cautè tamen et presse inter ignotas graditur valles nec prius se aperit, quam recepto apud Confluentiam Mosae subsidio licentius pergit.

[13] Rupes quidem utrinque altissimae et⁹ vineis contectae sunt, earumque vinum pars magna Alamanniae potat. Ibi tot aedificia totque castella e rupibus eminent, ut quasi *nivem coelitus* demissam *occupare colles* et universa *montium juga* conspicias, quorum tanta *est magnificentia*, tantum *decus*, tantus *ornatus*, ut *ampliora* hic rustica palatia sint *quam alibi urbana*, et *majori cum licentia ad delectationem amoenitatemque* constructa. Super colles haud parva planities jacet, ubi et *florida prata* et *lucidi fontes*¹⁰ et *frondosi luci* sunt. *Et quod omnia superat, naturam ipsorum locorum ad laetitiam existimabis natam. Videntur enim colles ipsi ridere et quandam a se diffundere jucunditatem, quam*¹¹ *intuentes nec videndo expleri aut satiari valeant, ut universa regio haec paradisus recte haberi et nominari queat*, ut¹² *cui nihil ad laetitiam vel pulchritudinem toto orbe sit par*. Quod¹³ si *obstupescunt*¹⁴ *homines, cum procul ex alto montis vertice Florentinam molem et amplitudinem circumjacentium conspiciant villarum*, quid hic faciant, cum Rheno vecti atque in puppi sedentes tam variorum castellorum *ornatum* tamque crebram aedificiorum congeriem aspiciant, ubi non tantum, sicut apud Florentiam, uno die discurrentes, sed tribus aut pluribus oculos pascent, nec horae momentum sine miraculi novitate transibunt. Atque ista de cursu Rheni sufficiant. [Cont.]

¹ dicemus PR, WO

² enim PR, WO

³ contemplatur HA

⁴ quam HE

⁵ pulchre HA

⁶ contra impetum ... trahuntur
omit. PR, WO

⁷ quasi HA; quam HE

⁸ incedat PR, WO

⁹ at HA

¹⁰ fontes WO

¹¹ qua PR, WO

¹² et PR, WO

¹³ quid PR, WO

¹⁴ obstupescant PR, WO

[12] But, to return to the Rhine, nowhere in Europe is there any river lined by so many towns and great cities. Several rivers surpass it in length but none in the nobility and charm of the neighbouring country. Passing over the famous cities of Strassbourg, Speyer, Worms, and many others, what shall I say about Agrippina?¹ That city was once ruled by a Roman named Aegidius², who expelled Childeric³ and reigned in Gaul. But when Childeric returned, the *Romans* were driven out, and *Cologne* [colonia] *received its name from being lived in [incolatus] by the Franks.*^{4 5} Looking at the magnificence and splendour of this city, you will not believe it is a city of merchants and private people but of a king. And what about Mainz, commanded by a beautiful river? Above Mainz, boats are rarely drawn against the current. Between Mainz and Cologne, the river only flows sluggishly. Squeezed in by the neighbouring mountains, the two sides almost touch in the narrow valley at Mainz. The Rhine would not dare to enter these narrow straits unless it was egged on by the river Main, offering itself as its companion and giving it courage. So, cautiously and under pressure, it passes through unknown valleys and does not broaden before being joined, at Koblenz, by the subsidiary Mosel,⁶ from where it moves on more freely.

[13] On both sides, there are steep hills covered with vineyards. A large part of Germany drinks their wine. So many buildings and castles rise above the hills that it is as if *snow fallen from the sky covered the hills and all the mountain ridges.* Their *magnificence, beauty and decorations* are such that the rural palaces here surpass the *urban* palaces elsewhere and are built *and designed for delight and charm.*⁷ At the top of the hills, there is a large plain with *flowery meadows, clear streams and leafy groves.* *And best of all, you would think that it is in the nature of these localities to give joy. It is as if the hills themselves are smiling and spreading happiness. When you look at them, you can never get enough. This whole region may rightly be considered and called a paradise, and no place on earth equals it in joy and beauty. [Cont.]*

¹ Cologne = Colonia Agrippina

² Aegidius (d. ca. 464): ruler of the short-lived kingdom of Soisson, 461-464/465. Previously *magister militum per Gallias*. Piccolomini appears to have this story - that has nothing to do with Cologne - from Gregory of Tours and Fredegar: the Frankish King Childeric I, who controlled much of northern Gaul, was exiled at some point after 457, and the Franks then elected Aegidius to rule them. According to ancient sources, Aegidius ruled them for eight years before Childeric was recalled and reinstated as king.

³ Childeric I (ca. 437-481): Frankish leader in Northern Gaul. Member of the Merovingian dynasty.

⁴ This is a false etymology, derived from Bruni (see below): *Colonia* was part of the official name of the Roman city: *Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium* (1st c. CE).

⁵ See Otto von Freising: *Chronica*, 4: 32: ... *Hildericus regnum adeptus, dum luxuriose viveret, a suis pulsus est Egidiusque Romanus in locum ejus substitutus. Porro Hildericus post VIII annos revocatus, Agrippinam invadens, eiectis inde Egidius fautoribus Romanis positisque suis ex Francorum incolatu Coloniam eam vocavit.*

⁶ "Mosa", normally meaning the river Maas, Mosel's Latin name being *Mosella* (Hartmann, p. 54).

⁷ Bruni: *Laudatio*, p. 237: *Quemadmodum enim de nive scribit Homerus: illam caelitus delapsam montes occupare et colles iugaque montium et pingua culta, ita hec extra urbem edificia universos circum montes collesque et planitiem occupant, ut potius e celo delapsa quam manu hominum facta videantur. At quanta horum edificiorum magnificentia est, quantum decus, quantus ornatu! Sunt enim ampliora quam urbana, utpote latioribus in locis constituta et maiori cum licentia ad delectationem amenitatemque edificata. Cf. Homer: *Iliad*, 12: 278-286.*

[Cont.] Quod¹ si *obstupescunt*² homines, cum *procul* ex alto montis vertice Florentinam *molem* et *amplitudinem* circumjacentium conspiciant *villarum*, quid hic faciant, cum Rheno vecti atque in puppi sedentes tam variorum castellorum *ornatum* tamque crebram aedificiorum congeriem aspiciant, ubi non tantum, sicut apud Florentiam, uno die discurrentes, sed tribus aut pluribus oculos pascent, nec horae momentum sine miraculi novitate transibunt. Atque ista de cursu Rheni sufficiant.

[14] Quos vero nutriat pisces, cujusque saporis salmones habeat, et utrum murenas ferat, illorum est inquirere, quibus non *gula vitae*, sed *gulae vita* deservit. Nos vilibus contentos anguillis sicut neque gustare sic illa investigare non decet.

[15] Sed – ut Basileam revertar – latitudo fluminis intra urbem ducentis passibus extenditur. Solet interdum liquefactis austro nivibus Alpium urbem inundare camposque omnes in plano sitos aquis obtegere et ipsum pontem [evertere³], quo minor Basilea majori jungitur. Urbis autem portio, quam esse trans fluvium diximus, ad Priscaudiam respicit, vini frumentique feracissimam⁴ regionem. Habet ad purgandas viarum sordes multiplicem rivum totaque in plano sedet. Animarum ejus cura⁵ episcopo Constantiensi, ideoque non partem urbis, sed aliam per se urbem nonnulli aestimant.

[16] Altera urbis portio sicuti latior ita etiam magnificentior et splendidior habetur. Duplici jugo eminet. Medius torrens immunditiam omnem secum trahit, qui variis undique pontibus coopertus vix tota urbe apparet nec semitam intersecat ullam. *Hinc atque* inde *splendidae plateae nobiliarumque familiarum ornatissimae domus et semper coetibus hominum frequentia compita*.

¹ quid PR, WO

² obstupescant PR, WO

³ em. HA, HE [cf. 16:8]

⁴ fertilissimam PR, WO

⁵ omnia PR, WO

[Cont.] If men are amazed when, from a faraway mountain, they see the size and greatness of Florence and the surrounding *villages*, what will they do when, sailing on the Rhine and sitting in the poop, they view the *splendour*¹ of the various castles and the many large clusters of buildings. As you pass through, you may graze your eyes on them not just for one day, as in Florence, but for three days or more, and not one hour goes by without a new wonder coming into view. This shall be enough about the course of the Rhine.^{2 3}

[14] I leave it to those who *live to eat and not eat to live* to investigate the kinds of fish it produces, how the salmons taste, and whether there are lampreys. Since we are content with cheap eels, it is not for us to taste and sample such fish.⁴

[15] I return to Basel: within the city, the river broadens to 200 *passus*.⁵ Often, when the southern wind melts the snow in the Alps, the city is inundated, all the fields in the plain are under water, and the bridge connecting the smaller [part of] Basel with the bigger is carried away.

4. The city

The part of the city on the other side of the bridge, already mentioned, is close to Breisgau, a region rich in wine and grain. It uses a stream with many twists and turns to clear filth away from the streets. All of it lies on flat open land. As the Bishop of Konstanz is responsible for its pastoral care, some hold that it is not a part of Basel but a different city.

[16] The other part of the city is larger and more magnificent and splendid. It lies on a double hill. A stream⁶ with many branches runs between the hills and carries away all the filth. It is covered everywhere with bridges so that it can be seen only intermittently, and it does not intersect any road. *Here and there are splendid squares and beautiful houses of noble families, and many crossroads always bustling with people.*⁷

¹ Bruni: *Laudatio*, p. 237: *Inter hec vero frondosi luci, florida prata, letissimi rivi, nitidissimi fontes et, quod omnia superat, natura ipsa locorum ad letitiam nata. Videntur enim colles ipsi ridere et quandam a se diffundere iocunditatem, qua intuentes expleri non possunt nec videndo satiari: ut universa haec regio paradisus (quidam) recte haberi et nominari queat, cui nihil vel ad pulchritudinem vel ad letitiam in tot orbe sit par. Obstupescunt certe homines qui Florentiam*

adveniunt, cum procul ex aliquo montis vertice tantam molem urbis, tantam amplitudinem, tantum ornatum, tantam frequentiam villarum conspiciuntur.

² The passages in cursive in this section are quoted from Bruni: *Laudatio*, p. 237. Piccolomini presumably had access to this work through Archbishop Pizzolpasso.

³ Note how Piccolomini, here, both quotes Bruni on Florence and

opposes Basel to that city. See Widmer: *Enea Silvius Lob.*

⁴ Cf. Juvenalis, 5: 99-100.

⁵ Ca. 300 m.

⁶ The Birsig.

⁷ Bruni: *Laudatio*, p. 235: *Hinc atque hinc splendidissimae plateae et nobilium familiarum ornatissime porticus et semper cetibus hominum frequentia compita.*

[17] *Inter alia vero urbis aedificia augustiori¹ quadam amplitudine ac magnificentia praestant ipsius² magni³ Dei templa ac delubra sanctorum, quae non minus ditia quam ornata dijudices, non tamen vestita marmore, quod⁴ ipsum tota ignorat regio, sed molli lapide nec multum duriore topheo⁵ utuntur. Sacrae autem domus tali a suis quaeque tribubus pietate coluntur, tali religione observantur, ut incertum sit, magis laudes an mireris. Habent et ipsae matronae pro censu cujusque ligneas in templo cellulas, quibus seipsas cum ancillis claudunt parvisque foraminibus divina prospectant, ut sicut apes in alvearibus sic mulieres in templis quaeque suis distinctae casulis videantur, quem morem licet admodum probem, plus tamen rigori hiemis quam honestatis amori tribuo. Affigere his templis clipeos non nisi nobilibus concessum.*

[18] *Tecta domorum tota urbe decora, pleraque tamen vitrea variis distincta coloribus, ut radiis solaribus lacessita mirabili splendore nitescant. Summa cacumina ciconiae obsident, eaque avis apud Basilienses inviolabilis est, sive quod innoxium verentur animal laedere, sive quod vulgo credentes orbatas foetibus aves ignem parare domui nocenti putant. Quidquid sit horum, illae et impune nidificant et pullos suos liberrime alunt. Non est hujuscemodi operis singularum explicare delicias aedium. Plus enim utilitatis habent quam ostentationis, et licet extrinsecus pictae et nominibus dominorum inscriptae sunt, non tamen superbae atque elatae videntur. Intus vero praeclara insunt cubicula, et ditissima suppellex habetur. Et quia longissimas ac rigidissimas hiemes vicini septentriones efficiunt, remedium quoque contra naturam usus invenit. Hic⁶ aulas more thermarum singulae domus habent, ubi et pavementum forti robore sternunt, et quidquid supra circaque est, abiete pulcherrima tegunt, et, ne servatus calor effugiat, fenestras vitreas construxere. Ibi cenant, ibi nonnulli artes suas excolunt, ibi etiam magna pars dormit. Sunt in his locis plurimae aves, quae quasi perpetuo vere servato dulcissime modulantur.*

¹ angustiori WO

² ipsa PR, WO

³ magna PR, WO

⁴ quia PR, WO

⁵ ciphō PR, WO

⁶ omit. HA

5. The churches

[17] *Among the other buildings of the city, the temples of the Great God and the shrines of the saints stand out because of their majestic size and magnificence, and you will see that they are as rich as they are ornate. However, they are not covered with marble, unknown in the whole region, so they use soft stone,¹ not much harder than limestone. The local communities² treat their holy houses with such piety and reverence³ that you are uncertain whether to praise it or to wonder at it. In the churches, [wealthy] matrons have wooden cells, which they enter with their maids, and from where they follow the religious services through small apertures. These women, each in their own little church house, are like bees in their hives. I should much approve of the custom if I did not believe it is due more to the rigours of winter than to love of propriety. Only the nobles are allowed to hang their shields in the temples.*

6. The houses

[18] House roofs in the whole city are beautiful, many of glass in various colours,⁴ gleaming marvellously when struck by sunbeams. On housetops, storks have their nests. In Basel, this bird must not be harmed, whether they disapprove of ill-treating an innocent animal or believe – with the common people – that anybody robs the birds of their young, they will cause his house to burn. Whatever the reason, the storks build their nests and raise their young without hindrance. It is not our aim here to describe the delights of the individual buildings. They are built more for usefulness than for ostentation, and though they are painted on the outside and carry the name of the owner, they are not conspicuous nor extravagant. But inside there are splendid rooms and rich furnishings. And since proximity to the northern regions makes for very long and severe winters, they protect themselves against [the rigours of] nature in this way: as in bathhouses, each house has a room covered with a hard wooden floor and all walls covered with wooden panels, and they have glass windows to keep the heat from escaping. In these rooms, they eat, ply their craft, and often sleep. They also have many birds there, trilling away cheerfully, as if in eternal spring.

¹ Red sandstone, see Hartmann, p. 55.

² "tribus".

³ Bruni: *Laudatio*, p. 236: *Inter cetera tamen urbis edificia*

augustiori quadam amplitudine ac magnificentia per urbem sparsa ac distributa, ut divina decet loca, mira a suis queque tribubus

coluntur pietate, mira religione observantur.

⁴ Glazed tiles.

[19] Calles neque angusti superflua latitudine ambitiosi. Solum duri¹ silicis² quadrigarumque rotis inviolabile, humanis tamen pedibus asperum³ et⁴ noxium. Fontes tota urbe scaturiunt dulces nitidique. Moenia et propugnacula neque *tanto apparatu* sunt, ut *timidae civitatis*⁵ aut *suis viribus diffidentis*⁶ videantur, neque rursus ita neglecta, ut *petulantis*⁷ et *inconsultae haberi possint*. Corona tamen *murorum* duplex est, nam et urbs et suburbia suis muris suisque anguntur foveis. Fuisse in hoc loco quondam [Judaeos⁸] eorum e tumulis deducti lapides et circa ipsas mediae urbis foveas collati indicant, qui litteris inscripti Judaicis aut epitaphium more gentis aut nomen sepulti⁹ hominis referunt.

[20] Vere novo plurima intra urbem prata rident, quae tota aestate umbras habent ad voluptatem jucundissimas¹⁰, quia vel patulis quercubus vel frondosis et in latum deflexis tiliarum ramis conteguntur venientemque ad se juventutem¹¹ blandissimo afflatu excipiunt, mirabilem quoque aut ludentibus aut ludum expectantibus laetitiam praebent.

[21] Urbis situs *neque in summis montibus, unde se praeclare ostendet, nec rursus in latissimo camporum aequore, ut quoquoversus* aperiat. Ventos enim ac procellas et *habitatorum* incommoditatem in monte, caliginem vero *et aeris impuritatem* in plano extimuit, sed, *quod*¹² *in omni re maxime* probant,¹³ *medium inter extrema* haec sortita est civitas. *Procul* namque *ab iniquitate montis et fastidio*¹⁴ *planitiei remota sic tamen utrumque complectitur et neutrius utilitatis* fit *expers*, ut *mira*¹⁵ *caeli* sanitate *fruatur*.¹⁶ Ficu caret atque castaneis, fructusque omnes absunt, quibus est nocivum frigus. Victus autem, sive quod suo solo plurima nascuntur frumenta, sive quod vicinae urbes facillime subministrant, ubertim suggeritur¹⁷, et quamvis frequens in urbe populus sit, et concilii causa infiniti paene advenae confluant, semper Cerealia et Liberi munera aequo pretio vendunt¹⁸.

¹ durum PR, WO

² silice PR, WO

³ aspere PR, WO

⁴ *omit.* PR, WO

⁵ civitates PR, WO

⁶ diffidentes PR, WO

⁷ petulanter HA, PR, WO

⁸ *em.* HA, HE, PR, WO

⁹ saltim HA

¹⁰ jucundissimam PR, WO

¹¹ invenientem PR; *omit.* WO

¹² quidem PR, WO

¹³ probat PR, WO

¹⁴ fastigia PR; fastigio WO

¹⁵ misericordia PR, WO

¹⁶ Bruni: Laudat

¹⁷ suggerit PR, WO

¹⁸ veneunt PR, WO

7. The public space

[19] The streets are neither narrow nor superfluously broad. They are paved with hard stones that are not worn down by chariot wheels but rough and hard on human feet. There are fountains all over the city, with sweet and clean water gushing forth. The walls and bastions are not so imposing *that they show their city to be fearful and lacking confidence in its own strength, but, on the other hand, they are not so run down that they show it to be overconfident and careless.*¹ The city has a double *circle of walls*, for the [inner] city and the suburbs both have their wall and moat. That Jews once lived here is shown by the tombstones taken from their tombs and used to strengthen the moats around the inner city. They are inscribed with Hebrew letters showing either an epitaph, as customary with that people, or the name of the buried person.

[20] At the beginning of spring, the many meadows within the city smile at you. Throughout summer, they provide the most pleasant shadow, being covered with wide-spreading branches of oaks and lime trees. They welcome the young people with agreeable breezes and give great pleasure to those who play sportive games and the onlookers.

8. Location

[21] The city lies neither on the top of mountains, *where it could dazzle the eyes, nor in the plane countryside, where it would be open in all directions*, for it feared the winds and the discomforts *to citizens* in the mountains and the fogs and *foul air* in the plain. *In all things, they prefer the middle between the extremes, and this is what the city got here. For it is remote from both the rigours of the mountain and the drawbacks of the plain, at the same time profiting from the advantages of both and from a wonderfully healthy climate.*² It has neither figs nor chestnuts nor any of those fruits that are harmed by the cold. Still, they are abundantly provisioned with the plentiful crops they grow themselves or easily get from the neighbouring cities. So, though their own population is large and almost an infinite number of foreigners come there because of the council, the gifts of Ceres and Bacchus³ are always sold at a reasonable price.⁴

¹ Bruni: *Laudatio*, p. 234: *Ipsam vero urbem ... speciosissima murorum septi corona, non tamen tanto apparatu ut timida aut diffidens suis viribus videatur, nec rursus ita neglecta ut petulans aut inconsulta possit haberi.*

² Bruni: *Laudatio*, pp. 233-234: *Neque enim summis in montibus collocata est ut inde se praeclare ostentare posset, nec rursus in latissimo camporum equore ut quoquo versus esset aperta. Prudentissime quidem utrunque et optimo consilio ab hac urbe factum. Neque enim in summis*

montibus habitare licet sine adversa caeli intemperie, sine ventis, sine procellis, sine summa habitatorum incommoditate atque molestia; nec rursus in immensa vastaque planitie absque uditate soli, absque impuritate aeris, absque caligine nebularam. Has igitur incommoditates fugiens, prudentissima urbs in eo loco posita est ut, quod in omni re maxime probatur, medium sit inter extrema sortita et procul ab iniquitate montis et fastidio planitiei remota. Sic tamen utrunque complectitur, ut neutrius utilitatis sit expertus et mira caeli

suavitate fruatur ... ubi non solum quid vicini agant gentes, quid finitimi populi consilii capiant, quid moliantur, quemadmodum erga nos fuerint animati perscrutari sat est eorum vel latentes insidias vel apertos impetus cavere. ... Atqui finitimarum gentium consilia nonnunquam fallunt: quid facient igitur longinquarum?

³ Grain and wine.

⁴ Not all members of the council would agree with this claim, see WI, p. 362.

[22] Nec ego huic urbi *vitio*¹ dederim, quod longissime a mari abierit. Licet enim *vendendis comparandisque* mercibus sit *forsitan utilis*², *nimis* tamen *salsa* est et *amara vicinia maris*, ideoque *Plato Atheniensis*, *cum civitatem, quae bene ac beate viveret, in suis libris institueret et, quae adesse quaeve abesse oporterent*³, *diligenter* inspiceret, eam *procul a mari* positam voluit, *nec putavit sapientissimus philosophus urbem aliquam esse posse beatam, quae aut in*⁴ *littore foret posita aut salsis fluctibus tunderetur*. Sunt enim huiusmodi civitatibus non solum *finitimorum* investiganda *consilia*, sed *remotissimae* cuiusque gentis studia cognoscenda, quod quanto est difficilius, tanto *maritimas urbes inquietiores* reddit. Unde et *Troia nobilissima, Asiae culmen, bis classe capta atque diruta* refertur. *Genuam* vero, *clarissimam Liguriaie urbem, secundo Punico bello ex improviseo captam et solo aequatam legimus*. *Quid eversionem Phocensium referam? Quid hic Athenas, quid Alexandriam, quid Siracusas* classibus destructas recenseam? *Inquieta est omnis maritima civitas permultisque subjacet incommodis*. Quis non abhorreat *aeris crassitudinem*, quis *caeli* non timeat *inconstantiam*, quis *pallentes*⁵ *morbos et insalubritatem littoreae plagae* non damnet? Quis *totius maritimae confinitatis* non fugiat *inclementiam*? Quodsi forsitan aliqui longa defessi via *mediterraneum situm vituperent et navi potius quam equo ferantur*, eos rogo, ut *obitum laborem cum perpetua sanitate compensent*.

¹ ficum PR, WO

² utile PR, WO

³ oporteret HA

⁴ omit. PR, WO

⁵ palantes HA

[22] As for the very long distance from the sea, I would not consider it a *disadvantage*, for though closeness to the sea *may be advantageous for selling and buying goods, the regions close to the sea are too salty and bitter*. Therefore, when *Plato the Athenian* wrote his books about the well-ordered and happy state and carefully investigated what is good and what is bad for such a state, he wanted it to be far from the sea. Indeed, *the wisest of philosophers considered that a city could not be happy if was located at the sea and beaten by salty waves*, for such cities must always be concerned about the designs not only of the closest neighbours but also of far away peoples. And since that is very difficult, *maritime cities* live in a permanent state of unrest.¹ Thus, *Troy, the crown of Asia*, is said to have been conquered and destroyed twice by a fleet. And about *Genoa, glorious city of Liguria*, we read that during the second Punic War,² it was conquered unexpectedly and razed to the ground. What shall I say about the destruction of *Phocaea*?³ And what shall I tell about *Athens*,⁴ *Alexandria*⁵ and *Syracuse*,⁶ all destroyed by fleets?⁷ All maritime cities are in a perpetual state of unrest and subject to a great many discomforts. Who does not loath *the unhealthy air*? Who does not fear *the shifts in weather*? Who does not curse *the pale and greenish illnesses and the insalubrious coastal region*? Who will not flee *the inclemency of maritime environs*?⁸ And if someone, tired of the long journey, complains of the [city's] inland location and would rather sail than ride, I ask them to consider the value of permanent health compared to the labour of the journey.

¹ Bruni: *Laudatio*, pp. 240-241: *Quod si quis est qui propterea deesse aliquid huic urbi arbitretur quod maritima non sit, is meo iudicio longissime errat et quod laudare debet id in vitium vertit. Est enim maris vicinia vendendis comparandisque rebus forsitan utilis, ceterum salsa atque amara nimis. Permulta sunt quippe incomoda quibus maritime urbes obnoxie sunt, permulta pericula quibus subiacere habent necesse. Plato Atheniensis, omnium philosophorum longissime princeps, cum civitatem que bene ac beate viveret in suis libris in-*

stitueret et que adesse et queve abesse oporteret diligentissime perquireret, in primis quidem illud censuit ut procul a mari esset remota. Nec putavit sapientissimus vir eam urbem ullo modo beatam esse posse que aut in litore posita foret aut maris fluctibus esset propinqua.

² 205 BCE.

³ 190 BCE.

⁴ 480 BCE.

⁵ 48/47 BCE.

⁶ 212 BCE.

⁷ Bruni: *Laudatio*, pp. 241-242: *Troya, nobilissimum totius Asiae*

culmen ... bis classe capta et diruta est. ... Genuam, nobilissimam Italiae urbem, secundo bello Punico ... ex improvise captam et ad solum dirutam legimus. Quid Phocensium eversionem commorem, quid Syracusarum, quid Alexandriae, quid Athenarum?

⁸ Bruni: *Laudatio*, p. 242: *Adde crassitatem aeris, adde inconstantiam celi, adde pallentes morbos, id est insalubritatem litoreae plage et totius maritime confinitatis inclementiam.*

[23] Erat olim Basilea suo subjecta episcopo, ut qui feudabilem¹ a Caesare urbem accepisset, unde et *gladii potestatem habebat et animadversionem² in facinorosos homines*. Postea vero, sive ut oportuit, sive ut voluit ipse – nihil de hoc compertum habeo – ab sese dominium abdicavit. Habet tamen annuos ex singula familia nummos et veteris domini et pristinae potestatis vestigium. Cives autem sic praetaxatis³ quibusdam legibus Caesari serviunt, ut liberi magis quam subditi videantur. Neque enim, ut in nostris urbibus, tyrannidem sibi vendicant neque dominandi cupidine excaecantur⁴. Et si libertas est vivere, ut velis, hi vere liberi sunt, aequalique jure inter se vivunt. Italici vero - ut de mea patria verum etiam invitus promam - dum imperare singuli volunt, omnes servire coguntur, ut, qui regem aut Caesarem aspernantur, vilissimae plebi subjiciantur⁵, unde nec ullum apud eos diuturnum imperium nec ullibi magis quam in Italia fortuna jocatur. Hi vero praesenti rerum statu contenti, pacatissimam custodiunt civitatem, nec sibi aliquis, sed reipublicae gerit officium, et quamquam popularis gubernatio sit, ita tamen inter se nobiles et plebeii munera sortiuntur⁶, ut nulli umquam querelae aut discidio locus relinquatur.

[24] Consilia his duo sunt, alterum novum, alterum vetus. Novum decernit, vetus tamen suadet et consulit, quid⁷ agendum putet, et quod isto anno est novum, sequenti antiquum erit. Et tam in hoc quam in illo duorum et quadraginta virorum suffragio res transigitur. In utroque nobiles et plebeii, totius enim administrandae reipublicae tertia portio debetur nobilitati. Summa tamen imperii penes magistrum civium. Hunc nonnisi militem creant, neque militiae nisi nobilis ascribitur. Plebejum vero nisi summis divitiis aut clarissimis belli facinoribus decoratum haud⁸ militiae dignum censent. Post hunc magister zunftarum sequitur. Habent enim singulae artes mechanicae zunftam, hoc est societatis illius principem, quibus omnibus magister zunftarum praeest. Tertio loco scultetus est, qui jus dicit populo, nec statuti aut consuetudinis egredi normam potest. Capitalia negotia per advocatum et quattuordecim viros et cum novo consilio transiguntur. Idem est in omni casu sanguinis. Magistratus annui sunt. Curiam nonnisi jus dicturi⁹ aut consilia discussuri petunt. Nulli ex publico sumptus, sua cuique domo ex privato est vita.

¹ feudalem HA

² animi adversionem HA, PR, WO

³ praetextis HA

⁴ excaecant PR, WO

⁵ subiciuntur PR, WO

⁶ sorciantur PR, WO

⁷ quod PR, WO

⁸ aut PR, WO

⁹ curiam nonnisi ... dicturi : curiali vero modo ius dicitur PR, WO

9. Government

[23] Formerly, Basel was subject to a bishop, who had received the city as a feudal possession from the emperor.¹ Therefore, he had *the power of the sword to punish evildoers*.² Later, he renounced that power, whether he was forced to or did it voluntarily – I do not know.³ However, he receives an annual amount from each family,⁴ a remnant of his old lordship and former power. But the citizens serve the emperor under certain laws that, in effect, make them free men rather than subjects. For, unlike in our⁵ cities, nobody claims lordship over them as tyrants⁶ or are blinded by the desire for power. And if freedom is to live as you please, these people are truly free, living together with equal rights. On the contrary, the Italians – to say (though unwillingly) something true about my own country – are all forced to serve, for while all wish to rule, they are all forced to serve, and rejecting both king and emperor, they are dominated by the rabble.⁷ Therefore, no lordship lasts long in Italy, and no country is more subject to fortune's whims. But the Basileans are content with the present state of things and keep a most peaceful city. All fulfil their office for the public good and not for their own. Though their government is democratic⁸, the nobles and the commoners share the offices so that there are no quarrels or dissensions.

[24] They have two councils, one the Old Council and the other the New Council. The New Council makes decisions, the Old Council deliberates and advises on which course to follow. The council that is the New Council in one year is the Old Council in the next. In both councils, matters are determined by a vote of 42 men. Each council is composed of commoners and nobles. In the administration of the city, a third part belongs to the nobility. The highest authority belongs to the mayor. Only knights are appointed mayors, and a commoner is only considered worthy of knighthood if he has distinguished himself by a large fortune or outstanding military exploits. After the mayor comes the *Zunftmeister*. Each craft has its own *Zunft*, meaning the leader of their guild, and the *Zunftmeister* is the head of them all. Third comes the *Schultheiss*, who judges the people,⁹ but within the statutory or customary rules. Capital crimes are handled by the attorney and 14 men and the New Council. The same is the case with all blood crimes. Offices are for one year only. They only go to the town hall in matters of justice or for deliberations. [While in office,] they do not live at public expense; they all live in their private home.¹⁰

¹ Note the use of the word Caesar for an (unspecified) emperor.

² The "*merum imperium*", a concept of Roman law, as defined by Ulpian (*Liber de officio quaestoris*, II) and quoted in the Digesta (II, 1, 3).

³ This happened sometime in the 14th century.

⁴ Martinspfennig.

⁵ Italian.

⁶ I.e., as lords not legitimately appointed.

⁷ This is an early statement of Piccolomini's inveterate disdain of democratic government and the

common people. His views on this matter were probably influenced by the history of Siena, where the popular party in the 14th century expelled the noble families, including the Piccolomini, both from power and from the city itself. Afterwards Enea Silvio's branch of the family fell into poverty and insignificance, from which it was saved only by their illustrious member, our Piccolomini himself, as he rose to be Bishop of Siena, Prince of the Empire and of the Church, and finally pope.

⁸ "popularis".

⁹ WI, p. 59: *aber nicht als Einzelrichter. Er leitete nur d. Verhandlungen des Stadtgerichts; d. Urteil zu finden blieb den die Gemeinde vertretende 10-14 Beisitzern vorbehalten.*

¹⁰ This in contrast to Florence, where the elected magistrate lived in the government palace during their term of office, cf. Bruni: *Laudatio*, p. 237: *... sic huius arcis ea species est ut quivis iudicare possit in ea habitare viros qui gubernatores sint rerum publicarum.*

[25] Consuetudine magis quam lege scripta utuntur, Lacedaemoniis quam Atheniensibus similiores. Nec jurisperito nec Romanis legibus locus¹. Ubi e novo casus emergit, frequenter seniori consilio statur. Nec hic litis anfractus, non *magno comites in fasce² libelli*, non empta procuratoris atque advocati verba. Omnia summaria sunt, utiliusque arbitrantur reipublicae alteri parti cito consulere quam protracta cognitione utramque decipere. In iudicio rigidi severique. Reum neque pecunia neque preces juvant. Nulli tanta potentia, ut impune delinquat. Unicum est³ in urbe sacellum idque divo Baptistae dicatum. Huc saepe sicarii impurique homines quasi ad asylum confugiunt, neque hic perpetuo sed ad tempus impunitatem habent. Relegatis ab urbe nulla spes reditus, nisi extraneum aliquem et magnum secuti virum redeant. Tunc enim, nisi est ardua culpa, civitas eis⁴ permittitur. Unde et cardinalibus et illustrium oratoribus principum saepe hoc datum est gratiae.

[26] Ad quaestionem criminum asperrimis atque acerbissimis cruciatibus instant adeoque miseros vexant reos, ut cervicem gladio dare beneficium extiment⁵. Ita tamen obstinati sunt aliqui, ut excarnificari prius quam fateri delictum velint, sive quod nimium vitae sunt cupidi, sive quod ignominiam etiam post mortem verentur. Damnatos vero sic iustitia exigente afficiunt, ut ipsa mihi horrorem⁶ non expositio rei, sed⁷ recordatio ingerat. Carnificem quidem spontaneum eoque solo quaestu viventem habent, quem hominem licet non approbem, civitatem vero⁸ eo utentem probo⁹. Plus tamen laudo plectendos capite huic exercitio custodiri. Illorum autem et damno et abhominor corruptelam, qui peregrinos et saepe nobiles tam vili ministerio coninquant. Rem furto subtractam, si reperiant¹⁰, non vero domino sed iudici adjudicant, ex quo evenit, ut furtum passi prius cum furibus transigant, quam iudicium persequantur¹¹. Quam legem licet aliqui furum alitricem existiment, ipsi ut diligentiae monitionem¹² custodiunt, quia et cautiores cives et magis vigilantes efficiat.

[27] Nulla hic studia gentilium litterarum. Poeticam oratoriamque prorsus ignorant. Grammaticae tantum¹³ ac dialecticae operam adhibent. Confluunt huc ex vicinioribus oppidis quamplures adolescentes, quibus ex elemosina victus est, magister ex publico.

¹ loco WO

² magno comites ... fasce : magni comitis infasti PR, WO

³ *omit.* HA

⁴ ei WO

⁵ existiment PR, WO

⁶ ipsa mihi horrorem : ipsam nunc horror PR, WO

⁷ sive PR, WO

⁸ *omit.* HA

⁹ probem PR, WO

¹⁰ reperiatur PR, WO

¹¹ prosequantur PR, WO

¹² nutricionem PR, WO

¹³ tamen PR, WO

10. Justice

[25] They use customary [law] more than written law, resembling the Spartans more than the Athenians. There is no room for jurists or Roman laws. If a new case occurs, it will be decided by the Old Council. Here are no tortuous trials, nor *bundles of papers which [lawyers] bring with them*,¹ nor bought speeches² of procurators or advocates. All trials are summary, and they believe it is better for the common good to speedily accommodate the other party than to frustrate both parties through a drawn-out process. Their justice is stern and severe. Neither money nor appeals can help the condemned. Nobody has such power that he can commit a crime with impunity. There is only one chapel in that city, dedicated to Saint [John] the Baptist.³ Often, murderers and criminals seek refuge there, but they do not have permanent, only temporary asylum. People exiled from the city have no hope of return unless they come back in the company of an important foreign personality, in which case they are allowed to enter the city unless their guilt is very great. Cardinals and ambassadors of illustrious princes are often granted this favour.

[26] During criminal interrogations, they use harsh and cruel torture, and they maim the accused so severely that they are relieved to offer their neck to the sword. Some, however, are so obstinate that they will rather be tortured to death than confess to a crime, whether they cling too much to life or fear ignominy even after death. Their justice requires that they treat the condemned in ways which I shudder not just to relate but even to remember. Their executioner is a volunteer who lives by this profession alone. I would not approve of such a man, but I commend the city for using him. However, I am more in favour of using men who are condemned to death for this office. And I reject and abhor the perverted practise of dishonouring foreigners and often nobles with such vile office. If they recover stolen property, they do not return it to the owner but assign it to the judge. This, however, causes those who have been robbed to deal with the thieves rather than to pursue them in court. Some believe that this law furthers thievery, but the Basileans consider it an encouragement to be diligent since it makes the citizens more cautious and vigilant.⁴

11. Culture

[27] They have no interest in pagan literature. They know nothing of poetry and oratory and only study grammar and dialectics. From the neighbouring towns, many young men come here, who live of alms and are given a teacher paid by the public purse.⁵

¹ Juvenalis, 7: 107.

² "verba".

³ Chapel of the Johannite Order

⁴ Piccolomini had probably misunderstood this matter, cf. WI, p. 368: *Offenbar liegt ein Missverständnis vor, vielleicht da-*

durch hervorgerufen, dass in Malefizverfahren die Verurteilung mittels einer Formel erfolgte, wonach dem Kläger der Leib, dem Richter das Gut des verurteilten züfällt. Piccolomini made the same claim in his description of

the city of Vienna (included in his *Historia Austriasis*).

⁵ Piccolomini is probably referring to the stipends for poor pupils at the diocesan and monastic schools and also to the *studium generale* founded by the council in 1432.

[28] Mos est civibus saepe ex symbolis esse, suntque cenacula in rem hanc altera hiemi, altera aestati idonea. Vestitus tam feminis quam viris frugi. Nullius pruinae tantus rigor, ut laneum aliquod intra¹ calceos sumant. Praecipua feminis cura circa pedes atque mamillas, et quam illos parvos et graciles, tam istas grandes et tumidas ostentare laborant. Forma hominum mediocris. Mores uti mortalium varii. Nulla apud eos interpretatio juramenti: quod promissum est, sine exceptione custodiunt. Nec aliena² rapiunt nec sua effundunt, praesentique fortuna contenti. Viri boni *esse quam videri* malunt.

[29] Ut sic³ moratae civitati haud⁴ injuria sit inditum nomen Basileae, quod a Graeco susceptum reginam significat. Regina igitur est inter adjacentes civitates Basilea, et nunc praesertim, quando⁵ reginam ecclesiae, id est sanctam synodum, intra se habet. Alii dicunt ingentis staturae basiliscum a conditoribus urbis primisque fundatoribus hoc loco repertum indeque Basileam dictam. Quod si est ita, non tamen haec significatio a natura concilii procul abiit: ut enim homines *solo visu* basiliscus interemit⁶, sic haereticos solo auditu concilium enecat. Rectius tamen hujusmodi nomen a basi, hoc est fundamento, deduxerim, quia divina dispositione provisum erat, futurum hic generale concilium, quod fundamentum fidei, id est auctoritatem ecclesiae, roboraret.

¹ inter PR, WO

² alia PR, WO

³ sit PR, WO

⁴ aut PR, WO

⁵ cum PR, WO

⁶ interierit PR

[28] The citizens often hold dinner parties, and they have dining rooms some of which are suitable for use in winter and others in summer.¹ Both men and women dress soberly. No frost is so great that they put woollen cloth into their shoes. The women are especially concerned about their feet and breasts, striving to show off the first as small and delicate and the second as large and swelling. The men are of middle size. As all men, they have different characters. They do not twist oaths but fulfil their promises with no exception. Content with their own present conditions², they do not rob others' of their property nor waste their own. They *prefer to be rather than to seem virtuous*³ men.

12. Name

[29] This well-ordered city justly carries the name of Basel, which is taken from the Greek and means queen. For Basel is the queen of the region's cities, especially now that she is hosting the queen of the Church, the holy synod. Some claim that Basel is named after a huge basilisk found here by the city's first builders and founders.⁴ If that is so, this meaning is appropriate, too, given the nature of the council, for just as the basilisk kills men *just by viewing*,⁵ the council destroys heretics just by hearing. But it would be more correct to derive this name from the word "basis", meaning foundation, since it was God who caused the general council to be held here to strengthen the foundation of the Faith, the authority of the Church.⁶

¹ The *Trinkstuben zum Brunnen und zum Seufzen*.

² "fortuna"

³ Sallustius: *Bellum Catilinae*, 54: 6: *esse quam videri bonus malebat*

⁴ There was apparently a local legend, that a basilisk had lived in the Gerberbrunnen in Gerbergasse.

⁵ Cf. Plinius: *Historia naturalis*, 29: 4, 66: *hominem, vel si ad-*

spiciat tantum, dicitur interemere.

⁶ These etymologies are fanciful. The origin of the name is probably Celtish.

28. Letter to Francesco Pizzolpasso of Milan (After 28 October 1438, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: Basel / Universitätsbibliothek / O III, 35 *

Editions: Preiswerk, pp. 4-17 (PR); HE, 29, pp. 97-98; WO, 1, 1: 29, pp. 95-96; (both on the basis of Preiswerk)

Reverendissimo in Christo patri Mediolanensi Francisco Picciolpasso Aeneas Silvius salutem.

[1] Superfuit mihi superioribus diebus nonnihil otii, in quo, dum essem quavis alia cura solutus, coepi, ut fit, praeterita meminisse, quae dum evolvo attentius, eo me dignitati tuae obligatiorem agnosco. Caritatis² enim erga me tuae haud facile dixerim quam multa experimenta transierint. Nam – ut taceam praeposituram a te mihi collatam et innumerabilem creditam plebem – illius diligentiae tuae nequeo oblivisci, qua me Basiliensium indignatione liberasti. Quamquam erat illa quidem injusta et ab aemulis meis magis quam ab ipsis civibus praeparata, eo tamen creverat, ut interdictus mihi in hanc urbem reditus videretur, nisi causam meam tua benignitas suscepisset placatisque civibus calamitoso mihi exuli quam criminoso reditum impetrasset. Sed odio illi – ut scis – epistola mea quaedam videbatur dedisse causam. Eapropter cogitavi modo, an possem epistola redimere, quod amisi epistola, cumque Philippum, archiepiscopum Turonensem, virum insignem et multarum rerum lectione peritum, ad nos venturum scirem, praeparavi sibi – ut fieri solet – in prima visitatione munusculum, praegustationem³ scilicet studiorum meorum.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² caritates WO

³ pregustationum WO

28. Letter to Archbishop Francesco Pizzolpasso of Milan (After 28 October 1438, Basel).

Context: When Piccolomini's first description of Basel of May 1434 became known to the citizens, it apparently caused a scandal, and there was some risk that he would be prohibited from returning to that city. Archbishop Pizzolpasso intervened successfully, ensuring that Piccolomini would be able to continue living in the city as a member and official of the council. This episode had presumably occurred before he returned to Basel from Scotland in 1436, indicating that his acquaintance with Pizzolpasso dated from his first stay in Basel, from 1432 to 1433 when Pizzolpasso, not yet Archbishop of Milan, resided there.

Subject: Piccolomini thanks the archbishop for his intervention and asks him to look over the new version of the description to ensure that it does not contain passages offensive to the Basileans.

Enea Silvio greets the Most Reverend Father in Christ, Francesco Pizzolpasso of Milan.

[1] During the past days, I had some leisure during which, free of all duties, I began – as happens – to look back on past events. As I reflected on them, I realised how much I owe Your Reverence. Indeed, I would be sorely pressed to mention all the many proofs of your kindness towards me that I have seen. Especially – not to mention the provostship you conferred upon me and the many people entrusted to me¹ – I cannot forget your diligence in freeing me from the anger of the Basileans. Though was unmerited and [the episode] orchestrated by people envious of me² rather than by the citizens themselves, it had come to the point when I might be forbidden to return to the city. But you, benignly, took up my cause and placated the citizens, thus obtaining that I could return as an unfortunate exile rather than a criminal one.³ As you know, it was a letter of mine⁴ that caused their indignation. Therefore, I have now considered how to regain with a [new] letter⁵ what I lost with [other]. So, when I was informed that Philippe,⁶ Archbishop of Tours, a distinguished and much read man, would be coming here, I prepared a small gift of welcome – as is often done – as a foretaste of my intellectual endeavours.

¹ After Piccolomini's oration in 1436 for Pavia and the territories of the Duke of Milan as the venue for the reunion council, Pizzolpasso secured Piccolomini's appointment as provost of San Lorenzo in Milan. Due to later complications, Piccolomini never

managed to get possession of this prebend.

² People that Piccolomini had offended with his sharp tongue and criticism or defeated in some other venture.

³ On exiles granted to return to Basel when in the company of

prominent persons and prelates cardinals, see letter 27: sect. 25.

⁴ Letter 16, from 1434, before Piccolomini left Basel with Bishop Bartolomeo Visconti.

⁵ Letter 27.

⁶ Philippe de Coëtquis.

[2] Descripsi igitur hanc urbem eamque veritate servata pro ingenioli viribus laudavi. Descriptionem vero ipso Philippo dedico, ut uno labore duplex officium persolvam, et hominis scilicet optime de me meriti et diu absentis memoriam ostendens et crudescentes erga me animos Basiliensium emolliens. Accessi igitur ad scribendum jamque opus exsolvi. Vereor tamen, ne nimium mihi crediderim. Nosti¹ Horatii Flacci consilium, qui suadet in *Arte Poetica*, *ne praecipitetur editio nonumque prematur in annum*. Rationem autem tarditatis Quintilianus adducit, ut *refrigerato inventionis amore* non ut auctores, sed ut lectores opera nostra diligentius emendemus. At ego vix stilo ab ultimo verso retracto libellum edo ideoque magis timeo, ne ridiculum opus ostenderim neve aliquem – ut antea feci – meis laeserim verbis et, dum gratiam quaero, reportaverim odium. Opus igitur mihi consilio est nec alium quam tuam paternitatem hic habeo, qui mihi et bene velit et recte possit consulere. Sunt enim in te plurimae litterae et ita rerum es practicus, ut non solum tibi, sed aliis quoque tua prudentia queat sufficere. Committo me igitur curae tuae et epistolam, ut, si quid² sit, quod mordicum putes aut Basiliensibus grave, id tecum adimas. Nequeo namque mihi consulere. Adeo enim sum veritatis amator, ut, dum illam sequar, me deseram. Sed habeo in tua dilectione spem firmam, ut in re ista iudicium quam rectissimum feras, nec enim voles me in odium illorum rursus incidere, a quo tua semel opera liberatus. Vale.

¹ nostri WO

² quiddam WO

[2] So, keeping to the truth, I have written [another] description of this city, praising it to the best of my limited abilities. I dedicated this description to Philippe, thus fulfilling two duties with one effort, i.e., to show that I remember him who had done much for me and been absent for a long time and to soften the Basileans' animosity towards me. I, therefore, began to write and have now finished the work. However, I fear that I may have trusted my [abilities] overly. You know the advice of Horatius Flaccus¹, who in his *Ars Poetica* urges that *publication should not be hurried but kept in store till the ninth year comes around*.^{2 3} Quintilian⁴ gives the reason for delaying [publication] when he says that we should let our satisfaction in our own productions cool so that we may go over them again more carefully, with a reader's eyes, not the author's⁵ Nonetheless, I publish this work having barely lifted the pen from the last sentence, and I, therefore, fear to be publishing a laughable work or to offend someone - as happened then - and harvest enmity when trying to gain favour. So, I need advice and have none but Your Reverence, who cares for me, to advise me properly. For you are well versed in letters and have much experience so that your prudence may profit not only yourself but also others. I, therefore, entrust myself to your care, [asking you] to remove what you think might be caustic or offensive to the Basileans. I cannot advise myself, for I am a lover of truth, and when I follow it, I harm myself.⁶ But I am confident that you will charitably show proper judgment in this matter and not want me to again incur their wrath, from which you have already saved me once. Farewell.

¹ Horatius Flaccus, Quintus (65-8 BCE): Roman poet.

² Horatius: *Ars Poetica*, 388.

³ Quoted in Quintilianus: *Institutio oratoria*, Proemium, 2-3.

⁴ Quintilianus, Marcus Fabius (Ca. 30 – ca. 95 CE): Roman

rhetorician and teacher. Author of the *Institutio oratoria*.

⁵ *Ibid.* 3-4: *ut refrigerato inventionis amore diligentius repetitos tamquam lector perpendere*.

⁶ Meaning that his truthfulness creates enemies who will take steps to harm him.

29. Letter from Francesco Filelfo (28 March 1439, Siena)¹.

Manuscripts: See *Filelfo: Collected*, I, p. 194. *

Editions: *HE*, 30, pp. 98-101; *WO*, 1, 1: 30, pp. 96-101; *Filelfo: Collected*, I, pp. 194-197.²

Franciscus Philelphus Aeneae Silvio salutem dicit.

[1] Et bene valere te et secundiorem jam tibi aspirare fortunam laetor majorem in modum. Quod autem scire cupis, quid in causa fuerit, ut relicta patria tua Sena, ubi et pacatissime vitam³ agebam et commode, inter discordiarum Bononiensium digladiationes me receperim, dicam tibi.

[2] Quales quantosque invidentiae aestus Florentiae paterer, praesens ipse olim coramque vidisti. At ludus erat, quod per id tempus patiebar incommodum ad eas aerumnas, quas quasi Alcides quidam perferre postea sum coactus. Nam posteaquam nulla aut juris aut aequi simulatione perditissimorum hominum rabies nocere mihi potuisset, ad arma concursus est, paratoque sicario aere non parvo mane cum in publicam illam – quam nosti – academiam docendi gratia pergerem, ex occultis insidiis in me, nihil tale neque caventem neque cogitantem, impetus factus est. Erat sicarius togatus Florentini mercatoris more, ne posset agnosci, qui educto repente longiore gladio, qui toga tegebatur, cuspidem mihi direxit in pectus, transfodissetque me omnino, nisi dextera manu facto pugno in ejus pectus illico magna vi irruissem. Itaque a proposito loco ictus ille aberrans in sinistrum brachium me percussit, omni illaesus vulnere. Elanguerat enim ictus, quoniam ille a me rejectus pugno paululum esset amotus. Qui rursus sublato gladio, quo me acie feriret in caput, in faciem me percussit.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae Saeculares*.

² The following text is based on HE and De Keyser's edition (*Filelfo: Collected*)

³ *omit.* HE

29. Letter from Francesco Filelfo (28 March 1439, Bologna).

Context: When Filelfo moved to Florence in 1433, he quickly became an ardent supporter of the anti-Medici party as well as an enemy of the city's humanists. After the restoration of the Medici in 1434, his situation became very difficult, and in 1435 he moved on to Siena.

Subject: In reply to a letter from Piccolomini asking him why he had left Siena, Filelfo relates the circumstances of two assassination attempts against him, one in Florence in 1433 and another in Siena in 1436.

Francesco Filelfo greets Enea Silvio.

[1] I greatly rejoice that you are well and that a happier fortune now smiles¹ at you. You ask why I have left your country Siena, where I lived in great tranquillity and comfort, so I shall tell you.

[2] You yourself saw the violent jealousy I had to suffer in Florence.² But the troubles I experienced then³ were like a [child's] play compared to the afflictions I – like another Alcides⁴ – was later forced to suffer. For after fanatical and reckless men had been unable to harm me under any legal or rational pretext, they had recourse to arms. An assassin⁵ was hired at great expense. An early morning,⁶ as I was going to lecture at the academy⁷ you know, he, hidden in ambush, attacked me as I was not looking out for trouble or even thinking about it.⁸ To avoid recognition, the assassin was wearing the cloak of a Florentine merchant. Suddenly, drawing forth a long knife hidden by the cloak, he turned the blade towards my breast and would have pierced me if I had not forcefully struck him on the breast with my right fist. Missing his strike, he hit my left arm. Because I managed to push him a little away with my fist, he did not wound me but raising his knife again, he hit me in the face.⁹

¹ “aspirare”: breathes on you.

² Filelfo arrived in Firenze at the beginning of April 1429 and began teaching at the university. Apart from a short visit to Bologna in 1430, he stayed in Firenze until the end of December 1434. During his time in Florence, he engaged in polemics with other humanist luminaries, including from Florence, and joined the anti-Medicean part, which earned him to be systematically harassed by the Mediceans. The context seems to show that the young Piccolomini attended his lectures sometime during Filelfo's first period in

Firenze, from April 1429 to September 1430, when Filelfo left for Bologna.

³ During Filelfo's first period in Firenze, from April 1429 to September 1430.

⁴ I.e., Hercules.

⁵ Filippo Casali.

⁶ 18 May 1433.

⁷ University of Florence.

⁸ Viti: *Il progressivo acuirsi delle polemiche e delle tensioni, nonostante il costante successo nell'attività didattica, portò all'organizzazione di un attentato contro il F., perpetrato il 18 maggio 1433, mentre egli era appena uscito di*

casa - abitava in Oltrarno nel Chiasso dei Ramaglianti – per recarsi allo Studio. Fu ferito al volto con un coltello da Filippo Casali, del contado di Imola, e la cicatrice gli sarebbe rimasta per sempre. Nel successivo processo lo stesso rettore dello Studio, Girolamo Broccardi - col quale il F. già in precedenza aveva avuto violenti scontri – si accusò come mandante, ma il clamore del fatto e il clima di generale conflittualità portarono a vedere, dietro il sicario, Cosimo de' Medici.

⁹ Filelfo apparently carried a permanent scar from this wound.

[3] Quis fuerit sicarius, notum est. A quibus autem conductus, etsi nihil habetur certi, infamia tamen in Medices repit et Cosmum, quoniam non solum ejus factio mihi semper adversaretur, sed etiam Laurentius frater aperte multa adversus me ageret. Paucis post mensibus ob civiles discordias idem Cosmus in carcerem primo conjectus est, dein relegatus ad Venetos sine alia prorsus ulla civium offensione. Et ita civiles discordiae tantisper quievere, donec in posterum annum iis pecunia corruptis, qui summae reipublicae praeerant, Cosmus in urbem revocatur. Tum jura divina omnia humanaque confunduntur. Optimates omnes alii relegantur, alii proscribuntur. Hinc direptiones, latrocinia caedesque sequuntur, quae ipse intuens animadvertensque, quanto cum periculo in tanto Florentiae naufragio forem, qui antea in summa - ut ita dixerim - malachia naufragus extitisssem, subduxi me et ab imminentibus tantorum fluctuum vorticibus in Senensis tuae reipublicae tamquam in portum aliquem maxime opportunum devolavi.

[4] Hic autem, cum et tranquille et honorifice vitam agerem neque de re Florentina ulla mihi prorsus cura esset praeter humani commiserationem ingenii, mense decimo, ex quo Florentia decesseram, nulla mea neque culpa neque culpae suspicione tantum potuit inimicorum conjuratio, ut ipse quoque inter proscriptos cives optimates proscriberer, id quod¹ – ut accepi – universae civitati fuit molestissimum auditu. Quin in proximum inde annum missus est Senam, ut me interimeret, idem ille sicarius, qui ab eadem ornatus conjuratione in faciem mihi vulnus inflixerat. Hic Philippus est vocatus, patria natus Casale Fluminensi, et patre Thoma et avo Bruno, qui etiam ipsi ambo notissimi habiti sunt sicarii. Aberam per id temporis ad Petriolanas balneas, idque non tam ulla mea vel necessitate vel delectationis quidem gratia, quam divino quodam consilio, ut certo puto, nam eo sum profectus sola visendi causa. Solet enim plerumque omnipotens Deus, quo de perseverantibus in malignitatem² facinorosisque hominibus aliquando supplicium sumat, certas quasdam easque occultas parare vias ad vindicandum.

[5] Cum ejusmodi ergo tempore sicarius Philippus Senam venisset neque me usquam videret, adit praeclarum in philosophia virum ac medicum prudentissimum Petrum Johannetum, qui ex patria Bononia pulcherrimis praemiis accersitus medicinam docebat, ut nunc etiam docet in ejus urbis publico studio. Ex eo quaerit, et qua in vicinia ipse habitarem, et ubi docerem, et quot mecum ducerem comites, et quantum valerem gratia apud cives. Ad quae ille, ut est vir callentissimus aequae atque acerrimo strenuissimoque ingenio inspecto hominis vultu et considerata verborum temeritate singillatim³ ea respondit, quae mihi usi fore arbitraretur, eodemque die litteris me de ea re omni commonefecit.

¹ id quod : idque HE

² malignitate HE

³ singulatim HE

[3] It is known who the assassin was. It is not certain who hired him, but the villainy creeps back to the Mediceans and Cosimo¹, for not only has their faction always opposed me, but his brother Lorenzo² has openly laid many plots against me. After some months, civil dissensions broke out, and Cosimo was first thrown into prison and then exiled to Venice,³ but otherwise, he was not harmed by the citizens. There was no more civil turbulence before the next year when the rulers of the republic were corrupted with money and recalled Cosimo.⁴ Divine and human rights were completely upset. Of the leading citizens, some were exiled, and others proscribed. Pillage, robbery, and murder followed. Seeing that and realising how dangerous the Florentine debacle was for me, at first wholly debilitated⁵ and devastated, I removed myself from the threatening whirlpools of such stormy waves and fled to your Sienese republic as to a very opportune harbour.

[4] I lived there in tranquillity and honour, and I only concerned myself with Florentine matters as much as human sentiment would warrant. But ten months after I left Florence, through no fault of mine or even suspicion of fault, my enemies' conspiracy against me was strong enough to secure my proscription⁶ together with that of the leading citizens, which the whole city heard with indignation – as I have learnt. The following year,⁷ an assassin was sent to Siena to kill me, the same one who at the conspirators' instigation had [previously] wounded me in the face. His name is Filippo, and he comes from Casale del Fiume.⁸ His father was a Tommaso, and his grandfather Bruno, both well-known assassins, too. At the time, I was absent [from Siena], visiting the baths at Petriolo. This visit was not for any medicinal reason⁹ nor for pleasure but was - I am convinced – caused by some divine design, for I had really only gone to see the place. But almighty God often prepares secret ways for retribution and punishment of evildoers and criminals.

[5] When the assassin Filippo had arrived in Siena and could not find me, he visited the distinguished philosopher and outstanding physician, Piero Giovanetti. This Piero had, with very handsome rewards, been enticed to come from his home city Bologna to teach medicine, as he still does, at the city's university.¹⁰ Filippo asked him where I lived, where I gave lectures, how many companions I had with me, and how popular I was with the citizens. But Piero is a most perspicacious man, of keen and vigorous intelligence. Looking closely at the man's face and considering the temerity of his words, he gave such answers which would be to my advantage, and the same day he informed me by letter about the whole matter.

¹ Cosimo de' Medici (1389-1469): Florentine banker and statesman.

² Lorenzo de' Medici "the Elder" (ca. 1395-1440): Florentine banker.

³ 7 September 1433.

⁴ Cosimo returned to Florence on 6 October 1434.

⁵ "malachia": lethargic, from Gk. Malakía.

⁶ Ca. October 1435.

⁷ 1436.

⁸ Possibly present day Casale Marittima, ca. 70 km. southwest of Florence.

⁹ "necessitas".

¹⁰ "studium publicum".

[6] Quare Senam ubi continuo revertissem ex illoque liquidius rem omnem coram didicissem, mox adeo adii praefectum praesidii, quem capitaneum vocant, Honofrium Tifernatem, cognomento “Virilem”, hominem subdolum et fallacem. Huic rem ipsam, ut habebat, expono et omnia sicarii signa do, qualia et a Petro Johanneto didiceram, et ipse quoque, dum illum inter ambulandum obviam habeo, agnosco. Respondet continuo veterator ille et fraudulens latro: “Grates habeo sempiternas, mi pater observandissime Philelfe, immortalis Deo, qui mihi causam praestitit, quo tibi aliquo officio meo rem dignam gratificarer, nam jampridem cupiebam occasionem offerri mihi morem gerendi tibi. Hominem actutum comprehendam comprehensumque torquebo ita, ut vel concoctum cibum omnem ei eruam e stomacho. Quem si conscium cujuspian adversus te perpetrandi facinoris offendero, vita privabo. Sin minus offendero, missum faciam, inquiens aberasse me in se capiundo, non enim illum esse, quem quaerebam.” Fateor equidem, mi Aenea, vel ex iis verbis me illico de homine suspicatum monstri nescio quid. Ceterum, quoniam satis mihi de sicario compertum videbatur, egi homini gratias de optima erga me voluntate.

[7] Capitur sicarius eodem vesperi. Captus torquetur et mei interimendi causa se missum confitetur, idque Honofrius continuo palam fit. Sed ab quo missus foret, reticescit. Nec sicarium plectit, sed differt animadversionem, modo aliam causam obtendens, modo aliam, at verisimilem nullam. Interea temporis increbrescit non solum apud me, sed apud nonnullos gravissimos cives tuos Honofrium Tifernatem commutasse Philippum sicarium cum praetura Florentina. Nihil est enim apud Florentinos usque adeo secretum atque arcanum, quod minus quam primum effluat: ita sunt omnes tamquam rimarum pleni. Quod rumoribus fuerat divulgatum, ipsius tandem rei eventus approbat. Nam paulo postea Florentiae praetor declaratus est Honofrius Tifernas. Sed redeo ad sicarium. Mulctavit hunc Honofrius libris quingentis, erantque multo ante paratae pecuniae, quibus ille carcere liberatus remitteretur Florentiam. Et quod ridiculosius fuerat in sententia, quam impudentissimus latro adversus sicarium tulerat: dicebat illum ad id facinoris perpetrandum fuisse corruptum grandi pecunia et magna remuneratione. Ab quo autem ab quibusve corruptus fuisset, subticuerat.

[6] Therefore, I immediately returned to Siena and heard everything from his own mouth. Then I went straight to the captain of the people, Onofrio Tifernate, called “the Virile”, a treacherous and deceitful man. I told him about the situation and gave him the description of the assassin I had from Piero Giovanetti. I had also recognised the assassin when I met him on the street. Onofrio, an inveterate and treacherous scoundrel, immediately answered me: “My father, honourable Filelfo, I am eternally grateful to immortal God for giving me the pleasure of being able to assist you, for I have, for some time now, been seeking an opportunity to be of service to you. I shall immediately arrest this man and torment him in such ways as to make to vomit up all the food in his stomach. If I find that he is guilty of planning a crime against you, I shall kill him. If not, I shall release him and make an excuse for having arrested him by error as he was evidently not the man I was seeking.” I declare, my dear Enea, that the man’s words immediately made me suspect him of something sinister. But when I had heard enough, I thanked him for his kind intentions towards me.

[7] The assassin was arrested that same evening. Under torture, he confessed that he had been sent to kill me, which Onofrio immediately let me know, saying nothing about who had sent him. Moreover, he delayed the punishment, first for one reason and later for another, but neither was plausible. In the meantime, I and many of your important fellow-citizens heard a rumour that Onofrio Tifernate had traded the assassin, Filippo, for the office of *podestà* in Florence.¹ Indeed, nothing is so secret and confidential in Florence that it does not become known immediately, as if all men were full of cracks! The spreading rumour was soon confirmed by fact, for shortly afterwards, Onofrio Tifernate was appointed *podestà* of Florence. But I return to the assassin. Onofrio fined him 500 lira, a sum that had been readied long before to get him out of prison and returned to Florence. The most ridiculous thing about the judgement this impudent rascal passed against the assassin was that though the assassin said he had been hired for a great sum to perform this crime, he was allowed to maintain silence about those who had bought him.

¹ In fact, Onofrio was *podestà* in Firenze the following year, 1437,

an office he may have received in compensation for his lenient

treatment of the Florentine assassin.

[8] Ceterum longe se sua de sceleratissimo sicario liberando fefellit opinio. Nam ego injuriarum agens provocatione sum usus ex tuae patriae institutis ad praetorem. Itaque ea omnis causa ab Honofrio latrone devoluta est ad Jacobum Constantium Siculum ex Messana, qui vir innocentissimus et gravissimus ea tempestate praetorem gerebat Senae. Hic si potuisset¹ causam ex integro cognoscere, non obscure patuisset, et qui fuisset auctor Florentiae vulnerandi mei, et a quo idem sicarius missus Senam esset ad me interimendum. Nam Florentiae quoque patuit de sicario, patuit de licitatore conductoreque sicarii. Is enim fuit homo impurissimus ac nequam, Hieronymus Brochardus Imolensis. Sed qui fuerint facinoris auctores, qui mercedem, quam pepigissent, sicario dissolverint, in obscuro sunt, cum² tamen novere plures Laurentium Medicem una cum Nicolao et Carolo frequentare persaepe solitum omnium scelerum officinam, infames aedes Hieronymi Brochardi, per id temporis, quo sicarius est conductus. Idemque Laurentius Medices Hieronymum, conjectum ob id sceleris in vincula, carcere liberavit et ab omni poena tutatus est in maxima etiam totius civitatis offensione, quae tota eam injuriam publicam suamque ducebat. Sed vis magnitudoque pecuniae longe plus potuit ac polluit quam leges, quam aequitas, quam omne juris pique vel officium vel sanctitas vel decorum.

[9] Sed redeamus ad praetorem. Is, inquam, Jacobus Constantius, cum non posset ex institutis patriae tuae eam de integro agitare causam, quam praefectus cognorat, sed augere poenam dumtaxat, quod potuit solum, eam Philippo sicario dextram abscidit publico iudicio, quae me Florentiae vulnerat in faciem, obtruncassetque hominem, quo nece sua reliquis scariis esset exemplo immanitatis suae, nisi ego id factum iri prohibuissem, utpote qui maluissem illum vivere³ vitam inutilem atque dedecorosam quam per expeditam mortem liberari animi cruciatu. Ut enim magni est animi parvas suasque injurias oblivisci, ita justis et sapientis de publico humani generis hoste dignam aliquam capere ultionem.

¹ potuissem HE

² uerum HE

³ illum vivere : uiuere illum HE

[8] However, the heinous assassin's expectations about his liberation were disappointed. For as the injured party, I appealed, under the rules of your country, to the *podestà*. Thus, the whole case was transferred from the scoundrel Onofrio to Jacopo Costanzo, a Sicilian from Messina, an honest and serious man who was, at the time, *podestà* of Siena.¹ If he had been allowed to take on the case from the beginning, it would not have remained hidden who was the author of my being wounded in Florence² and who had sent the same assassin to Siena to kill me. For in Florence, it was public knowledge who the assassin was and who had engaged and hired him. It was that filthy and wicked man, Girolamo Broccardi³ from Imola. But it is still in the dark who were the real authors of the crime, who had put up the money and paid the assassin. Many know, however, that Lorenzo Medici⁴ - together with Niccolò⁵ and Carlo⁶ ⁷ - often visited the usual workshop of all crimes, the infamous house of Girolamo Broccardi, at the time the assassin was hired. The same Lorenzo Medici freed Girolamo from prison and protected him from all punishment for this enormous crime against the whole city, thus greatly damaging both the public and himself.⁸ But the power and amount of money were stronger and more effective than the laws, equity, and all duties, inviolability, and decency of justice and piety.

[9] But let us return to the *podestà*. The rules of your country did not allow Jacopo Costanzo to take on a case from the beginning when it had already been judged by the captain. But by virtue of his own office, he could increase the punishment. So he condemned the assassin to lose his right hand, the one that had wounded me in the face in Florence. He would even have executed this monstrous brute as a severe warning to other assassins. However, I prevented it since I preferred the assassin to live on uselessly and shamefully rather than being freed from mental torment by a quick death. For though the magnanimous man should forget small injuries, it behoves the just and wise man to take fitting revenge from a public enemy of humanity.

¹ Jacopo Costanzo di Messina, Podestà di Siena in 1436.

² In 1433.

³ Girolamo Broccardi: Rector of the University of Florence from 1431. A Medici supporter.

⁴ Lorenzo de' Medici the Elder.

⁵ Niccolò de' Niccoli (1367-1437): Italian Renaissance humanist and book collector.

⁶ Carlo Marsuppini [Aretinus] (1398 - 1453): Italian humanist.

Chancellor of Florence 1444-1453.

⁷ True to form, Filelfo had become an enemy to all of these men.

⁸ On this affair, see Davies.

[10] Cum igitur neque pacate – ut audis – nec item commode agerem Senae videremque, quanto cum vitae periculo inter gladios venenaque versarer – non enim defuere, qui etiam domi ausi fuerint me veneno perdere – Bononiam eo consilio me recepi, ut paucos post menses Mediolanum petam, futurus apud unicum nostrae tempestatis solem, Filippum Mariam, principem sane omnium, qui aut sunt aut fuerunt aut futuri sunt, munificentissimum et optimum. Apud hunc enim nullae mihi inimicorum artes, nullae insidiae oberunt. Totus ero cum Musis, totus cum amicis, totus mecum. Quod autem me hortaris, ne deseram ipse me, ne cedam malignitati fortunae, hortaris tu quidem et amice et recte. Jampridem animum meum nosti. Non is certe sum, qui me nesciam virum esse. Itaque bono sis animo, per me licet. Numquam me ignaviae accusabis nec item insolentiae, quin Horatianum praeceptum illud in universa tuebor vita: *Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci*. Tu vero, quod ad te attinet, facito me de omni re tua statuque certiolem. Vale.

Ex Bononia, 5. Kalendas Apriles 1439.

[10] So, since – as you hear – I was unable to stay in Siena in peace and comfort and saw how dangerous it was to live among swords and poison – for there were some who even attempted to poison me in my own home – I decided to go to Bologna, intending to continue to Milan after some months. For [I wished] to be with the unique sun of our time, Filippo Maria,¹ the most munificent and best of all princes that have ever lived or live now or shall live in the future. With him, there will be no hostile machinations, no plots. I shall be entirely with the Muses, with my friends, and with myself. When you exhort me to not fail myself and to not yield to an evil fortune, your exhortation is both kind and just. But you already know my character: I am not a man who knows himself.² Thus, do not despair on my account. Never shall you accuse me of faintheartedness or arrogance. May I follow Horace's precept all my life: *He has won every vote, who has blended profit and pleasure.*³ As for you, please let me know all about your present condition and situation. Farewell.

From Bologna, 28 March 1439.

¹ Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

² A play on the Greek *Gnothi seauton* (Know thyself):

Inscription in the temple of Delphi.

³ Horatius: *Ars poetica*, 343.

30. Letter to Francesco Pizzolpasso of Milan (29 October 1439, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: Capistrano, XIX, f. 46 *.

Editions: HE, 31, pp. 102-103; WO, 1, 1: 31, pp. 101-103; (both based on the Capistrano ms.).

Translations: RE, 16, pp. 122-124.

Reverendissime pater et domine mi praestantissime post recommendationem.

[1] Scripsi alias tuae reverendissimae paternitati nomina trium, scilicet abbatis de Scotia, Johannis de Sagobia et Thomae de Corsellis, quibus data fuit plena facultas nominandi et eligendi reliquos electores futuri pontificis. Nunc autem referendum est, quid actum per eos sit. Quod ut manifestissime cognoscas, mitto paternitati tuae in cedula hic inclusa nomina omnium electorum per eos inserta, ex quibus facile poteris opinari, quid futurum sit. Illud autem scire paternitatem tuam volo, quomodo omnia munde, omnia pure, omnia sancte peracta sunt. Et datus erit a Deo, qui eligitur.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae saeculares*.

30. Letter to Francesco Pizzolpasso of Milan (29 October 1439, Basel).

Context: No Piccolomini letters are extant between his letter of 28 October 1438 (letter 27) and the present letter of 29 October 1439. During that time, the Council of Basel continued its proceedings against Pope Eugenius, described by Piccolomini in his work *De Gestis Concilii Basiliensis Commentariorum libri II* (DGCB). On 23 June 1439, “the council fathers voted in deputations to accept a report from a conciliar commission with evidence on one hundred and fifty charges against Eugenius.”¹ In the XXXIVth session, held on 25 June 1439, the council declared the deposition of Pope Eugenius and began to prepare for a conclave to elect a new pope.² On 24 October, it approved the proposal for the composition of the conclave drawn up by a three-man committee.

Subject: Piccolomini informs his friend, the Archbishop of Milan, not a conciliarist, about the composition of the conclave. He intimates to the archbishop that the composition was rigged in favour of a particular candidate. The archbishop would easily understand that the predominance of Savoyard interests in the conclave pointed to the election of Duke Amédée of Savoy.

Most Reverend Father and my Distinguished Lord, after recommendation.

[1] In another letter,³ I wrote to Your Reverence the names of three men, who were given full powers to nominate and choose the other electors of the future pope: The abbot from Scotland,⁴ Juan de Segovia, and Thomas de Courcelles.⁵ Now I can report what they did. So that Your Reverence may be fully informed, I send you, in the enclosed note, the names of all who were chosen by them. From those names, you may easily guess what will happen.⁶ But I wish Your Reverence to understand how everything has been done in a correct, pure, and holy way. Whomever they elect will be given by God.

¹ Stieber, p. 51.

² Stieber, pp. 55-56.

³ This letter is not extant.

⁴ Thomas Livingstone (d. 1460): Abbot of Dundrennan in the diocese of Whithorn.

⁵ Thomas de Courcelles (1400-1469): Theologian. Rector of the University of Paris, 1430. Involved in the process against Jeanne d’Arc.

⁶ In his DVI, sect. 192, Piccolomini intimated that the composition of electors favoured Amédée VIII of Savoy, who was elected as Pope Felix V: *However, some claim that he [Amédée] had greatly manipulated his own election as pope and that the fathers had been corrupted with money. I was never able to learn the truth of that. There were, however, some indications of a*

rigged election since the same Amédée, although he had previously opposed the council, sent his prelates to [participate in the] the deposition of Eugenius, for without the Savoyard [bishops], there would not have been an adequate number of lord bishops. Also, the majority of the electors were dependent on him, for almost all the Italians or French were his direct subjects or obliged to him by favours.

[2] In ipsa autem nominatione plures decepti sunt, quos arbitror paternitati tuae bene notos - non enim ignoras, qui ad rem istam ambiebant. Sunt autem exclusi multi, qui in ipsa aliorum nominatione albi et pallidi remanserunt, tres viros amare blasphemantes. Factum est tamen, ut Deus voluit, nec ullus titularis episcopus nominatus est inter duodecim. Frater Bernardus vere causam habet conquerendi, quia, cum providisset de famulis et aliis opportunis rebus, relictus est. Commendaverat autem domum suam vicinis, qui eam custodirent stante ipso in conclavi, ideoque peccatum fuit tantum virum omittere. Nomina autem electorum et aliorum officialium ad conclave haec sunt, quae sequuntur in cedula. Quia ego ut clericus ceremoniarum intro conclave, non potero ut alii electionem futuri papae cito scribere. Recommendo me autem vestrae paternitati, servitor tuus Aeneas.

Ex Basilea, 21. Octobris 1439.

Cedula

[3] Pro Italia: Episcopus Augustensis. Vercellensis. Iporigiensis. Taurinensis. Abbas Fructuariensis de Carrecto. De Secusia, Taurinensis dyoceseos. Praeceptor de Reverso. Praeceptor de Clavasio.

Pro Gallia: Cardinalis Arelatensis. Archiepiscopus Tarantasiensis. Episcopus Gebennensis. Episcopus Aquensis. Abbas Concensis. Archidiaconus Metensis, doctor. Thomas Tibut, magister in theologia, Normanus. Johannes de Valle, Brito magister in theologia. Thomas de Corsellis, magister in theologia Picardus.

[2] Many were disappointed when others than they themselves were elected – I believe they are well-known to Your Reverence, for you are quite aware who wanted to be chosen. Many who were excluded grew white and pale when others were nominated, and they cursed the three men bitterly. But everything has been done according to God's will, and among the 12¹ men appointed, there were no titular bishops.² But brother Bernard³ has reason to be annoyed, for when he had made arrangements for his household and other necessities, he was excluded. However, he had already entrusted his house to his neighbours to take care of it while he was in the conclave. Thus, it was an error to exclude this great man.⁴ The names of the electors and other officials at the conclave are included in the [enclosed] list. Since I join the conclave as clerk of ceremonies, I cannot – unlike the others – write quickly about the election of the future pope.⁵ I recommend myself to Your Reverence.

From Basel, 29 October 1439.

List

[3] For Italy: The Bishop of Aosta.⁶ The Bishop of Vercelli.⁷ The [Bishop of] Ivrea.⁸ The Bishop of Torino.⁹ Abbot del Carretto of Fruttuaria.¹⁰ The Abbot of Susa,¹¹ in the diocese of Torino. The Prior of Reversio.¹² The Prior of Chiavasso.^{13 14}

For France: The Cardinal of Arles.¹⁵ The Archbishop of Tarentaise.¹⁶ The Bishop of Genève.¹⁷ The Bishop of Dax.¹⁸ The Abbot of Conques.¹⁹ The Archdeacon of Metz, doctor.²⁰ Thomas Tibout,²¹ Magister in theology, from Normandy. Jean Valle,²² a Breton Magister in theology. Thomas de Courcelles, Picardian Magister in theology.

¹ 32?

² Titular bishops were honorary bishops appointed to sees no longer existing, particularly in the East.

³ Bernard de la Planche? See below and DGCB, pp. 212-213.

⁴ This argument appears somewhat specious.

⁵ Here, Piccolomini lets Pizzolpasso know that he will not be able to inform him immediately of the results of the election.

⁶ Giorgio di Saluzzo (bef. 1414-1461): Bishop of Aosta, 1433-1440. HE, p. 103, has Peter von Schaumburg, Bishop of Augsburg, but as a German bishop, he could not very well represent the Italians.

⁷ Guillaume Didier: Bishop of Vercelli, 1437-1452.

⁸ Giovanni de Parella di San Martino (d. 1479): Bishop of Ivrea, 1437-1479.

⁹ Lodovico de Romagnano (d. 1469): Bishop of Torino, 1438-1469.

¹⁰ Aleramo del Carretto: Abbot of San Benigno in Fruttuaria, 1419.

¹¹ Giacomo: Abbot of Abbey of Saints Peter and Paul, Novalesa.

¹² Giovanni di Monte Canuto: Prior of the House of Reversio (Hospital Brothers of Saint Antony).

¹³ Bartolomeo Provana: Prior of the house of Chiavasso (Hospital Brothers of Saint Antony).

¹⁴ All these prelates come from the states of Amédée VIII of Savoy.

¹⁵ Louis Aleman.

¹⁶ Jean d'Arces (ca. 1370-1454): Archbishop of Tarentaise, 1438-1454.

¹⁷ Francois de Metz [Meez] (d. 1444): Bishop of Genève, 1426-1444.

¹⁸ Bernard de la Planche. See DGCB, pp. 212-213.

¹⁹ Raimond IV de La Romeguière

²⁰ Guillaume-Hugues d'Estaing.

²¹ In the DGCB, pp. 214-215, Piccolomini calls him Nicolaus Tibout. Doctor of in theology. Penitentiary of the diocese of Coutances.

²² Jean Valle: Rector of Plounéor.

[4] Pro Germania: Episcopus Basiliensis. Abbas Candidae Casae de Scotiae. Abbas de Luzla, dyocesis Basiliensis. Decanus Basiliensis, doctor decretorum. Christianus, magister in theologia Viennensis. Archidiaconus Cracoviensis. Henricus de Judaeo, Coloniensis doctor. Jacobus de Salsburga, licentatus.

Pro Hispania: Episcopus Dertusensis. Episcopus Vicensis. Episcopus Visensis. Abbas Cucufati de Aragonia. Johannes de Sagobia, in theologia magister. Bernardus Bos, Cathalanus doctor, procurator episcopi Ilerdensis. Raymundus Albioli, de Cathalonia, procurator episcopi Tarasconensis.

[5] Sunt cardinalis unus, archiepiscopus unus, episcopi decem, abbates septem, magistri in theologia quinque, doctores juriurum novem, omnes autem in sacerdotio constituti.

Vicecamerarius episcopus Lausanensis.¹

Custodes conclavi: Episcopus Bellicensis. Episcopus Grossetanus. Abbas de Cusa. Abbas Abundavere. Magister Franciscus de Fuce in theologia. Guilielmus de Constantia, doctor. Johannes de Turicella, doctor Cathalanus. Thomas Nagel, Almanus bacalarius in artibus.

Aeneas, praepositus ecclesiae sancti Laurentii Mediolanensis, canonicus Tridentinus. Michael Gallicus, Normannus, clerici notarii ceremoniarum.

¹ vicecamerarius ... Lausanensis
omit. HE

[4] For Germany: The Bishop of Basel.¹ The Abbot of Whitehouse in Scotland.² The Abbot of Luzella, in the diocese of Basel.³ The Dean of Basel, Doctor in canon law.⁴ Christian, Doctor in theology from Vienna.⁵ The Archdeacon of Krakow.⁶ Heinrich von Jude, a doctor from Cologne. Jakob⁷ from Salzburg, Licentiate.

For Spain: The Bishop of Tortosa.⁸ The Bishop of Vich.⁹ The Bishop of Viseu.¹⁰ The Abbot of [Saint] Cucuphas in Aragon.¹¹ Juan de Segovia, Magister in theology. Bernard Buscho,¹² Doctor from Catalunya, procurator of the Bishop of Lerida. Raimondo Albiol,¹³ from Catalunya, procurator of the Bishop of Tarazona.¹⁴

[5] There is one cardinal, one archbishop, ten bishops, seven abbots, five magisters in theology, nine doctors in law, all being members of the priestly order.

The *vicecamerarius* is the Bishop of Lausanne.¹⁵

The guardians of the conclave were: the Bishop of Belley,¹⁶ the Bishop of Grosseto,¹⁷ the Abbot of Chiusa,¹⁸ the Abbot of Abondance,¹⁹ Francois de Fuxe,²⁰ Magister in theology, Wilhelm from Konstanz,²¹ doctor, Juan de Turicela,²² doctor from Catalunya, and Thomas Nagel,²³ a German, Bachelor in the Arts.

Clerks of ceremonies are Enea, Provost of San Lorenzo in Milan, canon of Trento, and Michel,²⁴ a Frenchman from Normandy.

¹ Friedrich von der Pfalz.

² Thomas Livingstone.

³ Konrad: Abbot of Luzella in the diocese of Basel.

⁴ Johann Wyler: Dean of Basel. Canonist.

⁵ Christian von Königgrätz: Canon of Olmütz; theologian. At the time, president of the German nation at the council.

⁶ Derzelaus Nicolai de Borzinow: Dean of Krakow. Canonist.

⁷ Jakob Friesheimer: Lawyer.

⁸ Otòn de Moncada y de Luna (1390-1473): Bishop of Tortosa, 1415-1473. See DGCB, pp. 216-217.

⁹ Jorge de Ornos [Jordi / Hornos] (ca. 1380-1453): Bishop of Vich [Vic], 1424 -1445. See DGCB, pp. 216-217.

¹⁰ Luis Goncalves de Amaral (d. 1444): Bishop of Viseu, 1431-1439. See DGCB, pp. 216-219.

¹¹ Benedictine abbey in St. Cougat [Cucuphat] de Vallès.

¹² Bernard Buscho: Canonist.

¹³ Raimondo Albiol: Canonist.

¹⁴ From this list is missing Antonio de Arulara, see DGCB, pp. 218-219.

¹⁵ Louis de la Palud (ca. 1375-1451): Bishop of Lausanne, 1431.

¹⁶ Perceval de la Balme [Baume] (d. 1460): Bishop of Belley.

¹⁷ Niccolò, see DGCB, pp. 218-219.

¹⁸ Giovanni: abbot of San Michele in Chiusa.

¹⁹ Francois: abbot of Abondance. Canonist.

²⁰ Francois de Fuxe [Fuce, Fusce]: Theologian. Franciscan.

²¹ Wilhelm: Canon of Speyer (?)

²² Juan de Turicela: Canon of Urgel, dean of Segorbe.

²³ In the DGCB, pp. 220-221, called Dietrich Nagel, canon of Riga.

²⁴ Michel Brunaut.

31. Letter to the City Government of Siena (6 November 1439, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: Siena / Archivio Statale / Concistorio, 88, 20 *.

Editions: HE, 32, p. 104; WO, 1, 1: 32, pp. 103-104; (both based on the Siena ms.).

Translations: ME, 10, pp. 61-62; RE, 17, pp. 123-124.

Magnifici et potentissimi domini mei, post recommendationem.

[1] Quoniam ego ut ceremoniarum clericus praesens fui et vidi atque audivi, quae his diebus sunt acta in conclavi circa electionem novi pastoris, significo vobis, quia papam habemus illustrissimum principem dominum ducem Sabaudiae, qui heri hora nona ante meridiem electus fuit, concurrentibus in eum ex 33 vocibus sex et viginti. Fuerunt et alii nominati, scilicet magister Johannes de Sagobia, qui omnes post ducem superavit in vocibus, archiepiscopus Coloniensis, episcopus Frisingensis, archiepiscopus Lugdunensis, cardinalis de Cypro et cardinalis de Fuxo ac cardinalis Sancti Petri. Sed superavit omnes illustrissimus dominus dux Sabaudiae, considerantibus patribus, quantum oporteret in hoc tempore virum habere potentem, qui adversarii conatus infrangeret. Et ita factum est, quia in quinto scrutinio dictum principem concorditer elegerunt. Credo, quia videbitis magnas ubique novitates et etiam in Italia, nec dubito, quin dux Mediolani illustrissimus oboedientiam sibi praestet, et tota Italia ipsum timeat. Veniet primo huc et postmodum partes Italiae visitabit. Nunc ita sciant dominationes vestrae, ut rebus suis caute et sapienter provideant, sicut semper consueverunt, mihi que mandent, si qua in re utilis esse possum patriae. Valeant optime dominationes vestrae, quibus me humiliter facio recommissum.

Ex Basilea, 6. Novembris 1439.

Servitor vester Aeneas, praepositus ecclesiae Sancti Laurentii Mediolanensis et canonicus Tridentinus.²

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae saeculares*.

² Chancery annotation in margin: *Die 22. Novembris praesentata.*

31. Letter to the City Government of Siena (6 November 1439, Basel).

Context: On 5 November, the conclave in Basel elected the Duke of Savoy as the next pope.

Subject: Piccolomini informs the City Government of Siena about the election so that it could take the political measures appropriate to this new situation.

My Magnificent and Mighty Lords, after recommendation.

[1] Since I was present as a cleric of ceremonies and saw and heard all that happened these days, during the conclave, concerning the election of our new shepherd, I inform you that we have a pope, the Most Illustrious Prince, the Lord Duke of Savoy,¹ who was elected yesterday at nine o'clock in the morning. He received 26 out of 33 votes. Others were nominated, too: Master Juan de Segovia, who surpassed all the others after the duke in votes, the Archbishop of Cologne,² the Bishop of Freising,³ the Archbishop of Lyon,⁴ the Cardinal of Cyprus,⁵ Cardinal de Foix,⁶ and the Cardinal of San Pietro.⁷ ⁸ But the Most Illustrious Lord Duke of Savoy had the most votes since the fathers considered it necessary to, at this time, have a man strong enough to resist the attempts of his adversary.⁹ And thus it happened that during the fifth ballot, they unanimously elected the said prince. I believe that you will see great changes¹⁰ everywhere and also in Italy. I do not doubt that the Most Illustrious Duke of Milan¹¹ will render him obedience and that all of Italy will fear him. First, he will come here,¹² and afterwards, he will visit parts of Italy. Your Lordships should now know how to proceed cautiously and wisely as you usually do. Please let me know if I can be of any service to our country. I bid Your Lordships farewell and recommend myself humbly to you.

From Basel, 6 November 1439.

Your servant Enea, Provost of the church of San Lorenzo in Milan and Canon of Trento.

¹ Amédée VIII (Savoie) (1383-1451): Count, later Duke of Savoy. Elected antipope under the name of Felix V by the rump council in Basel in 1439.

² Archbishop Theodor von Mörs.

³ Bishop Nicodemo della Scala.

⁴ Archbishop Amédée de Talaru.

⁵ Cardinal Hugues de Lusignan.

⁶ Cardinal Pierre de Foix.

⁷ Cardinal Juan Cervantes.

⁸ Following hallowed tradition, a number of "complimentary" votes were given during the first ballots.

⁹ Pope Eugenius IV

¹⁰ "novitates".

¹¹ Duke Filippo Maria Visconti.

¹² Basel.

32. Letter to Francesco Pizzolpasso of Milan (6 November 1439, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: Capistrano / xix, f. 46 *.

Editions: HE, 33, pp. 104-105 (based on Wolkan's ed.); WO, 1, 1: 33, pp. 104-105 (based on the Capistrano ms.).

Translations: RE, 18, pp. 124-125.

Reverendissimo in Christo patri domino Francisco archiepiscopo Mediolanensi, domino meo praecipuo.

Reverendissime pater et praestantissime domine, post recommendationem.

[1] Nescio quid aliud scribam reverendissime tuae paternitati, nisi quia papam habemus et illum quidem, quem octo jam annis praedicatum habuimus, ducem Sabaudiae illustrissimum. *Datum est desuper*, nec possunt mutari fata. Ex duobus modis, quibus sedari schisma poterat, forsitan unus habebitur, scilicet quia expulso Gabriele hic monarchiam tenebit. Habet – ut scis – et ultra et citra montes dominia. Tremebit – crede mihi – tota Italia, nec angulus Gabrieli tutus patebit. Fuit hic heri electus inter 9. et 10. horam ante meridiem. Laudant autem, qui hic sunt, omnes factum. Ex 33 electoribus habuit ipse 26, qui eum² eligerunt, et qui non 7. Aliud reservo in tempus. Satis est, quia a duabus et amplius eo partibus electus est secundum formam decreti. Dieta jam celebratur Francfordiae. Quid ibi deliberari debeat, nescio. Haec sunt, quae modo scribenda existimavi. Recomendo autem me humiliter tuae paternitati.

Ex Basilea, 6. Novembris 1439.³

Vester servus Aeneas.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae saeculares*.

² cum WO

³ At the end of the text of the letter, the following note has been added: *Recepta die sabbatis 14. Novembris 1439 per famulum domini Novariensis. Responsum eadem et*

scriptum aliquantulum sibi et etiam Nicolao nostro per Peragalum, qui ipsa die recessit vesperi. / Haec debuit esse secundo scripta (WO, 1, 1: p. 105, n. 1).

32. Letter to Francesco Pizzolpasso of Milan (6 November 1439, Basel).

Context: For years, the Duke of Savoy had planned and plotted to be elected pope by the council as its antipope to Eugenius IV. He had finally succeeded.

Subject: Piccolomini informs the Archbishop of Milan of the election of the Duke of Savoy as the council's new pope.

Most Reverend Father in Christ, Lord Archbishop Francesco of Milan, my Eminent Lord.

Most Reverend Father and Most Eminent Lord, after recommendation.

[I I know not what else to write to Your Reverence except that we have a pope, the one foretold eight years ago, the Most Illustrious Duke of Savoy. It *has been given from above*,¹ and the fates cannot be changed. Of the two ways in which the schism could be settled, we shall maybe have the one where Gabriel² will be expelled, and this one³ will hold the monarchy.⁴ As you know, the duke of Savoy has dominions on both sides of the mountains.⁵ All of Italy, believe me, will tremble, and no corner will be safe for Gabriel. The duke was elected yesterday between the ninth and the tenth hour before noon. All here praise the deed. 26 of the 33 electors voted for him, whereas 7 did not. (Other news I reserve for later.) According to the decree [of election],⁶ two thirds or more of the votes sufficed for election. A diet is being held in Frankfurt. I know not what is to be discussed there. This is what I thought I should write now. I recommend myself humbly to Your Reverence.

From Basel, 6 November 1439.

Your servant Enea.

¹ John, 19:11.

² Eugenius IV.

³ Felix V.

⁴ The papal monarchy.

⁵ The Alps.

⁶ The council's decree on the papal election.

33. Letter to Juan de Segovia (13 August 1440, Basel)¹.

Manuscripts: Wien / Österreichische Nationalbibliothek / 5104 / 56v ff. *; 5116, 77r ff *.

Editions: HE, 34, pp. 105-109 (based on Vienna 5104); WO, 1, 1: 34, pp. 105-110; (based on both Vienna mss.).

Translations: ME, 11, pp. 62-67; RE, 19, pp. 125-131; WI, pp. 176-187.

Aeneas Silvius Senensis domino suo Johanni de Segobia, sacrae theologiae magistro, salutem dicit.

[1] Licet coronationem summi pontificis vario rumore notam esse tibi tuisque collegis arbitror, quia tamen varia apud vos conducta esse opinor, quae inter se non cohaereant, dignum ipse putavi meis litteris satisfacere veritati vobisque ibidem **sitentibus** harum rerum narrationem efficere veridicam, remque, ut gesta est, ad unguem referre, atque – ut brevior sim – jam incipio.

[2] Romanos² pontifices coronari in generalibus conciliis raro auditum est. Tu tamen et Alexandrum Pisis et Martinum Constantiae coronatum audisti, sed praecedit³ hujus coronatio tanto illas, quanto et Felix illos nobilitate anteit. Ita enim iudicium eorum est, qui et illas et hanc contemplati sunt. Referam ego igitur de hac, sed paucis. Non enim ut historicus scribo, sed ut servus domini res gestas epistolari genere doceo. Transeo electionem de hoc principe auctoritate hujus synodi factam, quam alio loco non paucis verbis scripsi. Praetereo legationem sibi missam et consensum per eum praestitum, de quibus tu plane instructus es.

¹ This letter was not included in the collection of Piccolomini's *Epistolae saeculares*.

² Romanorum WO

³ precedet WO

33. Letter to Juan de Segovia (13 August 1440, Basel).

Context: After the election, at the rump council of Basel, of Duke Amédée of Savoy as pope, it took more than seven months before he was crowned. No letters of Piccolomini from that period survive. He had now been appointed secretary to Felix. By this, most European rulers had abandoned the Council of Basel and switched their allegiance to Pope Eugenius, and the coronation ceremony in Basel meant a new schism in the Church that was rejected by most princes and prelates.

Subject: Piccolomini relates the coronation of Felix V to Juan de Segovia.^{1 2 3}

Enea Silvio from Siena sends greetings to Juan de Segovia, Magister in sacred theology.

[1] I believe that you and your colleagues must have heard various reports about the coronation of the Supreme Pontiff,⁴ but I presume they were different and did not agree between them. I have, therefore, found it worthwhile to satisfy truth and to provide you there, thirsting for it, with an accurate and detailed account of the event as it actually happened. And to be brief, I begin right here.

[2] Roman pontiffs are rarely crowned in general councils, but as you have heard, Alexander⁵ was crowned in Pisa⁶ and Martin⁷ in Konstanz.⁸ However, this coronation excels those elections as much as Felix surpasses the other two in nobility. That is the judgment of those who have witnessed both those two coronations and the present one. So, I shall give an account, however brief, of this coronation. However, I do not write as a historian, but, as a servant of my Lord,⁹ I relate the events in epistolary form. I pass over the election of this prince made on the authority of the present synod since I have described it fully elsewhere.¹⁰ I also pass over the embassy sent to him and his acceptance¹¹, about which you are already fully informed.

¹ Cognasso, II, pp. 191-195.

² The ritual of this coronation was of necessity adapted to the local circumstances. For Piccolomini's description of another papal coronation, that one of Nicolaus V in Rome 1447, see CDR, I, sect. 57-58.

³ For comments on this letter, see Izbicki: *Reject*, p. 190.

⁴ Felix V. For a description of Felix V, his career and personality, see DVI, ch. 27.

⁵ Alexander V [Petrus Philargus of Candia] (ca. 1339-1410): Pope

(Pisan obedience) from 1409-1410.

⁶ Council of Pisa, 1499. Attempted to settle the Great Western Schism by deposing two popes (Roman line and Avignonese line) and electing a third, Alexander V, which only worsened the schism by creating a third papal line (Pisan).

⁷ Martinus V [Oddone Colonna] (1368-1431): Pope from 1417 to his death

⁸ Council of Konstanz (1414-1418), which finally settled the Great Western Schism by

deposing three popes and electing a new pope in their stead, Martin V.

⁹ Felix V. Piccolomini points out that he had written the account of the coronation not as an independent historian but as an official of the new papal court.

¹⁰ Here, Piccolomini refers to his *De Gestis Concilii Basiliensis* (Hay, p. 221-255) with a detailed description of the conclave. It appears that this work was written before the letter to Juan de Segovia.

¹¹ See DVI, sect. 193.

[3] Pergo ad coronationem, quae nono kalendas augusti celebrata est in civitate hac Basiliensi. Ipse autem dominus noster triginta ante diebus, octavo kalendas julii, ingressus erat, cujus introitus suum habere tractatum meretur, sed non omnia uno in tempore scribi possunt. Locus est ante cathedralem ecclesiam late patens, ubi spectacula populo fiunt. Illic sublimis tumulus constructus est et super illum altare excelsum¹ in angulo, desuper pretiosi panni, ne vel pluvia vel sol noceret. Prospectus exinde in omnem plateam fuit. Huc clerus et universa nobilitas ipseque coronandus pontifex conscendit. Extimati sunt hominum circiter duo milia tribunal conscendisse.

[4] Venerat praecedenti die Ludovicus, Sabaudiae dux, ipsius Romani pontificis generatus, vir comis aspectu et affatu placidus, consilio et animo justo. Statura illi mediocris et oculi praealbi. Cum ipso autem summo pontifice alter generatus profectus erat Philippus, comes Gebennensis, summa virtute et honesto corpore honestisque moribus adolescens, sociusque illi Ludovicus, marchio Salutiarum, fuit, quo in homine nescias formam vel eloquentiam magis admirere. Magna praeterea tam ducem ipsum quam etiam summum pontificem [ex²] tota Sabaudia secuta nobilitas erat, sui principis visura coronationem, contenderantque ita – ut fit – singuli spectabiliores venire. Itaque fuit magnus virorum magnusque equorum apparatus, quorum numerus ad quattuor milia dijudicatus est.

[5] Ex Alamania marchio de Roeteln, juvenili aetate decorus, flavos vento crines fatigans; Conradus de Winsperg, Romani imperii haereditarius camerarius, annis et sensu senex; comes de Tierstein, cui nemo forma comparandus juveni viroque fuit, nec adhuc senem senex aequalem habet; oratores Argentinenses, Bernenses, Friburgenses Solodorensesque. Omnis circumvicina nobilitas confluit, tantaque forensis populi multitudo concurrat, ut nulla capi platea posset, ac, si joculari licet, quidquid vini erat, sit bibitum. Capita quoque³ hominum ad quinquaginta milia credita sunt. Civitas vero mille robustos juvenes in armis habuit, ne quid tumulti, ne quid rixarum fieret prohibuit, aciem non minus timendam quam admirandam. Horum alii tribunal, alii palatium observavere. Tecta omnium domorum fenestrasque et arbores viri feminaeque obsederant, platea vero - sic populo plena fuit - ut nec sinapis grano dedisset locum.

[6] Quibus omnibus expectantibus advenit in ipso diei ortu Felix electus, veneranda canitie, decorus aspectu et facie tota prudentiam prae se ferens singularem. Statura hominis ut filiorum communis, forma egregia, quantum senio datur, pilus albus cutisque, sermo paucus et morosus. Ante ipsum praelati infulati et clerus urbanus cum reliquiis introierant. Locatus ille in praeeminenti sede est, ceterisque considentibus et facto ubique silentio caeremoniae inchoatae sunt, quarum sic peritum se Felix ostendit, ut nihilo monitoris egerit, putassetque nemo patrem illum saecularibus negotiis quadraginta aut eo plus annis versatum, tantum umquam otii potuisse habere, ut ritum ecclesiae sic imbuerit. Castigabat⁴ ipse per se aliorum errata nec aliquid vel minimum extra ordinem fieri ferebat celebravitque missam suam et cantando et legendo plus quam dici posset sollemniter, nihil omittens, nihil pervertens.

¹ excelso WO

² em. HE

³ omit. WO

⁴ itaque add. WO

[3] I move on to the coronation, which took place on 24 July in this city of Basel. Our Lord himself had arrived 30 days before, on 24 June. His entry deserves its own account, but all cannot be written at one time. The place was the large square before the cathedral, where spectacles for the people are usually held. There a high platform was built, and on it, they placed a raised altar in a corner, and above it a canopy made of precious cloths as protection against rain and sun. From there you could see all the square. The clergy, all the nobles, and the pontiff to be crowned mounted there. Altogether, an estimated crowd of about 2,000 mounted the platform.

[4] The day before, Louis,¹ Duke of Savoy, arrived, a son of the Roman Pontiff, gracious and affable, sagacious and just. He is of middle height and has pale eyes. The Supreme Pontiff's other son,² Philippe, Count of Genève, had arrived with his father. He is an adolescent of the highest virtue, handsome, and honest. He was accompanied by Ludovico,³ Marquess of Saluzzo, a man of such handsomeness and eloquence that you do not know which to admire the most. A great throng of nobles from Savoy accompanied both the duke and the Supreme Pontiff, coming to see the coronation of their prince, all vying – as usually happens - with each other to make the most impressive appearance. The array of men and horses was grand, and their number was estimated at 4,000.

[5] From Germany came Margrave von Rötelen,⁴ a handsome youth with golden hair flowing in the wind; Konrad von Weinsberg,⁵ hereditary chamberlain of the empire, old of years and bearing; Count von Thierstein,⁶ whose handsomeness no youth or man could equal, and who is, today, peerless among old men; the ambassadors of Strassbourg, Bern, Freiburg, and Solothurn. All the nobles of the region gathered there, as did such a large crowd of people from outside the city that no square could hold them and – allow me a joke! – the wine was drunk to the last drop! The crowd of people was estimated at 50,000. The city had 1,000 strong young men under arms to prevent riots and brawls, a force to be feared as much as admired. Some of them guarded the tribune and others the palace. All roofs, windows, and trees were occupied by men and women, and the square was so full of people that there was no space even for a mustard seed.

[6] As all these people were waiting, [pope-]elect Felix arrived at dawn, with venerable white hair, graceful and a face revealing his eminent wisdom. Like his sons, he was of middle height, as handsome as old age allows, white-skinned, of spare but deliberate speech. Mitred prelates and the city's clergy carrying relics preceded him. He was placed on a raised seat, and when the others had been seated, and there was complete silence, the ceremonies began. Felix knew them so well that he did not need a prompter, though nobody would have thought that this Father who had been occupied with secular affairs for forty years or more would ever have had time to acquire such intimate knowledge of church rituals. He even personally corrected errors made by others and did not allow the slightest deviation from the ritual. He celebrated mass, singing and speaking with incredible solemnity, without omissions and distortions.

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

² Philippe de Savoie (1417-1444): Count of Geneva. Died unmarried.

³ Ludovico I da Saluzzo [del Vasto] (1405-1475): Marquess of Saluzzo 1416-1475.

⁴ Wilhelm von Hachberg-Sausenberg (1406-1482): Marquess, 1428-1441

⁵ Konrad von Weinsberg [Winsperg] (1375-1448): Reichserbkämmerer.

⁶ Oswald I von Thierstein (1424-1488): Graf von Thierstein.

[7] Mira res omnibus et spectaculo digna videbatur patrem illic grandaevum celebrare, illic prolem insignem celebranti servire. Quasi enim *novellae olivarum circum* altare duo nati officiose attenteque, quantum laicis permittitur, ministrabant meritoque dici hunc Felicem omnes ajebant, qui post exactam laudabiliter in saecula vitam, post administratum feliciter ducatum generosamque sobolem educatam ad regimen universalis ecclesiae accersitus a Deo esset. Vidisses plurimos prae laetitia lacrimantes benedicentesque dominum, qui ad tantum spectaculum vivere eos permisisset, qui rem suis oculis intuerentur antea nec visam nec auditam ulli.

[8] Fuit tamen inter haec – ut saepe accidit – res una, quae risum movit. Moris est, ut inter ipsa sollemnia preces pontifici fiant, quas primus diaconorum cardinalium inchoat scrinariique et iudices subsequuntur. Hic autem loco iudicum advocati responderunt cantantique Ludovico cardinali Sanctae Susannae, viro maximo et ceremoniarum apprime gnaro, qui presbyter pro diacono fuit, responsuri advocati et scrinarii cantum adeo dissonum emisissent, ut non solum risum, sed et lacrimas ab oculis omnium excusserint, nec major de ulla re octo post diebus quam de illorum cantu sermo sit habitus. Quod etsi aliqui sibi dedecori existimaverint, ego qui¹ inter illos fui, nihi mihi ignominiae putavi inscitiam cantus, quam rem nemo umquam non levis perfecte adeptus² est, ideoque et sequenti die, cum apud praedicatores idem officium exigeretur, cantitare meum carmen non erubui.

[9] Ut igitur finita missa est summusque ipse pontifex consecratus, sacer tiaras triplici corona insignis, compluribus gemmis praelucidus, allatus est, spectanteque universa multitudine et animam comprimente Ludovicus cardinalis Arelatensis, cui id officii, quod Ostiensi episcopo debetur, synodus commiserat, quasi fructum suorum laborum jam colligens coronam ipsam excellentis pretii, quam plurimi ad triginta milia aureorum censuerunt, felici capiti Felicis imposuit, moxque per universos acclamatus est, ut vita papae esset, postmodumque plenariae indulgentiae, quas numquam antea populus ille habuerat, concessae sunt.

[10] Completisque coronationis sollemniis ex tribunali in processionem est itum, omnesque in equis per ordinem progressi sunt, qui hujusmodi est habitus: primi omnium laici et vulgaris turba famulantium, secundo nobilium distinctae familiae, tertio nobiles ipsi et milites, quarto loco barones, comites et marchiones, quinto dux ipse consilio suorum comitatus, aureis vestibibus in terram demissis. Inter hos, ut potuit, expompare nixus est quilibet: hic equi ostro et auro tecti, hic sagae militum, gemmis et argento onustae, hic tubae tibicinesque et mimorum³ cohors praeludens, variae vestes, varia ornamenta, ut nulli sat vidisse sit visum. Post hos urbanus clerus in pedes reliquias sanctorum vectitans et puerorum cantantium candidus ordo. His succedebat umbraculum rubei croceique coloris et apud illud scutiferi, quos honoris vocant, locati erant, rubeos gestantes pileos. Juxta hos fuissent praefecti navales, si qui affuissent, sed loco eorum eremita Ripalliae, quos milites Sancti Mauritii vocitant, suffecti sunt, viri graves et aevo praematuri, qui Felicis papae et saeculi et religionis fuerant comites, et qualis habitus illius antea fuisset. [*Cont.*]

¹ quoniam WO

² aggressus WO

³ minorum WO

[7] All were impressed to see the venerable old father celebrate mass, served at the altar by his distinguished offspring. *As olive plants around the altar*,¹ his two sons ministered diligently and attentively, as far as laymen are allowed to. All said that this [pope] was truly happy [Felix]: having lived his life in the world commendably and having ruled his duchy successfully and brought up his noble offspring, he had now been summoned by God to govern Universal Church. You could have seen many crying for joy and praising the Lord for allowing them to witness such a grand spectacle and behold with their own eyes something which nobody had ever seen or heard.

[8] As often happens, there was a comical episode. It is the custom at such solemn ceremonies to sing prayers for the pope,² where the first cardinal deacon intones [the single verses] and the secretaries and judges sing the responses. At this event, the advocates, instead of the judges, sang the responses to Louis, Cardinal of Santa Susanna, a great man who knew the ceremonies perfectly and as cardinal priest took over the role of the cardinal deacon. When the advocates and the secretaries gave the responses, they sang so dissonantly that they made people smile, nay, cry from laughter, and even a week later, people still spoke more about their singing than about anything else. Some of them were quite embarrassed, but I, who was one of the group, was not ashamed that I did not know how to sing well since no important man has ever learnt it perfectly. Therefore, when the same office was performed the next day, at the Dominicans, I was not ashamed to sing at all.

[9] After the mass and the consecration of the Supreme Pontiff, the holy tiara was brought, ornamented with three crowns and resplendent with many jewels. In view of the whole crowd, barely breathing, Louis, Cardinal of Arles, to whom the synod had entrusted this task normally belonging to the Bishop of Ostia, placed the crown on Felix' happy head, thus gathering the fruits of his labours.³ The crown was quite valuable, by many estimated at 30,000 gold ducats. Then the pope was acclaimed by all, shouting "Long live the pope"! Afterwards, plenary indulgences were granted, which people here had never had before.

[10] When the solemn coronation ritual was over, a procession began from the tribunal. All went by horse, in the following order: first, the laymen and the common crowd of servants. Second, the various households of the nobles; third, the nobles and knights; fourth, the barons, counts, and margraves; fifth, the duke⁴ with his counsellors, trailing their golden garments. Among them, everyone strived, as best he could, to outdo the others in splendour. You saw horses decked in purple and gold, armour heavy with jewels and silver, trumpets and fluteplayers preceded by a group of actors, many different garments and ornaments: nobody could get enough of looking at them. After them came the city's clergy on foot, carrying the relics of saints, and a group of boy singers dressed in white. A red and yellow umbrella⁵ followed, and around it were placed the so-called squires of honour, wearing red berets. After them would have come the naval captains,⁶ had any been there, but in their place came the hermits of Ripaille, called the Knights of Saint Maurice, dignified old men, who had been the companions of Pope Felix both in the world and in the religious life.⁷ [Cont.]

¹ Psalms, 127: 3: *thy children as olive plants, round about thy table.*

² The *Laudes Regiae*, sung at papal coronations.

³ Cardinal Alleman had been the primus motor of the council's deposition of Eugenius IV and election of the Duke of Savoy as pope.

⁴ Louis I of Savoy.

⁵ Traditional symbol of papal power.

⁶ The officers of the pope's naval station in Ostia.

⁷ See DVI, sect. 188.

[*Cont.*] In suis habitibus praemonstrabant plurimumque reverentiae videbantur mereri. Illinc prioribus quibusdam pluvialia sine mitra gerentibus locus fuit.

[11] Mox successere scrinarii et advocati, pluvialia ex traverso gestitantes¹, habitum cantui, quem habuerant, valde conformem. Idem gestamen debitum erat his, qui sequebantur, iudicibus, quod minime observatum est incuria promotorum. Habuerant autem cappas et pileos, tamquam praelati. Hos secuti sunt abbates et inde episcopi ornati pluvialibus infultaque, equis insidentes² faleratis. Hoc in ordine praeterivimus duodecim equos, qui ante umbraculum candore nivali, quales Rhesus ad Trojam duxit, rubeo tamen tegmine vestiti collotenus³ procedebant. Secundum episcopos salvatoris nostri domini Jesu inter decem⁴ magna luminaria corpus deferebatur, cujus conducendi cura Johanni, episcopo Argensi, theologo non minus utilis quam laudatae doctrinae, tamquam sacristae commissa erat. Sequenti in ordine duo cardinales duoque episcopi, Dertusensis Vicensisque, qui diaconorum cardinalium tenebant locum. Ultimo in loco summus ipse pastor, aureo tectus papilione, triplicem gestans coronam populoque benedicens, unus omnium oculis desideratus, incessu maturo procedebat, marchione de Roetelen et Conrado de Winsperg equum ejus ductantibus. Post eum thesaurarius clericique camerae et qui pecunias in populum jaciebat⁵, ornatu decenti, veniebant. Simul quoque principum, qui aderant, oratores, magnaue et confusa populi multitudo. Sicque per plurimos civitatis recessus est itum, donec Judaei illum expectantes nova et fallaci spe ducti legem Mosaicam obtulerunt, quam ipse laudans ritum damnavit eorum. Exinde vero in coenobium praedicatorum ventum est, ubi fratres cum priore⁶ procedentes papamque ante altare statuentes, claves coenobii sibi dederunt. Moxque finito laetitiae cantico, hora jam post meridiem tertia magis ad quietem quam ad prandium, quamvis adhuc jejunus foret, dimissus est Felix.

[12] Altera die illuc ad missam omnes convenere, qua finita consummatisque nonnullis, quae restaverant ceremoniis, praelatis omnibus, qui interfuere, duo argentei nummi et unus aureus traditus est atque exinde tota multitudo ad convivium convocata, ubi nec lex Orchia, nec Fannia vel Licinia locum habuit, nullaue alia sumptuaria, quibus vel pretium edulium vel obsoniorum copia⁷ praefiniretur⁸. Cenitatum est, ut libuit, laute sumptuoseque, pransitatum quoque, dubium est enim, prandium an cena fuerit. Horis circiter quattuor homines plus mille cenati feruntur. Pincernae summo pontifici pulcherrima proles, duo filii, fuerunt, architriclinus marchio Salutiarum. Ad horam tertiam post meridiem cessatum est, in hora vero quinta eodem ordine, quo itum erat, reditum est ductusque papa ad virginis templum, quod est Basileae praecipuum, in palatium per posticum quietem rediit.

¹ gestantes WO

² invidentes WO

³ collatenus WO

⁴ omit. WO

⁵ jacebat WO

⁶ obviam add. WO

⁷ omit. WO

⁸ praesumetur WO

[Cont.] They wore their habits, showing the kind of habit the pope had worn before and appeared greatly venerable. Then came some coped priors, without the mitre.

[11] They were followed by the secretaries and advocates, wearing mantles *ex traverso*¹, a habit very practical for singing. The same dress should have been worn by the judges, who came after, but due to the officials' neglect, they did not but instead wore cloaks and hats like the prelates. They were followed by abbots, then bishops, coped and mitred, seated on caparisoned horses. I have failed to mention the 12 snow-white horses - like the horses brought by Rhesus² to Troy - which, caparisoned in red, were led before the umbrella. After the bishops followed the body of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus, carried - as sacristan - by Johannes,³ Bishop of Arges, a theologian of meritorious and recognised learning. Then came two cardinals⁴ and the two bishops of Tortosa⁵ and Vich,⁶ who took the place of the cardinal deacons. Last came the supreme shepherd himself, under a golden baldachin,⁷ wearing the triple crown, blessing the people, the centre of all attention, at a sedate pace, his horse being led by Margrave von Rötelen and Konrad von Weinsberg. After him came the treasurer, the clerics of the chamber, and one who threw coins to the people, all decently attired. They were followed by those ambassadors of princes present in the city and a large and jumbled crowd of people. The procession passed through many streets of the city. Then the Jews, who had been waiting for him, with new and false hope,⁸ presented the Mosaic Law to him,⁹ which he praised while condemning their rite. Finally, they arrived at the Dominican convent where the friars with their prior received the pope and brought him in a procession to the altar and offered him the keys of the convent. When the hymn of joy¹⁰ had been sung, it was now three o'clock in the afternoon, and Felix departed, more to rest than to lunch though he was still fasting.

[12] The next day, all assembled for the mass, and afterwards, they performed the remaining ceremonies. Then all the prelates who had participated received two coins of silver and one of gold, after which the whole crowd was invited to a banquet, where neither the Lex Orcia, nor the Lex Fannia, nor the Lex Licinia,¹¹ nor any other sumptuary law regulating the cost of the food and number of dishes was observed. People dined - or lunched (it was uncertain whether it was a dinner or a lunch) - as they pleased, luxuriously and sumptuously. More than 1,000 men dined for four hours. The pontiff's handsome offspring, two sons,¹² served as his cupbearers and the Marquess of Saluzzo¹³ as his high steward. The banquet ended at three o'clock in the afternoon, and at five o'clock, they returned in the same order in which they had come. The pope was brought to the temple of the Virgin,¹⁴ the main church of Basel, and then - through a side-door - he returned to the palace to rest.

¹ ME: schiefliegende; RE: diagonal; WI schief gerückt.

² Rhesus of Thrace brought horses to Troy, which were stolen by Diomedes and Ulysess (Homer: *Iliad*, 10: 437).

³ Johannes Stojkovic [de Ragusa] (d. 1443): Bishop of Arges [Arditsch], 1438-1443.

⁴ Louis Aleman and Louis de la Palud.

⁵ Bishop Oton de Moncada.

⁶ Bishop Jorge de Ornos.

⁷ "aureo tectus papilione; RE: clad like a golden butterfly; WI: unter einem goldenen Baldachin"

⁸ Hoping, in vain (according to Piccolomini), for papal recognition of the Mosaic religion.

⁹ This ritual event was part of the "possezzo", when a new pope in Rome went in procession to take

possession of the Lateran Church, the cathedral church of Rome.

¹⁰ Probably the Te Deum.

¹¹ Sumptuary laws of the Roman republic.

¹² Louis I and Philippe of Savoy.

¹³ Ludovico I.

¹⁴ The cathedral of Basel.

[13] Haec de coronatione sanctissimi domini nostri¹, Felicis V., volui, ut scires. Tu nunc ista, quibus vis, comunica daque operam, ut patrem hunc, quem tanti facio, quam primum repetas feliciaque de vestro conventu nobis reportes. Vale.

Ex Basilea, idibus Augusti anno domini 1440.

¹ sanctissimi domini nostri :
domini nostri sanctissimi WO

[13] This is what I wanted you to know about the coronation of Our Most Holy Lord, Felix V. Convey it to all you wish, and seek to return as soon as possible¹ to this Father, whom I greatly revere, and bring us happy news about your meeting. Farewell.

From Basel, 13 August 1440.

¹ Segovia being absent on some mission for Felix V.

Appendix: List of texts in Wolkan not included in the present edition

1) Description of Vienna. WO, 1, 1: ep. 27, pp. 80-84; HE, ep. 27, pp. 82-86.

This text exists in two versions, of which the first was published by Wolkan. Wolkan has this comment on the text: Ich halte diese Beschreibung Wiens für den Rest eines Briefes, den Eneas bei seinem ersten Besuche in der Stadt an einem Freund richtete. He dated the letter to "April 1438?". Van Heck published both versions, and dated them both "1438?", though the second version mentions Johann von Eich's appointment as bishop in 1445.

*Both Wolkan and van Heck base their edition of the first version on cod. 3665 in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, and van Heck bases his edition of the second version on the cod. 3666 in the same library. However, since both these manuscript contain autograph draft versions of Piccolomini's *Historia Austriacis*, of which the description of Vienna forms an integral part (without trace of any letter format), it is not clear why Wolkan, followed by Heck, included the text in a collection of Piccolomini's letters.*