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**Oration “In hoc florentissimo” of Enea Silvio Piccolomini
(25 February 1455, Wiener Neustadt). Edited and
translated by Michael von Cotta-Schönberg. 5th version
(Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pius II; 23)**

Michael Cotta-Schønberg

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(Orations of Enea Silvio Piccolomini / Pius II; 23)

**Oration “*In hoc florentissimo*” of Enea Silvio Piccolomini
(25 February 1455, Wiener Neustadt). Edited and
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5th version

2019

Abstract

After the Fall of Constantinople on 29 May 1453, three imperial diets were held to discuss a crusade against the Turks. At all three diets the main spokesman for the emperor, Friedrich III, was Enea Silvio Piccolomini, seasoned imperial diplomat and Bishop of Siena. The first of the diets was held in Regensburg in May 1454 where Piccolomini gave the oration "*Quamvis omnibus*." The second was held in Frankfurt in October. Here Piccolomini gave the oration "*Constantinopolitana clades*", a major piece of humanist oratory. The third one was held at the imperial court in Wiener Neustadt, which began in February 1455. That diet was to decide on the practicalities of the crusade. In his oration, the "*In hoc florentissimo*", Bishop Piccolomini only dealt peripherally with the organization of the crusade and mainly focused on the ways in which a war ought to be conducted by Christians and on the spiritual preparation for a crusade.

Keywords

Enea Silvio Piccolomini; Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini; Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini; Pope Pius II; Papa Pio II; Kaiser Friedrich III (Habsburg); Emperor Frederick III (Habsburg); Crusades against the Turks; The Ottomans; Diet of Wiener Neustadt, 1455; Reichstag Wiener Neustadt 1455; Christian ethics of war; Renaissance orations; Renaissance oratory; Renaissance rhetorics

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Note to the reader

When the imperial diet of Wiener Neustadt opened in February 1455, it was quite natural that Bishop Piccolomini should give the formal opening speech to the Diet in Wiener Neustadt, and that he actually did so is attested by independent sources.

In 2013, an edition of the three texts documenting the oration, the “*Astantes*”, the “*In hoc florentissimo*”, and the “*Frequentissimus*”, was published in the *Reichstagsakten* (RTA), which will quite probably be the definitive edition. For the purpose of the present edition – within the framework of a complete bilingual edition of all Pius’ orations – it has therefore been considered sufficient to collate three manuscripts containing the version of the oration included in the Collected Orations of Pius II prepared under the pope’s direct supervision in 1462. All readers interested in this oration should also consult the RTA-edition with its excellent introduction, its comprehensive list of manuscripts and editions, its critical apparatus, and its copious notes.

Michael von Cotta-Schønberg

Foreword

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

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

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

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

12 September 2019

MCS

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

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Context¹

After the Fall of Constantinople in May 1453, the leaders of the two international institutions in Europe, Holy Roman Emperor Friedrich III and Pope Nicolaus V, endeavoured to organize a joint European crusade against the Turks. Two imperial diets discussed the matter, in May 1454 in Regensburg and in October 1454 in Frankfurt. Both of these diets supported the idea of a crusade in principle, but in practice only lukewarmly. The practicalities of the crusade was left to a third diet, to be held in the presence of the emperor, at the imperial court in Wiener Neustadt.

Though the main object of the diet was the Turkish matter, it was to some extent overshadowed by other issues: affairs of the empire, conflict between the courts of the emperor and King Ladislaus of Hungary, intrigues of the Archbishop of Trier, and so forth.

At the opening of the diet, on 25 February 1455, Bishop Piccolomini delivered an oration. Remarkably, he does not mention that oration in his *Commentarii*, but only his later oration to the Hungarian ambassadors, the “*Si mihi*” [24], of 25 March:

The time appointed for the next diet soon approached. Archbishop Jacob of Trier, Margrave Albert of Brandenburg, Margrave Karl of Baden and a few of the other German princes joined the emperor at Wiener Neustadt; the remaining princes sent delegations. The bishops and chief barons of Hungary came seeking aid; they spoke at length about the crusade against the Turks and the prospects of victory. From Italy there came the Apostolic Legate – the same as at Regensburg and Frankfurt, Bishop Giovanni of Pavia, who thought himself extremely wise and eloquent, though in the opinion of others the best that could be said for him was that he was not exactly a fool nor entirely unversed in speaking. He was followed by Michele Riccio, representing King Alfonso of Sicily and Aragon, an orator with a greater passion for invective than for praise. Giovanni da Capistrano was also there, tirelessly preaching sermons to arouse the people to arms against the Turks. At this diet, Aeneas gave a public address at the emperor’s command, replying to the ambassadors of Hungary. This was afterwards published and included among his Orations.²

The German princes were not interested, to put it mildly, in the crusade, but rather desired reforms of the empire which would further curtail the powers of the emperor, placing him in a serious dilemma: *If he gave way to the Electors, the scanty remnants of his power were gone; if he refused,*

¹ CO, I, 28; RTA, 19, 3, esp. pp. 454-508; Ady, pp. 129-130; Boulting, pp. 210-211; Helmrath: *German*, esp. pp. 60; Helmrath: *Pius*, esp. pp. 94-95; Helmrath: *Reichstagsreden*, pp. 265 ff.; Housley, esp. pp. 222, 227; Mitchell, pp. 114-115; Nowak, pp. 178-185; Pastor, I, pp. 480-483; Reinhardt, p. 162-165; Schwoebel, p. 33; Setton, II, pp. 157-158; Stolf, pp. 284-285; Toews, pp. 241-246, esp. pp. 254-260; Voigt, III, pp. 132 ff; Introduction to orations “*Quamvis omnibus*” [21] and “*Constantionopolitana clades*” [22]

² CO, I, 28 (Mereserve, II, pp. 137-139)

*the Diet would not vote troops for the crusade. Imperial policy, both religious and political, was in danger of receiving a blow from which it could not recover.*¹

This was the rather unfavourable political setting of Piccolomini's orations at the Diet of Wiener Neustadt.

2. Themes

Apart from a recapitulation of the results and themes of the previous diets in Regensburg and Frankfurt, the main themes of the "*In hoc florentissimo*" are:

- The conduct of war according to Christian ethics
- The unimportance of Turkish superiority in numbers

2.1. Conduct of the war according to Christian ethics

In his early oration, the "*Non est apud me*" [6] of 1446, to his parishioners in Aspach, Piccolomini had - with help from Cicero! - given a summary of Christian morals as applying to laymen, saying that:

in war, you must keep your word to your enemies. Moreover, you should not treat them cruelly for they, too, are men, and they may even think that they are fighting a just war. On our part, we should take care not to engage in war without reasonable cause, and the counsels of peace should always prevail over arms. When necessary, we should not decline to fight for our faith, country, and truth, but we should show moderation so as not to be regarded as cruel, faithless and inhuman. We should not thirst for blood: after a victory, the authors of evil should be punished, with moderation, but the many should be spared. And though civil law declares that the victor may legitimately keep the spoils of war, a Christian should not take any such, he should not destroy cities, nor plunder, nor slaughter the crowd, but consider it sufficient to get peace through war. [Sect. 129]

In 1455, he again dealt with Christian morality as applying to the conduct of war.

¹ Toews, p. 260

Most importantly, he underscored that *all victories are from God who gives victory to whom he wills* [Sect. 10]. And since *God is absolutely just and good*, He will give victory to *men who are themselves just and good* [Sect. 12].

It follows that if Christians are sometimes defeated by unbelievers, it is not because God favours the unbelievers, but because he punishes the Christians for their sins [Sect. 18].

Therefore, Christians going to war against the infidels must repent of their sins and change their evil ways:

But since we are sinners, and God does not listen to sinners, we must renounce sins and change our evil ways. Who doubts that we have all sinned? We have turned away from the testament of God, we have been wicked, and therefore we have been visited by evils without number. Therefore the City of Jerusalem has been lost, Antiochia has been surrendered, Alexandria has been profaned, Constantinople has been conquered, all the East and the South have fallen to strangers, the glory of the Greeks has been destroyed, the liberty of the Latins is threatened, our religion has been pushed into a corner of Europe, and we have been made a scoff and derision to the gentiles. Our God has turned away from us because of our sins, his right hand will no longer help us in battle, and his arm is against us. [Sect. 20].

This means that Christians should do away with:

- the vice of pride which causes fatal divisions in armies [Sect. 21];
- greed which makes soldiers fight for booty instead of Christ – and which alienates the very peoples to be liberated by the Christian troops [Sect. 26];
- cruelty and licentiousness which turns defeated enemies into desperate fighters [Sect. 28];
and
- idleness which is detrimental to the necessary discipline in the army [Sect. 30].

Abandoning vice, the soldiers should embrace the Christian virtues of humility, generosity, chastity, mercy, solicitude and abstinence:

So, all these beasts should be driven out of the camp if we want to be victorious: pride, greed, lust, cruelty, laziness and luxury. Instead of these we should call upon those noble and beautiful maidens: humility, generosity, chastity, mercy, solicitude, abstinence. It is those that can make

the Divine Piety accept us and summon the angel of victory from the summit of Heaven. [Sect. 30].

The German captains and their *Landsknechte* would presumably have been surprised – and horrified – by such demands ...

In between his moral counsels, and in spite of his own reference to foolish Formio who lectured the great general Hannibal on military strategy,¹ Piccolomini cannot refrain from dispensing various pieces of advice on military issues proper, based on historical examples and classical authors on military matters, especially Vegetius.²

At some point he takes up the question, discussed by Aristotle, of what is the most important quality in a general: high moral standards or great military skills. Aristotle prefers the man with great military skills, a viewpoint with which Piccolomini is bound to disagree, in view of his conception of victories as granted by God to good and just men [Sect. 13]. Piccolomini later extricates himself from this uncomfortable position by pointing out that it is difficult for men to judge the moral integrity of other men, including generals, and therefore the safer course is to prefer competence, and to choose such captains as combine a maximum of military competence with a minimum of wickedness. [Sect. 19]

2.2. Unimportance of Turkish superiority in numbers

Among the German princes, there was an understandable concern about Turkish superiority in numbers. Piccolomini himself calculated that the total Christian force would number 80,000 soldiers³ against a Turkish force of somewhere between 200,000 to 300,000 [Sect. 32].⁴

His answer to this problem was that large armies are unmanageable and cannot be properly commanded and fed [Sect. 33]: history shows that such forces may easily be defeated by smaller armies [Sect. 34-35]. In conclusion, a smaller Christian army, with experienced leaders and strong and disciplined soldiers, would not have to fear a larger, unwieldy and unskilled Turkish army:

An army which is too large is always at risk of being slaughtered. But if your army gathers in the numbers that have been decided, it will neither be contemptible because of its smallness nor defeated because of its great numbers. You will have experienced leaders and strong and disciplined soldiers, ready for the signals. You will be fighting as armed against unarmed,

¹ See sect. 9

² See Helmrath: *Pius*, p. 94

³ Composed of 40,000 German troops and 40,000 troops from other nations, see section 32

⁴ On the desirable size of the Christian army, see Housley, pp. 222, 227

skilled against unskilled, brave against cowards. For, as Aristotles testifies, the Asians are not warlike. To this should be added that the Turks are not loved by the Greeks. They will be fighting surrounded by enemies, and once they begin to flee they shall have to fear not only you, but also their Greeks. So, since you will be fighting in God's cause, there is no reason for you to fear the numbers of the Turks for God can just as easily win with small forces as with large ones. Indeed, he would rather win with few soldiers so that the victory will be seen to be his entirely. [Sect. 36]

3. Date, place, audience and format

The oration was delivered on 25 February 1455 in the royal castle in Wiener Neustadt.

The audience consisted of Emperor Friederich III, Georg Podiebrad, Governor of Bohemia, and a number of German princes, nobles, envoys and counsellors participating in the diet.¹

The format was that of a formal oration held on behalf of His Imperial Majesty.

4. Text²

Four texts document the oration given by Bishop Piccolomini at the opening of the Imperial Diet in Wiener Neustadt on 25 February 1455.

One is the full-length text "*In hoc florentissimo*". Another is a preliminary but unused version of the introduction to that text, beginning with the word "*Astantes*". A third one is a different, but unfinished version of the oration beginning with the word "*Frequentissimus*." The fourth is the report of the representatives of Nürnberg, written immediately after 25 February.³

How are these texts related, and how are they related to the oration as actually delivered at the diet?

Voigt believed that the "*Frequentissimus*" was the text of the oration as delivered at the diet. The reason for its incompleteness would be that missing parts, on the Christian ethics of war, were

¹ RTA, 19, 3, p. 454, 504

² Concerning the textual transmission of Pius II's orations, see *Collected orations of Pope Pius*, vol. 1, ch. 5

³ RTA, 19, 3, pp. 503-509

simply taken from the draft version of the "*In hoc florentissimo*".¹ Voigt may have been right, but some problems in the texts must be taken into account in determining their mutual relationship:

- Firstly, in the "*In hoc florentissimo*", Piccolomini explicitly mentions the presence of Janos Hunyadi, Governor of Hungary during King Ladislaus' minority. However, Hunyadi was not in Wiener Neustadt at the time, but stayed with King Ladislaus in Vienna. The later arrival of the Hungarian delegation in Wiener Neustadt occasioned another Piccolomini-oration of welcome, the "*Si mihi*" [24] of 25 March, addressed to the Hungarians on behalf of the emperor. This appears to prove that the "*In hoc florentissimo*" was written before it was known that Hungarians would not arrive in Wiener Neustadt in time for the opening of the Diet on 25 February.
- Secondly, the summary of the main points of Piccolomini's oration sent back to Nürnberg by its envoys Niklas Muffel and Hans Pirckheimer, who heard it in person, differs on various points from the text of the "*In hoc florentissimo*."²
- Thirdly, it is somewhat strange that the title of the "*Astantes*" / "*In hoc florentissimo*" gives the incorrect location as Vienna whereas the title of the "*Frequentissimus*" gives the correct location of [Wiener] Neustadt.
- Fourthly, it may be noted that in his *Commentarii* Pius only mentions his oration "*Si mihi*" to the Hungarians and not the "*In hoc florentissimo*". This is quite strange since Pius was otherwise careful to note his major public orations, of which an oration on behalf of the emperor and in his presence, at the opening of an imperial diet, must certainly have been such. There may have been some problem with the text, causing it not to be mentioned, e.g. the complicated circumstances of the diet and its opening. Or the text of the oration as delivered had been lost. But this is conjecture.

The truth of the matter cannot be settled on the basis of present evidence, but the interpretation proposed by the present editor is that Piccolomini's first draft of the oration was begun with the "*Astantes*", which was replaced when he wrote the full text of the "*In hoc florentissimo*", mentioning the presence of Janos Hunyadi. After the text of the "*In hoc florentissimo*" was finished, Piccolomini decided to write a new text, which was the one he delivered at the diet and the one documented by the report of the representatives of Nürnberg. This text was lost or later discarded by Piccolomini, who instead decided to write a completely new version, the "*Frequentissimus*", which however he never managed to finish. Thus, the "*Astantes*" and the "*In hoc florentissimo*" represent an Early Version of the oration, drafted before the opening of the diet. The version actually delivered at the

¹ Voigt, III, pp. 138-139, note 1

² RTA, 19, 3, p. 504

diet, would be an Intermediate Version, which is lost. And the “*Frequentissimus*” is a later revision, a Final Version, which was never completed.

The “*In hoc florentissimo*” is included in all seven manuscripts containing the papal collection of Piccolomini/Pius’ orations from 1462. The draft introduction “*Astantes*” is omitted in D and G (which derives from D), whereas the alternative, unfinished version “*Frequentissimus*” is omitted in the Milan manuscript E. One manuscript G, (Mantova) has the “*In hoc florentissimo*” twice!

Apparently, the three texts are not known from other manuscripts, indicating that the oration was not – like Piccolomini’s orations at the preceding diets in Regensburg and Frankfurt – disseminated individually after the diet.¹

4.1. Manuscripts

The seven manuscripts containing the oration are, as mentioned, all the manuscripts containing the Collected Orations of Pope Pius II from 1462²:

- **Lucca / Biblioteca Capitolare Feliniana**
544, ff. 103r-115v³ (G) *⁴
- **Mantova / Biblioteca Comunale**
100, ff. 59v-69r, 167r-188v⁵ *
- **Milano / Biblioteca Ambrosiana**
I 97 inf., ff. 120v-131v⁶ *
- **Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana**
Chis. J.VI.211, ff. 113v-126v⁷ (D) *
Chis. J.VIII 284, ff. 90r-98r, 143v-146v⁸ (A) *

¹ See also the lists of manuscripts containing the three texts in RTA, 19, 3, pp. 454, 458, and 491

² Concerning the textual transmission of Pius II’s orations, see *Collected orations of Pope Pius II*, vol. 1, ch. 5

³ ff. 103r-112r “*In hoc florentissimo*”; ff. 112r-115v “*Frequentissimus*”. The ms. does not have the “*Astantes*”

⁴ Manuscripts for which an orthographical profile is given in *Collected orations of Pope Pius II*, vol. 11, are marked with an asterisk

⁵ ff. 59r-69r “*In hic florentissimo*”; ff. 167r-169r “*Astantes*”; ff. 169r-183v “*In hoc florentissimo*” (twice!); ff. 183v-188v “*Frequentissimus*”

⁶ ff. 120v-122r “*Astantes*”; ff. 122r-132r “*In hoc florentissimo*”. The ms. does not have the “*Frequentissimus*”

⁷ ff. 113v-123r “*In hoc florentissimo*”; ff. 123r-126v “*Frequentissimus*”. The ms. does not have the “*Astantes*”

⁸ ff. 90r-92r “*Astantes*”; ff. 92r-98r “*In hoc florentissimo*”; ff. 143v-146v “*Frequentissimus*”

Chis. J. VIII 286, ff. 171r-193v¹

Vat. lat. 1788, ff. 128r-140r, 201v-205r²

4.2. Editions

Former editions of the texts are:

- Pius II: *Orationes politica et ecclesiasticae*. Ed. Giovanni Domenico Mansi. 3 vols. Lucca: Benedini, 1755-1759. / T. III, pp. 288-364
- Helmrath, Johannes: *Die Reichstagsreden des Enea Silvio Piccolomini 1454/55 – Studien zur Reichstag und Rhetorik*. Universität Köln, 1994, pp. 425-463
- *Deutsche Reichstagsakten unter Kaiser Friedrich III*. Fünfte Abteilung, Dritter Teil: Reichsversammlung zu Wiener Neustadt 1455. Bearb. von Gabriele Annas. München, 2013. (Deutsche Reichstagsakten, ÄR; 19, 3), pp. 454-502

4.3 Present edition

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

Text:

In view of the RTA-edition, the present edition is based only on A, D, and G, representing the main versions of the papal collection of 1462, with A as the lead manuscript.

Pagination:

The pagination is that of the BAV / Chis.I.VIII 284 **(A)**.

¹ ff. 171r-173r “*Astantes*”; ff. 173v-187v “*In hoc florentissimo*”; ff. 187v-193v “*Frequentissimus*”

² ff. 128r-129v “*Astantes*”; ff. 129v-140r “*In hoc florentissimo*”; ff. 201v-205r “*Frequentissimus*”

Textual apparatus:

Passages occurring in both the “*In hoc florentissimo*” and in the “*Astantes*” are given in bold types.

5. Sources¹

In this oration, altogether 83 direct and indirect quotations from various sources have been identified.

Biblical: 29

Classical: 46

Patristic and medieval: 7

Contemporary: 1

All: 83

The classical quotations dominate over the biblical. There is few patristic quotations² and only one quotations from contemporary authors.

Biblical sources: 29

Old Testament: 21

- Exodus: 2
- 1. Chronicles: 1
- Daniel: 2
- Ecclesiasticus: 2
- Isaiah: 1
- Jeremiah: 1
- Joshua: 1
- Judges: 1

¹ For an analysis of Piccolomini’s use of sources, see *Collected Orations of Pope Pius II*, vol. 1, ch. 8

² Cf. Helmrath: *Pius*, p. 94, n. 49: *Vorbild und vorsichtig benutzte Quelle ist unter anderem Ambrosius’ “De officiis ministrorum”*. The basis for this assertion is unclear

- Judith: 2
- 1. Machabees: 1
- 2. Machabees: 1
- Psalms: 5
- Wisdom: 1

New Testament: 8

- Matthew: 1
- Luke: 3
- James: 2
- Philippians: 1
- Romans: 1

Classical sources: 46

- Aristotle: 3¹
- Arrianus: 1
- Cicero: 12²
- Claudianus: 1³
- Gellius: 1
- Horatius: 1⁴
- Justinus: 7⁵
- Juvenalis: 3
- Lucanus: 2⁶
- Plutarch: 1⁷
- Sallustius: 1⁸
- Suetonius: 2⁹

¹ Ethica Nicom.; 1; Politica: 2

² De officiis: 2; De oratore: 1; De republica: 1; Pro lege Manilia: 9

³ De tertio consulatu Honorii

⁴ Carmina

⁵ Epitoma

⁶ Bellum civile

⁷ Parellel lives / Marius

⁸ De vitis caesarum / Titus

⁹ De bello Jugurthino

- Tacitus: 1¹
- Ulpianus: 1
- Valerius Maximus: 1
- Vegetius: 7²
- Vergilius: 1

Patristic and medieval sources: 7

- Augustinus: 1³
- Bede the Venerable: 1⁴
- Otto von Freising: 5⁵

Contemporary sources: 1

- Biondo, F.: 1⁶

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¹ Annales

² Epitoma rei militaris

³ De civitate Dei

⁴ Historia ecclesiastica

⁵ Chronica

⁶ Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades

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7. Sigla and abbreviations

A = Roma / Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana / Chis.I.VIII.284

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

G = Lucca / Biblioteca Capitolare Feliniana / 544

Abbreviations

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

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

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

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

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

RTA = Deutsche Reichstagsakten

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

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

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

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

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II. TEXT AND TRANSLATION

1. In hoc florentissimo

Oratio Aeneae Silvii Piccolominei, episcopi Senensis, qui postea pontificatum maximum adeptus Pius II appellatus est in conventu Viennensi jussu Caesaris¹

Hic incipit oratio²:

[1] {91r} In hoc florentissimo atque amplissimo conventu vestro, **reverendissimi patres, illustrissimi principes, ceterique viri magnanimi ac praestantissimi, non est cur hodie disseramus an bellum indicere Turcis expediat.** Id namque et in Ratispona super Danubium et in Frankfordia super Muganum abunde discussum atque determinatum est. In his enim locis ex jussione divi Caesaris Friderici, **Romanorum imperatoris, domini nostri piissimi** ac gloriosissimi, post amissam Constantinopolim ad consulendum reipublicae Christianae duo concilia celebrata sunt, in quibus satis superque satis deplorata est Constantinopolitana calamitas. **In Ratispona** putaverunt omnes, qui aderant, **necessarium esse pugnare in Turcos**, si religionis nostrae decus obtinendum est. **In Frankfordia re pressius examinata ac digesta decretumque est contra Turcos bellum. Repromissa sunt Hungaris**, quae petierunt³ **auxilia, statutus militum numerus qui ex Almania deducatur; classis ex Italia comparandae cura ad sanctissimum urbis Romae pontificem Nicolaum quintum remissa qui per legatum suum id oneris acceptavit.** Inclytus Hungariae ac Bohemiae rex Ladislaus neque pacem neque indutias belli cum Turcis habiturum se medio tempore affirmavit viresque suas omnes adversus illorum collecturum se ait.

¹ Enee Silvii episcopi Senensis oratio in conventu Viennensi Cesaris nomine de modo belligerendi contra Turcos **D, G**

² Hic ... oratio *omit.* **D, G**

³ quae petierunt *omit.* **G**

Oration of Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Bishop of Siena, who was called Pius II after he became pope, in the Diet of Vienna, at the Emperor's command

1.1. Introduction

1.1.1. Diets of Regensburg and Frankfurt

[1] Reverend Fathers, Illustrious Princes and you others, great and eminent men, today, in this excellent¹ and grand assembly, we do not have to talk about whether to declare war on the Turks for that has already been abundantly discussed and decided in Regensburg on the Danube and in Frankfurt on the Main. For on the command of Holy Roman Emperor Friedrich,² our pious and glorious lord, two diets³ have been held in these cities to take counsel concerning the Christian Commonwealth⁴ after the loss of Constantinople.⁵ At these meetings, the catastrophe in Constantinople has been lamented enough - and even more than enough!⁶ In Regensburg, all present considered it necessary to fight the Turks in order to maintain the honour of our religion. In Frankfurt the matter was examined and pondered in greater detail, and it was formally decided to go to war against the Turks. The Hungarians were promised the aid they sought. It was decided how many soldiers should be sent from Germany. The charge of mobilizing a fleet from Italy was entrusted to His Holiness, the Bishop of the City of Rome, Nicolaus V,⁷ who accepted it through his legate⁸. The Illustrious King Ladislaus⁹ of Hungary and Bohemia declared that in the meantime he would make neither peace nor truce with the Turks, and said that he would mobilize all his forces against theirs.

¹ "florentissimo"

² Friedrich III of Habsburg (1415-1493): Duke of Austria (as Friedrich V) from 1424. Elected King of Germany and Holy Roman Emperor in 1440, crowned in Rome in 1452

³ "concilia"

⁴ "respublica"

⁵ To the Turkish sultan, Mehmed II, in May 1453

⁶ A great and most eloquent lamenter had actually been Piccolomini himself

⁷ Nicolaus V (Tommaso Parentucelli) (1397-1455): Pope from 1447 to his death

⁸ Giovanni da Castiglione: Bishop of Pavia, later cardinal

⁹ Ladislaus the Posthumous of Habsburg (1440-1457): Archduke of Austria from 1440, King of Hungary from 1444 and King of Bohemia from 1453 to his death

[2] Haec serenissimus imperator certissima putat, nec promissa tot procerum, tot principum, tot communitatum quovis pacto ruitura credere potest. Scit inclytam nationem suam semper constantem ac sui dicti tenacem fuisse, neque ambigit, quin modo potissimum dicto suo faciat satis, quando de statu totius Christianitatis agitur. Nisi enim promissus progrediatur exercitus, Hungariam amittimus, ne dicam prodimus, cui Turci infensi sunt. Ea perdita nec Italia neque Alamania tuta est. Intellexit divus imperator noster, quam liberaliter ac magnifice sanctitatis domini nostri papae¹ in Frankfordiensi concilio per legatum suum sese obtulit, qui non modo pecuniae, sed ne vitae quidem suae parsurus est, ut Christianae plebi subveniat. Rex Ladislaus, quem paulo ante honoris gratia nominavi, Alberto patre et avo Sigismundo dignissima progenies, {91v} missis oratoribus suis, exposito regni sui discrimine, quamvis adhuc puer, aetatulam suam bello pro Christi fide gerendo, si vos sibi adjumento fueritis, consecraturum se ait. Theodericus Maguntinus et Jacobus Treverensis archiepiscopi, sacri Romani imperii principes electores, qui praesentes in conventu fuere, cognita Christiani populi necessitate, ad gerendum contra Turcos bellum omnes vires suas obtulere. Neque Theodericus, Coloniensis ecclesiae pontifex, per legatos suos² minora promisit. Fridericus autem, comes Palatinus, altus Baioariae sanguis generosaque Caesarum soboles, non modo se missurum in hoc bellum auxilia testatus est, sed iterum se quoque, si fortis exercitus instituat, et in propria persona militaturum se ait.

¹ *Sic!*

² *omit. G*

1.1.2. Promises of the princes

[2] The Most Serene Emperor considers this as firmly concluded, and he does not believe that so many nobles, so many princes, and so many cities will in any way fail their promises. He knows that his glorious nation has always been steadfast and kept its word,¹ and he does not doubt that it will fulfil its promises especially now that all of Christianity is at stake. And unless the promised army sets out, we shall lose, not to say betray Hungary, the enemy of the Turks. And when Hungary is lost, neither Italy nor Germany is safe.²

Our Holy Emperor has seen how generously and magnificently His Holiness, Our Lord Pope, through his legate to the Diet of Frankfurt, has committed himself to the cause, declaring that he would spare neither funds nor even his own life in assisting the Christian people.

King Ladislaus, whom for honour's sake I mentioned a moment ago, the worthy offspring of his father Albrecht and his grandfather Sigismund,³ has sent ambassadors to explain the danger to his realm and to declare that - although still a boy - he dedicates his tender age to fighting for the Christian Faith - if only you will help him.

Archbishops Dietrich of Mainz⁴ and Jakob of Trier,⁵ prince electors of the Holy Roman Empire, attended the diet⁶: recognizing the urgent need of the Christian people, they offered all their resources to the war against the Turks. Through his legates, Archbishop Dietrich of Cologne made similar promises.

And Friedrich,⁷ Count Palatine, of the high blood of Bavaria and noble descendant of emperors, has declared that if a strong army is mobilized, he will not only send troops to the war, but even fight in person.

¹ Cf. Tacitus: *Annales*, 13.54: *nullos mortalium armis aut fide ante Germanos esse exclamant*

² Piccolomini's "domino theory"

³ Ladislaus was the son of the King of the Romans, Albert II. (d. 1438) and Elisabeth whose father was emperor Sigismund (d. 1437)

⁴ Dietrich von Erbach (d. 1459): Archbishop of Cologne from 1434 to his death

⁵ Jakob von Sierck (d. 1455): Archbishop of Trier from 1440 to his death

⁶ "conventu"

⁷ Friedrich I der Siegrieche (1425-1476): Count Palatine, Prince Elector

[3] Quid Philippum, Burgundiae ducem, commemorem, nobilissimum Franciae sanguinem, cor Deo dignum, mentemque caelo deditam, et animum in obsequia Christi paratissimum? Referamne, quae praesens ille Ratisponae pollicitus est¹? Modestius existimo de tanta promissione silere, ne magnificentissimas oblationes tenui atque incompta oratione mea comminam. Oratores certe ipsius, cum apud Frankfordiam rogarentur, an auxilia sibi deputata Philippus missurus esset, non modo missurum eum dixere, sed indigne laturum, quia exiguus ex eo militum numerus peteretur. Nec germanus Caesaris, Albertus, sublimis Austriae sanguis, tantis rebus defuturum se quovis modo confirmavit. Ludovicus, Baioariae dux excellens, paternis opibus ac sua virtute potentissimus, Ratisponae per se ipsum, Frankfordiae per legatos Christianae necessitati magnifice subventurum se dixit.

¹ et *add. G*

[3] What shall I say about Duke Philippe of Burgundy,¹ of the most noble blood of France, a heart worthy of God, a spirit dedicated to Heaven, and a soul ready to obey Christ? Should I tell you what he promised in Regensburg? No, I think it will be more seemly to remain silent about his magnificent offers so as not to diminish his promise by my insignificant and unpolished oration. When in Frankfurt his orators were asked if Philippe would send the troops allotted to him, they replied that not only will he send troops, but that his dignity would be slighted if such a small number of soldiers was requested of him.²

And the emperor's brother, Albrecht,³ of the high blood of Austria, has declared that he will certainly not fail this great cause.

Ludwig, excellent Duke of Bavaria,⁴ mighty by virtue of paternal wealth and strong by virtue of his own qualities, has said, personally in Regensburg and through his legates in Frankfurt, that he would contribute generously to aid Christianity in its urgent need.

¹ Philippe III le Bon (1396-1467): Duke of Burgundy from 1419 to his death

² In Frankfurt it had been stipulated that the contingent from Burgundy would consist of 6.000 foot and 3.000 horsed soldiers

³ Albrecht VI of Habsburg (1418 -1463): Archduke of Austria, ruling Inner Austria (i.e. the duchies of Styria, Carinthia and Carniola) from 1424 and Austria from 1457 to his death

⁴ Ludwig IX der Reiche (1417-1479): Duke of Bayern-Landshut from 1450 to his death

[4] Quid de Theutonico Achille dicam? Quam volens, quam promptus, quam fervens ad tuendam ecclesiam nunc Ratisponae, nunc Frankfordiae visus est? Quaeritis, quis sit hic Achilles? Albertum ego marchionem Brandeburgensem, Germanicae nationis singulare lumen, Achillis nomine designo. Appellassem hunc Hectorem - ita equitationes, pugnas atque consilia illius Trojani et insuperabilem animum imitatur - nisi timuissem invictum principem victi herois nomine minorem reddere. Nam Hectorem bello superatum novimus: Albertum marchionem ex maximis ac periculosissimis proeliis victorem semper virtus eduxit. Carolus, marchio Badensis, cui Caesarea soror nupta est, laudatissimam illam in Frankfordia¹ vocem edidit: "Quamvis minor est mea potentia quam nobilitas, in obsequio tamen fidei nobilitatem magis quam potentiam intuebor, {92r} neque me Christianum putaverim, nisi laborantibus ceteris et ipse laboraverim." Praetereo, ne sim taedio, reliquos principes ac nobiles. Praetereo potentissimas ac magnificas civitates, quarum legati palmas ad caelum sustulere, cum de parando adversus infideles exercitu mentionem fieri audivere.

[5] Alfonsus, rex Aragonum et Siciliae, inter principes aevi nostri clarissimum sidus, victoriis ac triumphis illustratum, quem Christianorum spem maximam, barbarorum ingentem formidinem non injuria vocaverimus, praestantes² legatos Frankfordiam direxerat. Sed alter morbo in via decessit, alter in tempore comparere nequivit. Venit tamen hic ad Caesarem atque ea locutus est de rege suo, quae de principe magnanimo ac Christianissimo speranda fuerunt. Quid igitur est, quod jam hoc in loco perficiendum sit, quando et principes et civitates gerendi belli desiderio fervent? Quae placita atque conclusa sunt Frankfordiae apud omnes habentur rata; **sed quomodo, quove ordine executioni mandentur, id nunc in medium consulendum est.**³

¹ illam in Frankfordia *omit.* G

² *em.*; praestantis A, D, G

³ Hic disputat quod promissa executioni mandentur *in marg.* D, G

[4] And what shall I say about the German Achilles, so willing, so ready, so eager to protect the Church, both in Regensburg and in Frankfurt? You ask: Who is this Achilles? It is Margrave Albrecht of Brandenburg,¹ that remarkable light of Germany, whom I designate as Achilles.² I could have called him Hector³ – so greatly does he resemble that Trojan with regard to riding, battles, counsels and indomitable spirit – but I feared to belittle this unvanquished prince by giving him the name of a defeated hero. For we know that Hector was defeated in battle whereas the bravery of Margrave Albrecht has always given him victory even in the greatest and most perilous battles.⁴

As for Karl, Margrave of Baden, spouse of the emperor's sister,⁵ he made this praiseworthy statement in Frankfurt: "Since my nobility is greater than my might, I shall fulfil my duties to the Faith nobly rather than mightily. And I shall not consider myself a Christian unless I share the burdens of all."

So as not to bore you, I pass over the other princes and nobles, and the powerful and magnificent cities whose legates raised their hands to Heaven when they heard about the army being mobilized against the infidels.

[5] Distinguished legates had also been sent to Frankfurt by Alfonso,⁶ King of Aragon and Sicily, a shining star among the princes of this age, famous for his victories and triumphs, one whom we may justly call the greatest hope of the Christians and an enormous threat to the barbarians. However, one of the legates died from an illness on the way, and the other could not reach Frankfurt in time. Therefore, he came to the emperor here and gave a report from his king that fulfils the expectations we have of such a magnanimous and most Christian prince.

So, as it is clear that both the princes and the cities are burning with desire for going to war, what is it that we should achieve now, in this place? All that was decided and concluded in Frankfurt has been confirmed. Now, we must discuss how to put it into effect and in what order.

¹ Albrecht III of Brandenburg (1414-1486): Margrave of Ansbach and Kulmbach as Albrecht I. From 1470 Prince Elector of Brandenburg to his death. Given the byname Achilles by Pius II

² Achilles: (Greek myth.) hero of the Trojan War and the central character and greatest warrior of Homer's *Iliad*

³ Hector: (Greek myth.) Son of King Priam of Troy, crown prince

⁴ See also the orations of Pius II "*Si sacrosancto*" [38] and "*Advenisse te citius*" [53] which very clearly point to Albrecht of Brandenburg as military leader of the crusade against the Turks

⁵ Katarina (1424-1493): sister of the Emperor Friedrich III. Margravine of Baden

⁶ Alfonso V the Magnanimous (1396-1458): King of Aragon, Valencia, Majorca, Sardinia and Corsica, Sicily and Count of Barcelona from 1416, and King of Naples (as Alfonso I) from 1442 to his death

[6] **Danda est opera, ut exercitus quantocius congregetur; eligendus est dux belli; quem capitaneum nominamus; Romani imperatorem appellavere; dicenda dies, qua progrediendum; nominandum iter, quo sit eundum; statuenda belli gerendi sedes; res frumentaria procuranda; inter Hungaros, Bohemos ac Theutones unitas facienda; habenda cum Italis intelligentia certior: sciendum, quid illa natio gerat, quantam classem instruat, quem bello maritimo praeficiat, quo tempore sit exitura, quo loco Turcos invasura. Super his ergo uti cogitetis atque attenti sitis, orat imperator, qui cum vestro consilio cuncta disponere decrevit.**

[7] Verum quia summa omnium est, ut ita nos praeparemus, quatenus exercitum educentes vincere ac pacem Christiano populo parare possimus, jubet me Caesar nonnulla dicere, quae ad victoriam consequendam nedum idonea, sed etiam necessaria ducit: quam rem difficillimam reddit gravissimus ac frequentissimus conspectus vester. Illustrium namque virorum conventus, quanto disertissimis oratoribus animum elevatiorem efficit, tanto rudibus ac mihi similibus depressiorem reddit. Cumque nihil aures vestrae sustinere queant, nisi *perfectum ingenio, elaboratum industria, nitidum eloquentia*, vereor ne, dum Caesari pareo, mihi ipsi confusionem acquiram. Sed quis ego sum, qui tanti principis imperium devitem? Feram ignorantiae maculam, dum vitem contumaciae notam. Vos, si non mihi, at saltem Caesari, cujus nomine {92v} loquar, praebebitis aures.

1.1.3. Agenda of the Diet

[6] We must see to it that the army is gathered as soon as possible. We should elect a general – we call him captain, but the Romans called him *imperator*. We should set the date for the departure and decide upon the route. It must be determined where the war should be fought. Provisions must be procured. We must ensure concord between Hungarians, Bohemians and Germans. We should get more reliable information from the Italians so that we may know what that nation will do, how large a fleet it will commission, who will be its admiral, when the fleet will set sail, and where it will attack the Turks. The emperor asks you to consider these issues attentively and has decided to dispose all matters according to your counsel.

1.1.4. Captatio benevolentiae

[7] But, most importantly, we must prepare ourselves in such a way that when we go to war, we shall be victorious and win peace for the Christian people. Therefore, the emperor bids me to say some things that he considers not only to be useful, but indeed necessary for gaining victory. However, this is somewhat of an embarrassment for me as I look at the many and important men assembled here. For a meeting of such illustrious men quickens the spirit of accomplished speakers, but dampens the spirit of unskilled speakers like me. Since your ears can tolerate nothing but *the mature outcome of talent, the finished product of industry*,¹ shining with eloquence, I fear that in obeying the emperor I shall bring shame on myself. But who am I to disobey the command of this great prince? So, I shall bear the shame of ignorance as I avoid the blemish of pride. And you, if you will not lend your ears to me, then hear the emperor on whose behalf I shall be speaking.

¹ Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 1.1: *nihil huc nisi perfectum ingenio, elaboratum industria adferri oportere*

[8] Nec ego in hoc amplissimo auditorio illa tangam, quae fortasse multi expectant, id est quam robusti legendi milites; quo modo servandi ordines; quae arma induenda; qui currus apparandi; quae machinae ducendae; quae castris optanda loca, ut vitanda palus, salubritas aeris eligenda, ut aquandi, lignandi, pabulandi quaerenda commoditas; quadratam, rotundam, an trigonam castrorum formam esse oporteat; quanta commeatus habenda cura; quomodo plectenda delicta militum; quam diligenter exploranda hostium consilia, occultanda nostra; quomodo exercitus cornua, quomodo alas, quomodo medias acies struere sit necesse; quo pede praemisso jaciendum pilum¹, quo vibrandus ensis. Nam etsi haec ad victoriam magni momenti sint, librique de his scripti habeantur - scripserunt enim primi de his Laecedamones, tum multi Graecorum, ac ex Romanis² Marcus Cato senior, deinde Frontinus ad Trajanum Caesarem, et postremo noster Vegetius, nec Aegidius Romanus hanc partem reliquit intactam,

¹ *em.* [after RTA]; palum A, D, G

² Qui de re militari scripsere *in marg.* D, G

1.2. General military issues

[8] For, before this eminent auditory, I shall not touch on the issues that many may be expecting to hear about: how to pick strong soldiers; how they should be organised; how they should be armed; what wagons should be prepared; what war machines should be brought; how suitable camp locations should be chosen, free of marshy areas,¹ but with clean air and easy access to water, wood, and grazing; whether the camp should be built as a square, a circle, or a triangle; how to organise provisioning; how soldiers' crimes should be punished; how the plans of the enemies should be spied out, whereas our own should be concealed from them; how you should organise the battle order of the army in wings and centre; and what foot the soldiers should put forward when they throw their spears or brandish their swords.² Though these matters are very important for victory, and whole books have been written about them³ (first the Spartans wrote about them, then many other Greeks, and of the Romans Marcus Cato Senior,⁴ then Frontinus⁵ to Emperor Trajan, and finally our own Vegetius,⁶ nor did Egidio Romano⁷ leave this matter untouched),

¹ "palus"; RTA has the emendation *palum = hölzener Pfahl*, p. 466, n. 31

² Cf. Vegetius: *Epitoma rei militaris*, 1

³ Cf. Vegetius, 1, Prol.; 3, Prol.

⁴ Marcus Porcius Cato the Elder (234-149 BC). His Comments on military matters have been lost

⁵ Sextus Julius Frontinus (ca. 40-100). His "*De re militari*" is lost, but was used by Vegetius

⁶ Flavius Vegetius Renatus (late 4th c. AD). He wrote his *Epitoma rei militaris* around 400 AD.

⁷ Egidio Romano (Colonna) (ca. 1243-1316). He wrote about military matters in his *De regimine principum* from ca. 1280

[9] non tamen ego, praesentibus Alberto marchione, Johanne comite Bistricensi, ac Georgio, Bohemiae gubernatore, clarissimis ac fortissimis viris, qui ab ineunte aetate in armis nutriti sunt, pluribusque proeliis interfuerunt, quam ego legerim¹, de his rebus ausim verba facere, ne cum Formione philosopho sim derisui. Oravit hic aliquando in Rhodo, ut Cicero tradit, de re militari coram Hannibale Poeno, summo illius aetatis imperatore. Cujus orationem, cum ceteri maximis laudibus prosequerentur, solus Hannibal dignam vituperio censuit et hominem aetate delirantem putavit, qui se praesente de rebus bellicis disserere praesumpsisset. Commoniti ergo nos hoc exemplo, qualia esse debeant militum corpora, qualesve armaturae aut ordines, quive castrorum modi, quae pugnandi regulae atque cautelae, ad capitaneum, qui nominandus est, remitemus. Longe alia sunt, quae proferre jubemur, et ipsa tamen ad victoriam obtinendam accomodata² et necessaria. Neque enim congregato forti exercitu, delectis peritissimis ducibus, quaesitis utilibus armis, provisus abunde com meatibus, occupato loco pugnandi idoneo, structis prudenter aciebus, commisso viriliter proelio mox victoria datur, nisi victoriarum distributor dominus hoc nos munere donet.

¹ legerim G

² accomodanda A; accomodata *corr.* ex accomodanda D

[9] I shall certainly not dare to speak about them in the presence of Margrave Albrecht, Count Janos of Bistrita¹, and Georg,² the Governor of Bohemia, famous and mighty men,³ who have been taught military skills from an early age and have been in more battles than I have even read about.⁴ For I would not like to be laughed at like the philosopher Formio⁵ who, according to Cicero,⁶ once, in Rhodes,⁷ spoke on military matters before Hannibal of Carthage,⁸ the foremost military commander of that age.⁹ When the others praised his oration highly, only Hannibal criticized it and thought that the man must be senile since he presumed to discuss military matters in his own presence.¹⁰ Admonished by this example, we shall leave the issues of the physical condition of the soldiers, their weapons and organisation, the design of the camps, as well as the rules and precautions to be followed in fighting, to the captain to be appointed. What we have been bidden to discuss is something completely different, though it is still useful and even necessary for achieving victory. For victory will not just come because you assemble a strong army, select highly skilled leaders, get suitable weaponry, gather abundant provisions, occupy a location well suited to fighting, design an ingenious battle order, and enter the battle bravely: no, you will only be victorious if the Lord, the giver of victories, grants it to you.

¹ Janos Hunyadi (1406-1456): leading Hungarian military and political figure. Regent of Hungary during the minority of King Ladislaus the Posthumous

² Georg of Poediebrad (1420-1471): Governor of Bohemia during the minority of Ladislaus Posthumous. King of Bohemia from 1458 to his death. Leader of the Hussite party. Some years later, Piccolomini suspected him of poisoning Ladislaus

³ Of these three, Janos Hunyadi, the governor of Hungary, was not present, which supports the notion that the oration was not actually held in this exact version

⁴ Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 10.28: *plura bella gessit, quam ceteri legerunt*

⁵ Phormio (2nd century before Christ): philosopher belonging to the peripatetic school

⁶ Cicero, Marcus Tullius (106-43 BC): Roman statesman and author

⁷ In Ephesos, not in Rhodes. The oration was given before King Antiochos the Great in the presence of the Carthaginian general Hannibal

⁸ Hannibal Barca (247-ca. 183 BC): Punic Carthaginian military commander

⁹ Cf. Flavio Biondo: *Scritti*, p. 31

¹⁰ Cicero: *De oratore*, 2.18.75-77

[10] Dicendum est igitur hodie non quomodo manus castrenses, sed quomodo castrensiū animi ad obtinendam ex Deo victoriam disponi pararique debeant, atque in hoc {93r} omnis nostra consumetur oratio. Victoria¹, quemadmodum nostri tradunt, omnis ex Deo est, neque id dubium quidem, quando *omne datum optimum, et omne donum perfectum desursum est, descendens a patre luminum*. Neque sperare victoriam adversante Deo, neque ipso propitio timere ruinam fas est. *Juxta voluntatem enim suam, ut est in Daniele, facit Deus tam in virtutibus caeli quam in habitatoribus terrae, et non est qui resistat manui ejus et dicat ei: quare fecisti?* Victoria, et triumphus, et regnum in manu Dei est, et cuicumque voluerit ille, hoc dabitur. Ab eo igitur Pharaonis victor efficitur Moyses. Sive Josue, sive ceterorum judicum, ac regum bella respiciamus, quae veteris testamenti codex exponit, nullum superasse comperiemus, nisi quem *digitus Dei* tutatus est.

¹ Victoria ex Deo est *in marg.* D, G

1.3. All victories come from God

[10] So, today we shall not speak about how the troops should be organized, but about how their souls should be prepared so that God will grant them victory. Our whole oration will be about this matter. For, as our own¹ say, all victories come from God,² and this is undoubtedly true since *every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.*³ We may not hope for victory if God is against us, and not fear defeat if he is with us. For as it is said in the Book of Daniel: *God doth according to his will, as well with the powers of heaven, as among the inhabitants of the earth: and there is none that can resist his hand, and say to him: Why hast thou done it?*⁴ Victory, triumph, and domination are in the hands of God, and He gives them to whom He wills. Thus, he made Moses defeat Pharaoh. When we read in Book of the Old Testament about the wars of Joshua, or of the other judges, or of the kings, we learn that only those whom the *finger of God* protected were victorious.

¹ i.e. Christian writers as opposed to classical pagan writers

² Cf. 1. Corinthians, 15, 57. Piccolomini is usually quite reticent with regard to direct divine intervention in the form of miracles, but here he seems to believe that the outcome of battles is directly dependent on the intervention of God

³ James, 1, 17

⁴ Daniel, 4, 32

[11] Neque sine Dei nutu Trojam subvertit Agamemnon; neque Graeciam subegit Philippus; neque Asiam domuit Alexander; neque Italiam concussit Hannibal; neque uterque Scipio Carthaginensium attrivit imperium; neque duos ac XX reges debellavit Pompejus; neque undecies centena millia hostium occidit Julius; neque Constantinus civilia bella barbaricaque confecit; neque Aquileiam delevit Attila; neque, ut ad Germanos veniam, Longobardos Carolus magnus edomuit, Otto primus compescuit, secundus castigavit, tertius extinxit; neque conditor Austriae domus divus Rudolfus Ottokarum magnum Bohemiae regem bello superavit atque occidit. A Deo igitur quaerenda atque impetranda victoria est.

[12] At cum Deus ipse absolute justus bonusque sit, quis non intelligit eos potissime donandos ab eo victoria esse, qui sint ipsi et boni et justis? Si quis ergo vincere hostes externos cupit, ante omnia internos inimicos, hoc est mentis vitia superet. Vincat se ipsum necesse est, qui superare adversarium¹ cupit. Et nos ergo, si Turcorum frangere acies cupimus, ita in campum veniamus, ut ei grati atque accepti simus, cujus est donare victoriam. Et milites igitur vel exercitus et belli duces, quos eligimus, virtutis amatores, ocores vitii sint, neque scelerati, quamvis manu prompti et rei militaris periti, ad pugnam recipiantur.

¹ superare adversarium : adversarium superare G

[11] It was only because God allowed it that Agamemnon¹ destroyed Troy, Philip² overran Greece, Alexander³ tamed Asia, Hannibal thundered through Italy, each Scipio⁴ laid waste to the Carthaginian Empire, Pompey⁵ vanquished 22 kings, Julius⁶ killed 1.1 million enemies, Constantine⁷ successfully fought both civil wars and wars against barbarians, Attila destroyed Aquileia, and - passing to the Germans - Charlemagne⁸ subdued the Lombards, Otto I⁹ held them in check, Otto II¹⁰ punished them, and Otto III¹¹ destroyed them, and glorious¹² Rudolf,¹³ founder of the House of Austria, defeated and killed King Ottokar the Great¹⁴ of Bohemia. Thus, victory must be sought and obtained from God.

1.4. God gives victory to those who are just and good

[12] But as God is absolutely just and good, who does not understand that he will give victory especially to those men who are themselves good and just? So, if anybody wishes to vanquish external enemies, he should first defeat the internal enemies, that is to say the vices of the mind. The man who wants to overcome his adversary must first overcome himself. And if we want to destroy the ranks of the Turks, then we should go to war in such a way that we are pleasing and acceptable to Him who is the giver of victory. Let those soldiers and leaders of army and war we choose love virtue and hate vice, and let us not take wicked men into the army even though they are vigorous and skilled in fighting.

¹ Agamemnon: (Greek myth.): King of Mycene. Commander of the Greek armies in the Trojan War

² Philip II of Macedon [Philippos] (382-336 BC) : King of the Hellenic kingdom of Macedon from 359 BC to his assassination in 336 BC

³ Alexander III the Great (356-323 BC): King of the Greek kingdom of Macedon. Created one of the largest empires of the ancient world, stretching from Greece to Egypt and into present-day Pakistan

⁴ Scipio Africanus, Publius Cornelius (236-183 BC): general in the Second Punic War and statesman of the Roman Republic. Defeated Hannibal at the final battle of the Second Punic War at Zama, a feat that earned him the agnomen Africanus

⁵ Pompeius Magnus, Gnaeus (106-48 BC): military and political leader of the late Roman Republic

⁶ Julius Caesar, Gaius (100-44 BC): Roman general and statesman

⁷ Constantine I the Great [Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus Augustus](ca. 272-337): Roman Emperor from 306 to his death

⁸ Charlemagne (742/747/748 -814): also known as Charles I the Great. King of the Franks from 768, King of Italy from 774. In 800 crowned by the pope as the first Emperor in Western Europe since the collapse of the Western Roman Empire three centuries earlier

⁹ Otto I the Great (912-973): German King from 936 and Holy Roman Emperor from 962 to his death

¹⁰ Otto II the Red (955-983): Holy Roman Emperor from 973 to his death

¹¹ Otto III (980-1002): Holy Roman Emperor from 996 to his death

¹² "divus"

¹³ Rudolf I (1291): Originally a Swabian count. King of the Romans from 1273 to his death. Raised the Habsburg dynasty to a leading position. The first Habsburg to acquire the duchies of Austria and Styria

¹⁴ Ottokar II (ca. 1233-1278): King of Bohemia from 1253 to his death

[13] Aristoteles¹ tamen in hac parte adversus mihi videtur, qui de magistratibus civitatum agens in quinto *Politicorum* libro: *Si facienda sit electio ex duobus, quorum alter ad rem militarem aptus sed improbus, nec reipublicae amator habeatur, alter vero justus et amator, sed pugnandi parum peritus sit*, ad peritiam putat, magis quam ad probitatem esse respiciendum. Quod {93v} secutus apud Romanos Fabricius², magna gloria vir magnisque rebus gestis, videtur, qui teste Gellio Publium Cornelium Rufum, hominem furacem atque avarum, in temporibus reipublicae difficillimis consulatum petentem adjuvit, quoniam esset *manu strenuus ac bellator bonus militarisque disciplinae peritus*. Sed mihi neque Aristotelis sententia placet, neque digna, quam sequamur in hac parte, Fabricii videtur auctoritas. Namque si Dei est, ut diximus, omnis victoria, quis dubitet illam per ministros potius bonos ac Deo placentes, quam per odiosos concedi hominibus?

¹ Aristotelis sententia *in marg.* D, G

² Fabritii factum *in marg.* D, G

[13] Aristotle¹ appears to take the opposite view when he discusses the magistrates of cities in the fifth book of his *Politics*: *If there is an election between two men, one skilled in war, but morally unsound and not a lover of the republic, and the other a just man, who loves the republic, but has very little knowledge of fighting*, then greater weight should be given to military skill than to moral uprightness.² Among the Romans, this view was followed by Fabricius³, a man of great honour and great achievements, for - according to Gellius^{4 5} - Fabricius helped Publius Cornelius Rufus⁶, a thieving and greedy man, who sought the consulate in a time of crisis for the republic. His reason was that Rufus was *a vigorous man, a good fighter, and skilled in military matters*. But for my part I do not agree with Aristotle, and I think that we should not bow to Fabricius' authority in this matter.⁷ For if, as we have said, all victory is from God, who will doubt that it is granted through good officers pleasing to God, rather than through despicable ones.

¹ Aristotle (384-322 BC): Greek philosopher

² Cf. Aristotle: *Politika*, 5.9 (1309B)

³ Fabricius Luscinius Monocularis, Gajus: Roman consul (278 BC) and censor (275 BC). Traditionally known for his austerity and incorruptibility

⁴ Aulus Gellius (ca. 125-after 180 AD): Roman author and grammarian

⁵ Aulus Gellius: *Noctes Atticae*, 4.8.1-2

⁶ Publius Cornelius Rufinus II: Roman consul 277 BC

⁷ Note this example of Piccolomini not accepting classical authorities where they disagree with Christian morality

[14] Nihil rei militaris scientia proderit, nisi ducis probitas Deo placuerit. At contra sine rei bellicae peritia plurimum per se ipsam valebit innocentia.

*Integer vitae scelerisque purus
Non eget Mauris jaculis nec arcu
Nec venenatis graviora sagittis,
Fusce, pharetra,*

Flaccus inquit. Sicut enim maximae copiae parva manu, cum Deus voluit, consternatae sunt, ita et cum imperito duce peritum vincere Deo pronum est. Nolo veteris testamenti exempla referre. Res novae et in Christianismo gestae sufficiunt. Julianus Apostata et scientia pugnandi et militum numero Parthis multo superior, victus tamen occiditur, nec moriens hosti victoriam, sed Christo imputat, quem persecutus fuerat. Nam cum vulneratus esset neque mortali, sed divina se percussus manu¹ cognosceret: *Vicisti, inquit, Galilae, vicisti*. Constantino, cum anxius esset futuri belli, quo se imparem hostibus existimabat, per quietem signum crucis in caelo monstratum est, et vox facta, quae diceret: *In hoc, Constantine, vince*. Neque Theodosius Arbagastum aut Eugenium bellandi peritia, sed manifesto Dei auxilio superavit. Hinc illa non spernendi poetae² carmina:

*O nimium dilecte Deo, cui militat Aether
Et conjurati veniunt ad classica venti.*

¹ se percussus manu : percussus manu se G

² Claudianus *in marg.* G

[14] Military skills in a general are useless if he does not please God through moral uprightness. But moral integrity¹ will achieve much even if the person in question is not skilled in war.

*He who is upright in his way of life and unstained by guilt,
Needs not the Moorish darts nor bow nor quiver
Loaded with poisoned arrows,
Fusce,²*

says Flaccus.³ Just like large armies have been defeated by a small force when God wanted it, thus God can easily let an inexperienced general defeat an experienced one. I shall not quote examples from the Old Testament since more recent events from the Christian age will suffice. Though Julian the Apostate⁴ was greatly superior to the Partians both in military skill and in size of army, he was defeated and slain. When he was dying, he did not acknowledge the enemy as victor, but Christ whom he had persecuted. For when he was wounded, he recognised that he had not been struck down by a mortal hand, but by the hand of God, and he exclaimed, “*You have won, Galilean, you have won.*”⁵

And in the night when Constantine feared the coming battle, believing that he was not equal to his enemies, the sign of the cross was shown to him in the sky and a voice said, *In this [sign] you will win, Constantine.*⁶

And Theodosius⁷ defeated neither Arbogastes⁸ nor Eugenius⁹ through military skill, but because of the manifest help from God.¹⁰ Thus, these verses of a poet are not to be laughed at:

*Verily God is with thee, when the very elements fight for thee
and the allied winds come at the call of thy trumpets.¹¹*

¹ “innocentia”

² Horatius: *Carmina*, 1.22.1-4

³ Horatius Flaccus, Quintus (65-8 BC): Roman poet

⁴ Julian the Apostate [Flavius Claudius Julianus Augustus] (ca. 331-363): Roman Emperor from 361 to his death. Philosopher and writer

⁵ Otto von Freising: *Chronica*, 4, 10

⁶ Otto von Freising: *Chronica*, 6, 1

⁷ Theodosius I the Great (Flavius Theodosius Augustus) (347-395): Roman Emperor from 379 to his death

⁸ Arbogastes, Flavius (d. 394): Frankish general in the Roman Empire

⁹ Eugenius (d. 394): usurper in the Western Roman Empire against Emperor Theodosius I

¹⁰ Otto von Freising: *Chronica*, 6, 18: including quote from Claudian

¹¹ Claudianus: *De tertio consulatu Honorii*, 96-98: *o nimium dilecte deo, cui fundit ab antris Aeolus armatas hiemes, cui militat aether et coniuurati veniunt ad classica venti*

[15] Apud Britanniam, quae nunc Anglia nuncupatur, testante venerabili Beda, viro sanctissimo, cuius ego sepulchrum in Dunelmia vidi, cum proelium inter Christianos atque gentiles periculosum instaret, essentque Christiani et pauci et inermes, neque ullo pacto hostibus pares, intervenientibus duobus ex Gallia pontificibus, sanctis viris Germano ac Lupo, et in ipso pugnae principio “Alleluja” tertio grandi voce intonari iubentibus victoria Christianis fide, non arte neque viribus parta est. Pleni sunt nostri codices exemplorum: victrix frequenter probitas est, succumbit impietas. *Ego sum, qui sum, dicit {94r} dominus, et consilium meum non est cum impiis.* Neque hoc fugit Aristotelem, cujus in *Ethicis* haec sunt verba: *Nam si dii curam aliquam habent humanarum rerum, ut existimatur et creditur, rationabile est eos gaudere optimo et cognatissimo; huiusmodi vero est mens, et amantibus illam maxime honorantibusque favere, tamquam rerum carissimarum sibi curatoribus ac recte et benigne agentibus. Quod autem haec omnia sapienti maxime competant, non est obscurum. Amicissimus ergo deorum, eundemque felicissimum esse decens est.* Eccum Aristotelis testimonium, qui¹ curant superi mortalia facta hisque favent, qui mentem colunt. At hi virtutis amatores sunt, osores vitii. Sic ergo et victoriae porta nutu Dei bonis aperta est, malis clausa.

[16] Quod et gentiles ipsi manifeste senserunt, qui victoriam deam esse dixerunt, quam Jupiter optimus maximus mitteret: illam vero tamquam regi deorum obtemperantem, ad quos jusserit, venire et in eorum parte consistere. Et *hoc, inquit Augustinus in libro De Civitate Dei VIII., vere dicitur non de illo Jove, quem deorum regem pro sua opinione confingunt, sed de illo vero rege saeculorum, quod mittat non victoriam, quae nulla est substantia, sed angelum suum, et faciat vincere, quem velit, cujus consilium occultum esse potest, iniquum non potest.*

¹ quod D, G

[15] In Brittany, now called England, Venerable Bede¹, a holy man whose tomb I have myself seen in Durham,² had the following to report: once a perilous battle between Christians and pagans was imminent. The Christians were few and badly armed and in no way equal to their enemies. Then, at the beginning of the battle, Germanus³ and Lupus⁴, two holy bishops from Gaul, intervened and bade them sing “Halleluja” three times, loudly. Thereafter, the Christians gained victory - by faith and not by skill or strength.⁵ Our books are full of such examples: moral uprightness is often victorious, and impiety succumbs. *I am who am, says the Lord, and my counsel is not with the godless.*⁶ This is known to Aristotle who says, in his *Ethics*: *For if, as generally supposed, the gods have some concern for human affairs, it would be reasonable to believe also that they take pleasure in that part of us which is best and most closely related to themselves (this being the intellect), and that they reward those who appreciate and honour it most highly; for they care for what is dear to them, and what they do is right and good. It is clear that all this applies to the wise man, and it stands to reason that the one who is most dear to the gods is also a very happy man.*⁷ Thus Aristotle testifies that the heavenly beings⁸ care about the doings of men and favour those who cultivate the soul.⁹ These are the people who love virtue and hate vice. So, the gate to victory is opened for good men and closed for evil men at the nod of God.

[16] That the gentiles had the same notion is shown by the fact that they called Victory a goddess who was sent by the Good and Great Jupiter.¹⁰ Obeying the king of the gods, she came to those to whom he sent her and stayed on their side. In book 4 of his *De Civitate Dei* Augustine comments: *This might be said with truth, not of that Jupiter whom they fashion to match their fancy as king of the gods, but of the true King of the ages: that he sends, not Victory (who is no real being), but his angel, and gives victory to the man of his choice. His design may be hidden, but can never be unrighteous.*¹¹

¹ Bede the Venerable (ca. 672-735). English monk, author and scholar

² Visited by Piccolomini on his return from Scotland in 1435, cf. *Commentarii*, 1, 6

³ Germanus (ca. 378-ca. 448): Bishop of Auxerre in Late Antique Gaul. He is best remembered for his journey to combat Pelagianism in Britain in or around 429 AD

⁴ Lupus (ca. 383-ca.478): Bishop of Troyes. Accompanied Germanus of Auxerre on his visit to Britain

⁵ Bede: *Historia ecclesastica gentis Anglorum*, 1, 24

⁶ Exodus, 3, 14

⁷ Aristotle: *The Nicomachean Ethics*, X, 8 (1179a 25-27). Quoted after the translation from the Greek by J.A.K. Thompson and H. Tredennick, p. 335. Presumably known to Piccolomini through Leonardo Bruni’s translation into Latin

⁸ “superi”

⁹ “mentem”

¹⁰ “Jupiter optimus maximus”

¹¹ Augustinus: *De civitate Dei*, 4, 17

[17] Expedit ergo pugnantes in primis pios esse atque innocentiae scuto munitos, sic enim Deo grati atque accepti facile victoriam consequentur. Quod si dicat aliquis meliores aliquando succumbere victoresque fieri pessimos, atque illud Lucani commemoretur *victrix causa diis placuit, sed victa Catoni*, melioremque Julio Pompejum asseramus, respondebo non esse facile de probitate hominis judicare. *Deus solus est, qui scrutatur corda et renes hominum*. Nullum animal versutius est homine¹, multae in eo latebrae: *Multae insidiae dolosi*, inquit Sapiens. Saepe apud Deum reprobatus est, quem nos optimum credimus.

¹ Versutum animal homo *in marg.* D, G

[17] So, those who fight should above all be pious and protected by the shield of innocence. Thus, they shall be pleasing and acceptable to God and will easily gain victory. Here somebody may object that the better men have often been defeated in battle, whereas very bad men have been victorious. He may even quote Lucan¹ who said that *the victor had the gods on his side, the vanquished had Cato*.^{2 3} And he may add that we consider Pompey to have been a better man than Julius. To this I will answer that it is not easy to judge the morals of any man. *Only God searches the hearts and reins of men*.⁴ No animal is more cunning than man, and he has many subterfuges: *Many are the snares of the deceitful*, says the Wise One.⁵ Often God rejects someone whom we consider to be among the best of men.

¹ Lucanus, Marcus Annaeus (39 AD-65): Roman poet, born in Cordoba

² Cato, Marcus Porcius (Cato the Elder) (234-149 BC): Roman statesman and censor

³ Lucanus: *Bellum civile*, 1.126

⁴ 1. Chronicles, 28, 9

⁵ Ecclesiasticus, 11, 31

[18] De stragibus autem, quas ab infidelibus majores nostri perpessi sunt, et nos in dies patimur, non est quod divinam pietatem religioni nostrae adversam putemus faventemque sectae hostium. Sed odit Deus illos, quia sine fide impossibile est Deo placere. Corrigit nos quia *fidem sine operibus mortuam* habemus, illisque victoriam praebet ad mortem, nobis captivitatem immittit ad vitam. Sicut enim Maccabaeorum II. scriptum est: *Multo tempore non sinere peccatoribus ex sententia agere, sed statim ultiones adhibere magni {94v} beneficii est indicium. Non enim sicut in aliis nationibus dominus patienter expectat, ut eas, cum iudicii dies venerit in plenitudine peccatorum puniat. Ita et in nobis statuit, ut peccatis nostris in finem devolutis, ita demum in nos iudicet, propter quod numquam quidem misericordiam suam a nobis amovet. Corripens vero in adversis populum suum non derelinquit.* Sed dicitis saepe victos Dei cultores ab his, qui Deum nesciunt. Quod factum esse propter peccata nostra manifestum est; numquam tamen modo apertum mare, modo clausum in favorem infidelium legimus, neque *columnam ignis in nocte* fulsisse, in die *columnam nubis* adversus calorem datam, nec stetisse solem, neque fluminum impeditum cursum, neque oppidorum moenia solis orationibus cecidisse, quemadmodum haec ad utilitatem eorum, qui Deo serviebant, facta traduntur. Quidni ergo spem nostram et in vera fide et pura innocentia reponamus? Expectemus victoriam, si boni fuerimus, si mali, captivitatem mortemque timeamus.

1.5. Christians suffer defeats because of their sins

[18] Concerning the defeats that our forefathers suffered at the hands of the infidels and those that we are now suffering daily, we should not believe that Divine Piety is against our religion and favours the sect of our enemies. For them God hates, since nobody can please God without Faith. The reason that he castigates us is that *faith without works is dead*.¹ God gives our enemies victory unto death, but us he sends captivity unto life. In the second Book of the Machabees it is written, that *it is a token of great goodness, when sinners are not suffered to go on in their ways for a long time, but are presently punished. For, not as with other nations, (whom the Lord patiently expecteth, that when the day of judgment shall come, he may punish them in the fulness of their sins:) Doth he also deal with us, so as to suffer our sins to come to their height, and then take vengeance on us. And therefore he never withdraweth his mercy from us: but though he chastise his people with adversity he forsaketh them not.*² "But," you say, "worshippers of God have often been defeated by people who do not know God." This evidently happens because of our sins. For we never read about God now opening the sea, now closing it for the sake of infidels. Nor has a *pillar of fire* burnt for them in the night, nor has a *pillar of cloud* been given them as protection against the heat;³ nor has the sun stood still, nor has the flow of rivers stopped, nor have the walls of cities fallen because of prayers alone,⁴ as it is reported to have happened for those who served God. So why should we not place our hope in true Faith and pure innocence? Let us expect victory, if we are good, and let us fear captivity and death if we are wicked.

¹ James, 2, 20

² 2. Machabees, 6, 13-16

³ Exodus, 13, 21

⁴ Joshua, 6: on the walls of Jericho

[19] Ego igitur, ut at id redeam, quod de Aristotelis auctoritate praemissum est, si eligendus mihi dux belli fuerit, neque probitatem sine scientia rei bellicae neque scientiam sine probitate receperim, quoniam in altero temptare Deum, in altero irritare timuerim. At si alterum omnino sit eligendum, non auscultabo Aristoteli: temptabo libentius quam irritabo divinam pietatem, dum potius bonum quam peritum sequar. Hoc inquam, si certa atque indubitata sit probitas. Verum quia haec *rara avis in terris est nigroque simillima cygno*, neque cognosci potest, si qua est, oportet peritiam sequi. Nam quod ait Aristoteles, omnino falsum est, quia pauciores sint rei militaris periti, plures vero probitatis. Contra enim est, multi res callent bellicas, probitatis pauci sectatores. Erit ergo inter duces eligendus, qui scientiae militaris plurimum, malitiae minimum habuerit. *Non est qui faciat bonum, non est usque ad unum*, inquit psalmista. At cum Dei sit, quem velit, ex pugnantibus victorem efficere, non est ambiguum, quin meliores praeferat, nisi latens aliqua ratio sit, quae aliud suadeat. Nos autem, quibus incognita sunt iudicia Dei, generalem sequi regulam debemus, quoniam impios exterminat Deus, *justi autem in perpetuum vivent*. Suadet igitur Caesar, quoniam vincere volumus, eos in bellum mittamus, per quos donare nobis victoriam divina pietas non dedignetur.

[19] Therefore, to return to what was said above on the authority of Aristotle, if I had to choose a general, I would accept neither moral integrity without military competence nor military competence without integrity, for in the first case I would fear to tempt God and in the second to provoke him. But if I was forced to choose one of these alternatives, I would not listen to Aristotle for I would rather tempt Divine Piety by choosing the good man than provoke Him by choosing the skilled one. This I say on the condition that the candidate possesses indubitable moral integrity. But *such a bird is rare on earth and very similar to a black swan*,¹ and it cannot be recognized as such even if it should exist somewhere. Therefore, the safer course is to choose competence. For Aristotle's claim that few people have military competence and many more people have moral integrity is completely false. On the contrary, many people have military experience, but few people care about moral righteousness. So, among the military leaders you will have to choose the one who combines a maximum of military competence with a minimum of wickedness. *There is none*, says the Psalmist, *that doth good: no not one*.² But since it is God who makes one of the contestants the victor, there is no doubt that he will prefer the better men, unless some hidden reason points in another direction. But we who do not know the judgments of God should act according to the general rule that *God destroys the impious*,³ *but the just shall live for evermore*.⁴ Therefore, since we want to win, the emperor urges you to send such people to war through whom Divine Piety will deign to grant us victory.

¹ Juvenalis: *Satirae*, 6.165

² Psalms, 13, 1

³ Cf. e.g. 1. Machabees 9, 73

⁴ Wisdom, 5, 16

[20] At quia {95v} peccatores sumus, peccatores autem non audit Deus, criminibus renuntiare oportet vitamque mutare perversam. Peccavimus omnes, quis dubitet? Recessimus a testamento Dei, iniquitatem fecimus, idcirco invenerunt *nos mala, quorum non est numerus*. Hinc Jerosolymorum amissa civitas, Antiochia perdita, Alexandria profanata, Constantinopolis occupata, omnis oriens, omnis meridies alienatus, Graecorum contrita gloria, Latinorum in dubio libertas posita, religio nostra in angulum Europae redacta, *in derisum ac subsannationem* gentibus dati sumus. Recessit a nobis Deus propter peccata nostra, neque auxiliatur amplius nobis in bello dextera sua, et brachium suum contra nos est. Quod si rursus in gratiam redire volumus ac flagella divina vitare, contrario itinere incedendum est, abjicienda sunt omnia, propter quae venisse super nos credunt iram Dei. Audiendus est clarus ille propheta Jeremias: *Nunc ergo, inquit ille, bonas facite vias vestras et studia vestra, et audite vocem domini Dei vestri, et poenitebit dominum mali, quod locutus est adversum vos*. Audiendus est et alius propheta ac plus quam propheta, major homine, par angelis, Johannes Baptista, qui constitutus in heremo *fructus fieri dignos poenitentia* docet. Audiendus est et alter Johannes, de Capistrano, verax verbi Dei praedicator, qui diebus singulis nobis evangelizat. Sequenda sunt ejus monita: redeundum est denique in viam, renuntiandum vitiis, virtutibus inhaerendum.

1.6. Necessity of repentance

[20] But since we are sinners, and God does not listen to sinners, we must renounce sins and change our evil ways. Who doubts that we have all sinned? We have turned away from the testament of God, we have been wicked, and therefore we have been visited by *evils without number*.¹ Therefore the City of Jerusalem has been lost, Antiochia has been surrendered, Alexandria has been profaned, Constantinople has been conquered, all the East and the South have fallen to strangers, the glory of the Greeks has been destroyed, the liberty of the Latins is threatened, our religion has been pushed into a corner of Europe,² and we have been made *a scoff and derision*³ to the gentiles. Our God has turned away from us because of our sins, his right hand will no longer help us in battle, and his arm is against us.⁴ If we want to return to his grace and avoid the scourge of God, then we must go the opposite way and cast all that away from us which we believe to have brought the anger of God upon us. We should heed the noble prophet Jeremiah who says: *Now therefore amend your ways, and your doings, and hearken to the voice of the Lord your God: and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath spoken against you*.⁵ We should also hear another prophet, nay more than a prophet, who is greater than men⁶ and the equal of angels, John the Baptist. When he lived in the desert, he taught us to *bring forth fruit worthy of penance*.⁷ And, finally, we should hear another John, John of Capistrano,⁸ a truthful preacher of the word of God, who daily preaches the gospel to us. We should follow his admonitions: reverse our ways, renounce vice, and follow virtue.

¹ Psalms, 39, 13

² Flavio Biondo: *Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum Imperii decades*, II, 3 [Im.75]: *Melius filii et majori cum gloria nostri progenitores inchoatam - ut altiuscule repetamus - Romae et in Italia et viribus Europae aucta dignitatem ad totius orbis monarchiam extulerunt, per cujus omnes provincias et regiones nomen floruit Christianum. Quod nomen nostris temporibus ad parvum orbis angulum coangustari et quotidie de excidio periclitari videmus*

³ Psalms, 43, 14

⁴ Cf. Psalms, 43, 4

⁵ Jeremiah, 26, 13

⁶ Cf. Luke, 7, 28

⁷ Matthew, 3, 8

⁸ Giovanni da Capistrano (1386-1456): Franciscan friar and preacher

[21] Et quamvis omnia vitia detestatur Deus, praecipue tamen eliminanda est a nostro exercitu ea bestia septicornis, quam superbiam nominamus. *Initium enim omnis peccati*¹, ut inquit sapiens, *superbia est, et qui tenuerit illam, adimplebitur maledictis, et subvertet eum in finem.* De Nabuchodonosor inquit Daniel: *Cum autem elevatum est cor ejus, et spiritus illius obfirmatus est ad superbiam, depositus est de solio regni sui, et gloria ejus ablata est, et a filiis hominum ejectus est.* Abjiciamus igitur hanc pestiferam et venenatam bestiam, ne quid in exercitu nostro possit officere, ne principes inter se committat, ne milites invicem dividat, ne schismata inter nos nutriat, aut nationem nationi reddat infestam. Expositus est ruinae *omnis exercitus intra se divisus.* Impossibile est adversus hostem bene pugnare, cui cum fratre litigandum est. *Non potest veritas nostra mentiri,* quae in evangelio² omne {95v} *regnum in se divisum* ruiturum affirmat.

[22] Conradus³ imperator - ne vetustiora commemorem - rexque Francorum Ludovicus cum maximas copias contra Turcos ac Saracenos in Asiam deportassent, dum fuere concordēs, usque Jerusalem clari atque victores perrexerunt. At seditionibus postmodum agitati exercitum inglorium reduxere. Et ut ad nostra tempora propius accedam, Sigismundus, rex Hungariae, qui postea Romano imperio praesedit, non alia de causa in magno proelio victus a Turcis creditur, nisi quia variarum gentium collectum exercitum minus concordem habuerit. Idem quoque de Vladislao, Poloniae rege, vulgatum est, quem propterea victum atque occisum tradunt, quia non fuerit inter Polonos, Hungaros ac Valaccos unitum consilium.

¹ Initium peccati superbia *in marg.* D, G

² Euangelium *in marg.* D, G

³ Discordie *in marg.* D, G

1.7. Doing away with vice

1.7.1. Pride

[21] Though God hates all vices, there is one especially that must be removed from our army: the seven-horned beast which we call pride. For as the Wise One says: *Pride is the beginning of all sin: he that holdeth it, shall be filled with maledictions, and it shall ruin him in the end.*¹ And Daniel says about Nebuchadnezzar: *But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit hardened unto pride, he was put down from the throne of his kingdom, and his glory was taken away, and he was driven out from the sons of men.*² Let us drive out this pestilential and poisonous beast so that it cannot trouble our army, set the princes against each other, cause divisions among the the soldiers, foster divisions among us, or cause enmity between the nations [represented in the army]. For every army *divided against itself*³ is threatened with destruction. It is impossible to fight well against an enemy if you also have to fight your brother. *Out truth cannot lie,*⁴ and in the Gospel it tells us that *every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation.*⁵

[22] In the not too remote past, Emperor Konrad⁶ and the French King Louis⁷ brought great forces to Asia to fight the Turks and the Saracens. While they were in harmony, they managed to reach Jerusalem as glorious conquerors. But when conflicts arose between them, they had to bring back the army in shame.⁸

Closer to our own time, Sigismund, King of Hungary and later ruler of the Roman Empire, is believed to have been defeated by the Turks in a great battle⁹ only because of dissensions in his army which consisted of contingents from various countries.

In the same way, it is being rumoured that Wladislas, King of Poland, was defeated and killed because the Poles, the Hungarians, and the Wallachians did not have a common plan.¹⁰

¹ Ecclesiasticus, 10, 15

² Daniel, 5, 20-21

³ Luke, 11, 17

⁴ Romans, 9, 1

⁵ Luke, 11, 17

⁶ Konrad III (1093-1152): first King of Germany of the Hohenstaufen dynasty. Participated in the First Crusade

⁷ Louis VII (1120-1180): King of France from 1137 to his death. Participated in the Second Crusade

⁸ Piccolomini is alluding to the Second Crusade (1147-1149) that was quite disastrous

⁹ The Battle of Nicopolis, 25. September 1396 lost, in great part, because of a lack of coordination of the Christian forces

¹⁰ The Battle of Varna, 10. November 1444, where lack of coordination also seems to have played a role in the defeat of the Christians

[23] Vobis ergo, principes ac viri potentes, quibus in Turcos pugnare decretum est, concordiam super omnia Caesar commendat. *Concordia namque, ut ait Crispus, parvae res crescunt, discordia maximae dilabuntur.* Artissimum atque optimum in omni exercitu vinculum incolumitatis est *concordia*. Inexpugnabilis est exercitus, qui nexu caritatis est unitus. Ubi concordia est, ibi et ordo et oboedientia, sine quibus nihil est, quod duces exercitus valeant explicare. Facessant ergo inter vos omnes divisiones, nulli contentioni sit locus, absint illa nomnia, quae scissionem sapere possunt. Nemo se Gallicum, nemo se Theutonicum, nemo se Bohemum, aut Hungarum dicat. Unum sit omnibus nomen, Christianum se quisque vocitet, neque pugnaturus pro Christo aliis se quam Christi titulis ac fascibus ornet. Sint omnes milites cruce signati. Ament invicem. Inferiores superioribus pareant; superiores his, qui sibi subjecti sunt, moderata imperent. Nemo de se majora, quam sint, existimet. Si quis est virtute praestans ac Jasoni similis, qui sibi fieri injuriam credidit, nisi regnaret - erat enim ille ad gubernandum aptissimus - persuadeat sibi, quia non semper, qui melior est, eligitur. Titus, Vespasiani filius, quem *delicias generis humani* vocaverunt, *principatum* dicere solitus erat *fato dari*, inanesque curas illorum, qui suis studiis imperaturos se crederent. Nec male sentiebat, si fatum pro divina ordinatione, quae gubernat mundum, accipiebat.

[23] To you, Princes and mighty men, who have decided to fight against the Turks, the emperor recommends harmony above all. For as Crispus¹ says: *Harmony makes small states great, while the mightiest are undone by discord.*² In every army, *harmony is the strongest and closest bond of permanent union.*³ An army united by charity is invincible. Where there is harmony, there is also order and obedience without which no general can achieve anything. So, away with all divisions between you. Leave no room for conflict. Do not use names that reflect divisions. Let no one call himself French, German, Bohemian or Hungarian. Let there only be one name: let everyone call himself Christian. Let no one who is going to fight for Christ use other titles and symbols than those of Christ. Let all soldiers wear the sign of the cross⁴ and let them love each other. Inferiors should obey their superiors, and superiors should govern their subordinates with moderation. Let no one have a higher opinion of himself than is reasonable. If anyone has great courage and is like to Jason,⁵ who considered it an insult if he did not rule⁶ – for he was highly fit for governing – then let him convince himself that it is not always the best one who is chosen. Titus,⁷ the son of Vespasian,⁸ whom they called *darling of the human race*,⁹ used to say that *imperial power is the gift of fate*¹⁰ and those who believe that they shall come to govern through their own efforts trouble themselves in vain. And his notion was quite correct, though he believed in fate rather than in the divine providence that governs the world.

¹ Sallustius Crispus, Gaius (86-ca. 35 BC): Roman historian and politician

² Sallustius: *Bellum Jugurthinum*, 10.6

³ Cicero: *De re publica*, 2.43.69: *artissimum atque optimum omni in re publica vinculum incolumitatis, eaque sine iustitia nullo pacto esse potest*. Piccolomini applies Cicero's dictum about the state to the army

⁴ i.e. the symbol of a crusader

⁵ Jason: (Greek myth.) Hero famous for his role as leader of the Argonauts and their quest for the Golden Fleece

⁶ Apollonius Rhodius: *Argonautica*, 1.340-350.

⁷ Titus Flavius Caesar Vespasianus Augustus (39-81): Roman Emperor from 79 to his death

⁸ Vespasianus Augustus, Titus Flavius (9-79): Roman Emperor from 69 to his death

⁹ Suetonius: *De vitis Caesarum / Titus*, 1.1: *amor ac deliciae generis humani*

¹⁰ Suetonius: *De vitis Caesarum / Titus*, 9.1.

[24] Si quis ergo est, qui eum sibi praelatum dolet, cui se praeficiendum putavit, existimet, quia non humano, sed divino iudicio id factum est. Cogitet id, quod est in hoc bello, non se homini, sed Christo militare ac parere, nec gravetur, cum sit homo, humiliare se homini propter Christum, quoniam Christus ipse, cum esset Deus, propter hominem *usque ad mortem crucis se ipsum exinanivit*. O homo, quis tu es? Quem te ipsum facis? O caro, o terra, o pulvis, {96r} o cinis, unde ista tua superbia est? Unde tumescis? Unde est, ut homini subesse nolis, cum Deus ipse propter te homini se subjecerit? Abjiciamus, obsecro, hanc mentis elevationem, absit haec inanis spuma, recedat hic periculosissimus ventus. Sit nobiscum illa modestissima et pulcherrima virgo, quam vocamus humilitatem, quae sola divinam meretur gratiam, quae in terris sublimat homines et in caelis coronat angelos. Hanc, si totis affectibus complexi fuerimus, erit in nostro exercitu concordia, pax, tranquillitas, oboedientia, ordo. Nullum odium nos vexabit, nullis agitabimur contentionibus, unitum exercitum atque insuperabilem efficiemus.

[25] Dicat hic fortasse quispiam: "Quid est, quod ais? Ducibus ac militibus humilitatem praedicas, quos fortes ac magnanimos esse oportet. Humilitas autem his contraria virtutibus habetur." Immo vero, principes, nemo humilis est nisi fortis ac magnanimus. Fortitudini contraria est imbellicitas, magnanimitati pusillanimitas, non humilitas. Animus certe illi magnus est neque fortitudine caret, qui cum sit genere clarus, virtute praestans, ingentibus dignus honoribus: si vocatur ad res magnas, praesto est suoque satis officio facit. Si postponitur, non turbatur, neque propterea seditiones excitat, sed animo sedato fortunam fert atque illa spernit, quae alii magna ducunt. Ceterum quia in omni procuratione negotii et muneris publici caput est, ut avaritiae tollatur vel minima suspicio, eum belli ducem eumque capitaneum assumere oportet, quem summa temperantia commendatum reddat. *Neque enim potest¹ exercitum is continere imperator, qui seipsum non continet, neque severus esse in iudicando, qui alios in se severos esse iudices non vult*. Nullum vitium deterius est quam avaritia et praesertim in eo, qui ducit exercitum. Nam rem publicam venalem habet, nec enim debita militibus stipendia elargitur, nec praedas juste partitur, saepeque propter avaritiam ab instituto cursu revocatur.

¹ oportet G

[24] If anybody gets frustrated because another has been placed in command over him, when he thought that he himself should be placed in command over the other, then let him acknowledge that it has been done not by human, but by divine judgment. Let him consider that in this war he should not fight for and obey a man, but Christ. Let him not be aggravated that he, who is a man, should defer to another man because of Christ, for Christ himself, though God, *emptied himself even to the death of the cross*.¹ Oh man, who are you? What do you make of yourself? Oh flesh, oh earth, oh dust, oh ashes, from where comes this conceit of yours? Why do you swell with pride? Why do you not want to obey a man when God made himself subject to men for your sake? So, please, let us cast away this arrogance. Away with this froth of vanity. Let this dangerous flutter subside. May our companion be that modest and beautiful maiden whom we call Humility: only she merits divine grace. On Earth she raises up men, and in Heaven she crowns the angels. If we embrace her with all our heart, our army shall have harmony, peace, tranquility, obedience and order. We shall not be disturbed by enmities nor troubled by conflicts: rather we shall form one united and invincible army.

[25] Here, someone may object: “What are you saying? You demand humility of leaders and soldiers who should rather be strong and bold. But humility is the very opposite of these virtues!” On the contrary, Princes, only the strong and brave man can be humble. The opposite of strength is not humility, but weakness, and the opposite of courage is not humility, but timidity. That man, of noble blood, of eminent virtue, and worthy of great honours, is brave and strong who when called to great things is ready and performs his office well, and who when he is passed over is not upset nor raises trouble, but carries his fortune with equanimity and has little regard for things that others consider important. Moreover, in all conduct of business and public affairs it is very important that there should not be even the slightest hint of greed. Therefore, as leader and captain you should take a man who is commended by great moderation. *No commander can control an army who does not control himself, nor can he be a strict judge if he is unwilling that others should judge him strictly*.² For there is no greater vice than greed,³ and especially in one who leads an army. For [a greedy general] is corrupt, he does not pay the soldiers their due salaries, he does not divide the spoils fairly, and often he turns from the chosen course because of greed.⁴

¹ Philippians, 2, 7-8

² Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 13.38

³ On greed, cf Piccolomini's orations "*Si quis me roget*" [2] and "*Non est aoud me dubium*" [6]

⁴ Cf. Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 13.37

[26] Verum non solum capitaneo, sed universo exercitui prohibenda est haec pestis, ne, dum per agros amicorum sociorumque transit, rapinas agat. Neque ego hunc exercitum praedae cupidum esse voluerim. Auro namque, non Christo militat, qui spolia concupiscit. Pro tutela fidei, pro gloria Christiani nominis, pro *zelo domus Dei* hoc bellum suscipiendum est, non praedae causa. Non tamen parta victoria, si quid praedarum est, recipiendum prohibeo, nam et justum lucrum ex justo bello provenit. Cavendum tamen est, ne rapiamus, unde non decet, ne pauperes Graecos atque alios Christianos, qui coacti sub Turco degunt, suis bonis spoliemus. Quae res non modo invisae Deo esset, sed ipsos quoque nobis alienaret, qui spem in nobis habent. Cogitemus, quia ad liberandam¹ ex manu² Turcorum Graeciam, non ad spoliandam pergimus. Quod si vulgatum Graeci audiant, mirabilem hinc favorem consequimini. Alioquin non minus Graecos quam Turcos {96v} infestos patiemini.

[27] Praeterea, ut de capitaneo amplius aliquid dicam, sint ad eum *faciles aditus privatorum, sint liberae querimoniae de injuriis, ut qui dignitate principes excellit, facilitate infimis par esse videatur*. Fidem autem non ad socios solum, sed etiam ad hostes inviolatam custodiat.

¹ liberandum G

² manibus G

1.7.2. Greed

[26] But this evil must be forbidden not only to the captain, but also to the whole army, so that we do not pass through the territories of our friends and allies as robbers. I wish that this army should be devoid of all hunger for spoils: the man who wants spoils does not fight for Christ, but for gold. This war should be undertaken for the defense of the Faith, for the glory of the Christian name, and out of *zeal for the house of God*,¹ not for the sake of booty. If there are any spoils after victory has been won, I do not forbid [the soldiers] to receive them, for the spoils of a just war are just, too. But we should take care not to plunder where it is inadmissible, and not to despoil the poor Greeks and other Christians who are forced to live under the Turks. For that would not only be hateful to God, but it would also alienate from us the very people who put their trust in us. Let us bear in mind that we are setting out to free Greece from the hand of the Turks, not to plunder it. If the Greeks hear that you do not rob them, then you will become very popular with them. In the opposite case, the Greeks will hate you just as much as the Turks.

[27] I will say something more about the captain. Let him be *so easy of access to ordinary people, so open to hear their complaints of wrongs done them by others, that he whose greatness surpasses that of princes appears in accessibility the equal of the lowest*.² And let him keep his oaths not only to his allies, but also to his enemies.³

¹ Psalms, 68, 10: *zelus domus tuae comedit me*

² Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 14.41: *Iam vero ita faciles aditus ad eum privatorum, ita liberae querimoniae de aliorum iniuriis esse dicuntur, ut is, qui dignitate principibus excellit, facilitate infimis par esse videatur*

³ Cf. Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 14.42

[28] Absit ex nostro exercito omnis libido, omnis crudelitas. Nulli feminae vis inferatur. Pudicitia non modo nostrarum, sed etiam captivarum salva sit. In proelio robustos milites, in pace mansuetos velim. Parta victoria furor armorum cesset. Nemo nisi in acie occidatur. Parta victoria gladium vagina claudes, nudum videat nemo. *Hostes imperatoris virtutem pugnantes timeant, victi mansuetudinem diligant.* Etenim quamvis sunt¹ Turci omni malo digni, qui filium Dei abnegant, Jesum Christum, nihil tamen in eos temere ac crudeliter agendum est. Illud curandum omnino existimo, ut Graeci, si vincimus, libertatem sperent, Turci crudelitatem mortis non timeant, *ne desperationem in virtutem vertant.* Saepe *salus victis nullam sperare salutem* fuit. Modestia igitur ac providentia capitanei hoc curabit, ne crudelis exercitus existimetur, ne libidinosus, quod nulla re facilius aget, quam si et ipse continentia atque abstinentia valuerit. Oportet esse quidem milites animo plenos, sed non minus² libidinis quam Turcorum hostes omneque turpe nomen horrere, ne maritis uxores, ne patribus filias, ne sorores fratribus auferant. Temperanda est ipsa victoria. Nemo idcirco vincere velit, ut libidinem expleat. Expellatur haec immanis ac taeterrima bestia, quae saepe victores exercitus pervictos reddidit.

¹ sint G

² minor D

1.7.3. Cruelty and licentiousness

[28] In our army there should be no lustfulness, no cruelty, and no violence against women. The chastity of our female captives should be as safe as that of our own women. I want our soldiers to be forceful in battle and gentle in peace. When victory has been achieved, the fury of weapons should cease. No one should be killed except in battle. When victory has been achieved, the sword should be kept in its sheath, no one should see it bared. *When our enemies fight, they should fear the courage of the general, when they have been defeated they should love his mildness.*¹ For though the Turks, who reject Jesus Christ, the Son of God, are worthy of every chastisement, they should not be treated rashly or cruelly. And in my opinion, we should take special care that, if we win, the Greeks should hope for freedom, and the Turks should not fear cruel death and *turn desperation into bravery.*² Often the one *chance the vanquished have is to hope for none.*³ So through modesty and prudence the captain will see to it that the army shall not have a reputation for cruelty or for licentiousness. And the easiest way for him to do that is to be himself both continent and abstinent. The soldiers should be lively, but fear lust as much as their Turkish enemies. They must avoid a reputation for indecent behaviour, and not rob husbands of their wives, fathers of their daughters, or brothers of their sisters. Victory should be tempered, and nobody should wish for victory in order to indulge in lust. Let us drive out this cruel and horrible beast that often crushes victorious armies.

¹ Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 14.42: *hostes magis virtutem eius pugnantes timuerint an mansuetudinem victi dilexerint*

² Justinus: *Epitoma*, 2.13.6: *nec spem fuge adimet, ne desperatio in virtutem vertatur*

³ Vergilius: *Aeneis*, 2.354: *una salus victis nullam sperare salutem*

[29] Est quoque et alia bestia ex nostro exercitu procul abjicienda, quae desidia seu pigritia nuncupari potest. Decet enim “milites” sui nominis meminisse, quos¹ a² “malo”, quod perferunt, dictos jurisconsultus ait. Sciat se quisque miles in exercitu esse, qui non a quiescendo³, sed ab exercitando nomen accepit. Sint sedulo in armis, cursitent, foveam fodiant, vallum figant, agant, instent⁴, vigilant⁵, nullum tempus laboris vacuum habeant. Numquam in otio miles, numquam imperator inveniatur, sciatque capitaneus nullum *dulcius* spectaculum esse militibus, *quam* ductorem exercitus *panem communem milite coram edere, in vili simul jacere strato, vallum castrorumque metationem communi labore simul partiri*. Non enim tam fasces pecuniasque sortiri colendos capitaneos facit, quam laboris periculique vices subire. Praeterea magis ab exercitu ipsi coluntur duces, qui mutuo labori se ingerunt, quam qui pigrescere milites sinunt. Neque enim cibariis uti debet delicatis sive miles, sive imperator, ac longe *quaesitis*. *Luxuria* igitur omnis absit, et *lautae gloria mensae*. Scipio militem mulctavit, qui artocream ediderat, quam “Carthaginem” vocavit.

¹ Milites a malo dictos *in marg.* D

² *omit.* G

³ a quiescendo : acquiescendo D

⁴ instant A

⁵ et *add.* G

1.7.4. Idleness

[29] Another beast, too, must be cast far away from our army: it may be called idleness or indolence. Soldiers should remember the meaning of their name "*miles*" that according to a legal expert¹ comes from the damage, "*malum*", they do.² Every soldier should keep in mind that he is in an army, "*exercitus*", that gets its name not from idleness, but from "*exercise*". Let them do weapons exercises tirelessly, let them run, dig trenches, build bulwarks, be moving, press on, keep guard, and have no leisure time. Never should the soldier or the general be found idle. And the captain should know that no sight is sweeter to soldiers than when the general *eats the common bread in front of them, lies on a simple couch, and joins in the common labour when trenches and camps are under construction*.³ For sharing labour and danger does more than the *fascēs*⁴ and the distribution of money to make captains popular. And generals who participate in the common labours are more popular with the army than those who let the soldiers be idle. Neither soldier nor general should eat exquisite foods brought from afar. Let there be no *luxury* or *delicate eating*.⁵ Scipio fined a soldier who had eaten a dish of bread and meat⁶, "*artocream*", that he called "*Carthage*" ("*Carthaginem*").

¹ Ulpianus, Gnaeus Domitius Annius (ca. 170-223): Roman jurist

² Ulpianus: *De testamento*, Lib. 1 ff.: *Nam et miles a malo dictus quod arcere soleat scilicet*. Cf. also Bruni: *De militia* (Bayley, p. 373, l. 19): *sic et miles a malo quod arcet recte dici miles*

³ Plutarch: *Parallel lives / Marius* (Bibl. Ambros. H 37 sup, f. 23v), cf. Piccolomini: *Pentalogus* (Schिंगnitz, p. 234)

⁴ A bound bundle of wooden rods, sometimes including an axe with its blade emerging. In ancient Rome it symbolized a magistrate's power and jurisdiction

⁵ Lucanus: *Bellum civile*, 4.376

⁶ "*artocrea*". See RTA, 19, 3, p. 484, n. 146

[30] Sunt igitur omnes hae bestiae a nostris procul castris expellendae, si victores esse cupimus: superbia, avaritia, libido, crudelitas, {97r} ignavia, luxuria, proque his advocandae sunt nobilissimae ac speciosissimae virgines: humilitas, liberalitas, castitas, misericordia, sollicitudo, abstinentia. Hae sunt enim, quae divinam nobis pietatem placare possunt et angelum, qui victoriam praebeat, ex ipso caeli summo vertice advocare. Cumque his fortitudinem ac magnanimitatem, tum vero spem et alacritatem concurrere oportet. Aggrediantur milites alto corde, quae necessaria instant, pericula, neque terreantur subitis casibus, *non perturbentur in rebus asperis, neque tumultuantes¹ de gradu dejiciantur*, ut dicitur. Potissime vero capitaneus praesenti animo consilioque utatur nec a ratione discedat. Sed omnia, quae possunt evenire, in utramque partem libret ac percipiat cognitione futura, ut jam sciat, quid agendum sit, cum hoc aut illud evenerit, ne aliquando turpe illud dicere habeat: "*Non putaram.*" Cumque omnino periclitandum est, volo fortem militem servituti ac turpitudini mortem praeferre. Numquam spes, numquam alacritas militi desit; credat se omnis exercitus victurum cum pugnare oportet. Caveat imperator milite titubante committere proelium², ad quam rem duo necessaria sunt: alterum, ut ita munita sint castra, ne cogatur invitus pugnare; alterum, ut ratione ostendatur militibus victoriam esse sperandam, in qua re multum valet capitanei eloquentia, atque ingenium, ac *dicendi gravitas, et copia, in quo ipso est quaedam dignitas imperatoria*.

[31] In primo adjutus est Gaius Marius, qui contra Cimbro profectus, cum sensisset milites timere multitudinem ac proceritatem hostium, tam diu in castris se continuit, donec contumeliis provocatus miles proelium posceret. Antea vero petentibus hostibus pugnam respondit non esse Romani moris pugnandi consilium ex hostibus capere. Neque hic imitandi sunt aliqui, qui sibi dedecus reputant, nisi pugnent provocati. Timent enim rumores hominum, ne pusillanimes appellentur. Imitandus est potius Fabius Maximus, quem cum multi reprehenderent, quia non pugnaret cum Hannibale, *non ponebat rumores ante salutem*, neque pugnare sine certa victoriae spe³ volebat, quod illi facere possunt, qui castra opportune muniunt et his rebus fulciunt, quae sunt ad victum necessaria. Sed haec cura capitanei erit.

¹ tumultuante A, D; tumultuantes *corr.* ex tumultuante G

² committere proelium : prelium committere G

³ victoriae spe : spe uictorie G

[30] So, all these beasts should be driven out of the camp if we want to be victorious: pride, greed, lust, cruelty, laziness and luxury. Instead of these we should call upon those noble and beautiful maidens: humility, generosity, chastity, mercy, solicitude and abstinence. It is they who can make Divine Piety accept us and summon the angel of victory from high Heaven. They should be joined by fortitude and courage as well as by hope and ardor. The soldiers should fearlessly take on all necessary risks and not be frightened by sudden setbacks: let them not become *disconcerted in times of difficulty or ruffled and thrown off one's feet*, as the saying goes.¹ Most of all, the captain should be alert, prudent, and sensible. He should foresee and weigh all contingencies so that he may know what to do when they occur and not – shamefully – have to say: “*I had not expected*” that.² Since theirs is a life of risk and danger, I want the soldiers to be strong and to prefer death to slavery and shame. Never should hope and ardor fail the soldiers. When it must fight, the whole army should believe that it will win. The general should be careful about engaging in battle when his army is faltering. And with regard to the battle itself two things are necessary: one is a well-fortified camp so that the general is not forced to fight against his will, and the other is that soldiers be shown why they may reasonably hope for victory. In this matter, it is highly important that the captain be well-spoken and intelligent, and has that *weight and eloquence in his oratory, which is characterized by the dignity appropriate to a commander*.³

[31] One who greatly profited from this policy was Gaius Marius when he marched against the Cimbrians. Hearing that his soldiers feared the numerical strength and the tallness of the enemies, he remained so long in camp that the soldiers themselves, irritated by the insults of the enemies, demanded to fight. When, earlier, the enemies had asked for battle, he had replied that it was not the Roman custom to take advice on fighting from enemies. There is no reason to imitate those men who consider it shameful not to fight when insulted, fearing what people say, and not wanting to be called timid. Rather, we should imitate Fabius Maximus: when many criticised him for not fighting with Hannibal, *not in the least did fame with him take precedence of safety*,⁴ and he did not want to fight without certain hope of victory. This may be done by those who fortify their camp properly and have abundant provisions. But that is the responsibility of the captain.

¹ Cicero: *De officiis*, 1.23.80: *Fortis vero animi et constantis est non perturbari in rebus asperis nec tumultuantem de gradu deici, ut dicitur*

² Valerius Maximus: *Facta ac dicta memorabilia*, 7.2.2. Quoting Scipio

³ Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 14.42: *quantum dicendi gravitate et copia valeat, in quo ipso inest quaedam dignitas imperatoria*

⁴ Ennius, quoted by Cicero: *De officiis*, 1.24.84: *Noenum rumores ponebat ante salutem*

[32] Nos hic pauca de spe instituimus dicere. Sentio enim multos dicere, quibus non videtur verisimile cum eo exercitu, qui promissus est, vincere. “Namque cum fama sit trecenta aut saltem ducenta millia pugnatorum in armis habituros Turcos, quid,” inquit, “adversus haec quadraginta millia bellantes agant? Quae proportio ista? Quid nostra paucitas adversus tantam multitudinem?¹ Si fuerint hinc viri, inde oves, mactando nostros fatigari oportet.” His ego respondeo quadraginta millia ex sola Alamania mittenda esse, Hungari suum exercitum, Bohemique suum habebunt extra hunc numerum. Neque Austria, Moravia, Sclesia, quantum ad haec, inter Alamanos habentur². Ex Gallia quoque ceterisque Christianorum {97v} provinciis nonnulli sua sponte concurrent. Itaque facile, ut arbitror, octuaginta millia pugnatorum terrestres exercitus continebit. In mari quoque classis erit nostra inimica Turcis, quae illorum agros undique vexabit, et ad tuendam patriam remanere nonnullos coget. Non est parvus neque contemnendus exercitus, qui octuaginta millia virorum educeant gladios continet. Neque dux, qui sapiat, majorem desideret. Romani, teste Vegetio³, numquam tantam belli molem imminere posse putarunt, quin quattuor legiones una cum auxiliis ad resistendum sufficerent. Auxilia vero numquam majora voluerunt quam legiones essent. Et licet Octavianus Augustus quattuor et quadraginta legiones habuisse tradatur, non tamen his omnibus uno bello usus est, sed ad tutelam provinciarum legiones alias aliis in locis distribuit.

[33] Aristoteles⁴ in *Politicis* eam quippe civitatem non laudat, quae adeo magna est, ut cives inter se non sint cogniti. Negat enim ejus civitatis regimen posse subsistere, in qua non sint omnia ex ordine disposita. Civitates autem nimis amplas nimisque populosas recte disponi posse non putat. At haec ratio in exercitu potentior est. Civitas enim non semper hostes habet, et pacis tempore, quae gerenda sint imminente bello, disponere potest. Exercitus semper hostem insidiantem habet, et nunc impetum, nunc insidias cavere cogitur. Discrimina ex momentis occurrunt, quibus, nisi subito succurratur, funditus intereundum est. Sed quomodo ipso puncto temporis provideri atque occurri potest, nisi ad ipsum imperatoris nutum universi milites praesto sint? Quomodo praesto erunt, ignotus ignoto cum imperat? Maximi et numerosissimi exercitus neque regi neque pasci possunt, neque loca facile reperiuntur, in quibus pugnare multitudines hujusmodi possint: facile quoque minor exercitus aut colles aut palustria⁵ loca reperit, ne undique circumdari a multitudine possit. Impossibile est maximum exercitum ordinatum esse, neque enim multitudo rei militaris perita potest esse: vix paucos doctos invenias.

¹ que proportio ... multitudinem *omit.* G

² neque *add.* G

³ Vegetius de numero militum *in marg.* D, G

⁴ Aristoteles de magnitudine civitatis *in marg.* D, G

⁵ palustra G

1.8. Christians need not fear Turkish superiority in numbers

[32] Here, we propose to say something about what we may hope for. I hear many say that it is unlikely that you can win with the forces that have been promised, “for if the Turks are going to have 300,000 or at least 200,000 soldiers under arms, as it is rumoured, then what can our 40,000 soldiers achieve? What kind of odds are those? What can so few do against so many?¹ Even if those on our side are men and those on the other side sheep, we shall still be overcome by exhaustion just by slaughtering them.” To them I answer that the 40,000 applies only to the soldiers sent from Germany. The armies raised by the Hungarians and by the Bohemians are not included in this number, and – in so far as Germany is concerned – neither are those from Austria, Moravia and Silesia. From France and the other Christian lands there will be many volunteers. Thus, I believe, the land army will easily have 80,000 soldiers. At sea, our navy, too,² will fight the Turks and attack their lands everywhere, forcing them to keep many men at home in order to defend their country. An army having the swords of 80,000 men is neither small nor contemptible. Nor will an experienced general desire a larger army. According to Vegetius,³ the Romans thought that they would never be seriously threatened by a force so great that four legions with their corresponding auxiliary troops would not suffice to counter it.⁴ And they did not want the auxiliary troops to be more numerous than the legions. Even if Emperor Augustus is said to have had 44 legions, he did not use them all in a single campaign, but distributed them in many places for the defense of the provinces.

[33] In his *Politics*, Aristotle certainly does not praise the city which is so big that its citizens do not know each other. He says that no government can survive in a city where everything is not done in an orderly fashion, and he thinks that cities that are too large and populous cannot be well-ordered.⁵ This is even more true of armies. For a city does not always have enemies, and if war threatens at a time of peace there is time to make proper preparations. But an army always has an enemy lurking somewhere, and it always has to be on guard against attacks or traps. Dangers may arise at any moment, and if they are not countered immediately, there will be total disaster. But how can dangers be countered and met at any time, unless all soldiers are ready to obey the orders of the general? And how will they be ready if general and soldiers do not know each other? Very large armies can neither be commanded nor fed, and it is difficult to find places where such large numbers can fight. A small army, however, can easily find hills or marshy areas⁶ where they cannot be surrounded by a larger army. A large army cannot be well-ordered. And the large majority cannot be skilled in war – you will barely come across a few experts.

¹ Vegetius: *Epitoma rei militaris*, 2, 4

² To be provided by the Italians

³ Vegetius Renatus, Publius Flavius (late 4th c.): Roman writer

⁴ Vegetius: *Epitoma rei militaris*, 7.4

⁵ Aristotle: *Politics*, 7.4 (1326b)

⁶ Cf. Vegetius: *Epitoma rei militaris*, 3.6

[34] Legi ego non paucas veterum historias, neque fortunatos invenio exercitus numerosos¹. Nostis cum quanto fastu missus Holofernes contra Judaeos inceserit, cujus copiae terram cooperiebant, et *profectus est ipse*, inquit scriptura, *et omnis exercitus cum quadrigis et equitibus et sagittariis, qui cooperuerunt faciem ejus sicut locustae*. Ac hic viduae manu truncatus est. Rapsaces contra Ezechiam missus regem Aegypti deridet quasi *baculum arundineum*, cadit tamen exercitus ejus. Cyrus, Cambysis filium, qui condidit² imperium Persarum, cum ducentis millibus pugnatorum ingressus Scythiam regina Tamiris interficit³. Darius, Hystaspis filius, qui primus ejus nominis regnavit in Persis, cum septingentis millibus hominum ingressus Scythiam *amissis LXXX millibus* turpi fuga recessit. Eundem cum sexcentis millibus bellatorum Graeciam oppugnare nitentem Melchides⁴ Atheniensis in campis Marathoniis cum⁵ X millibus fugat.

¹ Numerosi exercitus infortunati *in marg.* D, G

² condit D, G

³interfecit D, G

⁴ Alcibiades *in marg.* D; Melchides *in marg.* G

⁵ omit. G

[34] I have read a number of historical works from old times, and I find that large armies were not successful.¹ You know with what magnificence Holofernes was sent against the Jews, and how his troops overran their land. *And he went forth, says Scripture, he and all the army, with the chariots, and horsemen, and archers, who covered the face of the earth, like locusts.*² Still he died at the hand of a widow.³

Rapsaces was sent against Ezechias⁴ and scorned the King of Egypt as a *staff of reed*.⁵ Still, his army was defeated.

Cyrus,⁶ the son of Cambyses⁷ who founded the Persian Empire, invaded Scythia with 200,000 soldiers, but was killed by Queen Tamyris.⁸

Darius I of Persia,⁹ the son of Hystaspes,¹⁰ entered Scythia with 700,000 troops; he lost 80,000 men and had to flee ignominiously.¹¹ The same Darius tried to conquer Greece with 600,000 soldiers, but on the plain at Marathon he was defeated and forced to flee by the Athenian Miltiades,¹² who had only 10,000 soldiers.¹³

¹ Cf. Vegetius: *Epitoma rei militaris*, 3.1

² Judith, 2, 11

³ Judith, 13

⁴ Hezekiah: 13th king of Judah. The commonly received computation reckons his reign from 726 to 697 BC

⁵ Isaiah, 36, 6

⁶ Cyrus II the Great (ca. 576-530 BC): King of Persia. Founder of the Achaemenid Empire

⁷ Cambyses I the Elder (ca. 600-559 BC): King of Anshan in Iran

⁸ Tamyris (fl. c. 530 BC): Eastern Iranian empress who reigned over the Massagetes, a Scythian people. Defeated and killed Cyrus I the Great. See Justinus: *Epitoma historiarum Philippicarum*, 1, 8

⁹ Darius I the Great (ca. 550-476 BC): King of Persia. Third King of the Persian Achaemenid Empire

¹⁰ Hystaspes [Vistaspa] (fl. 550 BC): Persian satrap of Bactria and Persis

¹¹ Otto of Freising: *Chronica*, 2, 16

¹² Miltiades (550-489 BC): One of the Greek generals at the Battle of Marathon

¹³ Otto of Freising: *Chronica*, 2, 16

[35] Xerxes, qui post eum¹ Persis imperavit, septies centena *millia* Persarum, {98r} auxiliarium vero *trecenta millia*, in Graeciam trajecit tantasque copias congregavit, ut *non immerito proditum sit flumina ab ejus exercitu siccata Graeciamque omnem vix ejus exercitum capere potuisse*. Superbus ille atque inflatus tanti ductor exercitus, *veluti naturae dominum se agebat, montes in planum deducebat, convexa vallium aequabat et maria quaedam pontibus sternebat, quaedam ad navigationis commodum coaptabat. Sed qualis rediit? Nempe una nave cruentis fluctibus et tarda per densa cadavera prora. Quam terribilis ejus introitus, tam turpis et foedus discessus fuit*. Terrestri proelio cum quattuor millibus militum a Leonida, rege Spartanorum, in angustiis Thermopylarum triduo debellatur, navali pugna in angustiis Salamini freti a Themistocle superatur, piscatoria scapha diffugit. *Res spectaculo digna et expectatione rerum humanae sortis varietate miranda; scilicet in exiguo latentem videre navigio, quem paulo ante vix aequor omne capiebat, carentem etiam omnium servorum ministerio*. Quid alter Darius, qui ante Codomanus dictus est? Non cum Alexandro magno duobus in proeliis dimicavit, apud Issum, deinde in Gangamelis? In primo bello sexcenta millia pugnatorum habuit, in secundo decies centena millia peditum, equitum quinquaginta millia, currus falcatos ducentos. Victus tamen utrobique est. Alexandro VII millia equitum, quadraginta millia peditum fuere. Gaius Marius cum sexaginta millibus militum trecenta millia Cimbrorum fudit atque delevit, nec majorem exercitum habuit Julius Caesar, cum quadringenta millia Gallorum contrivit.

¹ post eum : postea G

[35] Xerxes,¹ who ruled the Persians after him, brought 700,000 Persians and 300,000 auxiliary troops to Greece,² gathering there so large a force *that it may rightly be said that the rivers dried up because of his army and that all of Greece could barely contain it.*³ The general was so arrogant and proud of his great army that *as if he had been lord of nature itself, he levelled mountains, filled up valleys, covered some seas with bridges, and contracted others, for the convenience of navigation.*⁴ *In what plight did he return? Why, in a single ship; on blood-stained waves, the prow slowly forcing her way through waters thick with corpses.*⁵ His departure was just as ignominious and shameful as his arrival was terrible.⁶ In the terrestrial battle that took place in the narrow confines of Thermopylae and lasted three days, he was defeated by Leonidas,⁷ King of Sparta, who had only 4,000 men.⁸ And in the naval battle that took place in the narrow confines of Salamis he was defeated by Themistocles⁹ and had to flee in a fishingboat.¹⁰ *It was a wondrous spectacle and a remarkable example of the instability of the human condition: the one who had filled more than the whole sea¹¹ was now hiding in a small boat, without any servants!*¹² And what about the other Darius,¹³ who was formerly called Codomanus? Did he not fight with Alexander in two battles, at Issos¹⁴ and at Gaugamela¹⁵? In the first battle he had 600,000 soldiers, in the second one million foot soldiers, 50,000 horse soldiers, and 200 chariots armed with scythes. Nonetheless, he was defeated in both battles.¹⁶ Alexander had only 7,000 horse soldiers and 40,000 foot soldiers.

Gaius Marius fought 300,000 Cimbrians with 60,000 soldiers, and still he crushed them.¹⁷

And Julius Cesar did not have a larger army when he destroyed 400,000 Gauls.

¹ Xerxes I the Great (519-465 BC): King of Persia. Fourth Achaemenid dynasty. His invasion of Greece in 480 BC failed

² Justinus Trogus Pompejus: *Epitoma Historiarum Philippicarum*, 2.10: *Iam Xerxes septingenta milia de regno armauerat et trecenta milia de auxiliis*

³ Justinus Trogus Pompejus: *Epitoma Historiarum Philippicarum*, 2.10

⁴ Justinus Trogus Pompejus: *Epitoma Historiarum Philippicarum*, 2.10 *denique ante experimentum belli fiducia uirium ueluti naturae ipsius dominus et montes in planum deducebat et conuexa uallium aequabat et quaedam maria pontibus sternebat, quaedam ad nauigationis commodum per conpendium ducebat.*

⁵ Juvenalis: *Satirae*, 10.185-186

⁶ Justinus Trogus Pompejus: *Epitoma Historiarum Philippicarum*, 2.11

⁷ Leonidas I (d. 480 BC): King of Sparta

⁸ Otto von Freising: *Chronica*, 2,17; Justinus Trogus Pompejus: *Historiarum Philippicarum Epitoma*, 2.11

⁹ Themistocles (ca. 524-459 BC): Athenian politician and general

¹⁰ Otto von Freising: *Chronica*, 2, 17

¹¹ Juvenalis: *Satirae*, 10.175-186

¹² Justinus Trogus Pompejus: *Epitoma Historiarum Philippicarum*, 2,13

¹³ Darius III (ca. 380-330 BC): Last king of the Achaemenid Empire of Persia from 336 BC to his death

¹⁴ 333 BC

¹⁵ 331 BC

¹⁶ Arrianus: *Anabasis*, 3.8. Translated into Latin by Pier Paolo Vergerio. Piccolomini had a copy of this translation, cf. Helmrath, note 157

¹⁷ Battle of Vercellae, 30 July 101 BC

[36] Exposita semper ad caedem est nimia numerositas. Vester autem exercitus si, quemadmodum statutum est, congregabitur neque paucitate contemnendus neque numerositate confundendus. Duces peritos, milites fortes et ad signum paratos habebitis. Pugnabitis armati contra inermes, experti contra rudes, animosi contra timidos. Asiani¹ namque, ut ipse testis est Aristoteles, imbelles sunt. Huc accedit, quia non sunt a Graecis amati² Turci. Inter medios hostes pugnabunt: si semel fugere coeperint, et vos et suos timere habebunt. Non est igitur, quod multitudinem illorum formidetis, quando pro causa Dei pugnaturi estis, cui tam facile in paucis quam in multis vincere pronum est. Immo vult ille potius in paucis, ut sua omnino victoria videatur, quemadmodum Gedeoni contigit, quem cum CCC viris pugnare dominus voluit, cum congregasset XXX millia. *Dixitque dominus ad Gedeon: multus est tecum populus, nec tradetur Madian³ in manus ejus, ne gloriatur Israel contra me, et dicat: "Meis viribus liberatus sum"*. Confidite igitur, principes, neque multitudine hostium terreamini, quando pro eo pugnaturi estis, in cujus manu victoria est atque triumphus. Haec voluit Caesarea majestas me nunc⁴ dicere, ut ad futura, quamvis cauti estis, tamen cautiores redderemini. Vos igitur cogitate super his atque, ut Caesar confidit, boni consulite.

¹ Asiani imbelles *in marg.* D, G

² amati *corr. ex armati* A; armati D

³ Madiam A, D

⁴ me nunc : nunc me G

[36] An army which is too large is always at risk of being slaughtered. But if your army gathers in the numbers that have been decided, it will neither be contemptible because of its smallness nor defeated because of its great numbers. You will have experienced leaders and strong and disciplined¹ soldiers, ready for the signals. You will be fighting as armed against unarmed, skilled against unskilled, brave against cowards. For, as Aristotle testifies,² the Asians are not warlike. To this should be added that the Turks are not loved by the Greeks. They will be fighting surrounded by enemies, and once they begin to flee they shall have to fear not only your troops, but also their own.³ So, since you will be fighting in God's cause, there is no reason for you to fear the numbers of the Turks for God can just as easily win with small forces as with large ones. Indeed, he would rather win with few soldiers so that the victory will be seen to be his entirely. This is what happened to Gideon whom the Lord wanted to fight only with 300 men when he had already gathered 30,000. *And the Lord said to Gedeon: The people that are with thee are many, and Madian shall not be delivered into their hands: lest Israel should glory against me, and say: I was delivered by my own strength.*⁴ So, be confident, Princes, and do not fear the great numbers of the enemies since you will be fighting for Him in whose hand is victory and triumph.

This is what His Imperial Majesty desired me to say, so that with regard to future events you will be even more careful than you are now. Reflect on these matters and plan well, as the emperor trusts you will.

¹ "ad signum paratos"

² Aristotle: *Politica*, 7.7 (1327).

³ I.e. troops raised from the subject peoples, like de the Greeks

⁴ Judges, 7, 2

2. Astantes

[37] {90r} Hoc fuit principium orationis Aeneae Silvii Piccolomominei, episcopi Senensis, qui postea pontificatum maximum adeptus Pius secundus appellatus est, quam statuerat habere in conventu Viennensi jussu Caesaris, et durat usque “Erigite animos vestros, date operam, ut quam celerrime in bellum veniatis.” Postea mutuavit et usus est alio prohemio quod incipit “In hoc florentissimo atque amplissimo conventu”.

[38] Astantes hodie, **reverendissimi patres, illustrissimi principes, ceterique viri magnanimi ac praestantissimi**, coram serenissimo **domino nostro Romanorum imperatore piissimo ac gloriosissimo** de statu religionis nostrae ac fidei catholicae consulturi, illud jam persuasum certumque tenetis, quia **necessarium est pugnare in Turcos**, si rem publicam Christianam cupimus esse salvam. Sic enim visum est omnibus, qui **Ratisponae** conventum ex jussione nostri Caesaris habuere. **In Frankfordia vero re pressius examinata ac digesta decretum est bellum** terra ac mari **contra Turcos** gerendum esse. **Promissa sunt Hungaris auxilia, statutus militum numerus, qui ex Alania deducatur. Classis ex Italia comparandae cura ad sanctissimum urbis Romae pontificem Nicolaum quintum remissa, qui per legatum suum id oneris acceptavit.**

[39] Non est igitur, cur hodie disputemus, **an bellum indicere Turci expediat, sed quomodo quoque ordine, quae Frankfordiae placita ac conclusa sunt, executioni mandentur, in medio consulendum est. Danda est opera, ut exercitus quantocius congregetur. Eligendus est hoc in loco dux belli, quem capitaneum nominamus, Romani imperatorem appellavere. Dicenda dies, qua progrediendum; nominandum iter, quo sit eundum; statuenda belli gerendi sedes; res frumentaria procuranda; habenda cum Italis intelligentia certior. Sciendum, quid illa natio gerat, quantam classem instruat, quem bello maritimo praeficiat; quo tempore sit exitura; quo loco Turcos invasura. Super his ergo, uti cogitetis atque attenti sitis, magnopere vos oratos efficit imperatoria sublimitas, quae cum vestro consilio cuncta disponere decrevit.**

[37] {90r} Here follows the introduction to an oration by Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Bishop of Siena, who was called Pius II after he became pope, which he intended to give at a meeting in Vienna, at the request of the emperor. It ends with the words “Erigite animos vestros, date operam, ut quam celerrime in bellum veniatis.” Later he changed it and used another introduction beginning with the words “In hoc florentissimo atque amplissimo conventu”.

[38] Reverend fathers, Illustrious Princes, and you others, great and eminent men, you are assembled here today, to discuss – in the presence of our Serene Lord, the pious and glorious Emperor of the Romans – the situation of our religion and the Catholic Faith. You are already fully aware that it is necessary to fight the Turks if we want the Christian commonwealth to be safe. For that was the judgment of all those who met in Regensburg at the command of our emperor. In Frankfurt the matter was examined and considered in greater detail, and it was decided to make war against the Turks both on land and at sea. The Hungarians were promised help, and a decision was reached concerning the number of troops to be brought from Germany. The Holy Father and Bishop of Rome, Nicolaus V, was entrusted with the preparation of a fleet to sail from Italy, accepting this charge through his legate.

[39] Thus there is no reason for us to discuss, today, whether it is expedient to declare war against the Turks. Rather, we should discuss how and in what order the decisions made in Frankfurt should be implemented. We must see to it that the army is gathered as soon as possible. We must choose, here, a general, whom we call captain and the Romans called *imperator*. The day of departure must be appointed. The itinerary should be announced. It must be decided where the war shall be fought. Provisions should be arranged for. More certain information from Italy should be obtained. We must know what that nation will do: how great a fleet it will provide; whom they will appoint as admiral; when the fleet will sail; where it will attack the Turks. His Imperial Highness urgently requests that you consider and focus on these matters, as he has decided to arrange everything as you advise.

[40] Ceterum, quia Turcis jam explorata sunt consilia nostra illosque copias ingentes congregare, vigilare, instare studiisque omnibus niti, certum est, ut aestate proxima Hungariae nobilem terram ingrediantur ac sibi subjiciant. Eo vestras curas intentas esse convenit, idque Caesar ex vobis petit, ut quantocius fieri potest, promissus exercitus habeatur instructus. Nisi enim promissa subsidia suo tempore in Hungariam {90v} mittantur, timendum est, ne regnum illud amplissimum, quod pluribus saeculis nostrae fidei clipeus fuit, in potestatem hostium deveniat. Quod si divina ultio permiserit, nihil est, quod deinceps in Christianitate tutum relinquatur. Inde ad Italiam, inde ad Alamaniam ceterasque nostri orbis provincias facilis exitus patet. Sane cum Hungari nostra ac patrum nostrorum memoria plurima cum Turcis varia fortuna bella gesserint, fundendoque per multos annos suum sanguinem tutati sint nostrum, indignum fuerit eos quoquo modo a nobis relinqui. Ostendenda gratitudo est; subveniendum est sociis nostrae fidei; juvandi sunt in suis periculis, qui nos in nostris numquam reliquere.

[41] Et quoniam jam promissa sunt auxilia, cavendum, est, ne quo pacto deficiamus. Namque si privatis hominibus turpe est fidem fallere, multo magis his, qui sunt in dignitate, multo magis principibus ac populis. Hungaris addicta sunt subsidia non per unum, sed per multos principes, non per unam civitatem, sed per multas. Tota natio Theutonica in Frankfordiensi concilio ad tutelam Hungariae bellum contra Turcos gerendum statuit. Inauditum est nationem hanc promisso antehac defuisse. Cavendum est, ne in futurum quidem audiatur. Nihil est enim, quod Germanico nomini gloriosius habeatur quam promissi dictique tenax custodia. Servanda est haec a patribus vobis relicta haereditas, ut qui constantes semper habiti estis, et fixi nunc atque solidissimi reperiamini. Etenim cum omnes virtutes laudari soleant, sola tamen constantia coronatur. Quod si ceteris in rebus vestra natio solida et inconcussa reperta est, neque umquam suum dictum irritum fecit, nunc potissime studendum est, ut, quae promisistis, observetis, quando non solum his, quibus promissa sunt auxilia, sed nobis ipsis ad salutem observantia, ad interitum fractura promissi cedat.

[42] Nisi enim hoc tempore Hungariae opem fertis, non solum illi pereunt, sed vos quoque ruitis, ac vobiscum tota Christianitas interit. Actum est de religione nostra; extirpatur radicitus nostra fides; obruitur Christi nomen. Surgit in omnem terram Mahumethi perniciosum dogma, nisi sumptis armis Hungaros adjuvetis.

[43] Deplorata est satis in Ratispona atque in Frankfordia Constantinopolitana calamitas; demonstratum est, quo redacta est Christiana societas; expositum est, quid Turci cogitent, quantum nobis periculum immineat, quibus modis obviandum sit. Nunc gerendi tempus est. Cavere oportet, ne dum nimium consultamus, hostes nimium agant, ne dum nos curiam tenemus, illi campum occupent. Nisi praesto in armis sumus, Hungariam hostibus prodimus. Agite igitur, principes, erigite {91r} animos vestros! Date operam, ut quam celerrime in bellum veniatis.

[40] Moreover, since the Turks already know our plans, and are gathering immense troops, and are alert and completely focused on their undertaking, it is certain that they will invade and subjugate the noble country of Hungary next summer. This matter you have to deal with, and for his part the emperor asks you to provide the promised army as soon as possible. If the promised help is not sent to Hungary in time, we must fear that this great realm, for centuries the bulwark of our Faith, will fall into the power of our enemies. If the God of revenge allows it, nothing will afterwards be safe in the Christian world. The road to Italy, Germany and the other lands of our world will lie open. For generations the Hungarians have fought the Turks, with varying fortune. Shedding their own blood, they protected ours for many years. It would be unworthy if we failed them now. Rather, we must show gratitude. We must help our companions in the Faith. And in their hour of peril, we must help those who never deserted us in ours.

[41] And since help has already been promised to the Hungarians, it is our responsibility not fail them in any way whatsoever, for if breaking faith is shameful for private persons, it is all the more shameful for those in high office, and even more shameful for princes and peoples. Hungary has been promised help not just by one prince, but by many princes, and not just by one city, but by many cities. At the Diet of Frankfurt, the whole German nation decided to go to war against the Turks for the protection of Hungary. Never before has this nation been heard to have failed its promise. Take care that this will also be so in the future. Indeed, nothing brings greater glory to the German name than keeping your promise and your word. This heritage from your fathers you must keep alive so that you, who have always been seen as most reliable, will also now be found solid and dependable. For though all virtues are praised, only constancy is crowned. In all other matters your nation has, to this day, been found solid and unshakable, and it never went back on its word. But now – more than ever – you should keep your promises. Keeping them will save not only those who have been promised help, but also yourselves, whereas breaking them will lead to disaster.

[42] Indeed, unless you help Hungary now, it is not only the Hungarians who will perish: you, too, will be destroyed, and the whole of Christendom together with you. Our religion will be finished, our Faith will completely uprooted, and the name of Christ will be forgotten. The pernicious teachings of Muhammad will spread everywhere unless you take up arms and help the Hungarians.

[43] The catastrophe in Constantinople has been sufficiently lamented in Regensburg and Frankfurt. It has been shown how greatly the Christian Commonwealth has been reduced. It has been explained what the Turks intend to do, how great is the danger threatening us, and how it may be countered. Now is the time for action. Let us see to it that our enemies do not do too much while we talk too much, and that they do not occupy the field while we hold meetings. If we do not take up arms quickly, we betray Hungary to the enemy. So, act, Princes, show courage! And endeavour to go to war as quickly as possible!

3. Frequentissimus

Oratio Aeneae Silvii Piccolominei, episcopi Senensis, qui postea pontificatum summum adeptus Pius II appellatus est habita in conventu Novae Civitatis Austriae, non finita¹

[44] {143v} *Frequentissimus et amplissimus* hic conventus vester hodie, reverendissimi patres, illustrissimi principes, ceterique viri magnimi ac praestantissimi, quamvis hoc in loco verba facientibus alacritatem quandam miramque jucunditatem praestare videatur, mihi quoque non parva felicitas objecta sit, qui vestram hodie nobilitatem de rebus maximis sum allocuturus. Non tamen mea voluntas ad dicendum impulit, namque cum mente revolveo {144r} hujus auditorii dignitatem majestatemque tanti coetus, intelligo minus me aptum esse, qui coram tanta doctrina tantoque splendore nobilitatis orationem habere debeam. Neque enim huc afferendum quidquam censeo nisi *elaboratum ingenio*, eloquentia tersum, doctrina referctum², quod quidem praestari a me nullatenus potest. Sed vicit me auctoritas divi Caesaris Friderici, Romanorum imperatoris, domini nostri piissimi atque invictissimi, qui, etsi plurimos habet penes se viros facundia ac doctrina praeditos, nescio tamen qua ratione motus hanc mihi potissime dicendi provinciam demandavit.

[45] Mihi ergo, cum notum esset imperium, non cur mandaretur, sed quomodo tanto principi oboediretur, cogitare necesse fuit. Namque si praesidentis reipublicae rogationes veluti mandata suscipi debent, quid de mandatis ipsis dicendum erit? Injecta est igitur mihi dicendi necessitas, quamvis desit orandi facultas. Sed videat ille, quid mandaverit. Vos certe, ut arbitror, mihi aures minime denegabitis, quando non meo nomine, sed ipsius verba facio, quem vos omnes veneramini, deque his rebus loquar, quae vestram et omnium Christianorum salutem concernunt.

¹ Oratio ... finita : Aeneae Silvii episcopi Senensis oratio habita nomine Caesaris in conventu Nove Civitatis de bello Turconico, non finita **D, G**

² refretum A; refertum G

Oration of Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Bishop of Siena, who after he became pope was called Pius II, held at the Diet in Neustadt, Austria, unfinished

[44] Reverend Fathers, Illustrious Princes, and you others, great and eminent men, *your numerous and grand assembly* here today seems to the speakers both eager and remarkably joyful, and I ought to be happy to be speaking to you, noble men, on very important matters. However, [I must say that] in this I am not following my own inclination for when I reflect on the dignity and majesty of this great audience I see that I am not qualified to give an oration to men of such learning and splendid nobility as are assembled here. I believe that any oration to be given here should be *intelligent*, eloquent and learned, something which I can in no way achieve.¹ But I have been overruled by the authority of Holy Caesar Friedrich, Emperor of the Romans, our pious and unvanquished lord: though he has many eloquent and learned men in his service, he has charged me with this – I do not know why!

[45] However, when I was given this command, I had to consider not why it was given, but only how to obey this great prince. For if the requests of the leader of the state should be accepted as if they were orders, then what could I say about the orders themselves? So, now I am faced with the necessity of speaking even though I do not have the qualifications. But this is a matter for him who commanded it. As for you, I believe that you will not deny me your ears since I am not speaking in my own name, but in the name of him whom you all honour, and about matters that concern your own safety and the safety of all Christians.

¹ In this introduction, Piccolomini freely uses Cicero: *Pro lege Manilia*, 1.1

[46] Bis ego, quemadmodum pars vestrum¹ maxima non ignorat, de hoc ipso negotio sum locutus, de quo modo sermonem instituo, in Ratispona primum, deinde in Frankfordia. Haec sunt enim duo concilia, quae jussu majestatis imperatoriae ad consulendum reipublicae Christianae hoc anno gesta sunt. Etenim, cum accepisset, Caesarea sublimitas, quae Turcorum feritas circa Constantinopolim perpetrasset, quaeve deinceps adversus Christi fideles perpetrare instituisset, decrevit quantum in se foret, Christianae reipublicae, ne diebus nostris deleri posset, consulere. Id enim sibi velut ecclesiae protectori et advocato ex officio incumbere non dubitavit, memor illius sententiae Platonicae², quoniam qui reipublicae praesunt, quaecumque agunt, ad eorum, qui sibi commissi sunt, utilitatem referre debent, obliti commodorum suorum. Eadem quoque cura, idem studium, idem fervor sanctissimo domino nostro inesse videbatur, qui misso legato suo, episcopo Papiensi, docto et ornatissimo viro, Caesaream mentem ad tutelam reipublicae jam ardentem inflammare conatus est. Sed cum esset res ipsa grandis multorumque auxilia deposcere videretur, vocati sunt reges ac principes, excitatae communitates, invitati populi, celebrata, quae dixi, concilia.

¹ pars vestrum : vestrum pars G

² Sententia Platonica *in marg.* D, G

[46] As most of you know, I have already spoken twice on the matter that I am to speak about now,¹ first in Regensburg, then in Frankfurt. For, in that year,² His Imperial Majesty ordered two diets to be held in these cities, with the purpose of deliberating on the Christian commonwealth. For when his Imperial Highness heard about the cruel deeds of the Turks in Constantinople and what they planned to do against the believers in Christ afterwards, he resolved to do everything in his power to obviate the ruin of the Christian Commonwealth in our time. He did not doubt that this was his obligation by virtue of his position as protector and champion of the Church, remembering the words of Plato³ who said that those who lead the state should do everything they do for the sake of those who are entrusted to them, and not for their own advantage.⁴ The same preoccupation, zeal, and eagerness was seen in Our Most Holy Lord⁵ who sent his legate, the Bishop of Pavia, a learned and distinguished man, to endeavour to further inflame the emperor's mind to protect the commonwealth – though indeed it was already burning! But since the matter was extremely important and the contributions of many were necessary, the kings and princes were invited, the cities were summoned, the peoples were called to participate, and the two aforementioned diets were held.

¹ The orations "*Quamvis omnibus*" [21] (14 May 1454) and "*Clades Constantinopolitana*" [22] (15 October 1454)

² Cf. RTA, p. 494, n. 8

³ Plato (428/427 or 424/423 BC-348/347 BC): Greek philosopher. Student of Socrates

⁴ Plato: *Republic*, 342e, 345d-e, 346e-347a

⁵ I.e. the pope

[47] In Frankfordia denique conclusum est exercitus terra ac mari contra Turcos instituendos esse. Decretum est bellum pro defensione fidei {144v} gerere. Haec inclyta natio Germanica quadraginta millia pugnatorum in armis expeditorum in hoc proelium missuram se statuit. Hungari ac Bohemi cum ceteris gentibus inclyto Ladislao regi parentibus suas seorsum copias in armis habere promiserunt. Summus Romanus pontifex ex Italia classis armandae curam suscepit. Nunc¹ hoc in loco dandus est rebus ordo; eligendi sunt duces exercitus; unitas inter gentes, quae diversorum morum conventurae sunt, perquirenda; distribuenda inter provincias onera; statuenda dies, qua² copiae deducantur; nominandum iter, quo sit eundum; eligendi belli sedes, qua Turcos aggredi expediat - non dicam Teucros, numquam enim foedissimae conditionis gentem tam claro nomine honestabo; neque Asianos dicam, Romani populi patres, qui ex barbarica Scytharum faece originem ducunt³. Providendum est classem Italicam cum Germanico exercitu concurrere, ut duobus simul locis hostium territoria impetantur, quaerendi commeatus, pecuniae investigandae. De his omnibus non est, cur multa dicamus, neque Caesaris in hac parte anxius est animus. De rebus Italicis audietis apostolicae sedis legatum, audietis et inclyti regis Aragonum oratorem, audietis reliquos, qui ex illa provincia hic⁴ adsunt, et quis sit datus ordo ex Italia cognoscetis.

¹ Quae agenda pro expeditione *in marg.* D, G

² quo G

³ Turci unde *in marg.* D, G

⁴ *omit.* D, G

[47] In the end it was resolved, in Frankfurt, to mobilize both a land army and a naval army against the Turks. It was decreed to go to war for the defense of the Faith. This glorious German nation decided to contribute 40,000 armed soldiers¹ to the war. On their part, the Hungarians and the Bohemians, ruled by the glorious King Ladislaus, promised to send their armed troops. The Supreme Pontiff undertook the mobilization of a fleet from Italy. Here and now, we must make concrete plans for this whole venture: the leaders of the army must be chosen; ways must be found to create harmony between people coming from different cultures;² the burdens should be distributed between the provinces; the date of the troops' departure must be appointed; the itinerary must be settled; a suitable place for fighting the Turks should be chosen (I do not call them Teucrians³ for I shall never honour that disgusting people with so distinguished a name. Nor shall I call them Asians,⁴ fathers of the Roman people, for they take their origin from the barbaric dregs of the Scythians). We must coordinate the activities of the Italian fleet with those of the German army so that the enemy territories are attacked in two different places at the same time. Provisions must be arranged for; money must be found. But I shall not myself be saying much about these matters, and the emperor is not worried about them. Concerning the Italian matter, you shall be hearing the legate of the Apostolic See as well as the orator of the glorious King of Aragon, and others from that region, present here today. Thus, you will know the plans of the Italians.

¹ 30,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 horse soldiers

² "mores"

³ Piccomini had earlier, like other humanists, believed that the Turks were descendants of the Trojans or the Asians, and called them Teucrians

⁴ i.e. from Asia Minor

[48] Super his vero, quae circa campestrum exercitum disponenda sunt, intuetur Caesarea sublimitas plurimos ex vobis, qui adestis, rei bellicae peritissimos, quorum aetas semper in armis versata. Quid pediti, quid equiti, quid curribus, quid machinis conducat optime novit. Scitis quibus modis in acie, quibus in castris agendum sit. Multi ex vobis hostium naturam ac consuetudinem cognitam habent. Quae sint illius copiae, quae insidiae, quae artes, quae armaturae, quae vires, qui animi non ignorant. Vestrum erit igitur, quae ad bellum pertinent, ordinare. Caesari nihil hodie aliud incumbit nisi commonefacere vos ad tuendam religionem Christianam praesto et forti animo esse. Non est modo de bello gerendo suasio intemptanda, id enim jam decretum est.¹ Non est de numero militum disputandum, nam et ipse statutus est. Non est de capitaneo nominando disceptandum, nam et hunc cum vestro consilio Caesar dabit, virum fortem et tanto munere dignum. Non est de provisionibus faciendis circa exercitum concertandum, nam et has vestrae industriae Caesar dimittit.

[49] Quid ergo est, de quo hodie dicendum est? Sunt profecto et aliqua non parum {145r} expedientia, quae Caesareo nomine exponenda sunt vobis. Namque cum mens vobis omnibus sit bellum contra Turcos gerere – id est enim, ut dixi, jam decretum – ea omnia quaerenda sunt, per quae pugnantibus vobis victoria cedat. Victostrarum autem distributor est Deus; in ejus manu omnis triumphus est. Nemo vincit nisi donante Deo²; nemo triumphat nisi divina pietate juvante. Cum vult ille, corruunt magni exercitus; cum dat ille, parvae manus superant magnas.

¹ Que in aliis dietis conclusa fuere *in marg.* A

² Victores volenti Deo *in marg.* D

[48] Concerning the land army, His Imperial Highness will look to those many among you, present here today, who are specialists in military matters and have spent your whole life in warfare: you know what is best concerning foot soldiers, horse soldiers, wagons, and war machines. You know what arrangements to make both on the battlefield and in camp. Many of you are familiar with the character and the customs of the enemies, and you are aware of their numbers, their ploys, their techniques, their weaponry, their strengths and their mentality. So, it will be up to you to make arrangements for the war. Today, the emperor only intends to entreat you to be ready to protect the Christian religion and to show courage. We shall not try to persuade you to go to war for that has already been decreed. We shall not discuss the number of soldiers for that has also been settled. We shall not consider the appointment of the captain, for the emperor will follow your advice and appoint a man who is strong and worthy of this great charge. And we shall not talk about the provisions for the army, for this matter, too, the emperor leaves to you.

[49] So, what should we talk about today? There are indeed some other, quite important matters that we shall speak about in the name of the emperor. For since you are all intent on going to war against the Turks – that has already been decreed as I have said - we should search for all the things that will make you victorious in battle. But it is God who distributes victories; in his hand are all triumphs. Nobody wins unless God grants it; nobody triumphs without the assistance of Divine Piety. When he so desires, great armies collapse; when he grants it, small forces conquer great ones.

[50] Ille cum parva manu Hebraeorum ingentes prostravit hostium copias. Ille Samsonem, ille Gedeonem, ille Jephtam, ille Saulem, ille David, ille Salomonem, ille Maccabaeos, ille Constantinum, ille Justinianum, ille Theodosium ex¹ hostibus victorem fecit. Neque Alcibiades, neque Themistocles, neque Philippus sine hujus praesidio victor evasit. Neque Alexander, victo Dario, penetravit Indiam. Neque Achilles occidit Hectorem. Neque Agamemnon Trojam diripuit. Neque Hannibal per Hispaniam atque Galliam usque ad urbis Romae moenia victoria praecedente discurrit. Neque prior Scipio tributariam Carthaginem fecit, neque secundus delevit. Neque Pompejus Orientem domuit ac XXII reges bello vicit. Neque Julius Caesar Gallos subegit², Britannos domuit, Suevos terruit, Pompejum vicit, rerum potitus est. Neque Judaeos Vespasianus cum filio Tito delevit. Neque Nerva, neque Trajanus de Persis triumpharunt. Neque Attila, rex Hunnorum, delevit Aquileiam. Neque Theodericus, rex Gothorum, subjecit³ Italiam. Neque Carolus magnus de Saracenis triumphos egit, nisi magni Dei pietas hoc illis concessisset.

[51] Est igitur omnibus his, qui bellum gerere volunt, divinus favor impetrandus, caelestis muneris impetranda gratia. Desursum quaerendum est auxilium. *Omne donum optimum et omne datum perfectum desursum est, descendens a patre luminum.* Et quid nos miseri sumus, qui vel minimos populos sine ope magni Dei sternere posse credamus? Omnia illius sunt: *Domini est terra et plenitudo ejus.* Non solum homines, sed etiam bestiae in campis et ferae silvarum illius sunt. Non est nostrum vel minima animalia tangere, ne dicam homines, nisi Deus ipse voluerit. Nos igitur, qui pugnare cum Turcis statuimus, conari omni studio debemus, ut manus Dei dextra nos protegat nostrosque dirigat enses. Si placebimus majestati suae, remeabimus victores; sin autem, timendum est, ne praeda inimicorum simus. Deus ipse, si voluerit, Turcos in manus nostras dabit. Si minus, nos illis dabit, quia *calix in manu Domini vini meri plenus mixto et inclinabit {145v} ex hoc in hoc.* Agamus igitur opera Deo digna.

¹ et D, G

² omit. G

³ subegit D, G

[50] With a small troop of Hebrews, he conquered immense enemy forces. He made Samson defeat his enemies, as he did with Gideon, Jephthah, Saul, David, Solomon, the Machabees, Constantine, Justinian and Theodosius. Alcibiades¹, Themistocles, and Philip would not have been victorious without his assistance. Nor would Alexander have defeated Darius and reached India.² Nor would Achilles have killed Hector. Nor would Agamemnon have destroyed Troy.³ Nor would Hannibal have come through Spain and Gaul and reached the walls of Rome, preceded by victory.⁴ Nor would the first Scipio have subjugated Carthage, nor the second have destroyed it.⁵ Nor would Pompey have conquered the Orient and defeated 22 kings.⁶ Nor would Julius Caesar have vanquished the Gauls, subdued the Britons, terrified the Swabians, defeated Pompey and become the lord of all.⁷ Nor would Vespasian, together with his son Titus, have destroyed the Jews.⁸ Nor would Nerva and Trajan⁹ have triumphed over the Persians. Nor would Attila, King of the Huns, have destroyed Aquileia.¹⁰ Nor would Theoderic, King of the Goths, have subdued Italy.¹¹ Nor would Charlemagne have triumphed over the Saracens,¹² if the piety of our great God had not granted it.

[51] Thus, all who want to make war, should obtain the favour of God and the grace of the gift of Heaven. Help must be sought on high: *Every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights.*¹³ And how can wretched people like us believe that we can overthrow even the smallest peoples without help from our great God? Everything is his: *The earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof.*¹⁴ Not only men, but also the beasts of the fields¹⁵ and the wild animals in the forests are his. We cannot touch even the smallest animals, not to say men, unless God wills it. So, now that we have decided to fight the Turks, we should strive with all our might to obtain that God's right hand protects us and guides our swords. If we please God's majesty, we shall return as victors. If not, we must fear to become the victims of our enemies. If God wills it, he will give the Turks into our hands. If not, he will give us into theirs. *For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup of strong wine full of mixture: sometimes it turns this way, and sometimes that way.*¹⁶ Therefore, let us do works that are worthy of God.

¹ Alcibiades as victor in the sea battle at Cyzicos, 411 BC

² 326/325 BC

³ Note that Piccolomini's logic pushes him to claim that God intervened directly in the Trojan war

⁴ 218-203 BC

⁵ 146 BC

⁶ 66-59 BC

⁷ 58-48 BC

⁸ 70 AD

⁹ 113-117 AD

¹⁰ 452 AD

¹¹ 488-493 AD

¹² 778 AD. Could not really be called a triumph

¹³ James, 1, 17: *Omne donum optimum et omne datum perfectum desursum est, descendens a patre luminum*

¹⁴ Psalms, 23, 1

¹⁵ Cf. Judith, 11, 5

¹⁶ Psalms, 23, 9: *quia calix in manu Domini est et vino meraco usque ad plenum mixtus et propinabit ex eo*

[52] Habetis hic religiosum venerandumque patrem Johannem Capistranium, qui vobis diebus singulis evangelizat. *Ipsam audiamus*, ejus monita sectemur, redeamus in viam, reconciliemus nos Deo, avertamus iram ejus! Quod tunc fiet, cum opera illa reliquerimus, propter quae provocatam caelestem potentiam non dubitamus. Audiamus Johannem *in heremo praedicantem* ejusque vocibus auscultemus, qui *fructus faciendos dicit poenitentiae dignos*. Neque enim dubium est, quin nobis poenitentibus malefacere et dominum ipsum poeniteat nos corrigere.

[53] Insurgant igitur pontifices et officio sibi commissio utantur. Ostendant se bonos esse pastores, qui juxta¹ Ezechielem dispersa colligant et contrita sanent; imitenturque magnum illum et optimum *pastorem, qui animam suam pro ovibus suis* posuit. Offerant hostias Deo immaculatas, orent assidue, jejunia indicant, elemosynas non solum verbo, sed etiam, exemplo suadeant.

[54] Vos autem, fortissimi proceres, quibus arma tractanda sunt, qui stringere gladios in hostes proponitis, nolite rapinas concupiscere, nolite ex hoc bello divitias quaerere, nulla vos ambitio ducat, nulla vos teneat avaritia. Ponite crudelitatem, abjicite saevitiam, induite modestiam, magnanimitatem, fortitudinem. Scitote vos hoc in proelio non pro terreno, sed pro caelesti imperatore pugnatos. Nolite praemia hujus belli in terris sperare. Scitote vos Deo militari et ab eo mercedem expectate, qui pro temporalibus aeterna, pro caducis perpetua, pro terrenis caelestia, pro parvis maxima bona² daturus est. Dei est causa, quam defenditis, Deo irrogata est injuria, quam vindicatis, Deo subtracta est terra, quam vindicare curatis.

¹ hi add. A; hñ add. D

² dona G

[52] With us we have the pious and venerable father, Giovanni da Capistrano, preaching the gospel to you every day. *Let us hear him*¹; let us follow his admonitions; let us find back to the way; let us be reconciled with God,² and let us turn away His anger!³ This will happen when we stop doing those things that have undoubtedly provoked the wrath of Heaven. Let us hear Giovanni, *preaching in the desert*⁴: he tells us to bring forth *fruits worthy of penance*.⁵ If we repent of our evil doings, our Lord himself will undoubtedly repent of punishing us for them.

[53] Let the bishops rise up and perform the office entrusted to them. Let them show themselves as good shepherds who, like Ezekiel⁶ says, gather what has been scattered and heal what has been broken.⁷ Let them imitate that great and good *shepherd who gave his life for his sheep*.⁸ Let them offer up immaculate sacrifices to God,⁹ let them pray continuously, let them declare days of fasting, and let them encourage almsgiving not only by words, but also by example.

[54] But you, oh valiant nobles, who are to fight, and who intend to draw your swords against the enemy: do not desire plunder, do not seek riches from this war, do not allow ambition to lead you, do not let greed have power over you. Put away cruelty, cast off brutality; put on modesty, magnanimity, and fortitude. Know that in this battle you are fighting not for your emperor on Earth, but for your emperor in Heaven. Do not hope for earthly gains from this war. Know that you are fighting for God and expect your reward from Him who will grant you heavenly, not earthly rewards, eternal, not transient ones, and great, not small rewards. It is God's cause that you are fighting for, it is a wrong done to God that you are avenging, and it is land taken from God that you are striving to win back.

¹ Luke, 9, 35: *ipsum audite*

² 2. Corinthians 5, 20

³ Psalms 77, 38

⁴ Cf. Matthew, 3, 1: *Johannes Baptista praedicans in deserto*

⁵ Cf. Matthew, 3, 8: *facite ergo fructum dignum paenitentiae*

⁶ Error for Zachariah

⁷ Cf. Zachariah, 11, 16

⁸ John, 10, 11

⁹ Cf. 1. Peter, 2, 5

[55] Deus noster, ut scitis evangelio teste, cum esset universus orbis culturae daemonum deditus, solus Israel verum ritum teneret, misertus humanum genus descendit de caelo, carnem induit nostram, praedicavit salubria, iter in caelum docuit et viam vitae in veritate; utque redimeret universos, mortem pro nobis ferre non dubitavit. Multi ad ejus sermonem conversi sunt. Crediderunt in eum apostoli et discipuli ejus, qui postea in orbem dispersi omnes gentes ad Christum traxere. *In omnem terram exivit sonus eorum et in fines orbis terrae verba eorum*. Tulerunt et ipsi mortem ac magistrum secuti sermonibus ac miraculis orbem impleverunt: nam profecti praedicaverunt ubique domino cooperante et sermone confirmante sequentibus signis. Secuti sunt et {146r} martyres et confessores, accesserunt clarissima doctorum ingenia, quae sanam doctrinam ubique¹ gentium seminarunt. Atque ita factum est, ut totus orbis Christo crederet.

[56] Sed videte nunc, quo² redacta est nostra fides: Jerusalem, in qua primum salvator noster apparuit, et in qua nostram salutem operatus est, ubi et sepulchrum ejus demonstratur, Saraceni occupant, neque illis invitis eo nobis est aditus. Antiochia, in qua primum est auditum Christi nomen, aliena est a ritu nostro. Alexandria, quam Marcus sacris nostris initiavit, magnus Origenes instruxit, sanctus Athanasius confirmavit, Mahumeti fabulas audit. Carthago, quae magnum Augustinum sanctumque Cyprianum audivit, ipsa deleta est atque ipsius loco subrogata Tunes. Nihil de Christo sentit tota Aegyptus. Tota Libya alienata est a nobis. Oriens universus Christi crucem abominatur. Possemus haec perferre, nisi nostram Europam in praeceps ire videremus. Sed amissa est nobis Graecia, Achaia, Peloponnesus, Epirus, Macedonia et maxima pars Illyridis. Perdita est novissime memorabilis illa Constantini civitas. Deleti sunt Galatae.

¹ ubicunque D, G

² Quo redacta est fides Christiana *in marg.* D, G

[57] You know from the Gospel that when the whole world worshipped demons and only Israel practised the true religion,¹ our God took pity on the human race: He descended from Heaven, put on our flesh, preached salvation, taught the road to Heaven and the way of life in truth. And in order to save all men, he did not hesitate to die for us. Many were converted by his preaching. His apostles and disciples believed in him, and afterwards they scattered over the Earth and drew all peoples to Christ. *Their sound hath gone forth into all the earth: and their words unto the ends of the whole world.*² They, too, suffered death, and following their master they filled the Earth with sermons and miracles. For having set out, they preached everywhere, with the help of the Lord who confirmed their words with signs³. Afterwards came the martyrs and the confessors, and then the brilliant intellects of the doctors of the Church who sowed the right doctrine among all the peoples. And thus the whole world came to believe in Christ.

[58] But see now the reduced circumstances of our faith: Jerusalem, where Our Lord first made an appearance, where he effected our salvation, and where his tomb is shown, is occupied by the Saracens, and we only have access at their pleasure. Antioch, where the name of Christ⁴ was first heard, is now a stranger to our religion.⁵ Alexandria, which was initiated into our Faith by Mark, taught by the great Origenes, and confirmed in the faith by Saint Athanasius, now hears the fables of Muhammad. Carthage, which followed the great Augustine and Saint Cyprian, has been destroyed and in its place has come Tunis. The whole of Egypt is ignorant of Christ. The whole of Libya⁶ is estranged from us. The whole Orient reviles the cross of Christ. This we could bear with, if we did not also see our own Europe falling into the abyss. But now Greece has been lost to us, as has Achaia, the Peloponnese, Epirus, Macedonia and the greater part of Illyria. And quite recently the famous city of Constantine has been lost, and Galata has been destroyed.

¹ "ritus"

² Romans, 10, 18

³ "signis": i.e. miracles

⁴ Rather: the name of "Christian" for followers of Christ

⁵ "cultu"

⁶ Presumably Africa

[59] Quae gesserint¹ apud Constantinopolim hostes fidei, non est cur modo deploremus. Satis apud Ratisponam et apud Frankfordiam conquesti omnes sumus. Satis ploratum est, satis clamatum. Non est modo aut lacrimis aut singultibus opus. Vindicanda est salvatoris injuria. Facto nunc opus est, non verbo². Expediit tamen vos, generosos equites, dum bellum geritis, ponere ante oculos opprobria, quae Deo nostro apud Constantinopolim illata sunt, meminisse quomodo salvatoris simulacrum turpiter habitum est, quomodo gloriosae virginis caelorum deturbatae sunt imagines, quomodo foedata sanctorum delubra, atque reliquiae martyrum objectae canibus, utque ipsa divinissima eucharistia conculcata pedibus est. Nam etsi divinae substantiae nihil est, quod humana vis³ possit officere, si beati jam spiritus nihil detrimenti perferre possunt, non est tamen, quin nefarii conatus plecti debeant infidelium.

[60] Vos igitur, cum pugnabitis, mementote, quantum Deo vestro debetis, deinde qua poena digni sunt, qui majestati divinae sese opponunt. Sic enim et animus vester fortior erit et vobis Deus⁴ propitior, cum neque lucri causa, neque inanis gloriae, aut alterius mundanae voluptatis vos belligerantes viderit. Est praeterea necessarium, si favere nobis Deum⁵ volumus, ne superbi simus, aut inflati opinione nostra, ut sit concordia in exercitu, benivolentia inter principes, oboedientia subditos regat, ut pareant {146v} imperatori milites. Imperatores autem justis sint, censuram teneant⁶, vigilant, laborent, neque enim re ulla magis oblectat exercitum quam ducem suum⁷ videre aequae cum commilitibus⁸ laborantem. Cavete ne sint inter vos discordiae, nemo dicat: "Ego Theutonicus," "Ego Gallicus," "Ego Hungarus," "Ego Bohemus." Sit unum genus hominum, omnes Christiani estote, omnes cruce signati, omnes fratres.

[61] Vidimus aliquando propter dissensiones nostrorum vicisse Turcos, neque ulla res magis quam nostra divisio infidelium juvit causam. Galli ac Germani sub Conrado imperatore ac Ludovico, rege Francorum, propter aemulationem victoriam hostibus pepererunt. Sigismundo Caesare regnante idcirco Christiani a Turcis victi sunt, quia non erat inter nostros unitas. Sunt et qui propterea cecidisse regem Poloniae in bello dicant, quia non fuerunt unanimes Poloni simul et Hungari. Nihil est, quod tantum in bello noceat quantum divisio. Pugnare malim cum paucis unitis quam cum multis discordibus. Oportet in bello unum esse rectorem, quem cuncti respiciant, cujus nutu cuncta gerantur. Miles decano, decanus centurioni, centurio tribuno, tribunus imperatori pareat, sive alio nomine haec officia vocare velimus.

¹ gesserunt D, G

² verbis G

³ *omit.* D, G

⁴ vobis Deus : Deus vobis G

⁵ favere nobis Deum : Deum vobis favere G

⁶ censuram teneant : teneant censuram G

⁷ ducem suum : suum ducem G

⁸ commilitonibus G

[59] But now is not the time to deplore what the enemies of the Faith have done in Constantinople. We have all grieved enough in Regensburg and Frankfurt. We have lamented enough, we have clamoured enough. Now, there is no more need for crying or sobbing. The offense to Our Saviour must be avenged. What is needed now is action, not words. But when you, noble knights, are warring, it is fitting that you should see before you the terrible things done to our God in Constantinople, and remember how shamefully the image of our Saviour was treated, how the icons of the glorious Virgin of Heaven were desecrated, how the shrines of the saints were defiled, the relics of the martyrs thrown to the dogs, and the divine Eucharist trodden under feet. Though the divine substance cannot be harmed by human strength, and the blessed spirits can no longer suffer any injury, there is no reason why we should tolerate the wicked deeds of the infidels.

[60] Remember, when you are fighting, how much you owe to God, and how greatly those who oppose the divine majesty are worthy of punishment. Thus, your spirit will be stronger, and God will be more well-disposed when he sees that you are not fighting for gain, for empty glory, or for any other worldly gratification. Moreover, if we want God to favour us, we must not be prideful or have an inflated opinion of ourselves. There must be harmony in the army, and mutual benevolence between the princes. Obedience should rule the subjects so that the soldiers obey their generals. The generals should be just, keep discipline, and be vigilant and industrious. Nothing pleases an army more than seeing their leader labouring together with his fellow soldiers, as an equal. Strive to avoid conflicts between you and let no one say: "I am a German," "I am a Frenchman," "I am a Hungarian," or "I am a Bohemian." Let there be only one kind of men: let all be Christians; let all be crusaders; let all be brethren!

[61] Sometimes we have seen the Turks be victorious because of our own internal conflicts, and nothing has helped the cause of the infidels more than our divisions. Under Emperor Konrad and King Louis of France, the French and the Germans handed the victory to their enemies through their mutual jealousy.¹ During the reign of Emperor Sigismund, the Christians were vanquished by the Turks because our troops were disunited. And some people claim that the King of Poland fell in battle because of Polish and Hungarian disagreements. Nothing causes so much harm in a war as internal conflict. I would rather fight with few, but united troops than with many, but disunited. In a war, there should be only one leader whom all respect and at whose command² everything is done. The soldier should obey the *decanus*, the *decanus* the centurion, the centurion the tribune, and the tribune the imperator - whatever names we use for these offices.³

¹ The Second Crusade, 1147-1150

² "nutu"

³ Cf. Vegetius: *Epitoma rei militaris*, 2.7-8

[62] Sed quomodo erimus uniti? Erimus quidem, si superbiae fomitem abjecerimus, si cedere alter alteri voluerimus, si duci potius quam ducere. Cogitemus, in quo periculo sumus, quo¹ Christianitas ipsa submergitur, nisi juvetur. Faveamus alter alteri in honore. Non quaeramus tantum, per quem vincat, sed quomodo vincat Christianitas. Volumus quisque salvatoris nomen, salutem omnes appetamus. Extrahamus de naufragio navem, neque curemus, cui salvatae navis honor detur. Namque si volumus omnes videri duces, timendum est, ne simul omnes capiamur.

¹ quomodo D, G

[62] But how shall we become united? We shall become united if we cast off the motives for pride, if we are willing to yield to each other, and to be led rather than to lead. Let us consider the danger we are in, and how Christianity will be overcome unless it finds help. Let us support each other in honour. Let us seek not just the man through whom Christianity will win, but the way to win. No one should want to be called saviour, no, what we all should desire is salvation itself. Let us save this ship from shipwreck, and let us not worry about who will be given the honour of having saved it. For if we all want to be leaders, it must be feared that we shall all become losers.¹

¹ The rest of the text is lacking