

## Research Notes

### Peter Canisius SJ to Cardinal Giovanni Morone: Two Fabricated Letters Dated in the Mid-Sixteenth Century

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In the summer of 1997, the *Canisius Project* was launched after a long period of preparations. Its aim was to locate, transcribe, and publish the letters and documents of St Peter Canisius (1521–1597) that were not included in the eight majestic volumes by the German Jesuit, Otto Braunsberger SJ (1850–1926), published between 1896 and 1923.<sup>1</sup> The project includes a volume planned for the celebration of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Canisius, on 8 May 1521.<sup>2</sup>

While preparing this new edition of letters and documents, intended as a complementary addition to the Braunsberger volumes, we received two letters purporting to be by Peter Canisius

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1 For the project, see: Paul Begheyn, Patrizio Foresta & Robert Maryks, ‘Petrus Canisius to Ignatius of Loyola, Vienna February 1556. An unpublished letter. A presentation of the ‘Canisius Project’, *AHSI* 69/156 (2000), 223–35; Patrizio Foresta, “Neue Erträge des Canisius Project”, in his “*Wie ein Apostel Deutschlands*”. *Apostolat, Obrigkeit und jesuitisches Selbstverständnis am Beispiel des Petrus Canisius (1543-1570)*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2016, 463–74. The eight-volume edition is: Otto Braunsberger (ed.), *Beati Petri Canisii Epistolulae et Acta* [PCEA], 8 vols., Friburgi Brisgoviae, Herder, 1896-1923. We would like to thank Thomas Flowers SJ, who is writing a dissertation on Peter Canisius, and who helped to identify these two letters as forgeries.

2 The planned edited volume by Paul Begheyn and Vincent Hunink, the “*Monumenta Canisiana*”, will publish letters and documents, 1521–1615.

(although not in his own handwriting) and addressed to Cardinal Giovanni Morone (1509–1580). These letters are presented as having been written in the years 1554 and 1555; their context is the 1555 Diet of Augsburg (they argue against the resulting Peace of Augsburg from that Diet). They are preserved in the Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek in Erfurt / Gotha in Germany. They are preserved as part of a “Sammelhandschrift” (miscellany manuscript) of the theologian Johann Ernst Gerhard (1621–68) and arrived in Gotha in 1678.<sup>3</sup> The collection was initiated by the Dukes of Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg; the dukes considered themselves to be the keepers of the Lutheran heritage. From the 1640s, Duke Ernst I von Sachsen-Gotha (1601–75) started to collect sources that would assist in the writing of a history of the Reformation in the region.

As we shall see, the contents of these fabricated letters align well with the polemical Lutheran aims of the manuscript collection of which they are a part; their mocking tone towards Catholic positions helps clarify that they are forgeries. Many sections of the letters are parodies of Catholic teachings and standpoints. They are also intensely anti-German, showing through their mocking language what will happen to the German-speaking lands if there should be a complete return of the region to Catholic obedience, sounding a warning thereby to wavering Lutherans about their fate should this happen. They include an almost-comical section that commends a Catholic-led effort to impose total illiteracy on the German peoples, thus seeking to underline a contrast with Lutheran initiatives in the area of literacy and access to the reading of the Scriptures. The second letter also links Morone to Lutheran sympathies, something for which, famously, he was imprisoned in Rome in 1556 on suspicion of heresy. These forgeries are the products of a period of intense religious hostility between Catholics and Protestants in this region and in Europe: each side engaged in efforts to discredit the other, often played out and preserved through the cultural transmission of texts like these.

The addressee of both letters presented here is Cardinal Giovanni Morone, named Bishop of Modena in 1529 and created Cardinal in 1542. He was one of the most significant diplomats of

3 Information provided by Dr. Monika Müller. Daniel Gerth & Hendrikje Carius (eds.), *Katalog der Handschriften aus den Nachlässen der Theologen Johan Gerhard (1582–1637) und Johann Ernst Gerhard (1621–1668). Aus den Sammlungen der Herzog von Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha'schen Stiftung für Kunst und Wissenschaft*, Wiesbaden, Harassowitz Verlag, 2016.

the Reformation period, was briefly at the Diet of Augsburg (the context for these letters), and the last president in the third and final sitting of the Council of Trent (1561–63). In all of these roles, the papal directives under which he was operating entailed the aim of bringing Germany back to “the old and true religion”; at the same time, Morone’s reformist leanings and theological views made him an ambiguous figure, whilst he was at pains to prove his orthodoxy to suspicious observers.<sup>4</sup>

Morone regularly drew on theological advice from members of the young Society of Jesus, especially from those who were active in Germany, and more generally he was in contact with several Jesuits in the first decades after their papal ratification in 1540.<sup>5</sup> Two of his letters to Canisius from 1563 are included in the Braunsberger volumes,<sup>6</sup> along with four letters of Canisius to Morone, from the years 1563 and 1576.<sup>7</sup> Many years after the death of Braunsberger, in 1954, John Fisher published another letter of Canisius to Morone from 1577.<sup>8</sup> These letters appear to be genuine, and are treated as such by their editors. The date attributions of the two forgeries in Erfurt / Gotha are substantially earlier.

Here, they are published in full and identified as forgeries for the first time. They are presented in their original Latin, preceded by extended summaries in English. Both letters were written in an unknown hand, and probably were composed by the same person. Despite the place and dates given in these forgeries – Vienna, 1554 and 1555 – the actual time and place of their production cannot be verified, nor the extent and nature of their circulation. They belong to the genre of anti-Jesuit writings, in this case, from the Lutheran sphere. They belong, too, to a tradition of specifically anti-Canisius writings that circulated in the Protestant lands. Another well-known genre to which these letters belong is that of the anti-Jesuit forgery, in the vein of the *Monita Secreta Societatis Jesu*, written by

4 Massimo Firpo, “Morone, Giovanni”, *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* 77 (2021), online at [https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-morone\\_\(Dizionario-Biografico\)/](https://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giovanni-morone_(Dizionario-Biografico)/).

5 Foresta, *Wie ein Apostel Deutschlands*, 169.

6 PCEA IV, nrs. 828 and 832 (regarding the Council of Trent).

7 PCEA IV, nr. 902 (regarding the monastery at Grottaferrata); PCEA VII, nrs. 1952, 1957 and 1961.

8 John Fisher, ‘A New Letter of St. Peter Canisius’, *Historical Bulletin* 32 (1954), 102–05.

Polish ex-Jesuit Hieronim Zahorowski, and published for the first time in 1614.<sup>9</sup>

### **Letter 1 (1554)**

The first letter states that it was written in Vienna, 1 March 1554. Its contents display nothing of the theology and spirituality of Canisius and in many details deliberately sets out to misrepresent and discredit Canisius and the Jesuits. Its forged status is clear in several ways, such as incitement to murder, and recommendations of preposterous punishments for disobedience. It contains inaccurate terminology, such as “ordine Iesuitarum”, rather than the correct title, then and now, Society of Jesus. While, like his confreres, Canisius did sometimes refer to the Society of Jesus as the Jesuits, he would not have introduced himself as a Jesuit, and the term “order of the Jesuits” was technically incorrect and was not in Jesuit vocabulary.<sup>10</sup> Also, in terms of his mission, Canisius was not sent to Germany “pro extirpandis haeresibus”, as the letter states, but, rather, he was sent by Ignatius, first, to teach at the University of Ingolstadt, and then to teach at the University of Vienna. Canisius never encouraged public penances in the way this letter discusses. More generally, his writings do not include the aim of “extirpating heresy”. The letter also makes the claim that Canisius had “cleared Vienna of all heresy”: this was not the case, since we know from other sources that at that time he was concerned with the Lutheran-leaning sensibilities of a preacher at the court of Maximilian of Habsburg, Johann Sebastian Pfäuser (1520–1569). The letter furthermore includes a fabricated account of a disagreement between Canisius and Maximilian II. In terms of tone, it is harsh, arrogant, and proud, and contrary to the kind of formal address employed towards someone of Canisius’s stature to a cardinal of the Catholic Church.

### **Letter 2 (1555)**

This letter contains extensive material aimed at discrediting

9 Sabina Pavone, *Le Astuzie dei Gesuiti. Le false Istruzioni segrete della Compagnia di Gesù e la polemica antigesuita nei secoli XVII e XVIII*, Roma, Salerno Editrice, 2000; Bernard Vogler, ‘Les jésuites vus par les protestants rhénans (1560–1620)’, in Pierre-Antoine Fabre and Catherine Maire (eds.), *Les Antijésuites. Discours, figures et lieux de l’antijésuitisme à l’époque moderne* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2010), 455–468.

10 Canisius, for example, referred to the Society as “the Jesuits” in his letter to Juan de Polanco SJ, 5 January 1554 (PCEA I, 448).

Canisius, for example, on the subject of education, schools, and the Council of Trent. The author of this letter is possibly the same as that of the 1554 letter. It expresses ideas that would have constituted outrageous views had they indeed belonged to Canisius, such as condemning the use of Augustine for instruction in the Catholic Church because he “causes us a lot of trouble” and was one of “Luther’s teachers.” In fact, Canisius quoted heavily from Augustine in the catechism that he published within weeks of when this letter was supposedly written. Instead, true to their polemical nature, the views in this letter, instead, reflect very thinly veiled Lutheran attacks against the Catholic Church.

### **Concluding comments**

These letters and their main features place them squarely in the genre of forgery designed to bring discredit to the imputed author, and possibly even drawing on sources with a similar objective.<sup>11</sup> The fabricated letters provide an extremely interesting example of propaganda and polemical writings in the early modern period, as well as offering a window onto the reception of Canisius among those hostile to his programme and his works in the Protestant sphere. Their publication here is an invitation to further research into these fascinating examples of anti-Jesuit forgeries.

11 See *PCEA I*, 524–530.

**Letter 1: Erfurt/Gotha, Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek, Chart. A 85, 111r-114v**

(Attributed to Peter Canisius, addressed to Giovanni Morone, Vienna, 1 March 1554)

*Exemplum alterius epistolae Doctoris Petri Canisii Jesuitae Ad Reverendissimum D. Cardinalem Moronum legatum per Germaniam*

1. As all parts in a human body need each other, so do all members of the Church. You are important, unlike me, but I will try to give the help I can, regardless of my deficient style. 2. First, let me introduce myself. I am Canisius, of the Jesuit order, sent to Germany to fight heresies. Now I am in Vienna, which I have already cleared of all heresy. 3. I know you have been sent to Augsburg to persuade Germany to follow England and return to the bosom of the Mother Church. 4. Let me say that this province is easy and will readily obey: within a few days, we will see Germany accept obedience to the Pope. 5. But please mind that Germany has sinned gravely, subverting the teaching and practices of Rome, rebelling against the Pope and even publishing libellous books against the Pope. So it must not be accepted if she wishes to return on certain conditions. Germany must submit without conditions and must take up the old yoke. 6. In addition, some form of public penitence seems due: 100 noble men should be ordered to go to Rome, barefoot (shoe laces around the neck). In every cathedral on their way, they must enter and loudly declare that they have sinned against God by sinning against Rome. 7 In Rome, they should go on their knees to St. Peter's Cathedral, claiming "mercy, mercy", and then finally receive absolution, not by the Pope of course, but by some minor clergyman. 8. No condition may be proposed by these 100 men. We have the example of Barbarossa and Pope Alexander: when Barbarossa proposed conditions, this was refused. Instead, he was ordered to come to Venice and prostrate himself before the Pope, who next ordered him to go to Asia to fight the infidels, where he died. 9. I wonder why you have been so mild in dealing with England. If I had been in your place, I would have ordered two statues of English kings to be made, and I would have wished to tread upon both with two feet, as a sign of superiority and contempt. Next I would have ordered at least 50 noble men to go barefoot to Rome or even further, as a penitence. 10. Please mind particularly the following: I think a number of learned Lutherans from all over Germany will be the first to come and ask absolution, most of all Pomeranus, Melanchthon and others. They must not be refused but accepted, but with some extra punishment. For instance, this Melanchthon should be held in prison until he has written as many large books in our defence as he has written against

*us. And the others should be forced to become discalced Franciscans! 11. There are 12 heretics from Italy, who must be refused and not accepted! To avoid us appearing cruel by rejecting them, I would recommend you to feign clemency and even guarantee their return; meanwhile killers should be located along the roads they will travel, who will then murder them. They do not deserve to live, and promises must not be kept towards evil heretics, who caused severe damage to the Church. 12. To betray and kill such rebels is not a sin, but a merit. The closer such a person is to the killer, the greater the merit: take Diazius, who murdered his own brother as a favour to the Pope. By doing so, he earned becoming a Cardinal or Bishop! But he committed suicide. 13. Praised be God that our victory is such that we can discuss the punishment of our enemies! The Church may return to her former glory. Peter's Barque may be shaken, not sunk.*

[111r] Reverendissime in Christo pater ac D. D. colendissime, post humillima manuum sacratarum oscula.

1. Quemadmodum in corpore humano multa sunt membra, nullumque existit, quod non indigeat auxilio alterius, ita in corpore sacro sanctae Rom. ecclesiae multa etiam membra sunt, atque eodem modo nullum est, quod non indigeat auxilio alterius. Sic dixit Apostolus.<sup>12</sup> Quare cum D. V. R. ma sit unum ex nobilioribus eiusdem ecclesiae membris, ego qui sum ex minimis reverenter his litteris accedo, ut praestem quale auxilium possum. Spero enim quod non omnino contemnar licet balbutiens, nam quicumque vere theologus est, non debet esse sollicitus, ut utatur illis elegantis in loquendo, aut scribendo, qualibus utuntur haeretici.

2. Sed antequam aliud dicam, necesse est, ut aperiam quis sum. Sum ergo Doctor Canisius, ex novissimo ordine Iesuitarum, qui ante aliquot menses, iussus a sanctissimo D. Nostro, veni in Germaniam pro extirpandis haeresibus, nunc autem dego Viennae Austriae, quam una cum aliquibus meis confratribus iam prorsus (auxilio nostri Jesu) mundavi atque expurgavi ab omni labe haeretica.

[111v] 3. Scio D. V. R. mam missam fuisse a Sancta Sede Apostolica ad comitia Augustana,<sup>13</sup> ut persuadeat universae Germaniae, ut ad exemplum Angliae aperiat oculos, redeatque una cum ea ad gremium atque ad unitatem sacrosanctae matris ecclesiae; haec enim est summa legationis vestrae.

4. Primum itaque dico hanc provintiam minime esse difficilem, et nihil dubito quin successura sit ad vota, ita quod intra paucos dies

12 Cf. 1 Corinthians 12, 12–27.

13 The Diet of Augsburg concluded with the Peace of Augsburg on 25 September 1555.

visuri sumus totam nationem Germanicam recepisse obedientiam sanctissimi D.N. Iulii Papae III faelicissimi, quia sub eius papatu omnes haereses tollentur.

5. Deinde id monendum puto, ipsa Germania enormissime peccavit, qui de facto subvertit dogmata, traditiones, cultus, ritus, caeremoniasque sanctae Rom. sedis, imo prorsus rebellavit a capite ecclesiae, quod est papa, quin etiam contra illum multa convitia, multas contumelias in multis famosis libris conscripsit et sparsit. Quare minime erit audienda et ad pristinam unitatem obedientiamque recipienda, si forte dixerit se velle redire ad gremium sanctae matris ecclesiae cum certis conditionibus. Absit, hoc non decet maiestatem Rom. sedis. Sed Germania debet sine ullis conditionibus submittere se et humiliter suscipere antiquum iugum.

[112r] 6. Imo opus erit illi omnino iniungere aliquam paenitentiam et satisfactionem publicam, in primis, ut centum ex primoribus nomine totius nationis compellantur Romam una ire, non modo pedibus, sed nudis pedibus, ac etiam cum corrigia ad collum. In omnibus vero civitatibus ad quas pervenerint cogendi erunt intrare in ecclesiam cathedralem, atque coram toto clero et populo alta voce clamare se peccasse in maiestatem divinam peccando in sanctissimum D.N. Papam<sup>14</sup> et sanctam Romanam curiam.

7. Ubi autem Romam et ad portam, quam appellatur Sanctae Mariae a populo venerint, tunc nudis genibus debeant reptare usque ad ecclesiam sancti Petri, semper reboando 'misericordia, misericordia' atque illic demum absolvi, non quidem ab ipso sanctissimo Domino nostro, quia non sunt digni accedere ante conspectum suae sanctitatis quam tantopere lacerarunt diffamaruntque, sed ab aliquo vel paenitentiario vel inquisitore haereticae pravitatis, ad summum ab aliquo vili suffraganeo et episcopo titulari in contemptum.

8. Quanquam de conditione satisfactionis postea tractabimus, nunc satis sit monuisse illos nullo modo debere conditiones ullas proponere sed recipere. Habemus illustre exemplum Alexandri faelicissimae recordationis Papae III<sup>15</sup> qui cum fuisset [112v] aliquibus iniuriis affectus a Friderico Barbarossa<sup>16</sup> imperatore, quumque is iam inciperet redire ad cor optareque reconciliationem

14 Pope Julius III.

15 Pope Alexander III (1159–1181), born at Siena c. 1100 as Orlando Bandinelli.

16 Emperor Frederic I Barbarossa (1122–1190).



et ideo proponeret aliquas conditiones responsum tulit imperatorem debere a summo pontifice accipere non proponere conditiones. Quare Mais Venetias, ubi tunc erat papa, magna humilitate accessit, seque obtulit ad omnem satisfactionem arbitrio ipsius, qui illum in templum sancti Marci iussit venire, et collum ad terram usque demittere, quod sua sanctitas pede calcando protulit illa magnanima verba ‘super aspidem et basiliscum ambulabis, et conculcabis leonem et draconem,<sup>17</sup> sic servator decorum et gloria sanctae Romanae ecclesiae’, neque eo contenta eadem sua sanctitas, imperavit illi ut deberet ire in Asiam ad bellum gerendum contra infideles, quo quidem ivit, atque illic mortuus est.

9. Imo miror R.mum D. Cardinalem Polum<sup>18</sup> in recipienda Anglia ad obedientiam tam facilem et mitem fuisse. Profecto decuisset enim uti aliqua saltem mediocri severitate. Si ego fuissem legatus eius loco iussissem parari duas statuas, alteram similem Henrico VIII, alteram similem Eduardo VI Regibus Angliae, atque utramque voluissem ambobus pedibus bene calcare in signum verae superioritatis et in contemptum et poenam, deinde saltem quinquaginta ex primoribus Angliae imperassem, ut nudis [113r] pedibus accederent ad limina Apostolorum, aut forsitan etiam in terram sanctam et in montem Synai pro penitentia.

10. Ante omnia illud etiam moneo: praesensi quod primi omnium constituerunt venire ad petendam misericordiam atque absolutionem illi docti viri Lutherani qui sunt sparsi per civitates Germaniae, sed si alii forte non venirent, non est dubium quin venturi sint statim Joannes Pomeranus,<sup>19</sup> Philippus Melanthon, Georgius Maior,<sup>20</sup> Joachimus Camerarius,<sup>21</sup> atque omnes illi concionatores Saxonici. Ubi enim abundavit peccatum ibi nunc gratia abundabit.<sup>22</sup> Hos igitur minime debemus repudiare quin admittere ad paenitentiam; ecclesia enim nemini claudit gremium. Tamen iniungenda erit illis aliqua condigna satisfactio, verbi gratia illi illi malo Melanthoni ut maneat clausus in carcere quamdiu tot libros aequae magnos scripserit in defensionem nostram, quot

17 Psalm 91, 13.

18 Reginald Pole (1500–58), English humanist, Cardinal, 1536; Archbishop of Canterbury, 1556.

19 Johannes Bugenhagen.

20 Georgius Maior (1502–74).

21 Joachim Camerarius (1500–74).

22 Romans 5, 20.

scripsit ad offensionem, et tunc demum et non ante liberetur. Reliquis vero esset iniungendum, ut fierent monachi ex ordine sancti Francisci ab observantia qui ambulant nudis pedibus, atque ut cotidie cogereantur ieiunare, et celebrare missam, quia ieiunium, monachos et missam contempserunt.

[113v] 11. Postremo cum in numero haeticorum atque hostium sanctae Romanae ecclesiae reperiantur circiter XII ex natione Italiae, qui rebellantes papatui et profugientes in Germaniam multos libros scripserunt contra nos, hi certe non sunt recipiendi neque admittendi ad ullam paenitentiam, sed ne populo videamur crudeles ipsos repudiando, ego consulerem quod Do. V. Reverendissima simularet clementiam, et diceret se illos etiam velle recipere, imo daret fidem invitando eos ut accederent, sed interea essent disponendi carnifices in illis viis per quas essent venturi, qui eos iugularent trucidarentque; neque enim digni sunt, ut solem aspiciant, nec servanda est fides talibus praesertim haeticis, qui tantis damnis affecerunt sanctam Romanam Ecclesiam quumque per illos minime steterit quo minus tota Germania atque etiam tota Anglia perpetuo manserit separata et divisa in catholica unitate.

12. Prodere autem atque interficere tales rebelles non modo non est peccatum, sed maximum meritum. Et quanto quis interfecit personam sibi a militia affinitate aut cognatione coniunctiorem, tanto magis meritorium opus exercet. Ideo [114r] meritoriissimum (ut ita dicam) fuit opus Alphonsi<sup>23</sup> Dijacii Hispani,<sup>24</sup> qui in gratiam papae fratrem suum carnalem, qui erat Luteranus, trucidavit, unde dignissimus fuit, qui statim Cardinalis aut saltem Episcopus crearetur, et fuisset creatus, nisi se ipsum interfecisset.

13. Laudandus est Deus, qui iam perduxit nos ad talem statum talemque victoriam, ut iam possimus inter nos agere de castigandis inimicis nostris. Nunc ergo sancta Romana ecclesia poterit respirare, ac statim redire in pristinam foelicitatem et gloriam. Quandoquidem navicula Petri potest quidem agitari, sed non submergi.

Commendo me humillime D. V. R.mae.

Datum Vienna Kl. Martii IIII.

Eiusdem R.mae Do. V. servus.

Doctor Canisius Iesuita

23 Alfonso Díaz (1510–57), one of the pope's lawyers, who killed his Protestant twin brother Juan (1510–46).

24 Corrected from *Haspani*.

**Letter 2: Erfurt / Gotha, Universitäts- und Forschungsbibliothek, Chart. A 85, 115r-122v.**

(Attributed to Peter Canisius, addressed to Giovanni Morone, Vienna, 15 March 1555)

1. To my 35 fellow Jesuits here in Vienna I showed my recent letter to you, as well as some of my further advice concerning the same matter. They have prompted me to write about it to you, which I do now. 2. I already wrote to you that I think the Germans are not in a position to propose conditions, but should humbly submit and ask for pardon (or be dealt with firmly). Now I add: if they wish to negotiate about a universal council first, they must not be listened to and the whole matter should be buried. For in a real council, everybody must be heard, whereas the Roman Church has decided not to listen to any Lutherans and considers them as condemned. The world would certainly be astonished at such a 'council', so I rightly suggest this must be cleverly avoided, for our councils have already caused scandal enough. 3. Let me say in private that I have always been against holding a council (that is, for such a reason). When I asked people who thought otherwise how they would deal with opponents at such an occasion, they answered they would calm them, if need be, particularly through the authority of the emperor. But the very opposite happened: some protestant delegations who came to Trent could not be silenced, but loudly protested that it was absurd how we wished to be judges in our own cause. And so our council fathers were put to shame: they obviously just wanted to make their own decrees without listening to the other side. – Well, this is between me and you. Let us just cut out any mention of a council, because it could well obstruct all that is well now. 4. For I hear that the opponents are quite ready to concede now, without any council. I will add some more advice on how to enchain them, so that they may not escape. 5. Since I very much liked the request made on behalf of England, I drafted a somewhat similar request for Germany (I will describe it at the end). This form should be kept! Certainly, all of Germany obedient to Rome will follow you with closed eyes. 6. In case of a pestilence that is ending, the authorities strictly clean all houses in which anybody has died, without exception, for if a single house is left, the whole city may be infected again. Therefore, the same should be done in case of heresy, and even more strictly so: destroying it in a single town, province or country is not enough: it must be destroyed from all Christianity, or else it will spring up again. There are examples of this (Wycliffe spread Lutheranism 200 years ago in England, but his books were not consistently burnt, and these reappeared in Bohemia, and again cause fire in our times.) 7.

*There are areas and realms outside the Empire of Rome, which cannot be forced through the emperor's authority, e.g. Denmark, Prussia, Helvetia and others. So, if we eradicate heresy from Germany without doing so everywhere else, it will just spread again. The Lutherans are very good at that! 8. There is another point. Lutheranism is not only strong in the areas I mentioned, but also in many towns and villages in Poland, Pannonia, Dalmatia, Greece, Italy, and Gaul, although not so openly. From there, it can easily spread. Our efforts would be in vain if we did not 'purge all houses' where this evil was, I mean all at the same time. 9. So, here is what I think you should do: you should travel to all realms and provinces I mentioned and remove heresies from there, and once you have achieved this, return to Augsburg. It is no use collecting drops here, if the sources are not made dry first. They certainly have less fear of emperors and popes. 10. Furthermore, all printed books should be collected, from 40 years ago until now, from the time Luther and Erasmus started writing. And all should be burnt without exception. I know there are very many, but if not all are burnt, our work will be in vain. 11. And not just books from 40 years ago should be burnt, but also other books of some 300 years ago ( I will write about these separately). Among others, books by Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, which our enemies have started using against us. 12. And not just books from that whole period, but even books by fathers written 1000 years ago, notably by Augustine, who causes us a lot of trouble. (He certainly was one of Luther's teachers). But I will write about this separately. 13. And even all schools in Germany must be closed, not just universities but all primary schools where people learn elementary grammar. You may believe me: it will be good to provide barbaric nations no chance to proceed in literary studies. If only we could do the same with the Gauls, the English and the Poles! For what trouble have they caused us! So, away with all schools, let them be just soldiers or craftsmen or farmers. 14. Some think that schools like our Jesuit ones should be tolerated in Germany (schools in which we teach the Lord's prayer and some other prayers, for we Jesuits do not know anything more and laymen should not know anything more). But no, I think not even such schools should be tolerated. Germany should become entirely unlettered. Whoever has abused the gift of letters has deserved to be devoid of letters for one hundred years (like a city which has murdered its bishop has no right to a new bishop for such a long time). 15. Finally, since even without books or schools the new doctrine may still be in the hearts of many, another method seems due, a drastic one, about which silence must be kept. As soon as everything I suggested has been accomplished, our Majesty must start a war against the Turks, after requiring much gold for this from Germany, even from the cardinals, and gathering a large army of Germans (50,000*

or 60,000). But he should give the command to a general who will betray these German troops, handing them over to the Turks, or simply drowning them. Pope Alexander did this with Frederik Barbarossa, sending him with a large German army to Asia. 16. Perhaps you say "Eradicating heresy seems hopeless, if so much must be done!" It is difficult indeed, but it should be done. And the Church thinks it is possible, and expects this from your mission. And you should take care: if you shrink back or return to Rome without success, you might confirm the suspicion against yourself, viz. that you are rather attracted by this Lutheran dirt, and for that reason have not done the utmost to destroy it. 17. Remember Pole: he knew that he was likewise suspected and therefore failed to become pope, but he fiercely fought the Lutherans in England, as assiduously as anyone else! He sentenced 11 such ones to death, and 5 were executed. He washed and cleansed himself with their blood, and is now counted among one of the strongest enemies of Lutheranism. That's the way to become pope! 18. He should be your example and model, particularly in the shedding of enemies' blood. 'For what is a man profited', if there should be even a suspicion of his disagreeing with the Apostolic See?

[115r] Reverendissime in Christo pater, ac Domine Domine colendissime, post devota sacrarum manuum oscula, et humilem mei commendationem.

1. Communicavi meis confratribus Jesuitis, qui hic Viennae mecum sunt XXXV numero, eas litteras, quas nuper scripsi D. V. R. ac simul quaedam alia mea consilia ad eandem causam pertinentia. Quare me magnopere hortati sunt, ut ea litteris complecterer, et quam ocissime ad eam mitterem, quod facio, ac spero valde utilia et salutaria fore.

2. Scripsi mihi non videri e re atque e maiestate Romanae sedis ut Germani possint ullas condiciones proponere, sed eos utpote subditos nostros et culpabiles debere simpliciter atque humiliter se submittere ac veniam petere, si velint; sin maneat in eorum schismate, sic agendum cum illis audacter. Nunc addo: si forte voluerint agere de universali concilio prius celebrando, [115v] eos etiam minime esse audiendos, sed totam eam materiam resecandam et sepeliendam. Ratio est, quia revera (quod dictum sit inter nos) in eo quod iure deberet appellari legitimum atque oecumenicum concilium audiendi essent omnes, praesertim docti viri, maxime vero qui alicuius principis aut Reipublicae nomine accessissent, sed sancta Romana sedes omnino statuit nolle in concilio audire Luteranos, verum habere eos pro condemnatis. Quia ergo totus terrarum orbis miraretur ac valde reprehenderet talem inauditam

atque iniustam formam concilii, recte moneo totam eam materiam esse dextere declinandam, ne demus maius scandalum quam hactenus dederimus. Nihil enim dubium, quin hactenus dederimus talibus nostris conciliis.

3. Et dicam non aperte me semper fuisse ex eorum numero, qui censuerunt minime debuisse concilium congregari, duntaxat ob eam, quam dixi, causam, et quum aliquando eos qui sunt in contraria opinione in hunc modum interrogarem: "Poteritisne pati, ut adversarii velint in concilio quae voluerint loqui et causam eorum defendere?" respondebant: "Minime gentium", tunc ego: "Quomodo ergo placabitis, si venerint atque urserint se velle audiri?" respondebant (et inter hos erant aliqui cardinales): "Speramus minime esse venturos, aut si venerint, mitigabimus nostris practicis, praecipue autem autoritate Caesaris." Et tamen contrarium accidit, nam quum aliquae legationes principum protestantium Tridentum advenissent, vix una quidem passa est sibi persuaderi ut taceret spectaretque [116v] fabulam, aliae vero nihil minus neque delaxari longa expectatione, neque frangi ulla difficultate aut vinci ullius autoritate passae sunt, quin continuo urserint illis absurdissimum videri atque iniustissimum nos velle in nostra ipsorum causa esse iudices, sed debere utrinque idonei iudices deligi qui controversias definirent.<sup>25</sup> Quamobrem nostri reverendi patres conciliares pudore suffusi sunt. Negata enim audientia toto orbi patefecerunt se solos voluisse inter se decreta concinnare altera parte, inquam, non audita. Sed haec inter nos, et posthac reseceamus omnem omnino mentionem de concilio, quia ea posset nobis omnia, quae sunt alioquin in optimo statu, impedire.

4. Audio enim ipsos adversarios iam satis esse absque ullo praecedente concilio propensos paratosque [117r] ad cedendum veniamque petendam. Ergo quaedam alia subiiciam, ubi ostendam quibus catenis sint vincendi atque arcte obligandi, ne elabi aliquando possint.

5. Quum diligenter consideraverim formam eius supplicationis quae fuit exhibita in Anglia nomine totius regni, et mihi summe placuisset, concinnavi ego aliam fere ad instar illius nomine istorum comitiorum, hoc est, totius Germaniae. Eam vero in fine describam.<sup>26</sup> Certe ab hac mea formula minime erit discedendum. Nihil autem dubium, quin tota ea Germania quae paret Rom.

<sup>25</sup> Corrected from *deffinirent*.

<sup>26</sup> No such model text is to be found at the end of this letter.

imperio velit nunc clausis oculis sequi quocunque T.D.R. eam duxerit, tanta est vestra autoritas.

6. Sed id animadvertendum est: nam posteaque pestilentia diu grassata incipit desinere, in aliqua civitate solent hi qui talibus negotiis praesunt omnes eas domus in quibus aliquis [117v] eo morbo mortuus sit diligentissime et summa severitate aut rigore etiam purgare, ita ut nonnunquam magna pars supellectilis exuratur. Nam si unica tantum domus reliqua esset, minus exacte purgata statim posset iterum ex ea tota civitas infici. Idem ergo faciendum est, imo maiore tum diligentia, tum severitate aut rigore, ubi agitur de purgandis haeresibus, quae sunt pestes animarum. Neque enim satis est si ex una tantum civitate, aut provintia aut regno, sed elaborandum est omnibus nervis, ut uno eodemque tempore ex toto Christianismo abradantur, alioquin paulo post repullulaturae. Habemus exemplum in Anglia atque in Boemia. Wiglephus<sup>27</sup> enim Anglus fere ante ducentos annos seminarat in sua patria hanc ipsam Luteranam haeresin, et quia reges et praelati tunc non fuerunt diligentes in colligendis et comburendis eius [118r] libris, non multo post fuerunt allati in Boemiam, ubi novum ignem accenderunt, et quia statim non fuerunt etiam ex Boemia sublati subministrarunt nostra aetate non exiguum materiam novo incendio.

7. Quorsum haec? Dicam. Sunt non aliquot regna atque dominia, quae minime sunt subiecta Romano Imperio et propterea non possunt obligari ab ullis comitiis, quae autoritate Caesaris agantur, verbi gratia, Regnum Gotthiae, Regnum Daniae, Maritimae (ut vocant) civitates, Livonia, Prussia, Transilvania, Helvetia, Raetia. Quare si sustulerimus nunc ex Germania pestem, hoc est, haereses, et minime fuerint statim sublatae ex omnibus aliis locis, cui dubium esse potest, quin statim inde rursus huc afferentur et seminabuntur? An ignoramus quam diligentes sint ipsi Luterani?

8. Sed aliud considerandum est. Non modo [118v] enim in his locis quae commemoravi viget Luteranismus sed in multis civitatibus, oppidis, pagisque Poloniae, Pannoniae, Delmatiae, Graeciae, Italiae, atque Galliae, licet non ita aperte, et ita viget, ut si maxime posset reliqua omnia regna et provincias expurgare. Tamen frustra laboravissemus nisi omnes (ut ita dicam) domos in quibus haec pestis fuit expurgaverimus, dico uno atque eodem tempore.

9. Quocirca consulo ut D.T.R. conetur efficere opus perfectum, non imperfectum statimque ruiturum, hoc est, consulo ut sine mora

27 John Wycliffe (c. 1324-1384).

eadem D.T. accingat se ad iter adeatque omnia regna et provincias quas commemoravi atque inde prius ammoveat haereses, rebus vero foeliciter illic confectis, postea ad Augustana comitia revertatur. Quandoquidem frustra hic in imperio guttae colligerentur, si illi veluti fontes non fuerint prius siccati. Certe alibi minus timent Caesares et Papas suntque nobis multo aciores hostes.

10. Praeterea necesse erit colligere per totum orbem omnes omnino libros, qui fuerunt typis excussi a XL annis usque huc id est, a tempore quo non solum Luterus, sed Erasmus coepit scribere, atque ut omnes prorsus comburerentur, quia in omnibus est aliquid pestilentiae, ita ut si unus tantum reliquus esset, posset totam haeresin facile instaurare. Omnes ergo erunt absumendi quoquot sunt in toto orbe sparsi, et scio quidem esse propemodum infinitos, et multis sylvis opus esse, si omnes sint comburendi. Sed nisi comburantur frustra reliqua tentaverimus.

11. Ac non modo erunt exurendi illi qui a XL annis citra prodierunt, sed alii ex veteribus, qui ante fere trecentos, de quibus agam seorsum in aliis litteris. Inter alios oportebit comburi libros Dantis Aligeri,<sup>28</sup> Francisci Petrarcae,<sup>29</sup> Io. Boccaccii,<sup>30</sup> Poggii Florentini,<sup>31</sup> et quorundam aliorum, quippe quorum autoritate adversarii nostri coeperunt uti contra nos.

[119v] 12. Et non solum totius eius aetatis libri plurimi, sed nonnulli etiam a patribus conscripti ante mille annos, in primis vero ab Augustino, qui magnum negotium nobis facessit: certe is fuit praeceptor Martini Luteri. Sed de omnibus his agam particulari scripto, est enim materia valde gravis atque ardua.

13. Ad haec quum Germania habeat plurimas scholas, omnes prorsus erunt tollendae, ut ne una quidem reliqua sit, nec loquor solum de universitatibus, puta Wittembergica illa<sup>32</sup> tantorum malorum seminario, Lypseni, Genensi, Tubingensi atque aliis huiusmodi, sed quum dico scholas, intelligo omnes etiam illos litterarios ludos, in quibus docentur rudimenta grammatices. Et credat mihi D.T.R. quod valde proderit adimere barbaris nationibus occasionem qua possint in studiis litterarum proficere. Utinam vero Gallis quoque atque Anglis, et Polonis etiam possemus; nam ecce

28 Dante Alighieri (1265-1321).

29 Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374).

30 Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375).

31 Poggio Fiorentino (1380-1454).

32 Corrected from *illa illa*.



quomodo [120r] abutuntur, quantisque in angustiis et periculis nos collocarunt! Tollantur itaque ab illis scholae atque studia, et dent operam militiae (siquidem velint), ut olim fecere, aut sint artifices, aut terram colant.

14. Sunt qui putarent tales scholas posse in Germania tolerari quales nostrae existunt, hoc est, in quibus nos Jesuitae solemus docere pueros salutationem Angelicam, orationem dominicam, symbolum Apostolorum, septem sacramenta, et missam de beata Virgine. Nam neque nos plura scimus, neque praestat laicos plura discere. Verum ego neque istas quidem scholas censeo tolerandas, quin vellem ut tota Germania posthac esset futura omnino rudis litterarum, dico omnium prorsus. Quemadmodum enim civitates, qui eorum Episcopum interficiunt, ex dispositione iuris debent spatio centum annorum carere dignitate episcopi, [120v] ita quoque qui dono litterarum abusi sunt, debent saltem spatio totidem annorum tali dignitate privari.

15. Postremo quia nova ista doctrina adhuc erit impressa in animis multorum, qui sine ullis libris aut ullis scholis clanculum possent renovare haereses, alio remedio hic opus esset, et quidem acerrimo, sed silentio opus est (si unquam alibi). Rem enim maximi ponderis dicam, quam spiritus mihi suggessit. Id autem huiusmodi est. Confectis omnibus his quae hic attigi, sanctissimus D.N. adornet maximum bellum terra marique adversus Turcas, mittat ingentem vim auri in Germaniam, cogatque ut etiam Cardinales, qui alioquin solent esse immunes, contribuant, (nam soli pauperes solent alioquin ferre talia onera), colligat hic exercitum quinquaginta aut sexaginta millium. Verum talem capitaneum<sup>33</sup> praeficiat qui omnes Germanos milites prodat, partimque Turcis dextere propinet [121r] trucidandos, partim mari absumendos, piscibusque vorandos. Atque ita expurgabuntur reliquiae, neque enim aliud putandum est fuisse consilium Alexandri Papae III,<sup>34</sup> qui Fridericum Barbarossam<sup>35</sup> cum magno Germanorum exercitu in Asiam usque misit contra Saladinum,<sup>36</sup> ubi periit bonus Imperator una cum plurimis fortissimis viris.

16. Dixerit forsitan T.D.R. aut alius prudens vir ex vestris consiliariis qui haec mea legerit: "Minime sperandum est, ut unquam

33 Corrected from *tales capitaneos*.

34 Pope Alexander III (c. 1100/1105-1181).

35 Frederik I Barbarossa (1152-1190).

36 Saladin (1137-1193).

tollantur haereses si necesse sit, ut tam multae tamque magnae res conficiantur." Fateor imminere incredibilem difficultatem, ac non posse haereses extirpari nisi omnia ista fiant, sed elaborandum est ut fiant. Certum est sanctam Romanam sedem, quae minime potest decipi aut errare, sibi persuasisse posse fieri, atque expectare [121v] nunc tam arduum tamque divinum opus ex ista vestra legatione, cavendumque in primis puto ne si D.T.R. perterrita, aut victa tanti negotii magnitudine et difficultate, Romam redierit sine eo maximo fructu qui speratur, cavendum, inquam, ne confirmetur ea suspicio qua aliquando laborastis, hoc est, quod ista labes Luterana vobis ardeat atque ideo nolueritis ex animo laborare pro ea eradicanda.

17. Quin illud meminisse oportet, Cardinalem Polum,<sup>37</sup> quia norat se in eadem suspitione fuisse atque ideo excidisse nuper a papatu, voluisse nunc in Anglia tam strenue se gerere, ut nullus sit Cardinalis, nullus suffraganeus aut Episcopus nullusque inquisitor aut monachus (neque in ipsa quidem Hispania) qui severius et durius tractasset Luteranos. Quid plura? Nuperrime [122r] undecim eorum adiudicavit morti, iamque sumptum est supplicium de quinque, inter quos fuit unus Episcopus, cui nomen Opero,<sup>38</sup> atque eo sanguine eius D. Rma se optime lavit ac purgavit, ut nemo iam sit in toto terrarum orbe, qui non certissime sciat eum esse capitalem acerrimumque Luterani nominis hostem. Haec vero via, haec ad summum Pontificatum optima est.

18. Quare is Do. T. R. habendus erit ante oculos, hic imitandus praesertim in effundendo saepe sanguine adversariorum. Quid enim prodest homini, si universum mundum lucretur,<sup>39</sup> apostolicae autem sedi per omnia non consentiat, aut etiam suspectus sit, quod ex animo non consentiat?

[122v] Commendo me humillime R.me D. T.  
Datum Vienna Austriae die XV. Martii 1555.

Eiusdem humilis servus.

P. Canisius Doctor, et professor sacrae Theologiae

37 Cardinal Reginald Pole.

38 Opero, bishop, not identified.

39 Matthew 16,26.