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Nicholas of Cusa – A Companion to his Life and his Times

Morimichi Watanabe

Edited by

Gerald Christianson and Thomas M. Izbicki

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MORIMICHI WATANABE
Long Island University, USA

Edited by
GERALD CHRISTIANSON
Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, USA

THOMAS M. IZBICKI
Rutgers University, USA

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Preface

The purpose of this book is to provide a helpful guide to Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464), not only for advanced scholars in the field of Cusanus studies, but also for beginners. The book attempts to meet this goal first through a series of essays on important events and concepts that affected Cusanus' ideas and actions—philosophical, religious, intellectual and political.

Second, the book offers the reader detailed studies of Cusanus' precursors and contemporaries, both friendly and critical. These include philosophers, theologians, politicians, canon lawyers and writers, among others.

Third, in addition to ideas and persons, the book continues with an examination of various sites where Cusanus lived, studied, visited and made decisions. In order to ensure the accuracy of descriptions of and discussions on various sites below, the author has personally visited most of these places.

It is hoped that such a guide as this one will be an important resource and reference tool to all who wish to learn about and reflect on the life, thought and activities of Cusanus. Serious attempts have been made to base these studies on the most reliable, up-to-date sources and analyses.

One of the most important reasons for adopting the tripartite approach to the study of Nicholas of Cusa's life and actions, outlined above, is that no matter how important the understanding of his literary works or philosophical–theological concepts is, appreciation of these ideas can be reached only through the wider context of his thought, his colleagues and his footsteps. The author believes that the serious researcher and student of Cusanus should seek not just an understanding of Cusanus' literary, intellectual expressions, such as "the coincidence of opposites" (*coincidentia oppositorum*) and "possibility itself" (*posse ipsum*), but the "total view" of his thought and experience.

Many of the articles in Part I "Persons" and Part II "Places" were originally published in the *American Cusanus Society Newsletter* (ACSN) between July 1984 and December 2007, but they have been revised and brought up to date. All other portions were written specifically for the present book. Unless otherwise noted, all entries in the book were written by the author.

Editor's note: Because a large portion of the articles featured in this book were written over many years for a newsletter and later adapted, it has not been possible in a few cases to provide complete reference information. For this reason, information such as source text, author and page number have occasionally had to be omitted.

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Acknowledgments

"Every book brings its own obligations," wrote Donald F. Duclow in *Masters of Learned Ignorance: Eriugena, Eckhart, Cusanus*, [Variorum Collected Studies Series CS851] (Aldershot/Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006), x. As author of this book dedicated to the study of the life, activities and ideas of Nicholas of Cusa, I am especially indebted to Gerald Christianson and Thomas M. Izbicki, not only for their important articles in the volume, but also for their careful, discerning editorial work on the entire book. Of all the other contributors, to whom I am very grateful, special mention must be made of Donald F. Duclow and Clyde Lee Miller for their critical reading of some philosophical and theological chapters of this book. Il Kim must also be thanked for his continued help in the acquisition of necessary primary and secondary sources. Of all the European Cusanus scholars, whose publications influenced me greatly, I feel special gratitude to Erich Meuthen, Hermann J. Hallauer and Hans Gerhard Senger for their long-time, encouraging support. In recent years, Walter Andreas Euler has helped me greatly, including taking various steps to facilitate the publication of the present book.

As to those whose support was particularly notable, I would like to mention Charles Lohr, Mark Kollai and the late P. Petrus Becker. Their contributions are briefly mentioned at the end of several chapters, which were enriched by their knowledge, experience and wisdom.

I am naturally very grateful to all the publishers who allowed me to use some of the illustrations and maps in the book, including the map of Cusanus' legation journey, originally published by Felix Meiner Verlag, Hamburg. I am particularly indebted to John Smedley of Ashgate Publishing Limited for his support, understanding and patience through the stages of this work. Without his quiet but assured and steady support, it is doubtful whether the book could have been completed. It has been encouraging to know that a long-time friend, Manfred Meiner of Felix Meiner Verlag was always available to help me.

For over forty years, Long Island University, C. W. Post Campus has steadily supported my teaching and research. It has also helped sustain not only the operation of the *American Cusanus Society* and the publication of the *American Cusanus Society Newsletter* for over twenty-five years, but also the lengthy project to publish the present volume. I am very grateful to President David J. Steinberg and his leading administrators. It is also incumbent on me to recognize and thank Dr. Roger Goldstein, chairman of my department, who was ready to schedule a

reduced number of teaching hours when my scholarly demands became heavy and taxing.

Because of the increasing importance of computer technology in academic endeavors, my dependence on my wife and her colleagues in her medical school laboratory, particularly Mark Stewart, M.D., Ph.D., has become much greater than before. They deserve my sincere gratitude. In addition to technical know-how, however, I wish to acknowledge the long, steady and helpful support my wife has given to the work of completing the present volume.

At this point, I wish to take a wide, retrospective view and think of what kind of graduate education I had at Columbia University in New York in 1954-1960. Many of the professors who taught me there were not only erudite and stimulating, but also kind and supportive. They paid almost no attention to my non-European background and treated me simply as a graduate student interested in Nicholas of Cusa and Europe in the fifteenth century. It was wonderful to study under their guidance. Thus, it is to the memory of the following distinguished scholars at Columbia University that I dedicate this book:

> Herbert A. Deane (St. Augustine, European Political Theory; my dissertation advisor)
> Dino Bigongiari (St. Thomas Aquinas, Marsilius of Padua)
> W. T. H. Jackson (Latin Paleography)
> Paul Oskar Kristeller (Renaissance Philosophy)
> Garrett Mattingly (Renaissance Diplomacy).

Main Events in the Life of Nicholas of Cusa

Year	Main Events	Works
1401	Born at Kues on the Moselle River, the eldest son of Johan Cryfftz (Krebs), a fairly well-to-do *nauta*, manager of boat travel	
1416	Enters the University of Heidelberg	
1417	Enters the Law School, the University of Padua	
1423	Receives the doctor of canon law degree from Padua	
1424	Stays in Rome to find a position	
1425	Receives benefice from the church of Altrich in the bishopric of Trier; registers as a doctor of canon law at the University of Cologne; studies philosophy and theology with Heymericus de Campo	
1426	Participates in a legal case about the taxation of the wine sent from St. Nicholas Church in Bacharach to Andreas Church in Cologne by boat; together with sixty-eight professors of the Universities of Heidelberg and Cologne, says no	

Year	Main Events	Works
1427	September 6, becomes secretary and legal advisor to Otto von Ziegenhain, Archbishop of Trier	
1428	March 22, copies the manuscript of Ramon Llull at the Carthusian monastery on the outskirts of Paris; receives an invitation to become a professor of canon law at the University of Louvain, but declines	
1429	Becomes well known (among Italian humanists) as a discoverer of manuscripts	
1430	In the disputed election of the Archbishop of Trier after the death of Otto von Ziegenhain, becomes procurator of Ulrich von Manderscheid, a candidate for archbishop	
1432	Sent to the Council of Basel by Ulrich von Manderscheid to contest the papally appointed Raban von Helmstadt; incorporated into the council on February 29 and becomes a member of the Deputation on the Faith	
1433	Joins the Deputation on Bohemia	*Opusculum contra Bohemorum errorem*; *De usu communionis*
1434		*De concordantia catholica* (1433/34); *De auctoritate presidendi*
1435	Turns down a second invitation to become a law professor at Louvain; becomes Provost of Münstermaifeld	
1436		*De reparatione kalendarii*

Year	Main Events	Works
1437	May 17, moves from the majority party to the minority party of the council; in August, sent to Constantinople as Pope Eugenius IV's messenger to discuss the location for the council of reunion; November 27, returns to Venice together with the Greek Emperor, the Patriarch of Constantinople, and other high Eastern Church officials; on the way back, receives inspiration on *De docta ignorantia*, as "a celestial gift from the Father of Lights"	
1438	February 8, arrives at Venice; March 16, German Electors declare neutrality between pope and council	
1439	As papal messenger, visits German diets and assemblies at Mainz and elsewhere	
1440		*De docta ignorantia* (Kues, February 12)
1441	Attends the imperial diets at Mainz and Frankfurt	*Dialogus concludens Amedistarum errorem*
1442	May, attends the imperial diet at Frankfurt	*Epistola ad Rodericum Sancium de Arevalo*
1443		*De coniecturis* (1442/43)
1444	Attends the imperial diet at Nuremberg	
1445		*De deo abscondito* (1444/45); *De quaerendo Deum*; *De filiatione Dei*; *De geometricis transmmutationibus*; *De arithmeticis complementis*
1446	Attends the imperial diet at Frankfurt; appointed cardinal *in petto* by Pope Eugenius IV	*De dato patris luminum* (1445/46); *Coniectura de ultimis diebus*

Year	Main Events	Works
1447	Attends the imperial diet at Aschaffenburg as papal messenger	*De genesi* (March)
1448	December 20, made cardinal by Pope Nicholas V	
1449		*Apologia doctae ignorantiae* (November 9?)
1450	April 25, becomes Bishop of Brixen; December 31, leaves Rome for the legation journey	*Idiota de sapientia*; *Idiota de mente*; *Idiota de staticis experimentis*; *De circuli quadratura*
1451	Visits Germany and the Low Countries	
1452	Arrives at Brixen just before Easter	
1453	May 29, Fall of Constantinople; tries to reform as Bishop of Brixen; conflict with Duke Sigmund of the Tyrol worsens	*De pace fidei* (September); *De visione Dei*; *De theologicis complementis*
1454		*De mathematicis complementis* (1453/54)
1457	June, leaving Brixen, goes to Castle Andraz in Buchenstein, southern Tyrol	*De caesarea circuli quadratura* (Andraz, August 6)
1458	September 30, the new Pope Pius II calls Cusanus to Rome; completes his plan to establish St. Nicholas Hospital at Kues	*De beryllo* (Andraz, August 18); *De mathematica perfectione*
1459	While Pius II attends the Council of Mantua, serves as *Legatus urbis in temporalibus*	*De aequalitate*; *De principio*; *Reformatio generalis*; *Aurea propositio in mathematicis* (August 8)
1460	Returns to Brixen; besieged and captured at Castle Bruneck and forced to sign a humiliating contract; flees and returns to Rome	*Trialogus de possest* (February)

Year	**Main Events**	**Works**
1461	Becomes ill; June 11, executes his first will in Rome; July 16-September 15, stays in Orvieto, introduces a reform plan	*Cribratio Alkorani* (January?)
1462	August 17, in Orvieto	*De non aliud*
1463	June 3-6, visits Monte Oliveto to clothe a young man called Nicholas, with a monastic habit; June 21-September 24, in Orvieto	*Dialogus de ludo globi* (1462/63); *De venatione sapientiae* (fall)
1464	Before July 3, leaves Rome for Ancona; July 16, becomes ill at Todi in Umbria; August 6, writes final will; August 11, dies at Todi; August 14, Pius II dies at Ancona	*Compendium* (1463/64); *De apice theoriae* (Easter)

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Works of Nicholas of Cusa

Chronologically Arranged and Annotated

Only a limited number of easily available texts and translations are listed below. The mark • indicates Cusanus' principal works; the "h" stands for the *Nicolai de Cusa Opera Omnia* (Leipzig/Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1932-); and "Hofmann" refers to Nikolaus von Kues, *Die mathematischen Schriften*, 2nd ed., ed. and intro. Joseph E. Hofmann, trans. Josepha Hofmann (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1980).

For the texts of Cusanus' sermons, see the Introduction. See also Jasper Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa's Early Sermons, 1430-1441* (Loveland: Arthur J. Banning Press, 2003).

1433 *Opusculum contra Bohemorum errorem*: *De usu communionis*: "Little Work against the Error of the Bohemians: On the Practice of Communion"

From February until April 1433, Cusanus was involved as a member of the Deputation (Committee) on the Faith of the Council of Basel (1431-1449) in discussions with the Hussites (Bohemians) on the reception of the Eucharist under both species, bread and wine (Utraquism). The result was his treatise, the *Opusculum*, submitted to the council in March/April 1433.

[h. XV, 3, Opuscula Bohemica, III, 1 (in press).]

1433 *De maioritate auctoritatis sacrorum conciliorum supra auctoritatem papae*: "On the Superiority of the Sacred Councils to the Authority of the Pope"

This short tract deals with the superiority of the councils over the pope, written by Cusanus in the first part of 1433 as the council's response to the papal bulls that attempted to close the council. This work included the possible use of a *decretum irritans* (decree of nullification) against papal appointments to church offices. The tract's argument is similar to the early part of the *De concordantia catholica.*

[h. XV, Basileensia, planned, but not yet published; Erich Meuthen, *Cusanus-Texte*, II, *Traktate*, 2: *De maioritate auctoritatis sacrorum conciliorum supra auctoritatem papae*, (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Verlag, 1977), 42-87.]

1433/34 • *De concordantia catholica*: "The Catholic Concordance"

As chancellor of Ulrich von Manderscheid (c. 1400-1438), who was a candidate for the archbishopric of Trier, Cusanus submitted to the Council of Basel towards the end of 1433 or early in 1434 the *De concordantia catholica*, which demonstrated his deep knowledge of canon law, philosophy and theology, as well as of the Empire. Commenting on his advocacy of the conciliar ideas in the work, one of the best-known modern Catholic Church historians, the late Hubert Jedin, wrote: "Nicholas' *Concordantia catholica*, completed in 1433, is the most original product of the conciliar theory in the period that concerns us" [Hubert Jedin, *A History of the Council of Trent*, trans. Ernest Graf. 2 vols. (St. Louis: Herder, 1957), vol. 2, 22].

[h. XIV, 1, 2, 3, 4 (1959-1963); Paul E. Sigmund, *Nicholas of Cusa: The Catholic Concordance*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 1-322.]

1434 *De auctoritate presidendi in concilio generali*: "On the Presidential Authority in a General Council"

The so-called presidency debate from February 18 to February 25, 1434 at the Council of Basel began after John Berardi of Tagliacozzo submitted papal bulls to the council on February 15 calling for the creation of five presidents. Cusanus participated in the debate with his master Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444) and his colleagues, such as Juan de Segovia, John of Ragusa and Juan de Torquemada, and expressed views on February 25 that were more pro-papal than the pro-conciliar ideas contained in the *De concordantia catholica* of 1433/34.

[h. XV, Basileensia, planned, but not yet published: H. Lawrence Bond, Gerald Christianson, and Thomas M. Izbicki, "Nicholas of Cusa, 'On Presidential Authority in a General Council,'" *Church History* 59, 1 (1990), 19-34.]

1436 *De reparatione kalendarii*: "On the Amending of the Calendar"

A proposal for revising the Julian calendar.

[h. X, 4 Opuscula II, 4 (not yet published).]

1440 • *De docta ignorantia*: "On Learned Ignorance"

The *De docta ignorantia* was the first truly philosophical treatise and one of the most important works of Nicholas of Cusa. Begun on December 19, 1439 in the cloister of Münstermaifeld, where Cusanus was provost, it was completed on February 12, 1440, in his home at Kues.

[h. I, 1-164 (1932); Hopkins, I, 1-46, II, 57-101, III, 112-151.]

1441 *Dialogus concludens Amedistarum errorem*: "Dialogue Resolving the Error of the Amadeists"

After the breakup of the Council of Basel into a majority and a minority party in 1437, Amadeus VIII, Duke of Savoy, was elected by the majority in December 1437 as the anti-pope Felix V (r. 1439-1449). It was this victory of the Amadeists, the followers of Amadeus VIII, that Cusanus criticized in the *Dialogus*. He argued that authority can never be understood numerically, that a sound minority is to be respected and that what counts is the hierarchical rank of the minority party. First described as Cusanus' work by Josef Koch in his "Über eine aus der nächsten Umgebung des Nikolaus von Kues stammende Handschrift der Trierer Bibliothek (1927/1426)," which was published in Bonn in 1957, the *Dialogus* was clearly identified as Cusanus' work by Erich Meuthen in 1970 after the discovery of a second manuscript of the dialogue in Liège (Universitätsbibliothek, 107.C).

[h. XV, Basileensia, planned, but not yet published; Erich Meuthen, *Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft* 8 (1970), 78-114.]

1442 *Epistola ad Rodericum Sancium de Arevalo*: "Letter to Rodrigo de Sánchez de Arévalo"

In his letter to Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo (1404-1470), Spanish diplomat and champion of the papacy, Cusanus expressed clearly his new, more pro-papal views on the Church and the Council of Basel. Sánchez published in 1469 his small tract, *Libellus de remediis afflictae ecclesiae* ("On Remedies for the Afflicted Church").

[h. XV, Opuscula III, Fasciculus 2, Opuscula ecclesiastica, 1-16 (2007); Thomas M. Izbicki, "The Church in the Light of Learned Ignorance," *Medieval Philosophy and Theology* 3 (1993), 196-214.]

1442/43 • *De coniecturis*: "On Conjectures"

Cusanus supplemented the *De docta ignorantia* (1440) in 1442 or 1443 with the *De coniecturis*; the two together can be said to provide an almost complete system of his philosophical thought. Both works were dedicated to Cardinal Cesarini.

[h. III, 1-183 (1972); Hopkins, I, 164-257.]

1444/45 *De Deo abscondito*: "On the Hidden God"

In 1444-1446 Cusanus completed an interesting series of theological and philosophical inquiries into the limits of human knowledge and the search for God: *De Deo abscondito* (1444/45), *De quaerendo Deum* (1445), *De filiatione Dei* (1445) and *De dato patris luminum* (1445/46). All are edited in h. IV, Opuscula I.

[h. IV, Opuscula I, 1-10 (1959); Hopkins, I, 299-311.]

1445 *De quaerendo Deum*: "On Seeking God"

[h. IV, Opuscula I, 11-35 (1959): Hopkins, I, 314-320.]

1445 *De filiatione Dei*: "On Being a Son of God"

[h. IV, Opuscula I, 37-64 (1959); Hopkins, I, 339-358.]

1445 *De geometricis transmutationibus*: "On Geometrical Transmutations"

Cusanus dedicated his first mathematical work to Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli (1397-1482), a physician from Florence and a good friend from his Paduan days.

[Hofmann, 3-28.]

1445 *De arithmeticis complementis*: "Complementary Arithmetical Considerations"

Dedicated to "the physician Paolo, the best and most learned man."

[Hofmann, 29-35.]

1445/46 *De dato patris luminum*: "On the Gift of the Father of Light"

This treatise was written to Father Gerard, Bishop of Salone, either in 1445 or in 1446.

[h. IV, Opuscula I, 65-87 (1959); Hopkins, I, 370-386.]

1446 *Coniectura de ultimis diebus*: "Conjecture on the Last Days"

[h. IV, Opuscula I, 89-100 (1959).]

1447 *Dialogus de genesi*: "Dialogue on the Genesis [of All Things]"

Completed at Liège on March 2, 1447, the *De genesi* is a dialogue between Cusanus and a certain Conrad (probably Conrad of Wartberg, a canon of Münster). Cusanus employed a broad hermeneutic to reconcile the Biblical account of creation with a newly developing cosmology.

[h. IV, Opuscula I, 101-129 (1959); Hopkins, I, 391-415.]

1449 *Apologia doctae ignorantiae*: "A Defense of Learned Ignorance"

In this work, written in October or November 1449, against the charges of heresy and pantheism advanced by the Heidelberg scholastic Johannes Wenck of Herrenberg (d. 1461), a strong partisan of the Council of Basel, Cusanus defended himself, saying that Wenck was not only wrong, but arrogant.

[h. II, 1-36 (1932); Hopkins, I, 457-485.]

1450 *Idiota*: "The Layman"

In the summer before embarking on his long, arduous legation journey in 1451-1452, Cusanus composed the three dialogues collectively entitled *Idiota* (*De sapientia* I-II; *De mente* III; and *De staticis experimentis* IV).

• *Idiota de sapientia*: "The Layman on Wisdom"

In the first two books, which are written at and dated, respectively, Rieti, July 1 and Fabriano, August 7 and 8, 1450, he described and discussed his favorite notion of the *idiota* (layman).

[h. V, 1-57, 58-80 (1983); Hopkins, I, 483-520.]

• *Idiota de mente*: "The Layman on Mind"

The *De mente* was finished at the Camaldolensian monastery in the Val de Castro, near Fabriano, on August 23, 1450.

[h. V, 81-218 (1983); Hopkins, I, 533-589.]

• *Idiota de staticis experimentis:* "The Layman on Experiments with Weights"

Completed at Fabriano in the early part of September 1450, the work shows the influence of scholars such as Avicenna (980-1037) and Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472).

[h. V, 219-239 (1937); Hopkins, II, 605-624.]

1450 *De circuli quadratura, pars theologica*: "On Squaring the Circle, Theological Part"

Completed at Rieti on July 12, 1450 and written for an unknown friend, probably Cardinal Bessarion (1403-1472).

[h. X, Opuscula II, 2a, 87-93 (1994); Hofmann, 36-59.]

1450 *Quadratura circuli*: "Squaring the Circle"

Written during one of his busiest periods, when Cusanus was preparing for the great legation journey, 1451-1452.

[Hofmann, 58-67.]

1453 • *De pace fidei*: "On the Peace of Faith"

In a remarkably irenic response to the shocking conquest of Constantinople by the Turks on May 29, 1453, Cusanus wrote in September the famous dialogue *De pace fidei*. He took the position that in regard to the relations of various religions, the principle of *una religio rituum in varietate* was possible, thereby suggesting the possibility of agreement among them.

[h. VII, 1-65 (1959); Hopkins, I, 631-676.]

• *De visione Dei*: "On the Vision of God"

The year 1453 was Cusanus' most peaceful and successful one as Bishop of Brixen (r. 1452-1464). He completed this eloquent devotional work, *De visione Dei*, in the lonely Castle Andraz in Buchenstein, and sent it to his admiring friends, the Abbot and the Benedictine monks of Tegernsee.

[h. V, 1-90 (2000); Hopkins, II, 677-736.]

1453 *De theologicis complementis*: "Complementary Theological Considerations"

In his *De theologicis complementis*, written in 1453, Cusanus demonstrated his continuing fascination with the theological use and application of mathematical models.

[h. X, Opuscula II, 1-86 (1984); Hopkins, II, 746-773.]

1453/54 *De mathematicis complementis*: "Complementary Mathematical Considerations"

Cusanus dedicated the *De mathematicis complementis*, which was written sometime between 1453 and 1454 and which was one of his major mathematical works, to Pope Nicholas V (1397-1455; r. 1447-1455), who drew many Greek scholars to his court and who had the geometrical works of Archimedes (287?-212 B.C.) translated into Latin for Cusanus. Did he, as the Hofmanns seem to suggest, write a good many mathematical works around this time and afterwards because he wanted to escape from his frustrations and disappointments in his efforts to reform existing corruption and to counter resistance?

[Hofmann, 68-127.]

1457 *De caesarea circuli quadratura*: "On Squaring the Caesarian Circle"

On August 6, 1457, Cusanus completed this work at Castle Andraz and dedicated it to Emperor Frederick III (r. 1440-1493).

[Hofmann, 151-159.]

1458 *De beryllo*: "On the Beryl"

In the midst of his seemingly endless struggle against Duke Sigmund (or Sigismund) of the Tyrol (1427-1496; r. 1446-1496), Cusanus composed the *De beryllo*, a brief but important philosophical treatise. It was finished on August 18, 1458 in "Castle St. Raphael," the name Cusanus gave to Castle Andraz, believing that he had reached its safety with the help of St. Raphael.

[h. XI, 1, 1-85 (1988); Hopkins, II, 787-827.]

1458 *De mathematica perfectione*: "On Mathematical Perfection"

After returning to Rome on September 30, 1458, Cusanus completed this work in early October. It was dedicated to Cardinal Antonius de la Cerda (d. 1459) of Spain, one of the leading theological experts of the time. Cusanus regarded this treatise as his best mathematical work.

[Hofmann, 160-177.]

1458 *De aequalitate*: "On Equality"

While Pope Pius II was attending the Congress of Mantua (1459-1460), Cusanus, as *legatus urbis in temporalibus,* or legate and vicar-general in temporalities over papal territories, wrote two brief philosophical treatises, *De aequalitate* and *De principio*, discussing what it means to speak of God.

[h. X, Opuscula III, 1-49 (2001); Hopkins, II, 841-866.]

1459 *De principio*: "On the Beginning"

[h. X, Opuscula II, 2b, 1-59 (1988); Hopkins, II, 879-900.]

Reformatio generalis: "A General Reform of the Church"

The *Reformatio generalis* was probably completed in early July 1459. What is notable is that it discusses the reform of the Church "in its head and members."

[h. XV, Opuscula III, Fasciculus 2, Opuscula ecclesiastica, 17-61 (2007); Morimichi Watanabe and Thomas M. Izbicki, "Nicholas of Cusa, *A General Reform of the Church*," in: *Nicholas of Cusa on Christ and the Church*, ed. Gerald Christianson and Thomas M. Izbicki (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 188-202.]

1459 *Aurea propositio in mathematicis*: "Golden Proposition in Mathematics"

This last, brief mathematical work was completed in Rome on August 8, 1459. It is found only in one manuscript, Cod. Mediolanensis, Bibl. Ambrosiana G 74 inf, fol. 2^{v}-3^{r}, discovered by the late Raymond Klibansky.

[Hofmann, 178-182.]

1460 *Trialogus de possest*: "Trialogus on Actualized-Possibility"

In February 1460 Cusanus completed this important dialogue, in which the interlocutors are Cusanus himself, Lord Bernard Kraiburg, chancellor of the Archbishop of Salzburg, and the cardinal's former secretary, Giovanni Andrea Bussi (1417-1473).

[h. XI, 2, 1-87 (1973); Hopkins, II, 912-954.]

1461 *Cribratio Alkorani*: "The Sifting of the Koran"

After returning to Rome from Brixen in the winter of 1460, Cusanus, at the request of Pope Pius II, wrote *Cribratio Alkorani*, which was a Christocentric appraisal and refutation of the Koran based on a Latin translation by Robert of Ketton (fl. 1141-1157).

[h. VIII, 1-190 (1986); Hopkins, II, 963-1096.]

1462 *De non aliud*: "On the Not-Other"

Probably in January 1462, Cusanus completed one of his most speculative works, *De non aliud* or *De li non aliud*, in which he introduced, besides himself and Giovanni Andrea Bussi, John Andrea Vigevius, abbot of the monastery of St. Justine of Sezedim, Petrus Balbus of Pisa, later Bishop of Tropea, and Ferdinand Martins (or Fernandus Martins de Roriz), Cusanus' physician from Portugal. The central theme is the total otherness of God in relation to human conception.

[h. XIII, 1-65 (1944); Hopkins, II, 1106-1166.]

1462/63 *Dialogus de ludo globi*: "Dialogue on the Game of Spheres"

The work *De ludo globi* consists of two dialogues, both written in Rome, the first in 1462 and the second in 1463. The former dialogue is between Cusanus and John (Johannes), Duke of Bavaria; the second is between Cusanus and Albert (Albrecht) IV of Munich, a younger brother of John. Using the analogy of a concave and convex bowling ball, whose movement "cannot continue on in a straight line" but soon veers off, always moving in a different direction, Cusanus tries to explain the relationship between God and the individual soul.

[h. IX, 1-68; 71-150 (1998); Hopkins, II, 1179-1248.]

1463 *De venatione sapientiae*: "On the Pursuit of Wisdom"

After having read the *De vitis philosophorum* ("On the Lives of Philosophers") of Diogenes Laërtius (fl. third century), which had been translated from Greek into Latin by Ambrose Traversari (d. 1440) in 1433, and "aroused now," as he put it, Cusanus wrote in the fall of 1463 his *De venatione sapientiae* to direct all his intelligence "to so pleasing a speculation than which nothing more pleasant can occur to a man."

[h. XII, 1-113 (1982); Hopkins, II, 1275-1354.]

1463/64 *Compendium*: "Compendium"

Written probably in 1463 or 1464, the *Compendium* is a short but important summary of Cusan doctrines.

[h. XI, 3. 3-36 (1964); Hopkins, II, 1382-1409.]

1464 *De apice theoriae*: "On the Summit of Contemplation"

Cusanus' last work, written about four months before his death, is a dialogue between Cusanus and his last secretary, Peter Wymar von Erkelenz (c. 1430-1494), who was then a canon in Aachen. It shows that at Easter 1464 he, at last and to his great joy, came to the contemplation of God, not as some being to be found "negatively" in the darkness, *in obscuro*, as he had said in the *De docta ignorantia* and later works, but more "positively" as *posse ipsum*, "Possibility-Itself." As F. Edward Cranz said in "The Late Works of Nicholas of Cusa," in: *Nicholas of Cusa in Search of God and Wisdom*, ed. Gerald Christianson and Thomas M. Izbicki (Leiden: Brill, 1991), 141-160, it would have been stimulating if we had been able to see the development of Cusanus' ideas thereafter.

[h. XII, 115-169 (1982); Hopkins, II, 1420-1434.]

Abbreviations

ACSN	*American Cusanus Society Newsletter* (New York, 1983-)
Clm	*Codex latinus monacensis*, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich
h	*Nicolai de Cusa Opera omnia. Iussu et auctoritate Academiae Litterarum Heidelbergensis* (Leipzig-Hamburg: Felix Meiner, 1932-)
MFCG	*Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft* (Mainz and Trier, 1961-)

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Contributors

Gerald Christianson is Professor Emeritus of Church History at Lutheran Theological Seminary, Gettysburg, PA. He chairs the International Seminar on Pre-Reformation Theology, which, in cooperation with the American Cusanus Society, has held biennial conferences on Nicholas of Cusa, conciliarism and reform. He served as President of the American Cusanus Society from 2007 to 2009.

Thomas M. Izbicki is Humanities Librarian for Philosophy, Religion and Classics at Rutgers University, New Jersey. Known especially for his studies of Juan de Torquemada and Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, he recently published *Reject Aeneas, Accept Pius: Selected Letters of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (Pope Pius II)*, with Gerald Christianson and Philip Krey (2006) and *Nicholas of Cusa, Writings on Church and Reform* [The I Tatti Renaissance Library, 33] (2008).

Il Kim recently received his Ph.D. degree in architectural history at Columbia University, NY. His dissertation is entitled "The Cult of Light in Fifteenth-Century Italian Renaissance Architecture." He has published translations into Japanese of books and articles on architecture and co-authored several books on contemporary architecture. He is now a Visiting Assistant Professor at the Pratt Institute in New York.

John P. Kraljic holds a Juris Doctorate from Georgetown Law School (1987) and a Master of Arts Degree in History from Hunter College of the City University of New York (2002). A fluent speaker of Croatian, he has written on many themes concerning Croatian and Croatian-American history which have been published in Croatia and the United States. A contributing editor of the *Review of Croatian History*, he is a member of the Executive Committee of the Croatian Academy of America.

Jesse D. Mann is a Ph.D. recipient from the University of Chicago, who has written extensively on John of Segovia. In recent years, he has paid particular attention to canon law and liturgy, systematic meditation and the *Vita Christi* tradition. He now holds an appointment in the Department of Religious Studies, Drew University.

Donald D. Sullivan is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of New Mexico. Specializing in the later Middle Ages, he has published such articles as "Nicholas of Cusa as Reformer" (1974), "Apocalypse Tamed: Cusanus and the Traditions of Late Medieval Prophecy" (1983) and "Cusanus and Pastoral Renewal: The Reform of Popular Religion in the Germanies" (1996).

Fig. 1 The lawyer Cusanus writing a legal opinion in the Bacharach case (1426). Munich, Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Abt III: Geheimes Hausarchiv, Fol. 6v, Handschrift 12 (by permission of His Highness Duke Albrecht of Bavaria). © Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv

Fig. 2 Cusanus’ House of Birth at Kues (Bernkastel-Kues). © Landesmedienzentrum Rheinland-Pfalz/Harald Goebel

Fig. 3 St. Nicholas Hospital at Kues. © Landesmedienzentrum Rheinland-Pfalz/Harald Goebel

Fig. 4 Cusanus' Library in St. Nicholas Hospital at Kues. © Landesmedienzentrum Rheinland-Pfalz/Harald Goebel

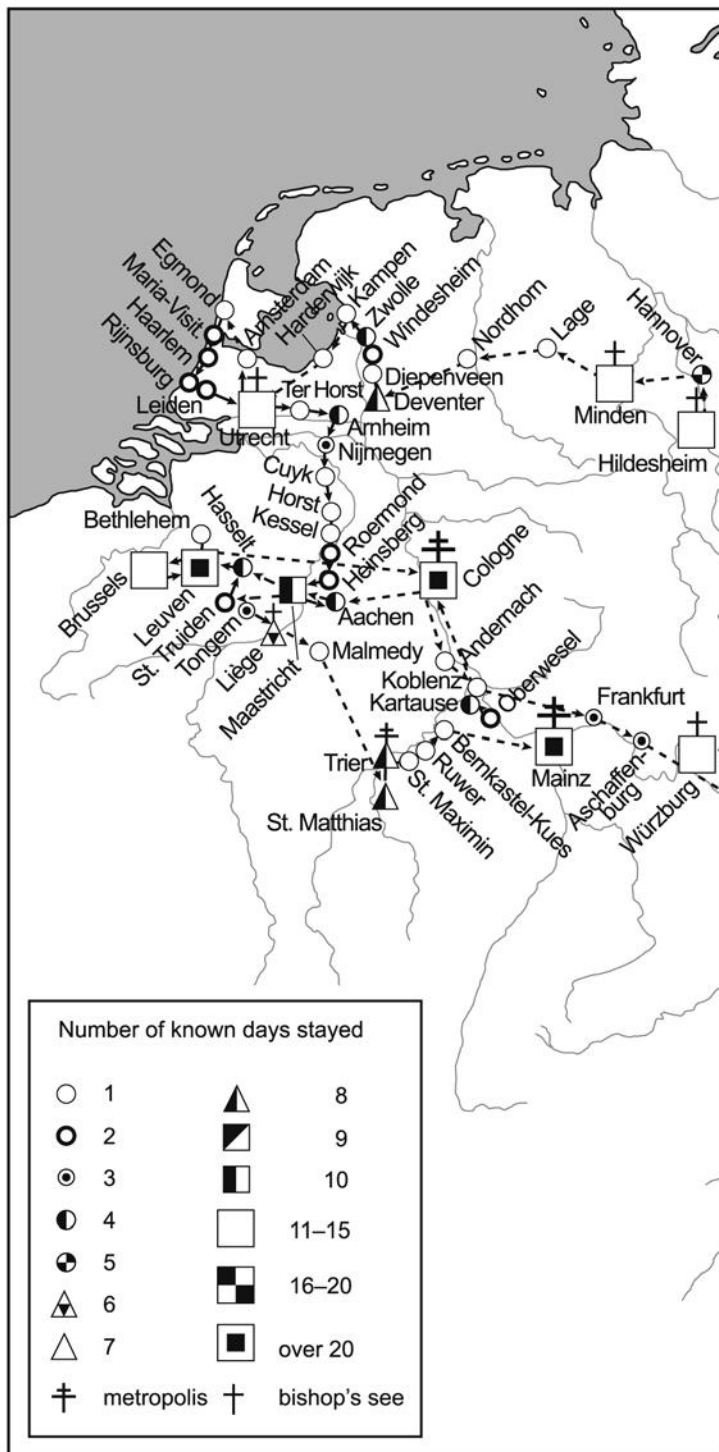
Fig. 5 Cusanus' portrait, detail of the altar picture in St. Nicholas Hospital at Kues. © Landesmedienzentrum Rheinland-Pfalz/Harald Goebel

In Nomine Domini amen. Anno a nativitate eiusdem Millesimoquadringentesimo sexa
gesimoquarto Inditione duodecima die vero lune Sexta mensis Augusti Pontificatus Sanctissimi in xpo pris et dni nri dni Pii divina providentia Pape Secdi
Anno Sexto hora vesperorum vel quasi Tuderti in palatio Epali constitutus in lecto egritudinis Reverendissimus in xpo pr et dns dns Nicolaus de Cusa tt
Sancti petri ad vincula Sancte Romane eccle pbr Cardinalis et Epus Brixinen, anime et ratione compos corpore autem debilis In mei Petri Wymari de Erklen
Clerici leodien dioc apostolica et Imperiali auctoritatibus notarii et testium subscriptorum presentia auctoritate sibi a prefato Sanctissimo dno nro papa et a felicis recordationis Nicolao ppa
quinto per bullas aplicas utriusque concessa volens ut dixit de rebus suis causa mortis dispone ac testamentum sive codicillum sive extreme voluntatis facere pro aie
sue ac predecessorum suorum salute ordinavit et disposuit hanc suam ultimam voluntatem si eum ex hac egritudine ab hac luce migrare contingeret in hunc qui sequitur
modum. In primis omnia testamenta sive ultime sue voluntatis dispositiones per eum quomodolibet factas cassavit revocavit et annullavit, ac pro cassatis revocatis
et annullatis haberi voluit Excepto testamento sive ordinatione sue ultime voluntatis alias per ipsum Rome de Anno dni Millesimoquadringentesimosexagesimo
primo Inditione nona die vero lune quintadecima mensis Junii Pontificatus prefati Sanctissimi dni nri Pii pape secundi Anno tertio, in infirmitate gravi constitutum,
Coram venerabili et discreto viro magistro henrico Pomert Canonico lubicensi Secretario et Notario suo et certis testibus facto, et in quadam papiri cedula de manu
[illegible] henrici conscripto et subscripto et a tergo eiusdem cedule de manu sue Reverendissime paternitatis hoc in verbo Testamentum consignato. Quam quidem
cedulam idem Reverendissimus dns Nicolaus Cardinalis ibidem in medium produxit et per me Notarium suprascriptum publice legi fecit, Cuius tenor de verbo ad verbum
sequitur et est talis Anno etc Sexagesimoprimo die lune quintadecima Junii Inditione Nona pontificatus Sanctissimi dni nri dni Pii pape secundi Anno tertio hora sex
tadecima vel quasi Rome constitutus in lecto egritudinis Reverendissimus in xpo pater et dns dns Nicolaus tt sancti petri ad vincula Sacrosancte Romane
eccle pbr Cardinalis et Epus Brixinen anio et rone compos corpore aut debilis. in mei henrici Pomert Clerici lubicen dioc publici aplica et Imperiali
auctoritatibus notarii et infrascriptorum testium presentia auctoritate sibi a prefato Sanctissimo dno nro papa die hesterna oraculo vive vocis ac etiam a felicis recordationis
Nicolao papa quinto per bullam concessa volens ut dixit de rebus suis causa mortis disponere ac testamentum sive codicillum facere pro aie sue ac predecessorum
suorum salute, ordinavit et disposuit hanc suam ultimam voluntatem si eum ex hac egritudine ab hac luce migrare contingeret in hunc qui sequitur
modum. In primis animam suam deo et beate virgini marie ac toti celesti curie commendans, pro sui corporis sepultura locum elegit ecclesiam sancti petri ad vin
cula volens ibidem sepeliri retro summum altare ante Cathenas ad partem dexteram, Item voluit quod in eius sepultura nulla pompositas sit, sed quod alis devote
fiat. Ita quod familiares sui induant nigris vestibus et exequie fiant consuete sine tamen solempnitate. Item dixit se habere in Banco de medicis Sex milia et
septingentos floren Renen de quibus dedit Quinque milia florenos renen hospitali sancti Nicolai in Cusa per eum erecto et constructo, volens quod de huius
modi quinque milibus emi debeant redditus dicto hospitali ducentorum florenorum renen. ex quibus viginti pauperibus scolaribus studere volentibus in partibus infer
oribus alamanie dari voluit ad septem annos ab anno videlicet quinquagesimo octavo vel quintodecimo incipiendo anno quolibet cuilibet floren Renen decem, et hoc
sit perpetuo observari, Item voluit quod ex residuo dictorum florenorum in dicto Banco existentium expediri debeant exequie sue, et quod inde superest dividi inter fami
liares eius voluit. Item voluit quod equi eius similiter cedant familiaribus suis ac vestes panni et utensilia. Item duo milia floren sibi per Theodericum de driel mer
catorem debita sive apud eundem deposita dedit et legavit eccle sancti petri ad vincula, pro ipsius structura, et divini cultus ibidem augmento. Item totum arge
tum eius quod extimavit ad valorem quatuor milium floren Renen pondere mandavit. illud quod totaliter legavit et dedit dicto hospitali sancti Nicolai in Cusa
Item voluit quod libri apud eum existentes et qui sui non sunt, restituantur illis quorum fuit, suos autem libros omnes dedit et legavit dicto eius hospitali volens
illos ibidem adduci et reponi. Item ex pecunia quam dixit fore apud magistrum Symonem de welen eius nepotem dedit et legavit dicto eius hospitali florenos
Renen mille, ac ex eadem pecunia dedit et legavit prefato eius nepoti pro suo labore habito florenos Renen ducentos. residuum aut pecuniarum huiusmodi volu
[illegible] Rome apud basilicam apostolorum petri et pauli in domo et camera lecti egritudinis eiusdem Reveren
dissimi dni Cardinalis Sub anno etc presentibus venerabilibus viris dnis Johanne Stam plebano in Cusa, et petro Wymari de Erklentz Canonico Aquensi
Treveren et leodien dioc Testibus. H. pomert notarius ad hec manu propria. Quod quidem testamentum sive dispositionem premissam, iterum inno
vavit confirmavit et laudavit et observari voluit, salva emendatione infrascripta. ac excepto sexto et ultimo eiusdem testamenti capitulo. in quibus nar
ratur duo milia floren apud theodericum de driel fore deposita, et certam pecuniam apud magistrum Symonem de welen eius nepotem existere. Quos

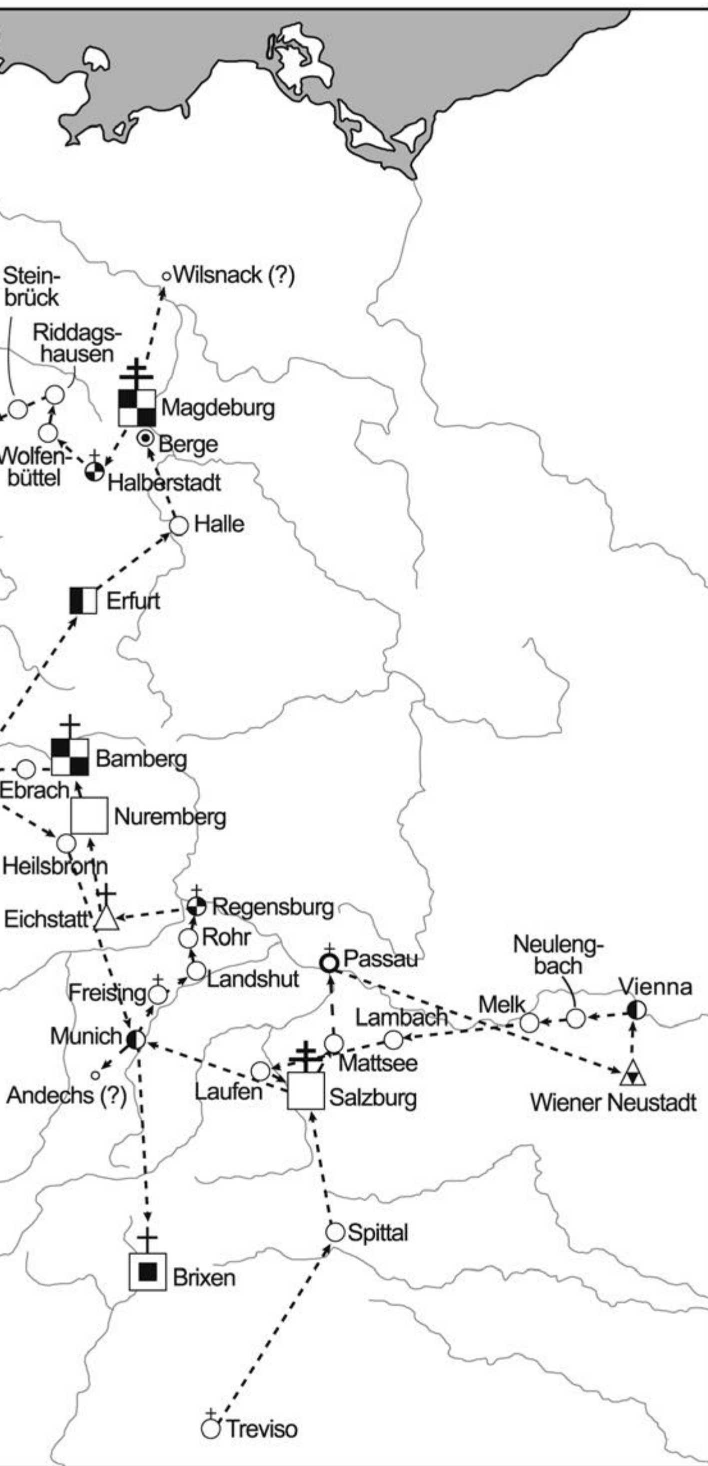
Fig. 6 Cusanus' last will of August 6, 1464 drawn up by Peter von Erkelenz. © Landesmedienzentrum Rheinland-Pfalz/Harald Goebel

Fig. 7 Tomb of Nicholas of Cusa at S. Pietro in Vincoli, Rome. © Landesmedienzentrum Rheinland-Pfalz/ Hans Kiefer

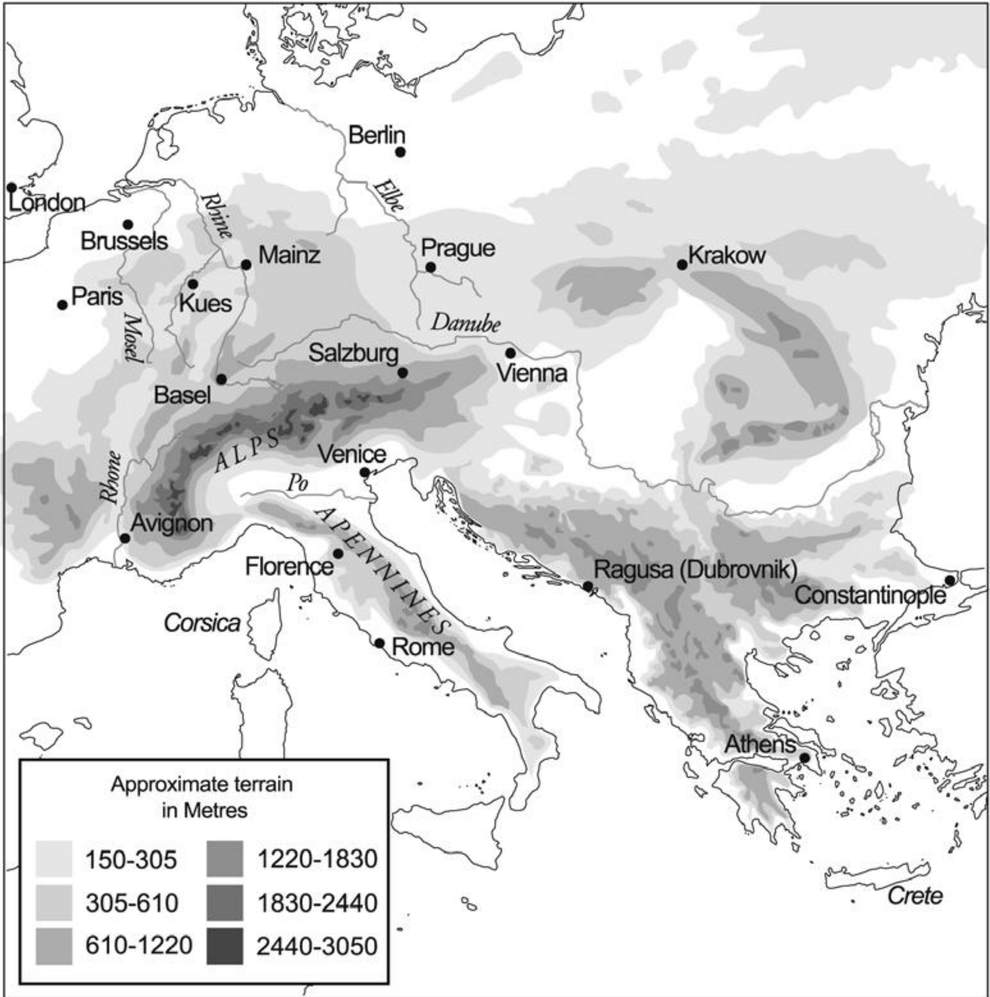
Map 1 Cities and Towns in in the Life of Nicholas of Cusa.



Egmond
Maria-Visit
Haarlem
Rijnsburg
Leiden
Amsterdam
Harderwijk
Kampen
Zwolle
Windesheim
Nordhorn
Lage
Hannover
Diepenveen
Deventer
Ter Horst
Utrecht
Arnheim
Nijmegen
Minden
Hildesheim
Cuyk
Horst
Kessel
Roermond
Heinsberg
Cologne
Bethlehem
Hasselt
Brussels
Leuven
St. Truiden
Tongern
Liège
Maastricht
Aachen
Malmedy
Andernach
Koblenz
Kartause
Oberwesel
Frankfurt
Mainz
Aschaffenburg
Würzburg
Trier
St. Matthias
St. Maximin
Ruwer
Bernkastel-Kues
Number of known days stayed
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11–15
16–20
over 20
metropolis
bishop's see



Map 2
Places Nicholas of Cusa visited on his German Legation)



Map 3 General Map of Europe in Nicholas' of Cusa's Time.

Introduction

What is the value of examining the ideas and activities of the late medieval lawyer, philosopher, theologian and cardinal Nicholas of Cusa (Nicolaus Cusanus) (1401-1464)? Did the political, social, religious and intellectual conditions of his era have any resemblance to our own, thereby presumably contributing to a better understanding of our period? Or was his own period unique and worth exploring in order to appreciate and understand the complexity of historical developments and human reactions to them? Serious attempts must be made to explore the ideas he developed and to learn how the conditions and events of his time affected his activities or brought about his actions.

Although there are certain unclear or unknown facts about Nicholas of Cusa's life, we have a fairly clear biography thanks to many studies made available in recent years. His philosophical, theological and scientific ideas are much more readily available than, say, twenty years ago because many more scholarly studies and his own writings are now available.

Nicholas of Cusa was born into a bourgeois family in the small village of Kues (present-day Bernkastel-Kues) on the Moselle River. His father, Johan or Henne Cryfftz or Krebs (d. 1450), was a fairly well-to-do boat owner, or *nauta*, who exercised considerable influence in local politics. There are a good many legendary stories about Cusanus' youth. For example, it is said that because Cusanus was so little interested in his father's trade, taking more interest in studying and reading books, one day the father knocked him off the boat.

But the first fact in his life which can be established is, as a registration record at the University of Heidelberg shows, that he entered the university in 1416 to study the "seven liberal arts." How much influence the school of Nominalism (*via moderna*), which was strong at that time because of the teaching of Marsilius of Inghen (1340-1396), the university's first chancellor, exercised on the fifteen-year-old student from Kues is difficult to establish.

After only one year at Heidelberg, Cusanus crossed the Alps to enter in October 1417 the Law School of the University of Padua, which was, like the Law School of the University of Bologna, one of the leading law schools in Europe. During his six years in Padua, 1417-1423, Cusanus seems to have taken advantage of the wonderful opportunities offered by the university not only as a great legal center, but also as a center of the Italian Renaissance. He befriended, for example, the mathematician, astronomer and physician Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli (1397-1482)

and the humanist educator Vittorino da Feltre (1378-1446). As a humanist, Cusanus deepened his interest in Greek culture and became known among the humanists in Florence, the center of the Italian humanist movement. Under the instruction of such famous law professors as Prosdocimus de Comtibus (d. 1438), Paulus de Dotis and Raphael Fulgosius, Cusanus received a doctor of canon law degree (*doctor decretorum*) from Padua in 1423.

After entering the University of Cologne in April 1425 as "Doctor of Canon Law from Trier" (*doctor in iure canonico treverensis*), he probably taught law there, but clear evidence is not available. Because of his ties to Ulrich von Manderscheid (c. 1400-1438), who was then a member of the cathedral chapter at Cologne, Cusanus was able to do legal research in the cathedral archives. Because of his discovery of the twelve lost plays of the Roman comic poet Plautus (250-164 B.C.) while in Cologne, he became well known as Nicholas Trevirensis among such Italian humanists as Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1454) and Nicolò Niccoli (1364-1437). The Bacharach toll tax case of 1426 was one of the most important events in which Cusanus was involved while in Cologne, drawing the attention of famous law and theology professors from the Universities of Cologne and Heidelberg. Because of the fame Cusanus acquired as a lawyer, he was, in 1428 and then in 1435, invited to become a professor of canon law at the University of Louvain, which had been founded in 1425, but each time he declined to accept the invitation.

Cusanus' active participation in the Council of Basel (1431-1449) from 1432 to 1437 as Ulrich von Manderscheid's procurator gave him opportunities to meet many distinguished council members from many countries. As a result, he rose to a high level of political and legal sophistication. He was by then a busy, sought-after lawyer and diplomat on an international stage. One of the most important results of his activities at the council was the completion of *The Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*) in 1433 or 1434, about which Hubert Jedin, the famous historian of the Council of Trent, said: "Nicholas' *Concordantia catholica,* completed in 1433, is the most original product of the conciliar theory in the period that concerns us." The work was dedicated to Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444), who was serving as President of the Council of Basel, and also to Emperor Sigismund (r. 1410-1437), who arrived at Basel in October 1433.

Cusanus' goals were unity and harmony within the Church. But conflict between Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) and the Council of Basel intensified, thereby increasing divisions within the council itself. As a result, Cusanus shifted his allegiance from the council to the pope around 1437. The turning point in his loyalty was the question of where to hold a council of reunion with the Eastern Orthodox Church. In 1436 he voted with the minority party to permit the pope to decide where the new council should take place. In May 1437 Cusanus and two other delegates of the minority party were commissioned to go to Constantinople. They sailed from Venice in late summer. The move he made from the conciliar majority party to the papal minority party in 1437 has been endlessly debated and often severely criticized.

Cusanus' mission to Constantinople was a remarkable event. He not only experienced the famous "supreme gift of the Father of Lights" on his way back

to Venice, but he also served as ambassador to the Greek world and brought back many distinguished Greek representatives, as well as some important manuscripts which he later used and which are now deposited in his library in Bernkastel-Kues. The magnitude of the ocean he traversed with Greek political and spiritual leaders compared to the small size of his ship made him acutely aware that there existed an insurmountable chasm between the infinite and the finite. This was a chance for the learned, skilled political and legal thinker to be made aware of a deeper, more profound aspect of human existence. The result was his most famous philosophical book, *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*), which was completed in Kues on February 11, 1440. He was by then almost forty years old.

The man who was a learned political and legal theorist and who had declined to enter the "ivory tower" twice spent busy, active days and months during the remaining twenty-four years of his life. Although the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-1442), to which Cusanus brought the Greek delegation from Constantinople, issued the decree *Laetentur coeli* on July 6, 1439, thereby bringing about the end of the schism, at least briefly, which had existed since 1054 between the Roman and Greek Churches, Cusanus was sent from Ferrara to Germany to bring the German princes to the papal side, because they had declared their neutrality in the struggle between Eugenius IV and the council. Cusanus worked hard for almost ten years, between 1438 and 1447, at the imperial diets at Mainz (1441), Frankfurt (1442), Nuremberg (1444) and other assemblies. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464), his friend and the future Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464), called Cusanus "the Hercules of the Eugenians." As a result of Cusanus' efforts, the Concordat of Vienna (1448) was signed, which aligned Germany with Pope Eugenius IV.

Cusanus' elevation on December 20, 1448, to the cardinalate by Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455) and then his appointment on April 26, 1450, as Bishop of Brixen initiated an especially difficult period of his life. His legation journey to Germany and the Low Countries, from the end of 1450 to about Easter 1452, exposed him to the tough political and social realities of Europe. The dismal struggle with Sigmund (Sigismund) "the Rich," Duke of Tyrol (1446-1496), between 1452 and 1460, made him aware that the political, legal, social and economic conditions in the Empire and the Tyrol were dangerous, even life-threatening.

During these troubled years in Brixen, Cusanus continued to preach and write. Indeed, as Donald F. Duclow pointed out, "Preaching was central to his pastoral role and reform efforts, and one hundred and sixty-two sermons survived from the years 1453-1457." Cusanus and Duke Sigmund met at Wilten Abbey near Innsbruck in late June 1457, but rumors and troop movements led Cusanus to believe that the duke's agents were attempting to kill him. As a result, Cusanus left Brixen and retreated to Castle Andraz in Buchenstein, which was on the diocese's southern border. When one visits today the isolated, forlorn Castle Andraz in the ragged, peripheral region of Buchenstein in the Tyrol where the frightened Bishop of Brixen found refuge on July 10, 1457, one cannot help thinking about the anxiety, fear and perhaps agony that must have afflicted the bishop, who was forced to abandon his episcopal city. Writing in his notes in February 1458, he said that he had arrived at Castle Andraz with the help of Archangel Raphael, and that he had been "in

the wilderness of the Dolomites for thirty-two weeks." But even in Andraz, his speculation and creative activity did not stop. His *On the Beryl* (*De beryllo*) and perhaps *Trialogus on Actualized-Possibility* (*Trialogus de possest*) were written in the lonely castle on the banks of the brook Coldi di Lana. He also completed *On Squaring of the Caesarean Circle* (*De caesarea circuli quadratura*) at Castle Andraz. Josef Ehrenfried Hofmann, who devoted his academic career to the study of Cusanus' mathematical works, stated that at Andraz Cusanus was "alone, far-away from all friends and even without the books he loved" (242).

Cusanus remained in Castle Andraz until August 1458, when, responding to the new Pope Pius II's repeated calls, he departed for Rome on September 30, 1458. When he revisited his diocese in April 1460, Duke Sigmund's troops encircled the Castle of Bruneck, where Cusanus had taken refuge, and they succeeded in exacting all the duke's demands. After being freed from Bruneck to return to Rome, Cusanus the lawyer repudiated the agreement with Sigmund on grounds of duress. Although he was safely back in Rome, the Turkish threat to Europe and Christendom posed by the fall of Constantinople in 1453 made Cusanus keenly aware of the problem of the lack of interreligious unity and tolerance, as was indicated in his *On the Peace of Faith* (*De pace fidei,* 1453). As a man of action, he even tried to bring about reform in Rome and Orvieto, but, as is shown in his *Sifting of the Koran* (*Cribratio Alkorani,* 1461), he seemed to have become more pessimistic and critical towards existing political and religious conditions.

During the difficult years of his later life, Cusanus' views on God and the absolute maximum were changing because of the revelation he had received at sea on the way back from Constantinople in 1437. He wrote in *On the Vision of God* (*De visione Dei*) of 1453 that God dwells within a paradise of the coincidence of opposites (*coincidentia oppositorum*), which is surrounded by a wall. The wall is sometimes called the wall of paradise, that is, beyond both reason and intellect. Cusanus' search for God then progressed and resulted in the concept of "can-is" or "actualized-possibility" (*possest*) in the *Trialogus on Actualized-Possibility* (*Trialogus de possest*) of 1460. In 1463 he composed an overview of his thought, *On the Pursuit of Wisdom* (*De venatione sapientiae*), which reflected similar ideas. Then, as a result of his philosophical and theological ascent to God in the Easter season of 1464, he wrote *On the Summit of Contemplation* (*De apice theoriae*). He said: "I once thought that it was better to be found in the shade. But truth is great power, and in it Power itself shines brightly." Thus he began to conceive of God not negatively, but more positively.

On the way to Ancona, where Pope Pius II was preparing for a crusade against the Turks, Cusanus died at Todi in Umbria on August 11, 1464. Paolo dal Pozzo Toscanelli, his friend since his Paduan days, as well as the Portuguese physician Fernan Martinez de Roriz, witnessed his passing. The pope, who was waiting for the arrival of ships to join his crusade but who was very disappointed by the small number that responded, died at Ancona three days later. Cusanus' body was buried in Rome at his titular church of St. Peter in Chains, but his heart was brought to Bernkastel-Kues and placed beneath the chapel floor at St. Nicholas Hospital.

It was not long after the death of Cusanus in 1464 that his works began to be edited and printed. The first Strasburg edition, which is usually referred to as the "a" edition, was edited and published by Martin Flach of Strasburg in 1488. The next edition, which was edited by Roland Paravicini and published in Corte Maggiore near Piacenza by Benedictus Dolcibelli in 1502, is called the Milan edition ("m"), and was a rather slavish imitation of the Strasburg edition. The famous humanist Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (c. 1453-1536) edited and published the Paris edition ("p") in 1514, in which he included for the first time *The Catholic Concordance* and excerpts from some of Cusanus' sermons under the heading *Libri excitationum*. The publisher of the Paris edition was Jodocus Badius Ascensius. Finally, in 1565, the Basel edition ("b") was issued by Henri Petri. It is certainly difficult to say that Cusanus was forgotten in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

As Stephan Meier-Oeser showed in *Die Präsenz des Vergessenen*, there appeared a number of respectable and substantial studies of Cusanus' life, ideas and activities after the publication of the Basel edition of 1565. Meier-Oeser cites many studies not only in the section on "Literature before 1847," but also in "Literature from 1847." In the latter section, special attention must be paid to the works of Maurice de Gandillac, Ernst Hoffmann, Raymond Klibansky, Giovanni Santinello and Edmond Vansteenberghe. But we must note that the modern "revival" of Cusanus studies was significantly aided by the appearance of the famous 1927 book *The Individual and the Cosmos in the Philosophy of the Renaissance* (*Individuum und Kosmos in der Philosophie der Renaissance*) by Ernst Cassirer (1874-1945). Cassirer was influenced by Cusanus research undertaken by his teacher, the notable Neo-Kantian philosopher Hermann Cohen (1842-1918), but it was Cassirer who discussed Cusanus in the first two chapters of his book, describing him as "the first modern philosopher."

The modern critical edition, which is referred to as the Heidelberg edition ("h") and published by the Felix Meiner Verlag in Leipzig as *Nicolai de Cusa Opera omnia* under the auspices of the *Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften*, was initiated in 1932 by Ernst Hoffmann, professor of philosophy at the University of Heidelberg, and his gifted, multilingual student Raymond Klibansky. Originally designed to be completed by 1944 in fourteen volumes, the edition was interrupted by World War II. The office and storage houses of Felix Meiner Verlag were completely bombed out in 1943, and the firm began its reconstruction in Hamburg only in 1951. In 1970 the *Sermons* (*Sermones*) series was added to the Heidelberg edition of the *Opera omnia.* Edited first by many Cusanus specialists under the leadership of Rudolf Haubst, the *Sermones* series was an important addition to the *Opera omnia.*

Shortly after, in 1976, Erich Meuthen and Hermann Hallauer began to gather and publish the *Acta Cusana*, which is an exhaustively researched and carefully edited series that added a tremendous amount of information about Cusanus' life and activities. According to the editors, the goal of the project was to gather all documents, papers and writings in which Cusanus was directly referred to or cited. Thus far, four thick volumes plus an index by Erich Meuthen have been published in the series. It is perhaps accurate to say that no other medieval writer's life has been so carefully and minutely examined as Cusanus'. After seventy-three years, the *Opera omnia* was finally and "officially" completed at the commemorative

symposium held by the *Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften* at Heidelberg on February 11-12, 2005. It is important to remember, however, that there are still unpublished portions of the *Opera omnia* and the *Acta Cusana.*

As indicated above, the expansion of the number of Cusanus' works published in the *Opera omnia* in 1960 and thereafter could not help but change the nature, orientation and character of Cusanus studies. It was no longer sufficient to discuss the meaning and significance only of Cusanus' early works, such as *On Learned Ignorance* or *The Catholic Concordance*, but it was necessary to examine the changed or developed views of Cusanus in his later works. In his recent publication, *Cusanus: The Legacy of Learned Ignorance*, Peter J. Casarella, who organized a conference in October 2001 at the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, to commemorate the sixth centenary of the birth of Nicholas of Cusa, compared *Nicolò Cusano agli inizi del mondo moderno*, which contained the studies delivered at the 1964 jubilee conference in Bressanone (Brixen) to mark the fifth centenary of Cusanus' death, with the studies presented at his 2001 conference. His purpose was to "take stock of the changing nature of research." Casarella granted, first of all, that

> there is a surprising continuity of themes between *Nicolò Cusano agli inizi del mondo moderno* and the more recent endeavors in Washington … But the differences of perspective between 1964 and 2001 are just as striking. (xxiii)

In 1964 Cassirer's interpretation of Cusanus was still an important beginning, but the recent addition of many works of Cusanus to his *Opera omnia* has had a significant impact on the extent to which his works are investigated.

A second difference between 1964 and 2001 is the degree to which the issue of spirituality was emphasized. "In 1964 none of the sermons was available in the present critical edition," wrote Casarella. Many of Cusanus' two hundred and ninety-three sermons are now available. Almost all of the Latin texts of these sermons had been published in the Heidelberg edition of the *Opera omnia* by 2008. Of the four scheduled volumes of the German translation of Cusanus' sermons, the third volume, which includes Sermons 122-203, was published in 2007. Jasper Hopkins published the English translation of Sermons 1-26 with a useful introduction as *Nicholas of Cusa's Early Sermons: 1430-1441* in 2003. To translate the remaining sermons is an ambitious, challenging project. We may note that the Cusanus-Gesellschaft in Trier organized and sponsored a two-year symposium in which, with Cusanus' sermons designated as a central issue, it presented in the first year (October, 2004) seven lectures on Cusanus' sermons and in the second year (October, 2005) seven more. Jasper Hopkins published the second English translation of Cusanus' sermons in 2008, indicating, however, that because of the more *didactic* and less inspirational and devotional nature of the forty-five selected sermons, and because of the difficulty of arranging them topically, he "selected the Sermons that most appealed to [him], and [he] arranged them according to [his] own degree of interest in them" (2008, iii).

A third area which calls for our special attention is what we may call the "internationalization" or "globalization" of Cusanus studies. In 1960, in preparation for the fifth centenary of Cusanus' death in 1464, the Cusanus-Gesellschaft was established in Germany. The Cusanus Society of America was informally initiated in 1981 at the Sixteenth International Congress on Medieval Studies at Kalamazoo, Michigan; in 1983 the society was formally organized as the American Cusanus Society. The Japanese Cusanus Society, which started as a small group in 1971, was reorganized in 1982. For a while these three were the more organized, better-known groups, but new Cusanus societies or research centers have been formalized or established in other countries quite recently. They include the Centre for Cusanus Studies in Nijmegen, the Netherlands (2001), and the Circulo de Estudios Cusanos in Buenos Aires, Argentina (2006). It has been reported that a Cusanus center was established in Turin, Italy, around March 2007. We must note that exchanges among these Cusanus societies and organizations have become easier and faster. For example, we can report on a congress on Cusanus that took place in St. Petersburg, Russia, on September 20-22, 2006. The Japanese Cusanus Society held its Twenty-Sixth General Meeting at Sapporo on October 13-14, 2007. An international conference on Cusanus was held at Åbo Akademi University, Turku, Finland, on July 13 to August 3, 2008. The Second International Cusanus Congress of Latin America was held in Buenos Aires on August 19-22, 2008 under the general theme, "Cusanus' Conception of the Relationship between Identity and Otherness." On April 24-25, 2009, the Institut Catholique de Rennes, Ker Lann, France sponsored an international symposium under the title, "Identity and Difference in the Work of Nicholas of Cusa." At the Forty-Forth International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, on May 7, 2009, the American Cusanus Society successfully held two Cusanus sessions: "Cusanus and Islam" and "Philosophy and Theology of Nicholas of Cusa." The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, Poland held a conference on "Eriugena-Cusanus" on September 22-24, 2009. St. Petersburg Society for Studies of Cultural Heritage of Nicholas of Cusa held a conference on April 22-24, 2010 under the title, "The Principle of *coincidentia oppositorum* from Nicholas of Cusa through Nicholas of Berdyaev." The Cusanus-Gesellschaft in Germany is making preparations for its sixtieth anniversary in 2010.

Cusanus has been characterized as a "doorkeeper of the new age" (Haubst), a "Janus-faced thinker" (Hösle), a "theologically oriented metaphysician" (Hopkins), a "medieval thinker for the modern age" (Yamaki), "one of the greatest Germans of the fifteenth century" (Kremer) and "his own kind of Neoplatonist with a philosophical sensibility notably different from that of other Renaissance thinkers who were Platonists, such as Pico and Ficino" (Miller). The variety of Cusanus scholarship and the changing views on the essence of his thought and contributions are inevitable—and to be welcomed—as a result of these organizations, as well as expanded primary sources and the development of philosophical, theological, political, cultural and intellectual studies of Cusanus' legacy.

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I. Ideas and Events

1. Canon Law

Nicholas of Cusa is usually known as a theologian or a philosopher, but he was first trained as a canon lawyer at the University of Padua from 1417 to 1423. What was the study of canon law like at that time? Who were his teachers? What influence did he receive at Padua? According to Constant Van de Wiel, *History of Canon Law*:

> Canon law is a normative system that includes canones, decreta, decretalia, constitutiones, praecepta, responsiones, rescripta, epistolae, and legal customs. In the course of the centuries, however, these terms have been applied to different kinds of legally binding rules, which have been compiled in both private and official collections. (11)

To discuss the origins and development of the law of the Church in a fairly brief article would be impossible, or at least very difficult, unless certain restrictions are placed or certain periods or points are emphasized. In this article on canon law, emphasis will naturally be placed on the medieval or late medieval period, especially in relation to Nicholas of Cusa and his times.

In the early Christian Church, there developed some important Church orders, such as the *Didache*, or *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, at the end of the first century, the *Shepherd of Hermas* in the second century, the *Apostolic Tradition* in the third century, ascribed to St. Hippolytus (c. 170-c. 236), and the *Didascalia apostolorum* in the mid-third century.

During periods of persecution, especially by Emperors Nero (r. 54-68) and Diocletian (r. 284-305), Church organization was naturally weakened. But after the Edict of Milan, issued in 313 by Emperor Constantine I (288-337), the councils and synods of the Church developed further, deciding doctrinal issues and acting as ecclesiastical courts. There began to develop a hierarchical, organizational structure of the Church, whose main features still exist today. The first Council of Constantinople (381) recognized the Bishops of Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, Jerusalem and Rome as patriarchs, with the Bishop of Rome claiming a preeminent authority.

In the early Middle Ages (fifth and sixth centuries), the successful invasion of the Western Empire by Germanic peoples inevitably altered the relationship between ecclesiastical institutions and civil government. The growth in the number of members of monastic communities was another notable feature of this period. To look at the Germanic kingdoms, the canon law in these areas reflected the isolationism and particularism of the new political order. There appeared in the first half of the sixth century, for example, St. Finnian (or Vinnian) of Clouard in Ireland, who was the author of the earliest methodical penitential produced in the first half of the sixth century. In the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries, the number of penitentials grew.

Around this time, the number, size and complexity of canonical collections also increased. In her detailed study, *Canonical Collections of the Early Middle Ages*, Lotte Kéry lists one hundred and ninety-three collections, such as the *Constitutiones apostolicae* (c. 380), the *Statuta ecclesiae antiquae* (fifth century), the *Collectio Dionysiana*, completed by a Scythian monk, Dionysius Exiguus (c. 500-555), and the *Epitome Hispana* and the *Excerpta Hispana*, often attributed to St. Isidore of Seville (c. 560-636).

Perhaps special attention should be paid to the appearance in the ninth century (c. 850) of the famous pious fraud, the Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals, ascribed to "Isidorus Mercator," a pseudonym, or even to St. Isidore of Seville. Its influence was pervasive. Kéry describes one hundred and eight extant, complete manuscripts of the forgery, including sixteen complete ones at the Vatican Library and forty-five partial manuscripts scattered all over Europe.

In 774 Pope Hadrian I (772-795) sent to Charlemagne (c. 742-814) the C*ollectio Dionysio-Hadriana*, which helped to bring about a new unity in canon law. But attacks by Vikings, Magyars and Muslims led to the disintegration of Carolingian Europe. By the tenth century, the period of feudalism had arrived, and as a result a decline of canon law set in.

James A. Brundage wrote in his *Medieval Canon Law*:

> During the tenth and eleventh centuries, canonical rules for choosing members of the church's hierarchy often fell into abeyance. Bishops, abbots, and other church officials, down to and including parish priests, typically came to be named by local landowners and noblemen, who often demanded concessions of church property from the successful candidate in return for securing his appointment. Similarly, should a local strongman wish to provide his son with a dignified and comfortable living as a bishop or abbot, for example, the chances are extremely good that the boy would be taken care of, no matter how meager his qualifications for the position. Numerous other positions of canon law also fell by the wayside during this period. (31)

The changed situation of the Church in the tenth and eleventh centuries required revised canon law books.

The *Decretum* of Burchard (c. 950-August 20, 1025), who served as Bishop of Worms (1000-1025), was certainly a large, outstanding collection of canons. It comprised 1,785 canons organized in two hundred books, compiled between circa 1008 and 1012. It was the first collection of canons that was arranged according to subject matter, including the episcopacy, ordained persons, churches, baptism, the Eucharist, homicide, incest, monks and nuns, witches, excommunication, perjury, fasting, drunkenness, laymen, accusers and witnesses, fornication, visitation of the sick, penance and contemplation, in that order. Burchard apparently did not distinguish law from theology.

Then came Ivo (c. 1040-1115), Bishop of Chartres (r. 1090-1115), the "most learned canonist of his age," who is often called the "patron saint of the lawyers." His three canonical collections were the *Decretum*, the *Panormia* and the *Collectio Tripartita*. The *Decretum*, which appeared in 1095, contains 3,760 fragments in seventeen volumes. Ivo made considerable use of the *Decretum* of Burchard of Worms.

In the prologue to his *Decretum*, Ivo stated that he was attempting to unite the ecclesiastical rules "into one body." He was one of the first to set forth conflicting passages in the authorities and to suggest some standards by which they could be reconciled. Canonists found Ivo's prologue immensely valuable as a guide for resolving the discrepancies that they often found between ecclesiastical laws.

The *Panormia* achieved a greater popular success than its bulkier companion, the *Decretum*. It was widely disseminated throughout Western Christendom and later canonists drew upon it for subsequent collections. As Kéry shows (254-258), its extant manuscripts are very numerous. Ivo's prologue to the book sets forth rules for the interpretation of canonical texts that became central to the works of later canonists, especially to Gratian, whose work is described below. Stephan G. Kuttner (1907-1976), one of the greatest canon law scholars of modern times, said in his Wimmer Lecture XV, delivered at Saint Vincent College at Latrobe, Pennsylvania in 1956 and published as *Harmony from Dissonance*:

> The Panormia (c. 1096) of Bishop Ivo of Chartres, one of the most influential and certainly the most widely diffused canonical collection of the generation before Gratian, opens with a prologue … [that] was a milestone in the history of the art of interpretation. (12)

This collection in three parts (*Collectio Tripartita*) has also been ascribed to Ivo, although the basis for that assumption is rather shaky. There were many important developments in the so-called "classical period," 1140-1375, of the history of canon law.

In this connection, we must pay attention, even briefly, to the revival of Roman law that had been developing since the eleventh century in Bologna, if we are to understand the rise and development of the canon law field. Bologna had been a center of legal studies in Europe for more than a generation. A self-taught, but inspiring, jurist named Irnerius (c. 1060-1125) was drawing many students from all over Europe to his lectures on Roman civil law. There has been a great deal of discussion on how the texts of Roman law were discovered and began to be

discussed by many teachers. But Irnerius, who taught at Bologna in particular, gained prominence among them. Often referred to as the "lamp of the law" (*lucerna iuris*), Irnerius was no doubt the founder of Romanist legal scholarship.

Returning to the field of canon law, we note that the culminating point in the development of canon law was reached when Gratian (Gratianus) (d. c. 1179), the "father of the science of canon law" (*Pater scientiae canonicae*), completed *A Harmony of Discordant Canons* (*Concordia discordantium canonum*)—or, in short, *Decretum*—in Bologna around 1140. We know little about him. Even the long-held theory that he was a Camaldolese monk who taught at Bologna has been criticized by John T. Noonan in his article "Gratian Slept Here." We should remember that the great poet Dante assigned Gratian a place in paradise (Canto 10).

From the title Gratian gave to his work, *Concordia discordantium canonum*, his intention was clear. He wanted to dissolve the contradictions (*discordantiae*) that occurred so often in the innumerable sources by bringing these texts in harmony with each other. Although not accepted officially by the Church at first, his work enjoyed widespread approval. The title *Decretum* was used according to the examples of Burchard of Worms and St. Ivo of Chartres, whose works it replaced. The *Decretum Gratiani* introduced an entirely new period in the history of canon law. It later received official recognition as the first part of the *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, and remained a true standard work of canon law until the promulgation of the first *Codex Iuris Canonici* in 1917.

The famous "decretists" who tried to understand and apply Gratian's *Decretum* include the following:

Paucapalea, the first decretist
Rolandus Bandinelli (once thought to be Pope Alexander III)
Huguccio (d. 1210), the most important canonist of the twelfth century
Joannes Teutonicus (Johannes Zemeke) (c. 1170-1245/46), author of the influential *Glossa ordinaria* of Gratian's *Decretum*, which subsequent teachers and judges relied on as their best guide to Gratian's work

There were canonical collections issued after Gratian's *Decretum*, which when taken together were called the *Corpus Iuris Canonici* (*Body of Canon Law*). They were:

Liber Extra (Decretals) of Gregory IX (1234)
Liber Sextus, added by Boniface VIII (1298)
Constitutiones Clementinae, compiled by Clement V (1317) and issued by John XXII
Extravagantes of John XXII (1325)
Extravagantes Communes (1261-1471)

By the end of the fifteenth century, the invention of printing in Europe enabled publishers to issue sets of the above canonical texts to parallel their publication of Justinian's codification of Roman law, entitled the *Corpus Iuris Civilis* (*Body of*

Civil Law). Some of the famous "decretalists" who in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries commented on the canonical collections are the following:

> Alanus Anglicus (fl. 1208-1238), an English canon lawyer who lectured at Bologna
> Sinibaldo dei Fieschi (Pope Innocent IV) (d. 1254)
> Hostiensis (Henricus de Segusio) (1190/1200-1271), a most distinguished and influential canonist; his great fame rested on his *Summa* and *Lectura* on the Gregorian decretals
> Ramón de Penyafort (1180/85-1275), compiler of the Gregorian decretals and also author of glosses on the *Decretum* and of an influential *Summa de Poenitentia*
> Guido de Baysio (the archdeacon) (c. 1250-1313) wrote a gloss on the *Sext* and the influential *Rosarium,* an apparatus of glosses on the *Decretum*
> Joannes Andreae (Giovanni d'Andrea) (c. 1270-1348), "The Fount and Trumpet of the Canon Law"
> Francis Zabarella (c. 1335-1417), often called "the foremost canonist of his day"; after studying at Bologna, he lectured at Florence and Pavia
> Panormitanus (Nicholas de Tudeschis; also called Abbas Modernus, Abbas Siculus) (1386-1453?), Archbishop of Palermo (1435), produced many influential works, such as *Quaestiones*, *Repertiones*, *Consilia* and glosses on the decretals

For a long time after the establishment of the Law School at Bologna in the eleventh century, the school occupied a dominant position in the field of European jurisprudence. German students who went to Italian law schools in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were clerics who wanted to acquire knowledge of Roman law. But by the beginning of the fifteenth century, the prestige of the Law School at the University of Padua was almost as high as that of Bologna. It is said: "While Bologna revered the *glossa ordinaria* of Accursius (c.1182-1263), even to the point of giving it precedence over Roman law, Padua permitted a cautious practical adaptation to the circumstance of the time" (Van de Wiel, 131).

As Paolo Sambin showed, Cusanus was a boarder at the home of his famous law professor, Prosdocimus de Comitibus (d. 1438), while he was a law student at the University of Padua from 1417 to 1423. Codex Cusanus 220, which is now in the Library of St. Nicholas Hospital in Bernkastel-Kues, contains on fol. 152^{r}-276^{v} Cusanus' notes taken by him when he attended Prosdocimus' lecture at Padua on "Commentary to Book II of the Decretals of Pope Gregory IX" (Krchňáck, 68). In the marginal notes, Cusanus refers to his teacher as "Pros" and describes him as a "distinguished doctor" (*docta egregious* [Krchňáck, 68-80]). Undoubtedly, he heard the legal theories of Zabarella discussed in class. He was certainly a contemporary of Panormitanus, who, like him, participated in the Council of Basel.

> In common with all the Italian Universities, Padua was chiefly famous for the Law Schools, Canon and Civic. As Bologna decayed because of

> its incessant quarrels and secessions, and the narrow mindedness of the professors, Padua with its more liberal, and essentially wiser, city authorities, forged ahead … (Schachner, 283)

Around the beginning of the fifteenth century, the University of Padua, which was by then no less prestigious than Bologna, had the largest number of German students in the Faculty of Law. We should note that many important contemporaries of Cusanus—Gregor Heimburg (c. 1400-1472), his severe critic, Johannes von Eych, Conrad Schenck, Werner von Aufsus and Baptista Mantuanus (1448-1516), the famous poet—also studied law at Padua. It should also be remembered that many German students who went to Italian law schools to study canon and Roman laws were influenced by Italian humanism and contributed to its diffusion into Germany after their return home.

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2. Great Schism of the West (1378-1417)

The Great Schism of the West is undoubtedly one of the important events that considerably influenced the development of Nicholas of Cusa's ideas and activities.

During the so-called "Babylonian Captivity" of the Church at Avignon from 1305 to 1378, seven popes were Frenchmen:

Clement V (Bertrand de Got) (r. 1305-1314)
John XXII (Jacques Duèse) (r. 1316-1334)
Benedict XII (Jacques Fournier) (r. 1334-1342)
Clement VI (Pierre Roger) (r. 1342-1352)
Innocent VI (Etienne Aubert) (r. 1352-1362)
Urban V (Guillaume de Grimoard) (r. 1362-1370)
Gregory XI (Pierre Roger de Beaufort) (r. 1370-1378)

When Clement V, the first of the Avignonese popes, settled at Avignon, it was a sensible choice. A chaotic political situation prevailed in central Italy. Strictly speaking, Avignon was not French territory. The city itself was subject to the kings of Sicily, and its surrounding region was part of the Papal States.

Pope Boniface VIII (r. 1294-1303), a significant predecessor of Clement V, the first Avignonese pope, was condemned as a heretic because of every possible crime, including murder, magic and homosexual acts. Boniface was briefly cowed, but in 1302, encouraged by a vast influx of pilgrims to Rome in the Jubilee year of 1300, issued the bull *Unam sanctam*, which asserted the doctrine of papal monarchy in strong terms: "We declare, announce, affirm and define that, for every human creature, to be subject to the Roman pontiff is absolutely necessary for salvation." But a small military force took Boniface prisoner at his palace at Anagni in 1303. The proud old pope was released by local townspeople a few days later, but died shortly thereafter (Bennett and Hollister, 263).

Elected in 1305, Pope Clement V pursued a policy of cautious accommodation to the French throne. He was a Bologna-trained canon lawyer and a good administrator.

He revised and expanded the code of canon law, adding a new section called the Clementines. But his greatest challenge was resisting pressure from the French crown. The French King Philip IV, "the Fair" (r. 1285-1314), pursued a policy of forcing Clement V to call a general council to brand Pope Boniface VIII a heretic, because of their long-standing conflicts.

Whether, as some historians have stated, the continuing pressure on Clement's six successors at Avignon by the French crown resulted in the "colonization" of the papacy, making it "French," is a question that requires careful consideration. For the most part, the Avignonese popes were capable of independent action without being completely controlled by the French crown, although the papacy's very location suggested to France's enemies that it was no longer an impartial international force, capable of claiming supremacy in the Church.

In the 1360s, a number of saintly figures like St. Brigitta of Sweden (1303-1373) and Friar Pedro of Aragon (1305-1381) began to exert pressure on Pope Urban V to restore the papacy to Rome. Urban complied in 1367, but returned to Avignon just before his death. Thereafter, Friar Pedro, St. Brigitta and especially St. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380) encouraged Pope Gregory XI to return to Rome. In one of her many letters to Gregory, St. Catherine demanded:

> Even if you have not been very faithful in the past, begin now to follow Christ, whose vicar you are, in real earnest … Above all, delay no longer in returning to Rome and proclaiming the Crusade (against the infidels). (Duffy, 125-126)

The papacy's seventy-year exile at Avignon ended in January 1377 when Pope Gregory XI returned to Rome, because he believed that Rome was the proper place for the pope.

According to Jean Gerson, Gregory is said to have regretted his return to Rome before his death on March 27, 1378.

The conclave that elected Gregory's successor on April 8 was mobbed by Roman crowds. They were afraid that the French cardinals might elect another French pope who would return to Avignon. Many of them were armed and chanted: "We want a Roman or at least an Italian." Under this pressure, the cardinals elected an Italian, Bartolomeo Prignamo, absentee Archbishop of Bari, who took the name Urban VI (r. 1378-1389). Although much respected as an archbishop, Urban VI, as pope, turned out to be overbearing and violent. Immediately criticizing the cardinals' luxurious way of life, Urban seems to have lost his self-control, even on one occasion bodily attacking a cardinal. His private and public displays of anger showed that he had lost all his precious humility and circumspection after his elevation to the papal throne. In a number of later manuscripts, as Blumenfeld-Kosinski pointed out, Urban VI was depicted as the "terrible beast" (*bestia terribilis*) who was regarded by many as the originator of the Great Schism.

Less than six months after electing Urban VI, the cardinals fled Rome, declared Urban's election invalid because it had been conducted under duress and elected

at Fondi on September 20, 1378, the Cardinal of Geneva, Robert, as Pope Clement VII (r. 1378-1394). Thus began the Great Schism.

Leading the entire Curia, Clement VII went back to Avignon, while Urban VI created a new Curia by appointing twenty-nine cardinals from many parts of Europe. Now there were two popes, two papal administrations and two legal systems. Nations were divided into allegiances along dynastic and political lines. England, Germany, north and central Italy, and central Europe obeyed Urban, while France, Burgundy, Savoy, Naples and Scotland supported Clement. Some wavered. Naples changed allegiances several times; Portugal also flip-flopped frequently. Even saints were divided: St. Catherine of Siena supported Urban; St. Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419), Clement.

To what extent this division and fluctuation were caused by rising "nationalistic" sentiments is an important topic that must be carefully evaluated. Because of the rise of the Conciliar Movement, which is described in a separate chapter, serious attempts began to be made to terminate the Great Schism. At the Council of Pisa (1409), five hundred prelates deposed both popes and elected on June 26, 1409 a new one, Alexander V (r. 1409-1410) (Peter Philargus, Pietro Philargi). But because neither of the old popes accepted these conciliar depositions, the effect of the Council of Pisa was to transform a two-way schism into a three-way schism.

Finally, Sigismund, the Holy Roman Emperor-elect, called another council in November 1414 to Constance (1414-1418). It was there that an attempt was made to heal the breach, which had grown wider over the years. After two popes were deposed and the third resigned, the Church was united by the election on November 11, 1417, of a conciliar pope, Martin V (Odone Colonna) (r. 1417-1431), ending the Great Schism.

Eamon Duffy wrote in his widely-read book, *Sinners and Saints*: "For the Church at large, it was a trauma. The practical effects of the Great Schism were disastrous" (2). It is true that the Avignonese papacy developed a fairly advanced bureaucratic system and fiscal efficiency. But, while the papacy was growing more efficient and wealthier, its spiritual capital steadily diminished.

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3. Conciliarism

To put it simply, the conciliar theory is a theory which holds that a general council is the supreme authority in the Church. The beginning of the Conciliar Movement can be found in the Great Schism (1378-1417) of the papacy, discussed in the preceding article, although the intellectual and theoretical origins of the conciliar theory, as we see below in the discussion of Brian Tierney's views, can be found in medieval canon law. How did the theory influence Cusanus?

The expected and prompt reaction to the papal schism was the demand for a general council to be held to decide on the legitimacy of the two claimants to the papal throne, Urban VI (r. 1378-1389) and Clement VII (r. 1378-1394). The voice was raised at the University of Paris in 1379 by two German masters, the canon lawyer Conrad of Gelnhausen (d. 1390) and the theologian Henry of Langenstein (d. 1397).

The canonist Conrad of Gelnhausen argued in his *Short Letter* (*Epistola brevis*) of 1379 and his *Letter of Concord* (*Epistola concordiae*) of 1380 that a council was superior to the pope and cardinals because it was less likely to err in faith. He advocated the calling of a general council and appealed to the French and Bohemian kings, Charles V (r. 1364-1380) and Wenceslas IV (r. 1378-1419).

In his *Letter on Behalf of a Council of Peace* (*Epistola concilii pacis*), published in 1381, the theologian Henry of Langenstein wrote:

> Therefore, putting aside this florid style of writing, let us now come to the point at issue and again bring forward the truth that has, as it were, been urged advisedly by the indirect method of fine words, and that has now to be discussed in plain and unadorned language with the precise acuteness of a disputation, namely, whether to end the present schism it is expedient and necessary that a general council be held. (Spinka, 112)

Quoting the famous Roman legal maxim *Quod omnes similiter tangit, ab omnibus approbetur*, he went on to say:

> Therefore, new and difficult cases which concern the whole world must be discussed by a general council. "For what affects all must consistently be dealt with by all or by the representatives of all." (Spinka, 117)

The expressions of the early conciliar position fell on deaf ears in both Paris and Prague.

The conciliar principle of representative government in the Church had been suggested (with varying degrees of radicalism) by John of Paris (c. 1240-1306), Marsilius of Padua (c. 1275-1342), William of Ockham (c. 1300-c. 1349) and Michael of Cesena (c. 1270-1342). Because of the failure of Benedict XIII (r. 1394-1417) and Gregory XII (r. 1406-1415) from February to April 1408 to arrive at a compromise,

there arose strong arguments about who could summon a general council. The canon law acknowledged only the papal prerogative of summoning a general council, but the very problem the Church faced at that time was that it was not clear who the true pope was.

These problems and arguments were expressed in "an extremely valuable epitome of conciliar theory," dated January 1, 1409, which Pierre d'Ailly (1350-1420), chancellor of the University of Paris, sent to the cardinals. D'Ailly wrote:

> Notwithstanding the limitation of restriction which we mentioned, the Church in certain cases can hold a general council without the authority of the Pope … [I]f there were several contenders for the Papacy so that the whole Church is subject to no single one of them, nor appeared at the call of any one or even of two of them at the same time—just as is the case in the present schism … [I]n those and similar cases, therefore, it is clear … that the Church can and should assemble a general council without the authority of the Pope. (col. 911)

Invoking Aristotle's concept of equity (*epikeia*), D'Ailly went on to say: "This is clear … from Aristotle's teaching in the *Ethics* where he speaks of *epikeia*." What D'Ailly meant was that the positive laws of the Church, which dictated that no rightful general council could be held without the authority of the pope could, according to Aristotle's teaching, be interpreted civilly.

In 1410 a curial official, Dietrich of Niem (or Nieheim) (c. 1340-1418), wrote his important work, *Ways of Uniting and Reforming the Church*. Strongly influenced by Marsilius of Padua, Dietrich argued for conciliar sovereignty by distinguishing between "the catholic Church," which consisted of the Christians (Greeks, Latins, barbarians, men and women, rich and poor), and "the apostolic Church," which consisted of pope, cardinals, bishops and clergy. According to Dietrich, the apostolic Church derives its power from the Church. The council represents the Church, and it is therefore superior to the pope.

The Council of Pisa (1409), convened by two groups of cardinals in response to strong demands, worsened the prevailing ecclesiastical conditions. Instead of healing the bipolar division of the papacy between Gregory XII (r. 1406-1415) of Rome and Benedict XIII (r. 1394-1417) of Avignon, it established a tripartite division of the papacy after deposing both popes, who refused to step down, and electing Alexander V (r. 1409-1410). The schism was finally resolved at the Council of Constance (1414-1418) with the election of Martin V (r. 1417-1431). There is no need to describe here in detail what happened to rival claimants to the papal throne.

We must note, however, the significance of two decrees passed by the Council of Constance, about which a recently published book, *The Church, the Councils, and Reform*, edited by Gerald Christianson, Thomas M. Izbicki and Christopher M. Bellitto, provides a wider context. The first is the decree *Haec Sancta*, enacted at the fifth session on April 6, 1415. Summoned by John XXIII (r. 1410-1415; d. 1419) at Pisa on All Saints' Day, November 1, 1414, the council had three tasks: to complete the restoration of papal unity, to suppress the heresy of Jan Hus (c. 1374-

1415) and to undertake the neglected work of reform. Beginning slowly at first, the council was "in business" by 1415, but the flight of John XXIII from Constance to Schaffhausen on March 21, 1415, complicated the process of unity.

Shortly after John XXIII's flight, Jean Gerson (1363-1431), chancellor of the University of Paris, delivered his sermon *Ambulate* on March 23, 1415, which was seemingly weak and formal, but had a great effect on the course of events. After speaking of the efficient cause, the formal cause, the final cause and the material cause of the existing conditions and invoking Plato and Aristotle, the chancellor went on to declare, among other things, that:

> 7. When the Church at general council lays anything done concerning the regulation of the Church, the pope is not superior to those laws, and positive laws. So he is not able, at his choice, to dissolve such legislation of the Church.

> 8. Although the Church and general council cannot take away the pope's plenitude of power, which has been granted by Christ supernaturally and of his mercy, however it can limit his use of it by known rules and laws for the edification of the Church. (Crowder, 76-82)

Haec Sancta declared, among other things, that Constance was a "lawfully assembled" general council representing the Catholic Church and went on to say:

> That therefore it has its power immediately from Christ; and that all men, of every rank and position, including the pope himself, are bound to obey it in those matters that pertain to the faith, the extirpation of the said schism, and to the reformation of the said church in head and in members. (Crowder, 82-83)

The second important decree passed by the council was *Frequens* of October 9, 1417. It heightened the significance of *Haec Sancta* by providing that the next council should meet in five years, another in seven years and then every ten years thereafter.

In accordance with *Frequens*, the Council of Pavia-Siena met in 1423-1424 and the Council of Basel in 1431-1449. Thus the Conciliar Movement gained momentum and regularity. But the Council of Ferrara-Florence, which began in 1438 and lasted until 1442, created another "schism" within the Church. As Nelson H. Minnich pointed out, how the councils held after the Council of Ferrara-Florence, such as Pisa-Milan-Asti-Lyon (Pisa II) (1511-1512), Lateran V (1512-1517) and Trent-Bologna-Trent (1545-1563), were related to the previous ones and what impact they had on the Conciliar Movement has been discussed at length in recent years, especially after the Second Vatican Council (1963-1965).

There are at least two important recent developments in the study of conciliarism. The first is the impact of Brian Tierney's epoch-making book *Foundations of the Conciliar Theory*, published in 1955. The second is the notion, as expressed clearly in Francis Oakley's book *The Conciliarist Tradition* (2003) that, instead of regarding the Conciliar Movement as something that ended or even failed after the Council of Basel, its development and influence on recent constitutionalist ideas should be recognized and appreciated.

Let us now come to the first development. Tierney pointed out that:

> The absence of any adequate study of the canonistic writings as sources for conciliar ideas is understandable, for the medieval canonists have usually been associated with the doctrines of extreme papalism that were put forward in the conflict of *regnum* and *sacerdotium*. (12)

Tierney went on to say:

> The neglect of canonistic sources by most writers on the origins of the Conciliar Theory may also rise from a mistaken approach to the early history of conciliar thought. There has been a tendency to treat the Conciliar Movement as something accidental or external, thrust upon the Church itself … [T]o understand the origins of a constitutional crisis in the Church we must surely turn to the background of constitutional law from which all parties in the crises sought to defend their claims. Without a study of the canonists we can never hope to understand in all its complexity the polity of the medieval Church. (13)

Admittedly, there were some scholars, like H. S. Offler, who expressed some reservations on Tierney's work:

> Though we may feel that, given the present state of knowledge, Dr. Tierney presses his conclusions pretty far, on his way to them he presents us with a coherent and interesting argument … It is less easy to follow Dr. Tierney when he attributes overriding and almost exclusive importance to the canonists in the making of the conciliar theories … (188-190)

Turning now to the second topic of the new developments mentioned above, we must examine briefly how the governance of the Church has been viewed in the late Middle Ages and thereafter. Until recently, it was often said that the Conciliar Movement was defeated. For example, Robert E. McNally, S.J., stated in 1963:

> [By the end of 1449 the] Great Schism had ended, and the papacy had definitely conquered Conciliarism, in fact for all practical purposes had securely buried it. It would never pose the dangerous threat of Constance and Basle. (73)

But some other writers, especially Francis Oakley and Brian Tierney, have shown great interest in the continuation of conciliar or conciliarist ideas even after the Council of Basel. To take the case of Oakley, the continuance and development of constitutionalist ideas in the Church were clear in his initial work on D'Ailly published in 1964 (*The Political Thought of Pierre d'Ailly*). In many articles published later, he touched on such writers as Jacques Almain (d. 1515), Robert Bellarmine (1542-1621), Nicholas de Clamanges (c. 1360-1434/40), Edmond Richer (1559-1631), Matthias Ugonius (1446-1535) and Francis Zabarella (1360-1417), who directly or indirectly promoted the continuation and development of conciliarism.

Oakley wrote in *The Conciliarist Tradition*:

> The fact is that it has long been customary to portray the whole conciliar episodes as nothing more than a stutter, hiccup, or interruption in the long history of the Latin Catholic Church, an unfortunate and revolutionary episode, radical in its origins and rapid in its demise. In this book, however, it will be my purpose to claim to the contrary that the roots of the conciliarist tradition were thrust deep into earlier (and unimpeachably orthodox) ecclesiological soil, and that that tradition was by no means the papacy's later defeat of its conciliarist opponents at the Council of Basel (1431-49). (16)

In his classic work *Studies of Political Thought from Gerson to Grotius, 1414-1625*, John Neville Figgis (1866-1919) wrote in 1916:

> A brief account of the *De concordantia catholica* of Nicolas [*sic*] of Cues will give the best exposition of the ideals of the [Conciliar] Movement. Like the rest in being a *livre de circonstance*, it is distinguished from them by its elevation and breadth. (52)

This statement still holds true.

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4. Cusanus' Legation Journey (1450-1452)

On December 24, 1450, Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455) asked Nicholas of Cusa to serve as *legatus a latere* and sent him to the German lands and the Low Countries for three purposes: to reform religious life, to mediate disputes and to dispense jubilee indulgences to those who could not come to Rome in the Jubilee year of 1450, the first after the Great Schism (1378-1417).

At a time when Jakob von Sierck (1398-1456) (r. 1440-1439), Archbishop of Trier, was accompanied by one hundred and forty knights when he went to Rome in 1450, Cusanus started his wintry journey from Rome on December 31, 1450, riding modestly on a mule, accompanied by about thirty co-travelers, including the Scotsman Thomas Livingston(e) (d. 1460?).

His great journey, which actually lasted from January 1451 to April 1452 and which extended about 2,800 miles from Rome to Brixen, can be called, in Josef Koch's words, the "peak in Cusanus' life" (Koch, *Der deutsche Kardinal in deutschen Landen*, 3). In an important lecture, Erich Meuthen, the foremost authority on Cusanus' life in general and especially on Cusanus' legation journey of 1451-1452, concluded that "seen from its report and from contemporaries' memories, the journey has always been regarded as one of the great events in the history of Germany."

One of the most important and useful modern aids to the study of Cusanus' journey is the "Itinéraire et principaux actes de Cusa au cours de sa grande légation" in the great study of Cusanus' life and thought by Edmond Vansteenberghe (1881-1943), *Le cardinal Nicolas de Cues (1401-1464)* (483-490). In "Das Itinerer der Legationsreise 1451/52" (116-148) in *Nikolaus von Cues und seine Umwelt*, Josef Koch published a more detailed list of dates and events concerning Cusanus' legation journey. More recently, Erich Meuthen described in detail what happened from December 31, 1450 to April 15, 1452 in the *Acta Cusana: Quellen zur Lebensgeschichte des Nikolaus von Kues*. Two of Meuthen's other studies, "Die deutsche Legationsreise des Nikolaus von Kues, 1451/1452" and "Das Itinerar der deutschen Legationsreise des Nikolaus von Kues, 1415/1452," may also be profitably consulted.

From Rome, Cusanus and his retinue reached Spittal via Treviso and across the Alps (see map). After visiting Austrian towns such as Salzburg, Passau, Wiener Neustadt, Vienna and Melk, they returned to Salzburg and then entered Germany. Moving northwest from Munich, they visited many historic towns, such as Freising, Regensburg, Eichstätt, Nuremberg, Bamberg, Würzburg, Erfurt, Halle

and Magdeburg. Turning westward, the party traversed the area between the Elbe and the Weser Rivers, visiting Halberstadt, Wolfenbüttel and Hildesheim, reaching Minden on July 30, 1451.

In the northern Low Countries, which the party then entered, they visited such places as Deventer, Diepenveen, Windesheim, Zwolle, Kampen and, coming down southward, arrived at Utrecht. After a circular detour to the north, which included Amsterdam and Egmond, the party left Utrecht on September 5. Thereafter, they moved south after Arnhem (Arnheim) and reached Maastricht after visiting such towns as Nijmegen, Kessel, Roermund and Heinsberg. Then, after spending over twenty days in Leuven (Löwen) and eleven to fifteen days in Brussels, the party returned to Germany and reached the large German city of Cologne.

During this long, reforming legation journey, Cusanus presided over provincial synods at Salzburg, Magdeburg, Mainz and Cologne, which were the sees of the archbishops. He also held a diocesan synod at Bamberg. The number of churches and monasteries that he visited and tried to reform during a few days or two weeks at each place amounted to about eighty. In many places, he also delivered sermons either in German or in Latin. Fifty-one of these sermons have been preserved. The number of indulgences which he distributed as he went from place to place is so large that the topic cannot be dealt with sufficiently in a brief study such as this.

To give a bit more color to the picture of the legation journey presented here thus far, let us pick up briefly several cases of events that took place during the different periods of his journey.

At the Provincial Synod of Salzburg, Cusanus issued a reform decree on February 8, 1451, which ordered that members of all orders restore the rules of their respective orders within a year on pain of losing their privileges and rights. The decree, which was not accepted at the synod, remained unknown until recently, when it was discovered in the library of Saint Peter's monastery in Salzburg.

It is not clearly established that while Cusanus was at Magdeburg from June 13 to June 28, he went northward to visit the Saxon village of Wilsnack, which had become a famous and popular pilgrimage site after 1383 because of the veneration of the bleeding hosts, drawing pilgrims not only from northern Germany, but also from many other European countries. By 1384 Pope Urban VI (r. 1378-1389) had granted the right to issue indulgences to those who visited Wilsnack. The number of pilgrims is said to have reached one hundred thousand in a few warm months between spring and early autumn. Between 1443 and 1453, Wilsnack became a topic of heated debate because it was criticized by the theologian Heinrich Tocke (1390-1453) and the theological faculties of the Universities of Prague, Erfurt and Leipzig. Some reports seem to indicate that Cusanus was in all probability in Wilsnack.

On June 24, 1451, after returning from Wilsnack, Cusanus issued seven decrees in Magdeburg and one decree each on June 26 and 28. What is remarkable is that none of the decrees had anything to do with Wilsnack. It was only on July 5, shortly after reaching his next stop, Halberstadt, that he issued a general decree, *Hac maxime*, prohibiting the veneration of bleeding hosts without, however, mentioning Wilsnack. As a papal legate, Cusanus probably did not wish to contradict Pope Eugenius IV, who had approved of Wilsnack in 1447. But the decree showed clearly

that he was critical of the veneration of the bleeding hosts because, according to him, “every occasion by which the unlettered are deceived must be removed” (Sullivan 404).

Shortly after arriving in the Netherlands, Cusanus stayed eight days at Deventer, two days at Windesheim and four days at Zwolle, which indicates how much he was interested in the Modern Devotion (*Devotio Moderna*) and the Windesheim Congregation. Although he was not educated at a *Devotio Moderna* school at Deventer in his youth, it is certain that his determination to establish the Bursa Cusana, a school for students which began in 1469 and still exists today, was made firm during his stay at Deventer in 1451. Apparently, Cusanus was more interested in the Windesheim Congregation than *Devotio Moderna*. Before going to Windesheim, which is about twenty-five kilometers from Deventer, he stopped at Deepenveen to visit the Sisters of the Windesheim Congregation. After arriving at Windesheim, he was graciously received by Prior Johannes Busch (1399-c. 1480) of the Windesheim Congregation and established cordial relations with the members of the congregation.

Then, coming to the area between Belgium and Germany, Cusanus and his party visited Maastricht, Aachen, Liège (Lüttich), Malmedy, Trier, Kues and Mainz. What Cusanus did while he was in Trier from October 23 to November 8, 1451, is described in detail in the *Acta Cusana*. What did Cusanus do when he visited Kues, the place of his birth, for only one day on November 9, 1451? After the death of their father, Henne Cryftz or Krebs, in October 1449, Cusanus, his brother, Johann (d. 1456), and his sister, Klara (d. 1473), seem to have begun to plan the founding of the Hospital of St. Nicholas. The actual building of the hospital began in 1450 or 1451, but how much of the building Cusanus was able to see is not known. It is reported, however, that Cusanus delivered an indulgence to the chapel of St. Peter in Kues, where Johann was priest, and also settled a dispute about competence between Johann on one side and Jacobus Froup de Cestelun and an altar boy on the other. How modest and unassertive Cusanus must have been if he had only a one-day stay at his place of birth while on a four-hundred-and-sixty-five-day journey. He was probably in a hurry to reach Mainz, arriving there on November 13, 1451. It was in Mainz and Cologne that Cusanus and his party stayed over a month, the longest of their stays during the legation journey. After Cologne, they went to Maastricht, Hasselt and Brussels, and, like a soccer ball kicked back and forth, the party turned around at Brussels to go back to Aachen, Koblenz, Frankfurt am Main, and Aschaffenburg. It was probably on April 7, 1452, two days before Easter, that it reached Brixen, Cusanus’ bishopric, via Heilsbronn, Eichstätt and Munich.

Forty years after the end of Cusanus’ journey, Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516), the famous Benedictine Abbot of Sponheim, wrote:

> Nicholas of Cusa appeared in Germany as an angel of light and peace, amidst darkness and confusion, restored the unity of the Church, strengthened the authority of her Supreme Head, and sowed a precious seed of new life. (Sullivan, 383)

Trithemius' remarks laid the foundation for the very optimistic appraisals of the legation which prevailed for many years. But recent studies have revealed the considerable difficulties and resistance that Cusanus encountered as he tried to accomplish his reform mission.

It is known that during the Provincial Synod of Cologne, a Franciscan friar attempted to kill him by poison, an indication that there was some displeasure about Cusanus and his activities. Since the mendicant orders, both Franciscan and Dominican, were directly subordinate to the pope, they took Cusanus' attempts to reform them, which Cusanus started only after around October 1451, as interference with their internal affairs and appealed to the pope.

Some also believed that although Cusanus had once tried to limit the powers of the pope by championing the supremacy of the council, he had become a "traitor" by later joining the papal camp. It was also deemed by some that at a time when a German cardinal was regarded as an extraordinarily rare phenomenon, like a white crow, it was anti-German for a German-born cardinal to attempt to reform German churches and monasteries on orders from the pope. This kind of critical attitude was clearly expressed in Johannes Kymeus' *The Pope's Hercules against the Germans* (*Des Bapsts Hercules wider die Deudschen*, Wittenberg, 1538).

It is clear that the whole experience of the legation journey was an extraordinary and crucial experience for Cusanus. Many writers, including Vansteenberghe and Koch, have stated or at least implied that the journey ended with his entrance into Brixen shortly before Easter 1452. But it might be reasonably argued that the journey came to its end when Cusanus returned to Rome in 1458 to report on his journey to Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464).

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5. Devotio Moderna

It is still stated in some books that when Nicholas of Cusa was a young boy he was sent to Deventer, the Netherlands, to study at the school run by the *Devotio Moderna* (Modern Devotion). But this is merely legend. Neither Jakob Marx nor Erich Meuthen supports the theory. In the *Acta Cusana*, as well as other writings, Meuthen mentioned nothing about Cusanus' schooling in Deventer or elsewhere in the Netherlands. It is true that Cusanus visited Deventer and other neighboring cities during his legation journey in Germany and the Low Countries in 1450-1452, as the *Acta Cusana*, I, 3a, 1066-1077, shows clearly in several documents. Cusanus was in Deventer from August 13 to August 20, 1451. As Meuthen, Maarten J. F. M. Hoenen and Nikolaus Staubach have shown, the *Bursa Cusana* in Deventer, which still exists today, was designed by Cusanus to support poor students and was opened in 1469, five years after Cusanus' death, in accordance with two wills written by Cusanus himself. It is therefore important to know what exactly the *Devotio Moderna* was and what influence it had not only on the Netherlands and other countries in Europe, but also on Nicholas of Cusa.

The *Devotio Moderna* was the late-fourteenth-century movement of piety and spirituality that arose in the IJssel Valley of the Netherlands and upper Rhineland. Its spread was linked to the appearance of the Brethren and Sisters of the Common Life, which attracted men and women of the middle strata instead of the upper class and demanded spiritual renewal, discipline and contemplation. It later spread to Germany, Belgium, France, Switzerland and other European countries. The articles collected in *Die "Neue Frömmigkeit" in Europa im Spätmittelalter*, edited by Mark Derwich and Martial Straub (2004) also discuss the *Devotio Moderna* in Bohemia, Middle and Eastern Europe (Silesia, Hungary), Vienna and Italy.

The founder of the *Devotio Moderna* movement was Geert Grote (Gerardus Magnus, Gert Grote) (1340-1384) of Deventer. There are four fourteenth- and fifteenth-century biographies (*vitae*) of Geert Grote: one rhymed text by an unknown author, the *Vita Gerardi* by Thomas à Kempis (Thomas Hemerken à Kempis) (1380-1471), the *Vita Magister Gerardi Magni* (bef. 1450) by Peter Horn (Petrus Horn) (1424-1479) and the *Scriptum de magistro Gerardo* (c. 1458) by Rudolf Dier (1384-1459). Even so, his early life is not well known. The orphaned son of a Deventer cloth merchant and city councilman, Grote studied the liberal arts, astronomy and canon law at the University of Paris beginning in 1355. Only Peter Horn says that he also visited Prague. Then Grote underwent a spiritual crisis between 1372 and 1374 and retired from 1374 to 1377 to the Carthusian monastery of Momikhuizen near Arnhem, where he read widely in spiritual authors.

On September 20, 1374, he offered his house for the use of about sixteen poor religious women. Without entering a religious order, he obtained ordination as a deacon and a special license to preach. After 1380, campaigning as an itinerant preacher against heresy, simony and clerical concubinage for four years, he carried the message of repentance and conversion to all parts of the diocese of Utrecht. His first sermon was delivered in the vernacular in Amsterdam. The men and women who were moved by his earnest and stirring preaching began voluntarily to gather in private houses, where they lived the lives of devotion he had urged them to. But he was also opposed by members of the mendicant orders, some civic leaders and a portion of the secular clergy, whose morals he attacked severely. The severest critic of the *Devotio Moderna* was the Dominican Matthew Graber, who drew up his criticisms sometime later, between 1406 and 1415.

These houses or gatherings of Grote's followers began to spread from Deventer to Zwolle, Diepenveen, Windesheim and elsewhere across the entire diocese of Utrecht, until the plague suddenly took Grote away on August 20, 1384. He was only in the forty-fifth year of his life. The group of persons who were living in Grote's vicarage in Deventer started a community with common property around the time of Grote's death. A similar "gathering" began to appear in Zwolle.

After the death of Grote in 1384, the leadership of the group was assumed by Florens (Florentius) Radewijns (c. 1350-1400), who could be called the real and respected organizer of the movement. Unlike in the case of Grote, there is a clear historical source to show that Radewijns was educated in Prague. It was Radewijns who wrote the daily schedule (*Consuetudines*) of the group around 1396. It emphasized charity, poverty and obedience.

Grote's second outstanding disciple was Gerard Zerbolt of Zutphen (1367-1398). Little is known about his life, but he was, after Grote, the most learned and intellectually influential among the first generation of the brothers. The main works of Zerbolt were the widely disseminated *On the Reform of the Powers of the Soul* (*De reformatione virium animae*) and *On Spiritual Ascensions* (*De spiritualibus ascensionibus*).

The followers of the Modern Devotion made no binding or solemn vows. Making their own living, especially by copying manuscripts or by weaving, members of the congregations followed monastic patterns in observing the canonical hours and

emphasizing silence, obedience, fraternal correction, and frequent meditation and examination of conscience.

As John Van Engen noted in his *Devotio Moderna: Basic Writings* (13-15), the four common points of these gatherings were: (1) the devout were pious persons who lived together and in common on the basis of their work, their ecclesiastical incomes and their own contributed wealth; (2) these brothers and sisters were not planning to found a new religious order but a voluntary gathering of the devout; (3) as a movement the New Devout were obedient to their prelates and the Roman Church; and finally (4) the New Devout were said to live together in humility and love and in pursuit of virtue.

As the common practices of these houses, Van Engen also mentions (1) the use of the vernacular; (2) holding "collations"—in effect, sermons within their gatherings and outside; and (3) "fraternal correction," that is, open confession of faults, continual admonition of others and acceptance of such admonitions. Van Engen cites a recent study (20) that shows six houses by 1400, eleven by 1420, twenty by 1460, thirty-nine by 1500 and forty-one by 1517. In 1550 the number was twenty-seven and in 1600 seven, indicating clearly the negative impact of the Reformation.

Although certain writers on Grote, such as R. R. Post, Ernest Persoons and Willem Lourdaux, paid considerable attention to the status and role of the Sisters of the Common Life, many scholars were more interested in the relationship of the *Devotio Moderna* to humanism and the Reformation. One of the reasons often cited for this de-emphasis was the scarcity of original sources. It was also said that the sisters were passive and could not go out to preach. With the rise of interest in recent years in the role of women in history, greater attention began to be paid to the study of the Sisters of the Common Life, for example by Leen Breure, Gerhard Rehm and John Van Engen, along with many others.

Rehm's impressive study of the sisters in Germany is now essential reading. After discussing individual houses of the sisters, the Meister-Geerts-Haus in Deventer, the Lower and Middle Rheine region, Westphalia (Münster, Paderborn, Cologne), Lower Saxony, Hesse and the Southern Ostsee coasts, Rehm shows that the number of sisters' houses reached its highest point between 1440 and 1460, and that in northeast Germany it reached about sixty houses, outnumbering brothers' houses. Some of these gatherings began to place themselves under the Rule of St. Augustine or the Third Order of St. Francis. Around 1394/95 four such gatherings organized themselves as the Windesheim Congregation of Canons Regular, the monastic branch of the *Devotio Moderna*. Leading writers from the Windesheim Congregation included Gerlach Peters (1378-1411) and Hendrik Maude (1366-1471).

No doubt, the best known of all writers from the *Devotio Moderna* was Thomas à Kempis, a canon of Mount St. Agnes (St. Agnietenberg) near Zwolle. Not only did he write a chronicle of his cloister and biographies of Grote, Radewijns and Zerbolt, he also compiled, according to most recent scholars, the *Imitatio Christi*, one of the world's most famous and popular spiritual treatises.

The study of the *Devotio Moderna*, which influenced such prominent figures in history as Gabriel Biel (c. 1420-1495), Desiderius Erasmus (1469?-1536) and Martin

Luther (1483-1546), has not been a simple, straightforward path in modern times. *The Christian Renaissance: A History of the "Devotio Moderna,"* written in 1924 from the Protestant point of view by the American scholar Albert Hyma, was criticized by the distinguished Dutch scholar R. R. Post in his *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism*, published in 1968. Post rejected Hyma's main thesis that the *Devotio Moderna* was a renaissance, a rebirth of Christian life, and that the brethren extended education and thus prepared people's minds for humanism, "because it is based on various unfounded or inaccurate assumptions."

In the following years, many scholars were engaged in discussions on the relationship between the *Devotio Moderna* on one side and the Reformation and humanism on the other. The number of distinguished scholars involved and the studies produced by them is truly impressive. But, as a result, the study of the Sisters of the Common Life was, as Rehm put it, "vastly under-investigated" (*weitgehend unerforscht*). We should note here that Post's rejection of Hyma's thesis mentioned above began to be revised or softened by such scholars as Heiko Oberman and Willem Lourdaux, who maintained that there was some connection between the *Devotio Moderna* and humanism.

It was also often said that with the coming of the Reformation the *Devotio Moderna* lost its strength and vitality and gradually disappeared. But in *Die Brüder vom Gemeinsamen Leben im Jahrhundert der Reformation*, published in 1997, Ulrich Hinz demonstrated that the *Devotio Moderna* had considerable influence and power even after the Reformation in places like Münster, Cologne and Hildesheim. Perhaps it was premature to ask, as did Van Engen, if the *Devotio Moderna* was a failure. No doubt, there will be many stimulating discussions on the subject in the future. Whether Cusanus was influenced by the movement is what we must examine.

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6. Fall of Constantinople (1453)

In this short essay only the last period of the long, complicated history of Byzantium (or the Byzantine Empire, 284-1453) can be touched on briefly.

From 1290 on, the Ottoman Turks, who came out of Asia and swept across Asia Minor, moved on across Anatolia until they were established solidly in its western part. In 1354 they occupied Gallipoli, their first foothold in European territory. Seven years later, in 1361, they moved their capital to Adrianople. By 1440 the Byzantine Empire was little more than the city of Constantinople itself, which was a fortress encircled by the Turks, and the southern portion of the Peloponnese in Greece, which was centered on the fortress of Mistra and the Empire of Trebizond.

We must note here briefly a few events that preceded the fall of Constantinople. In 1402 the Mongol conqueror Temür (Tamerlane, c. 1326-1425) defeated the Ottomans at Ankara in central Anatolia. Then, like the earlier Mongol invaders, his army mysteriously withdrew. It is said that Temür had decided to conquer China first. The Ottomans' defeat and Temür's retreat gave the Byzantine Empire a breathing period for almost fifty years. During this period the Council of Constance (1414-1418) reunited the Western Church by the election of Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431), thereby terminating the Great Schism. At the Council of Florence (1438-1445), the Roman and Byzantine Churches were joined, though only briefly, bringing strength to Christendom vis-à-vis the Ottomans. But at the battle of Varna in 1444, Sultan Murad II (1421-1451) had little difficulty in overwhelming the crusading army, including the papal legate, Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444).

On February 13, 1451, Murad II died, and within a year his son and heir Mehmet II (r. 1451-1481) began preparations for an attack on Constantinople. Stephen Runciman wrote in *The Fall of Constantinople, 1453*, about Mehmet II after his accession to power at the age of twenty-three:

> Having established his administration and tidied his palace, the young Sultan settled down to plan his policy. The outside world only knew of him as an inexperienced youth whose early career had been lamentable. But those who saw him now were impressed by him. He was handsome, of middle height but strongly built. His face was dominated by piercing eyes, under arched eyebrows, and a thin hooked nose that curved over a mouth with full red lips. His manner was dignified and rather distant, except when he had drunk overmuch … He was notoriously secretive. The unhappy events of his childhood had taught him to trust no one … He would never make himself beloved; he had no desire for popularity. But his intelligence, his energy and his determination commanded respect. No one who knew him could venture to hope that this formidable young man could ever allow himself to be deflected from the tasks that he had set himself to perform; of which the first and the greatest was the conquest of Constantinople. (58-59)

Mehmet II began to lay siege to Constantinople on Easter Monday, April 2, 1453. Because of the Black Death of 1347 and other factors, the city's population had been reduced considerably. Constantine XI Palaeologus (1449-1453), the last emperor of the Byzantine Empire, mustered five thousand Byzantine soldiers and another three thousand Westerners to meet Mehmet II and his eighty thousand troops. The Ottoman army included two thousand, or, as recent studies show, five thousand, elite, well-trained Janissaries.

The city of Constantinople was surrounded by fourteen miles of the famous fortified Theodosian walls or Land Walls. The Ottomans, however, possessed enormous cannons, which were still relatively new weapons, developed by a Hungarian engineer called Urban.

The siege had lasted for seven weeks, and yet the huge Turkish army had achieved very little. On May 27 the sultan told his army that a great assault would take place very soon and that, in accordance with the customs of the Islamic world, his soldiers would be allowed three days in which they might freely sack the resisting city. He then told his followers that Monday, May 28, should be a day of rest and atonement, and that they would be prepared for the final assault on the following Tuesday.

Early on the morning of Tuesday, May 29, at about half-past one, the first wave of attackers, the Bashi-Bazouk(s), irregulars from many countries, including some from Christian countries—Slavs, Hungarians, Germans, Italians and others—attempted to wear the Byzantines down, but after almost two hours of heavy fighting, the sultan ordered them to retire.

The second wave, regiments of the Anatolian Turks, then focused their attack on a section of the Blachernae wall in the northwestern part of the city. This section of the walls had been built in the eleventh century, more recently than the rest, and was much weaker. The crusaders had broken through the walls here in 1204. The Ottomans were also able to penetrate, but were quickly pushed back. The Kerkoporte gate in the Blachernae section, however, had been left unlocked, which was soon discovered by the Ottomans. They rushed in.

Constantine XI had the third, last defense of the city. Throwing aside his purple regalia, he joined his soldiers against the rushing Ottomans, dying in the ensuing battle in the streets.

Many civilians were slaughtered by the Turks when they first broke through the walls and captured the towers on the main thoroughfare of the city, the Mese. Runciman wrote:

> The regiments marched in one by one, with music playing and colors flying. But once they were within the city all joined in the wild hunt for loot. At first they would not believe that the defense was finished. They slew everyone that they met in the streets, men, women and children without discrimination. The blood ran in rivers down the steep streets from the heights of Pera towards the Golden Horn. (145)

By evening there was little left to plunder. The sultan proclaimed that the looting now should stop. According to Michael Kritob(v)oulos, the (generally pro-Ottoman) Greek writer and historian (Crowley 220), when the sultan entered Constantinople in the afternoon of May 29, he was allegedly taken aback at the destruction that had been wrought:

> [He] looked about to see the great size, its situation, its grandeur and beauty, its teaming population, its loveliness and costliness of its churches and public buildings, and of the private houses and community houses and those of officials … When he saw what a large number had been killed, and the ruin of the buildings, he was filled with compassion and repented not a little at the destruction and plundering. Tears fell from his eyes as he groaned deeply and passionately: "What a city we have given over to plundering and destruction!" (Harris, 186-187; 251)

Many people at various levels in Europe were shocked by the conquest of Constantinople. In general, the Turks were regarded as enemies of Christian civilization. Greek and Turkish accounts of the loss of Constantinople tended to present a slightly milder version of events, but Latin writers painted a more gruesome story. The humanists were especially concerned. They contrasted the Greco-Roman concept of civility with the new barbarism of the Turks. Hearing reports that thousands of books were lost or deliberately destroyed, the humanists were particularly incensed. Lauro Quirini (1420-1475), a Venetian humanist who spent almost half his life in Candia, Crete, where he traded in books, especially Greek books, wrote in a letter to Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455):

> [The] overthrow of an entire people has been accomplished—the name of the Greeks has been erased … Consequently, the language and literature of the Greeks, invented, augmented, and perfected over so long a period with such labor and industry, will certainly perish. (Bisaha, *Creating East and West*, 67)

In his letter to Nicholas of Cusa, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464), wrote:

> It is an ignominious and unknown nation, fornicating with all sorts of defilements, cultivating prostitution; it eats all sorts of abominations, being ignorant of wine, grain, and salt … Into whose hands Greek eloquence will fall I do not know. Who of sound mind will not mourn? Where now will we seek fluent genius? The river of all doctrines is cut off; the mount of the Muses is dried up. Where now is poetry to be sought? Where now philosophy? (Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, 312)

According to Aeneas, the fall of Constantinople was a "second death for Homer and a second destruction of Plato."

The Morean (Peloponnesian) fortress of Mistra, where Constantine's brothers Thomas and Demetrius ruled, held out until 1460. In 1461 the independent Byzantine state in Trebizond fell to Mehmet.

To sum up, the fall of Constantinople affected the future of Europe and the Middle East, and its impact was significant not only for future political and diplomatic developments, but also for the cultural, intellectual, philosophical and theological spheres of the Western world.

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7. Congress of Mantua (1459-1460)

The Congress of Mantua of 1459-1460 was decidedly one of the important events in the life of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464) after he became Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464). The conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 had given Aeneas

a great shock, as it had many others in Europe. He was acting in accordance with the proud crusading spirit that ran through his family. His family crest, with a cross and five gold half-moons, had been granted to his ancestors for their participation in the Fifth Crusade of 1218. He had one main purpose: to organize a great crusade to drive back the Turks. The central idea of his pontificate was the liberation of Europe from Turkish domination.

Although he was known as a great humanist and had in fact received the title of Poet Laureate in 1442 while serving Emperor Frederick III (1415-1493; r. 1440-1493), his main concern as pope became the protection of Europe from the expansion and threat of the Turks. In order to discuss how to organize an anti-Turkish crusade, he decided to convene a congress at Mantua in 1459. The majority of the cardinals were opposed to the proposition; he had the support of only two: Torquemada, the Spaniard, and Bessarion, the Greek.

The pope and his retinue left Rome and started by heading northward on January 20, 1459, leaving Nicholas of Cusa in charge of the Curia during the pope's absence. He took six cardinals with him. They visited Terni, Spoleto, Assisi and Perugia and, crossing the Lake of Trasimeno, came to Corsignano, Aeneas' place of birth, on February 22. He himself described his return to Corsignano in the *Commentaries*:

> Returning now he hoped to take some pleasure in talking with his boyhood friends and to be cheered by old familiar sights; but he was disappointed, for most of the men of his generation had died and those who were left kept to their houses, bowed down with old age and illness. (Meserve and Simonetta, 281)

But the people of the town were delighted at the presence of the pope. They reveled in the fact that he had been born among them. Aeneas ordered a cathedral to be built and palaces for the Piccolomini to serve as lasting memorials, and also renamed the town Pienza after himself. When the pope then entered Siena on February 24, the city was in a festive mood and beautifully decorated. Pius delivered an oration in praise of Siena, urging the nobles and the commoners to maintain civic harmony. He quoted Sallust who said, "by concord small things grow; by discord great things fall to pieces." While the pope was in Siena for two months, he raised the city to metropolitan rank. Embassies came from Bohemia, Castile, Germany, Hungary and Portugal to offer him congratulations. On April 23 the pope left Siena, accompanied by Duke Galeazzo Maria Sforza (1444-1476) of Milan, who was later assassinated in the Church of San Stefano at Milan.

The rest of the journey to Mantua was not politically eventful, with eleven days in Florence, eight days in Bologna and nine days in Ferrara. It was on May 27, five days before the scheduled opening date of the congress, that the pope entered Mantua. The city was filled with crowds of people and foreigners who had come in from the neighboring towns. Among them were Bianca Maria Sforza, Duchess of Milan, the daughter of the late Duke Filippo Maria (1412-1447) and the wife of Duke Francesco Sforza (1450-1466), with her boys and daughter, called Ippolita

Maria (1445-1488), only thirteen years of age, who was betrothed to Alfonso II of Naples, son of the King of Naples, Ferrante I (1431-1494). The next day, Ippolita delivered before the pope a Latin oration, which, according to some, she composed herself. Aeneas writes in the *Commentaries:* "her style was so elegant that all who heard her were lost in wonder and admiration" (Meserve and Simonetta, 377).

On the appointed day, June 1, 1459, the Congress of Mantua was opened in the Duomo, and the pope delivered his address, displaying the full range of humanist rhetorical devices and flourishes. But no envoys were present, for none had arrived. Perhaps Mantua in high summer oppressed the princes and diplomats (Russell, 53). Other Christian princes summoned to the congress came to Mantua slowly. Because of scant attendance it was necessary to delay the opening of the sessions until September 26, 1459. Even then only a few delegates were in attendance.

On September 26, Mass was said in the Cathedral of S. Pietro, and Pius held his hearers for three hours. Cardinal Bessarion (1403-1472) followed the pope and made a long, dull speech which also lasted three hours. At last, after three weary months, John, Duke of Cleves, and the Lord of Croye, arrived from Burgundy. The Duke of Burgundy himself was too old to come. The assembly was stirred up to a great heat, but the ardor then cooled. Quarrels over precedence were frequent and widespread. It soon became clear that the Christian states could not in any way be relied on for mutual support and cooperation against the Turks. France would promise nothing, because the pope had preferred Ferdinand of Aragon (1423-1494; r. 1458-1494) for the throne of Naples, which had made the French angry. Venice pursued insincere tactics. J. G. Russell has discussed the unfriendly positions of Aragon, France and Venice toward the Pope in great detail (Russell, 59-69).

While this bickering was going on, Duke Sigmund (Sigismund) (1446-1496) of the Tyrol arrived at Mantua in great pomp. His spokesman was Gregor Heimburg (c. 1400-1472), a lawyer and a sharp critic of Pius II and Nicholas of Cusa. As Duke Sigmund's legal advisor, Heimburg spoke not only to defend Sigmund's case against Nicholas of Cusa, but also to criticize the pope's crusade plans so severely that Pius, in his brief of October 18, 1460, condemned and excommunicated Heimburg "as the son of the devil" (Pastor, III, 189). On the other hand, there were some who appealed to the pope. For example, although she probably did not attend the congress, in her letter of August 1, 1459, sent to Pope Pius II, Isotta Nogarola (1418-1466), one of the most famous women of the Italian Renaissance, urged the pope:

> Therefore, gird yourself most powerfully, most blessed father, with your sword above your thigh, since you know that this power has been given to you from heaven so that you may punish the evil and not allow your church to sink into ruin and deformity. Take up your arms and shield and rise up for the support of a church conquered not by passion but zeal for justice. For there is a species of piety in severity. In your time you should want nothing more zealously than that the Roman Church, your bride, should rejoice in the tranquility and peace due her. (Nogarola, 182)

By November Pius had come to perceive that the congress was a failure. He wrote: "The Congress of Mantua … was never a congress, in the full meaning of the word. It was a series of bilateral meetings of the Pope and individual 'national' embassies or groups of embassies …" (Russell 51). The pope ended the congress on January 14, 1440, as he wrote in the *Commentaries*, III:

> When all had finished, the Pope bade the Cardinals, bishops, abbots and all the priests that were there to put on their sacred testaments, and he himself, descending from his throne, turned towards the steps of the high altar. There on bended knees, sighing and weeping, he chanted in suppliant voice for a long time verses chosen from the psalms which seemed suitable to the occasion, while the prelates and all the clergy made responses. When his prayer was finished, he blessed the people, and in this manner brought to a close the Congress of Mantua. (Mitchell, 162-163)

Before he left Mantua, he called the cardinals together and issued on January 18, 1460, the famous bull *Execrabilis*. The bull began:

> A horrible abuse, un-heard of in earlier times, has sprung up in our period. Some men, imbued with a spirit of rebellion and moved not by a desire for sound decisions but rather by a desire to escape the punishment for sin, suppose that they can appeal from the Pope, Vicar of Christ … to a future council. (Oberman, 225)

It went on to say that all appeals to a future council were useless, illegal and wholly detestable, and proclaimed the anathema against anyone who dared to appeal to a council. The former conciliarist was by then a strong critic of the Conciliar Movement.

Pius left Mantua on the last day of January 1460, stopping again at his beloved Siena. He advanced the city to the dignity of an archbishopric, canonized its distinguished daughter Catherine of Siena (1347-1380) and appointed his nephew, Francesco Todeschini, aged twenty-three, Archbishop of Siena.

It is clear that Pius II was not successful in summoning European nations to commit to the goal of organizing a crusade against the advancement of the Turks. But he made it clear what his primary concerns were as a new pope. His abrogation of the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges (1438), which had set limits on papal involvement in the French (Gallican) church, and the issuance of the bull *Execrabilis* certainly demonstrated his resolution, impatience and anger.

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8. Islam

We will see below concisely how Islam, which arose in the seventh century, still posed a threat in the fifteenth to the Christian West and especially how and why Nicholas of Cusa was interested in its doctrines and concerned about its impact on the Church.

In his famous book, *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*, R. W. Southern (1912-2001) wrote:

> They (John of Segovia, Nicholas of Cusa, Jean Germain and Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini) got to grips with each other, but they failed to get to grips with Islam. Neither the conference desired by John of Segovia and Nicholas of Cusa, nor the Crusade desired by Jean Germain and Aeneas Silvius, still less the latter's appeal to the Sultan Mahomet II, had any future. The advance of Islam on the Eastern frontier continued and was not halted till the middle of the sixteenth century; Islamic power continued to grow in the Mediterranean and the danger that Moslems in Syria would join hands with Moors in Spain persisted for many years. Crusade and argument, preaching and persuasion, alike faded into the background. As the Turkish danger reached its height and Islam threatened to engulf Europe, there was one last outburst of the medieval apocalyptic prophesying, similar to that of Eulogius and Paul Alvarus in ninth century Spain and Joachim of Fiore in Italy in the late twelfth century. (104)

Born in Mecca, the Prophet Muhammad (570-632) received the first revelation at Mt. Hira in 610. No doubt one of the important turning points in the history of Islam occurred in 622, when Muhammad and his followers emigrated from Mecca to Yathrib, later called Medina, a move which is referred to as the *Hijra*. This year subsequently came to be regarded as the beginning of the Islamic era.

The expansion of Islam before and after Muhammad's death in 632 was extremely rapid. At first there were internal discords and conflicts between the Medinan army and the Meccan army: the first significant battle, the battle of Uhud, had taken place in Badr in 624, and the second, the battle of the Trench, occurred in

625. The third battle fought between Medinan and Meccan forces occurred in 627, and the Treaty of Hudaybiyah declared a truce between the Prophet Muhammad and the Meccans. It was in June 632 that, after returning to Mecca, Mohammad died. Then there came a period in which four caliphs reigned in quick succession. The process of expansion which began during the first caliphate was quick and impressive. Syria was conquered in 636. The next year, 637, Iraq was taken. There followed the conquest of Jerusalem in 638, and by 711 parts of Spain and Sind (India) were under Muslim occupation. Although they were defeated by Charles Martel (c. 690-741), the de facto ruler of the Franks, at Tours and Poitiers in France in 732, Muslims founded Baghdad in 762, had established the Fatimid state in North Africa by 909 and established the Muslim dynasty in west Africa in 1009.

In 1038 the Seljuq Sunni Turkish dynasty was established in Iraq. But it was in 1095 that, after receiving an appeal for help against the Seljuq Turks from the Byzantine emperor, Alexius I Comnenus (1081-1118), Pope Urban II (r. 1088-1099) launched the First Crusade, which lasted from 1096 to 1099.

On November 27, 1095, at the Council of Clermont, Pope Urban II delivered an address in which he exhorted the crowd, “Wrest that land from the wicked race, and subject it to yourselves.” In response, the famous cry went up on all sides: “God wills it!” The First Crusade mobilized a force of some fifty to sixty thousand, organized as separate military bands. One band, not authorized by the pope, was made up of commoners and started out before all others under the leadership of an eloquent preacher, Peter the Hermit (1050-1115). The main objective of the First Crusade, to conquer the Holy Land, was accomplished largely because of Muslim disunity. In the Holy Land, the leaders of the crusade established four tiny states. Two, Tripoli and Edessa, were counties; Antioch was a principality and Jerusalem a kingdom. The Europeans were able to hold on to them until 1100, although many new crusades had to be called.

How could Europeans understand the teachings of Islam? Muslims believed that the Koran (Qur’an) was the uncreated word of God which had existed in his presence from all eternity. It was brought down to the nearest heaven on Ramadan on the “Night of Power” and revealed to the Prophet Muhammad by the angel Gabriel over a period of twenty-three years. The Muslims believed that the Koran was inimitable and that its inimitability was proof of its divine origin despite the fact that to many critics it is not clearly or logically ordered. The central message of the Koran, which was revealed both through the Meccan and the Medinan periods, is that there is only one God and that he alone is to be worshipped and obeyed. “No god but God” is the chief message.

Since Muslims believed that the Koran was God’s teachings revealed in Arabic to its followers, it was believed until the twentieth century that it should not be and cannot be translated into any other language. But, in the middle of the twelfth century, this prohibition had already been broken by Peter the Venerable (1094-1156), Abbot of the Benedictine Monastery of Cluny. In 1142-1143 Peter traveled to Spain and assembled a team of translators.

As Thomas E. Burman put it in “‘Tathlîth al-wahdânîyah’ and the Twelfth-Century Andalusian-Christian Approach to Islam”:

> There was a large number of Catholics [in Spain] who had been reared in Arabic books. Some, like [Peter] Alfonsi, were Andalusian Jews who had converted to Christianity; but though they had abandoned the faith of their fathers these converts, or *conversos*, could not possibly erase the deep Arabic imprint on their personalities resulting from their Andalusian upbringing. Most, however, were the descendants of the Romano-Gothic Christians who had lived long under Muslim rule in the centuries since the Arab conquest of Iberia. Over these centuries, these Christians had become Arabicized in language and culture though they maintained their Christian belief and practice. They were known in consequence as *Mozárabes* in Spanish and *Mozarchs* in English, both words apparently from the Arabic *musta'rab* or *musta'rib* meaning "one who has become Arabicized."

All these Spanish Christians "nurtured among the Muslims," had an intimacy with Islam that no other European Christian could match in the twelfth century (109-110).

Yet, when Peter the Venerable announced after arriving in Spain that he was looking for translators to work on the Koran, he found that there were no volunteers for the job. Eventually, he was able to hire Robert of Ketton (Robert of Chester) (fl. 1141-1157), an Englishman living and working in and around the libraries of Toledo, which had a large and influential Mozarabic community and was by then a center of Arabic studies. Robert had come to Toledo to study and translate Arabic works on astronomy and algebra. Peter the Venerable was able to acquire not only the support of the Englishman, but also that of a Muslim called Muhammad as Robert's co-worker to ensure the accuracy of the translation, which was completed around 1143.

Why did Peter the Venerable initiate steps to translate the Koran into Latin? In the second half of the twelfth century, there were many heresies in Europe. By the end of the century, the high hopes of the First Crusade had been dashed by a long series of military reverses, including the Second (1147-1149) and the Third Crusades (1188-1192). To the Abbot of Cluny, Islam was a Christian heresy—the last and greatest of the heresies. He himself later wrote two anti-Islamic tracts, the *Summation of the Entire Saracen Heresy* (*Summa totius haeresis Saracenorum*) and a refutation of Islam entitled *Book against the Sect or Heresy of the Saracens* (*Liber contra sectam sive haeresim Saracenorum*). He wrote in his *Letter about His Translation* (*Epistola de translatione sua*):

> My intention in this work was to follow that custom of the Fathers by which they never silently passed by any heresy of their times, not even the slightest … without resisting it with all the strength of faith and demonstrating, both through writings and discussions, that it is detestable. (Menocal, 186)

But, as Southern pointed out in his *Western Views of Islam in the Middle Ages*, "the Abbot of Cluny's suggestion that Islam required serious study in order to support the weaker brethren in the Church fell flat." Southern went on to say:

> Equally his hope that he might convert the Moslems by exposing the weaknesses of the Koran was vain, for his exposure remained buried in the obscurity of the Latin language. Islam never heard the charitable voice of the Abbot of Cluny explaining, "I attack you, not as some of us often do by arms, but by words; not by force but by reason; not in hatred, but in love. I love you; I write to you; writing to you, I invite you to salvation. (39)

According to Southern,

> [t]he event which did more than anything else to change the whole aspect of the Islamic problem came from a very unexpected quarter. It was the appearance of the Mongols in the scene of history. The effects of this on the outlook for Western Christendom were many and various. (104)

In his detailed book, *The Mongols and the West, 1221-1410*, Peter Jackson discusses the impact of the Mongols on the West. Around 1236 the Great Khan Ogödei (1229-1241) sent an army westward. By 1239 resistance on the steppes had ended, and Kiev, the chief city of the Rus, fell to the Mongols in 1240. Thus the Mongols were on the frontiers of Latin Christendom, including Poland.

Early in 1241, Hungary was the principal target for the Mongols. The assault on Hungary began on March 18, defeating the army of Bolestaw V, Duke of Cracow. Towards the end of March 1242, the Mongol Prince Dadan retired through Bosnia and Serbia. The Mongols burned Cattaro (Kotor) and plundered the towns of Drivasto and Sva (Suagium). Had the Mongols pressed on westwards beyond Hungary, they would not have encountered any coordinated opposition. As Jackson put it, "Contemporary analysts report panic as far afield as the Netherlands and Spain" (65). The Mongol leader Hülegü Khan burned Baghdad in 1358 and ruled Iran, Iraq, the Caucasus and Anatolia as Il-Khan, subordinate of the Great Khan.

There are some other thinkers and writers of the later Middle Ages whose views on Islam could be taken into account briefly here, such as Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1150), Abbot of Clairvaux, Ramón de Penyafort (1175/80-1275), a Dominican canon lawyer from Catalonia who worked for the evangelization of Jews and Muslims in Spain, and Ricoldo da Montecroce (1243-1320), a Dominican from Florence and author of *Against the Saracen Law* (*Contra legem Saracenorum*). But since our primary concern is Nicholas of Cusa and his ideas and activities, we may turn at this point to his knowledge about Islam.

It is not known exactly when Nicholas first learned about Islam. Was it at the University of Heidelberg, at the University of Padua, or even later? It is likely that he heard about and became interested in Islam while he was a canon law student

and met with many students at Padua from 1417 to 1423. As is shown elsewhere in this book, he demonstrated his knowledge about Islam in his first extant sermon, delivered on Christmas Eve at the Church of St. Florin in Koblenz in 1430. The twenty-nine-year-old doctor of canon law referred to God as the highest good, which depends on no one and derives from no one: "God the origin of all good and perfection, virtue and truth, depending on no one, and from whom all things (are), must be the supreme good." (*Deus, quia omnis boni et perfectionis, virtutis et veritatis origo a nullo dependens, et a quo omnia, ipsum, summum bonum esse necesse est*. [h. XVI, Pt. 1, 3]).

While attending the Council of Basel from 1432 to 1437, he became a good friend of Juan de Segovia (1393-1458), a former professor at Salamanca and a strong supporter of the Council of Basel. As a Spanish clergyman, Juan had a deep interest in Islam and its teachings. Cusanus and Segovia studied the Koran together between 1433 and 1437. Although it has been lost, Juan is said to have made a new translation of the Koran.

At Basel, Cusanus acquired a copy of Robert of Ketton's twelfth-century Latin translation of the Koran and other documents. He loaned the book to Segovia, who not only copied the book, but also continued his serious study of the Koran for the remaining twenty years of his life (cf. Part II: 21).

The book in question is Codex Cusanus 108, now in the library of St. Nicholas Hospital at Bernkastel-Kues, a version of the so-called Toledan Collection produced in 1143 under the aegis of Peter the Venerable, which, besides the Latin Koran of Robert Ketton, contains *The Teachings of Mohammed* (*Doctrina Mahumeti*), *The Book of Mohammed's Lineage* (*Liber generationis Mahumeti*), *The Chronicle of the Saracens* (*Chronica Saracenorum*) and other, shorter pieces (Biechler, "Nicholas of Cusa and Mohammad," 52).

When Cusanus was sent to Constantinople in 1437 as a delegate of Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447), he found not only the same Latin translation of the Koran that he had left for John of Segovia, but also was able to inspect a copy of the Koran in the original language. In September 1453, shortly after the conquest of Constantinople by Muhammad II and his troops, he wrote his enlightened and almost pro-Islam *On the Peace of Faith* (*De pace fidei*), as one of the most knowledgeable persons in the West about Islam and its teachings.

When Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464), a close friend of Cusanus', went to the Congress of Mantua in 1459, a year after he was elected pope, to make plans to launch a crusade against the Muslims, Cusanus was asked to serve as Pius II's special representative and governor in Rome. *The Sifting of the Koran* (*Cribratio Alkorani*), which, it seems, Cusanus completed in 1461 to dedicate to the pope in the war against the Turks, was less irenic than *On the Peace of Faith*, demonstrating his hardening attitude towards Islam. It was apparently clear to Cusanus by that time that the success of the papal crusade was highly questionable. At Cusanus' instigation, Denys of Rickel (Dionysius the Carthusian) (1402-1471) wrote a lengthy book which he entitled *Against the Treachery of Mohammed* (*Contra perfidiam Mahometi*) and which he supposedly dedicated to the cardinal. Codex 107 contains not only *The Tract against the Law of Mohammed* (*Tractatus contra legem Mahometi*,

fols. 1-193), but also the treatise by the Dominican Ricoldo da Montecroce, *Against the Saracen Law* (*Rinoldus* [*Ricoldus*] *contra legem Sarrazenorum*, fols. 194-232).

Called upon to join a papal crusading fleet at Ancona, Cusanus was on his way when he died in Todi on August 11, 1464. The pope himself passed away three days later at Ancona without launching a crusade against the Muslims. It is clear that Islam was one of the most important issues of the time not only from the point of view of Pope Pius II, but also to Nicholas of Cusa.

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9. Humanism

The term "humanism" has meant many things to many people. Some scholars have gone back to the Scholastic period to find the origins of Renaissance humanism. Because the Carolingian Renaissance of the eighth and ninth centuries laid great emphasis on improving the teaching of grammar and rhetoric, it is often cited as an important medieval precedent in the development of humanism.

Also famous as a medieval precedent is the "Renaissance of the twelfth century," which was discussed by Charles Homer Haskins in his well known 1927 book of that title. But what we mean here by humanism, of course, is understood in the context of late medieval, Renaissance or pre-modern periods. Because of Nicholas of Cusa's importance in this book, special attention will be paid below to the development of early humanism north of the Alps, particularly in the Tyrol. In the course of our investigation, it is well to understand and appreciate what Paul Oskar Kristeller said about Renaissance humanism, because his views on the subject were widely, although not universally, accepted.

The term "humanism" itself was coined in the early nineteenth century, around 1808, by the German philosopher and educational reformer Friedrich Immanuel Niethammer, but the term *humanista* (humanist) goes back to the late fifteenth century and was in common use during the sixteenth. A humanist was understood in the later Renaissance to be a teacher or student of the humanities, or the *studia humanitatis*. The term *studia humanitatis* is even older than the concept of a humanist and appears in the writings of ancient authors such as Cicero (106-43 B.C.) and Aulus Gellius (c. A.D. 130-c. 180).

According to Kristeller, in the fifteenth century the term *studia humanitatis* acquired a more technical and precise meaning. It was:

> defined as comprising five subjects: grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy. In other words, in the language of the Renaissance, a humanist was a professional representative of these disciplines, and we should try to understand Renaissance humanism primarily in terms of the professional ideals, intellectual interests, and literary productions of the humanists. (*Eight Philosophers of the Italian Renaissance*, 150)

Renaissance humanism was, Kristeller goes on to argue, often incidentally, but never primarily or consistently, concerned with theology or speculative philosophy, with law or the natural sciences. "It cannot be closely associated with the medieval traditions of these other disciplines." According to Charles Trinkaus in the *Scope of Humanism*, "it was also a reaction against Scholasticism" (6).

The eminent position of Italy during the period of Renaissance humanism and the importance of Italian influence on other European countries during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are generally well recognized. Francesco Petrarch (1304-1374) is well known as the chief founder of humanism. Giovanni Boccaccio

(1313-1375), a Florentine merchant's son who was trained in commerce and law but became a vernacular poet and later a humanist scholar and friend of Petrarch, is very famous for his *Decameron* (1350-1353). One of the important questions before us is how Italian humanism was diffused or transferred to other countries in Europe.

The first important channel through which Italian humanism spread outward was what can be called the exchange of persons. Many foreigners had occasion to visit Italy and to become acquainted with humanist learning. Some scholars went on their own; merchants, clergymen and political envoys visited Rome or other places in Italy.

By far the most important from our point of view were the foreign students who studied in Italy and then returned to their countries to occupy important academic or professional positions. No less important for the diffusion of humanism were the Italians who lived in other countries. Italian businessmen and bankers who were active all over Europe, Italian bishops, scholars and artists who went abroad, and political envoys from the various Italian states all promoted the diffusion of Italian humanism. Many Italian scholars entered the service of foreign princes and dignitaries as tutors or secretaries, as librarians, as court poets or court historians. The list is long and distinguished. It includes Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini in the Empire, as we shall see in more detail (cf. Part II: 1). A last important group of Italians was composed of political and religious exiles. One of the famous examples is Cola di Rienzo (c. 1313-1354), whose short stay in Bohemia left some important traces. Aside from the personal contacts mentioned above, another channel of diffusion was books, both manuscripts and printed books. The enormous number of Italian humanist manuscripts purchased and preserved in libraries outside of Italy during the Renaissance period is impressive.

Let us now turn to the development of early humanism north of the Alps, especially in Germany. In regard to this point, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464), later Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464), occupies an especially important position. Although Aeneas was originally, like Cusanus, a supporter of the Council of Basel (1431-1449), he had begun gradually to move towards a position of neutrality between the council and the papacy by 1442. Honored as Poet Laureate by Emperor Frederick III (r. 1440-1493) in Frankfurt on July 27, 1442, he decided to support the emperor, who had been taking a neutral position between pope and council, and joined the Imperial Chancery under Kaspar Schlick (d. 1449) the next year. As a result, he was in a position to introduce the ideas of humanism directly to less advanced, if not "barbarian," northern Europe.

To the cultured young Italian humanist, the imperial courts at Graz, Wiener Neustadt and Vienna must have looked quite drab and dull. Soon after entering the Chancery, Aeneas dedicated to Frederick III a tract called the *Pentalogue* (*Pentalogus*), which purported to be conversations between him and four other persons, including Frederick III, and which discussed, among other things, the relative merits of the force of arms and humanist education. But Frederick III seems to have taken little note of it. It is not surprising that Aeneas characterized Frederick

III as "almost stupid" (*pene stupidum*). R. J. Mitchell, in her book *The Laurels and the Tiara*, wrote:

> It was not long before it was brought home to Aeneas that he had exchanged the frustration of his life at Basel for something even less palatable. Instead of being a leader of social and intellectual life as he had hoped to be … Aeneas found that he was just another clerk in the already over-staffed Chancery … A Bavarian named Wilhelm Taz was in charge of the clerks at this time; between him and Aeneas Sylvius an initial distaste for each other soon ripened into strong personal enmity. "And he abused Aeneas in a remarkable manner" so that "in all things [Aeneas] came last, and neither at table nor in the dormitory had a place worthy of his rank, and was hated, despised, and mocked at like a heretic or a Jew." (88-89)

But, referred to as the "apostle of humanism" in Germany, Aeneas occupied an important position in the diffusion of humanism to northern Europe.

There are numerous studies of Renaissance humanism in Italy after Petrarch and Boccaccio. Much attention has been paid to the development of humanism in centers such as England, France, Spain, Poland, Germany and others. But we should pay special attention, albeit briefly, to the southern part of Germany and Austria, where Cusanus played an important role as Bishop of Brixen in the Tyrol from 1452 to 1460.

In *The Religious Renaissance of the German Humanists*, Lewis W. Spitz discussed Rudolf Agricola (1444-1485), "Father of Humanism," Jakob Wimpfeling (1450-1528), Johannes Reuchlin (1455-1522), Conrad Celtis (1459-1508), Ulrich von Hutten (1488-1523) and others, including Erasmus and Luther. But all of these famous "humanists" flourished after Cusanus and were not known to him. In order to assess the imprint of early—or, we should say, very early—humanism on Cusanus, we must briefly examine two contemporary humanists related to the Tyrol, Gregor Heimburg (c. 1400-1472) and Johannes Hinderbach (1418-1486) (cf. Part II: 12 and 13).

Born in the Franconian city of Schweinfurt around 1400, Heimburg was, as discussed in more detail elsewhere in this book, educated in all probability at a Latin School which was attached to the Church of Johannes in town. This school was where the humanists Conrad Celtis and Johann Cuspinian (1473-1529) also studied in later years. Heimburg matriculated in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Vienna on October 13, 1413. After studying at some other German universities, he crossed the Alps in 1421 to study at the University of Padua, where he received the degree of doctor of canon law (*doctor in iure canonico*) in February 1430. His teachers of both civil and canon law included Prosdocimus de Comitibus, Henricus de Alano, Paulus de Dotis and Jacobus de Zochis. After attending the Council of Basel in 1432 as general vicar in ecclesiastical affairs of the Archbishop of Mainz, Heimburg became legal advisor to the city of Nuremberg in 1435 and continued to serve in this capacity until 1461. When he discussed humanist studies at the imperial

court in Wiener Neustadt on January 31, 1449, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, Bishop of Trieste at that time, was so impressed by Heimburg's speech that he wrote a letter to Heimburg the same day:

> When Cicero was still a young man he delivered a marvelous speech which aroused and excited the admiration of all the Greeks who heard him … This anecdote occurred to me today as you were speaking at the court about humanistic studies; your eloquence left the lawyer and the German in you behind and you rose to Italian heights of graceful oratory … If you and men like you determine to continue and cultivate oratory with all your strength, Germany will have a brilliant future. (Mitchell, 88-89)

Meeting Duke Sigmund (1446-1496) of the Tyrol on May 11, 1458, at the court of Duke Albert VI of Austria, Duke Sigmund's cousin, Heimburg became his supporter and made a speech at the Congress of Mantua in 1459 on behalf of Sigmund, who was by then deeply involved in a prolonged, bitter feud with Cardinal Cusanus as Bishop of Brixen in the Tyrol. Heimburg was soon Duke Sigmund's most important advisor in his fight against Cusanus and Cusanus' friend and supporter, Pope Pius II.

In his article "Vestigia Aeneae imitari: Enea Silvio Piccolomini als 'Apostel' des Humanumus. Formen und Wege seiner Diffusion," Johannes Helmrath noted a peculiar nationalistic strain in Heimburg's humanism. Unlike Aeneas and Cusanus, Heimburg never abandoned the conciliar party nor moved to the papal camp. In this connection, we should note that earlier writers such as Lewis Spitz and Donald Weinstein broadly discussed the impact of nationalism on later German humanists.

Another important early humanist in the Tyrol was Johannes Hinderbach, Aeneas Sylvius' close friend and a relative of the famous theologian Henry of Langenstein (d. 1397). His life and activities are discussed in more detail in another part of this book (see Part III: 13). In the winter semester of 1434-1435, Johannes enrolled at the University of Vienna. After obtaining his baccalaureate in 1437 and *magister atrium* in 1438, he began his legal studies at the University of Padua in 1441 and completed his studies, receiving a doctor of canon law degree (*doctor decretorum*) on January 14, 1452. Entering the court of King, and later Emperor, Frederick III (r. 1440-1493) in 1449 as a secretary, he began his career as Frederick's diplomat. He was sent to Rome, Bohemia and other places often as Frederick III's envoy, including when the emperor's former secretary, Aeneas Sylvius, was elected pope and became Pius II. But Johannes' high hopes for some rewards from the new pope, including a cardinalate, were dashed, and he had bitter feelings towards Pius II. But in 1465, after the death of Pius II and Cusanus, Hinderbach was elected Bishop of Trent and entered the city triumphantly on September 21, 1466.

Despite many issues he had to contend with, including the controversial ritual murder of Simon Unferdorben, "Little Simon," in 1475, Hinderbach pursued his interest in the s*tudia humanitatis*. He collected manuscripts avidly and corresponded eagerly with northern Italian humanists. His collection of six music manuscripts

is especially well known. He also promoted the new art of book printing, which the printer Albertus Kunne (fl. 1415-1519) of Duderstadt began in 1475 with the publication of *The Story of the Christ Child Murdered at Trent* (*Geschichte des zu Trient ermorderten Christenkindes*).

In view of this short survey, a question must be asked: Was Nicholas of Cusa a humanist? In reflecting on the meaning and significance of the question, the following statement by Paul Oskar Kristeller should be taken into account:

> I should not wish to maintain that Cusanus was a typical representative of Renaissance humanism. It is obvious, and has been pointed out many times, that the roots of his philosophical, mathematical, theological and political thought lie elsewhere, and that he differs in his interests, attitudes and activities rather significantly from many of his Italian contemporaries. On the other hand, it seems equally obvious to me that Cusanus was deeply imbued with the humanist culture of his time, and that this culture represents an important ingredient in his work and thought. A famous sentence in the preface to his *De concordantia Catholica* is an early testimony of his admiration for the classical enthusiasm of his age, as is the well known part he took in the search for classical manuscripts, and in the discovery of some of the works of Plautus, and perhaps of Tacitus. Typically humanist is Cusanus' lifelong concern with textual and historical criticism, which is attested by his own words, by those of his contemporaries, and by the marginal notes in his manuscripts. Although his Latin style is anything but humanistic, his frequent use of the dialogue form may be influenced by the literary fashion of his time, as well as by the model of Plato and other ancient authors known to him. Yet the strongest evidence of Cusanus' connection with Italian humanism is supplied by his personal relations, and by the content of his library. (Kristeller, "A Latin Translation…" 181-182)

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10. Neoplatonism

The term "Neoplatonism," or "Neo-Platonism," means the philosophical system of Plotinus (205-270), the last great philosopher of antiquity, and his successors. Our question here is what influence Neoplatonism had on Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464). Before proceeding further to discuss Plotinus and his ideas, it is important to take a quick look at Middle Platonism (c. 80 B.C.-c. 250), which preceded Neoplatonism. The academy founded in Athens by Plato (c. 429-347 B.C.) went through two major periods. The Old Academy (387-250 B.C.) stressed metaphysics, while the New Academy (c. 150-c. 110 B.C.) took a skeptical turn and emphasized epistemology. The fall of Athens in 86 B.C. brought the school to its end, and around 80 B.C. a former member of the academy, Antiochus of Ascalon (d. c. 69 B.C.), founded his own "academy," sometimes referred to as the Fifth Academy, which revived and reaffirmed the centrality of metaphysics. This development marked the beginning of the phase known as Middle Platonism (c. 80 B.C.-c. 250) and continued to the period of Plotinus.

Plotinus himself was reluctant to discuss the place of his birth, but the later Greek writer Eunapius of Sardis (c. 345-c. 420) tells us that Plotinus was a native of Lycopolis in Upper Egypt. According to his pupil and friend Porphyry of Tyre (c. 223-309), he became interested in philosophy at the age of twenty-eight, and for eleven years was a disciple of Ammonius Saccas of Alexandria (c. 175-242), the reputed "Originator" and "Socrates of Neoplatonism," about whom only little is known. Plotinus accompanied Emperor Gordian III (238-244) on an expedition to Persia to learn about Eastern thought. After his return from Persia, he established his own school in Rome around 244. He taught for ten years in Rome before starting to commit his thoughts to writing. His fifty-four treatises were published thirty years after his death by Porphyry in the six *Enneads*, that is, six sets of nine treatises.

Plotinus' main concern on the speculative side is with the relations between unity and multiplicity. At the top of the hierarchy of beings there is the One or

the Good, the absolutely simple and self-sufficient first principle. Below it is the intelligible world of ideas, and on a still lower level there is the World Soul, the third number of the Plotinian Triad. The last member is the intermediary between the intelligible and the material world, which is the furthest removed from the One because, according to Plotinus, matter holds the lowest place.

"Plotinus, the philosopher of our time," begins Porphyry in his biographical essay about his master, "seemed ashamed of being in a body" (Edwards, 1). The disciple really captures the spirit of the master's philosophy and explains why the master was reluctant to talk about his origins and had a negative conception of matter. Yet the characteristic mood of the *Enneads* is one of certainty. Plotinus regularly insists that his doctrines must be true, because reason demands it. As John Gregory pointed out in *The Neoplatonists*:

> [S]o sure is he that he often presupposes, rather than justifies, the premises from which his conclusions are drawn. It is likely that a reaction against Skepticism was one of the motivating forces behind Neoplatonism. (12)

In its earlier phases, Neoplatonism was centered especially at Alexandria, which had displaced Athens as the intellectual center of the Roman world. But the movement soon spread to Rome. Plotinus himself taught there from 244 onwards. Eventually, its influence could be felt in the rest of the Empire; by the early fifth century it had gained a firm foundation at Athens.

The most important representatives of Neoplatonism after Plotinus were Porphyry, Iamblichus (c. 250-c. 330/325), Eunapius of Sardis (c. 345-c. 420), Proclus (410-485), called "the Aristotle of Neoplatonism," and C(h)alicidius (fl. fourth century), the Latin Neoplatonist and commentator on Plato's *Timaeus*. Of the important representatives mentioned above, Proclus is worth describing a little further because of his influence on the future development of Neoplatonism.

The foremost representative of the Athenian school of Neoplatonism, Proclus was born in Constantinople of wealthy parents, but came to Athens in his youth to study philosophy at the academy, at first as the pupil of Syrianus. Later he was appointed to the position of *Didadochus*, or Successor of Plato, as head of the academy. There he spent the remainder of his life, dividing his time between teaching and the writing of many long, learned commentaries. He wrote two influential works of systematic metaphysics, the *Elements of Theology* and *Platonic Theology*, which were commentaries on Plato's *Timaeus*, *Parmenides*, *Alcibiades* and *Cratylus*, and furthermore scientific and literary works, such as *Hymns*, *Chrestomathia* and *Works and Days*.

A synthesizer of Neoplatonic doctrines, Proclus kept the elements of Plotinus, but introduced a principle of triadic development in the series of emanations. The three stages were, according to him, an original, an emergence from the original and a return in a lower form to the original. Proclus differed from Plotinus in regard to the origin of matter, which he held to be a *parupostasis*, a by-product with no existence of its own. His importance as a creative thinker has often been

overstated. Many of the new ideas which distinguish his Neoplatonism from that of Plotinus are traceable to Iamblichus or Syrianus.

Because Neoplatonists and Christians shared many common beliefs, Christians sometimes borrowed insights from Neoplatonists. Among the Latin Fathers, Augustine of Hippo (354-430) realized that one need only change a few words to make Christians of the Platonists. The Greek Fathers, such as Basil the Great (c. 330-379), Gregory of Nazianzus (329-380) and Gregory of Nyssa (c. 330-395), were equally responsive to Neoplatonism.

The reception of Neoplatonism during the thousand years of the Middle Ages is an immensely complex subject because of the cultural and intellectual adjustment and adaptation of Neoplatonism to Greek and Latin Christians, Jews and Muslims. In each culture, enthusiasts tried to reconcile Neoplatonism with their religion. No doubt, the most extraordinary was the Christianization of Proclus' philosophy around 500 by Pseudo-Dionysius (fl. 500).

Aside from the difficult question of who Pseudo-Dionysius really was, to whom four treatises, *The Celestial Hierarchy*, *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, *The Divine Names* and *Mystical Theology*, and ten letters, written in Greek, possibly in Palestine, in the late fifth or early sixth century, have been attributed since the sixth century, we face the questions of what his main message was and what influence his writings exercised. Despite the obscure style of the treatises, there were no barriers to their study and they were repeatedly translated into Latin, notably by John Scotus Eriugena (c. 810-c. 877) and Robert Grosseteste (c. 1170-1253). The treatises exerted a significant influence not only on the development of Scholasticism, especially through Thomas Aquinas, but also on the development of Neoplatonism and on Nicholas of Cusa.

Compared with the other three traditions, Greek, Jewish and Muslim, Latin Christianity was slower in absorbing Neoplatonic ideas. After Augustine, the principal Neoplatonic thinker was Boethius (c. 475-525), who not only brought Porphyry's *Isagoge* to the Latin audience, but also presented many Neoplatonic ideas in his famous *Consolation of Philosophy* (*De consolatione philosophiae*). Thereafter, centuries followed that produced thinkers influenced by Aristotle, such as Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274). But Eriugena was a notable product of Neoplatonism in the ninth century, and Albertus Magnus (c. 1200-1280), Thomas' teacher at Cologne, was receptive to Neoplatonism and inspired a Neoplatonic approach in three Dominicans: Dietrich of Freiberg (c. 1250-c. 1310), Meister Eckhart (c. 1260-c. 1328) and Berthold of Moosburg (c. 1300-after 1361).

Nicholas of Cusa drew upon these thinkers, as well as Neoplatonism, in constructing his own works *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440), *On Conjectures* (*De coniecturis*, 1441/1442) and others. As another important thinker influenced by Neoplatonism, mention must be made of Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499), whose translations and studies of Plato, Plotinus and other Platonic authors were influential throughout Europe.

Besides these Christian thinkers, both Greek and Latin, Jewish and Muslim thinkers came under the influence of Neoplatonism. The most notable among the Jewish thinkers was Ibn Gabriol (Avicebron, c. 1021-c. 1058), whose *Fountain of Life*

featured Neoplatonic doctrines. The most famous Muslim Neoplatonist was Ibn Sina (Avicenna, 980-1037) who, besides being a physician, was the author of about a hundred treatises, including a *Canon of Medicine* that enjoyed a great reputation and *Sanato*, an immense encyclopedic work.

The number of recently published books on Neoplatonism is large and impressive. Apparently, the subject is very much alive and draws the attention of many thinkers and scholars.

In a book entitled *Proclus et son influence*, which was published in 1985 in commemoration of the 1,500th anniversary of Proclus' death, many scholars, such as W. Beierwaltes, J. Couches, P. Hochot, H-D. Saffrey, C. Steel and L. Sturbal, discussed his influence on later thinkers, including Nicholas of Cusa. After discussing Proclus' impact on Cusanus, especially his thought on the One, Werner Beierwaltes in *Procliana: Spätantikes Denken und seine Spuren* (Frankfurt a. M., 2007) analyzes Cusanus' notion of the One in *On the Not-other* (*De non aliud*, 1462), *On the Pursuit of Wisdom* (*De venatione sapientiae*, 1463), *Sermo* LV; 7, 34 (h. XVII, 269): *God Who Is the One Thing Necessary* (*Deus, qui est ipsum "unum necessarium"*), and others. Another good example, according to Beierwaltes, is Cusanus' treatise, *On the Beginning* (*De principio* [*Tu quis es?*]) of June 9, 1459, which dealt with the notion of the One. The center of all life (*centrum tocius vite*) was undoubtedly what Cusanus thought that the One signified.

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11. Negative Theology

Negative theology is the theology that attempts to describe God by negation. It is also known as the *via negativa* or apophatic theology. It speaks of God only in terms of what may not be said about God. In negative theology, it is recognized that the divine is ineffable and that human beings can never truly describe or define the essence of God in human words. All attempts to do so will be false. In the end, we must transcend words to understand the nature of the divine. Thus, the apophatic approach is often allied with or related to the approach of mysticism and Neoplatonism.

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle all have references to the "One," the ineffable God. Some theologians have argued that the first to articulate the theology in Christianity was St. Paul, whose reference to the Unknown God in the book of Acts (Acts, 17.23) is well known. The apophatic approach to see the One is taken not only by the Christian traditions, Western and Eastern, but also by the Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist and other East Asian traditions.

St. Clement of Alexandria (c. 150-215) was “the first Christian to advocate a method of negative thinking” (Mortley and Dockrill, 44). Sometimes called the “founder of Christian mysticism,” Clement of Alexandria was the first Orthodox writer to discuss the apophatic concept of God. Born in Athens around 150, he was a convert to Christianity who became a pupil of Pantaenus (d. c. 190), the head of the Catechetical School at Alexandria. As Pantaenus’ successor, Clement taught around 190 in Alexandria. He is often regarded as an innovator who attempted to bring together his Christian faith and traditional Greek philosophical education. His main writings were *An Exhortation to the Greeks* (*Protrepticus*), *The Teacher* (*Pedagogus*) and *Miscellaneous Studies* (*Stromateis*).

This was the age of Gnosticism, a complex religious movement which in its Christian form came into clear prominence in the second century, and Clement agreed with the Gnostics in holding knowledge (*gnosis*) to be the chief element in Christian perfection. But for him the only true *gnosis* was that which presupposed the faith of the Church.

After the Cappadocian Fathers—three brilliant leaders of philosophical Christian orthodoxy in the later fourth century, St. Basil the Great, Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia (c. 330-379), St. Gregory, Bishop of Nazianzus (329-389), and St. Gregory, Bishop of Nyssa (c. 330-395)—we come to the incomparable, complex and very influential Pseudo-Dionysius (fl. 500). According to John D. Jones in his *Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagite*:

> [F]or Pseudo-Dionysius, the practice of this [negative] theology requires that one deny affirmative theology and all that is manifested in the light of beings; the practice of negative (mystical) theology requires that one deny all reference to what is … Again, the practice of negative (mystical) theology requires that one stand out of the light of beings, abandon all knowledge of beings, and plunge into a darkness of unknowing (áγvwsía). (4)

The *Corpus Dionysianum*, the four works and ten letters attributed to Pseudo-Dionysius, had a decisive effect on the development of Western medieval thought. First translated into Latin by Hilduin (775-844), the abbot of the monastery of St. Denis, around 832, it was retranslated around 867 by John Scotus Eriugena (c. 810-c. 877). His translation, his commentaries on the *Corpus* and his great work *Periphyseon* were decisive in the spread of the influence of the *Corpus* in the West.

To mention only those important medieval and late medieval writers who came under the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius, we can cite:

Maximus Confessor (c. 580-662)
John Scotus Eriugena
Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1141)
Thierry of Chartres (fl. 1142-1150)
Richard of St. Victor (d. 1173)
Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274)

Bonaventure (1221-1274)
Gemisthos Plethon (c. 1370?-1450)
Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464)
Denys the Carthusian (1402-1471)
Marsilio Ficino (1433-1499)

When we pay special attention to Nicholas of Cusa's relations with a few important advocates of negative theology, such as Dionysius the Areopagite, John Scotus Eriugena and Meister Eckhart (c. 1260-1327), we note that St. Nicholas Hospital Library in Bernkastel-Kues and the British Museum have the following manuscripts which Cusanus owned:

Dionysius: Codex Cusanus 43-45 [Marx, *Verzeichnis*, 38-42]
Eriugena: Codex Additivus 11035 [Beierwaltes, "Cusanus and Eriugena,"115, n.3]
Eckhart: Codex Cusanus 21, 125 [Marx, *Verzeichnis*, 16, 17, 121]

He read them carefully, annotated them and wrote marginal notes. As indicated in the Select Bibliography below, the following scholars showed in their publications how much and how carefully Cusanus studied medieval writings: Baur, Campbell and Jones on Pseudo-Dionysius; Beierwaltes, Carabine, Duclow and McGinn on Eriugena; and Duclow, Koch, Lossky and Wackerzapp on Eckhart. It is clear that as we study the philosophical, theological and intellectual ideas of Nicholas of Cusa, we should keep in mind the wide and deep influence of the negative theology tradition in the West and its impact on Cusanus himself.

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II. Persons

1. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464) in Scotland

When Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini was sent by Niccolò Albergati (1357-1443), Cardinal of Santa Croce, to Scotland towards the end of the Congress of Arras (1435), the Italian humanist was eager to learn about the country, which he had never visited before. As Aeneas tells us in his *Commentaries*, he had been taken to the congress by Cardinal Albergati as his secretary. But because of the role the cardinal played at the congress in negotiating a separate peace between Burgundy and France, Aeneas' master became a target of criticism by the English. The peace treaty had deprived England of its most powerful ally.

Why Aeneas was sent on a mission to the court of James I (1394-1437; r. 1406-1437) has been endlessly discussed by scholars, but without any convincing results. In describing the purpose of his mission, Aeneas himself was, perhaps intentionally, brief and vague. Some sources say that Aeneas was sent to persuade James I to join the supporters of the Council of Basel against the English, who were strong supporters of Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447). It is also asserted that he was instructed to urge the Scottish king to harass the English from the north in order to deter the English from further raids in France. After eighteen years of captivity in England, James I had been set free in 1424, returning to Scotland with a high-born English wife, Joan Beaufort. As Aeneas himself wrote in his treatise on famous men, *De viris claris*, James I, who is remembered in the history of English literature for his love poem "The Kingis Quair," was still "hot tempered and greedy for vengeance." It should be remembered that in 1449, Eleanor (c. 1433-1480), the sixth child of the Scottish king, was to marry Sigmund (Sigismund), Archduke of Austria and Duke of the Tyrol, who became an archenemy of Cusanus as Bishop of Brixen.

On his way from Arras to Scotland, Aeneas was detained at Calais, which was in English hands and "forbidden either to carry on or to return" (*neque progredi neque regredi*) (Piccolomini, "Commentaries …" trans. Gragg, XXII; cf. Watanabe). He was then allowed to cross the British Channel only because Henry Beaufort (c. 1375-1447), the Cardinal of Winchester, intervened on his behalf. Cardinal Beaufort, who was himself on his way home from Arras, was commonly known as the "Rich Cardinal" and could exert enormous influence in English politics. It should be remembered in this connection that Henry Beaufort, who was Joan Beaufort's uncle, had brought the Italian humanist Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459) to England to serve as his secretary from 1418 to about 1422.

Aeneas was pleased to see the sights of the rich and populous city of London. At St. Paul's Cathedral, he saw a magnificent translation of Thucydides by an unknown Latin writer. The "wondrous tombs of the kings" at Westminster and the golden mausoleum of St. Thomas of Canterbury also impressed him very much. But when he applied for letters of safe conduct to Scotland, his request was declined. The English were suspicious of the purpose of his mission. As a result, he had to re-cross the Channel and take a sea route to Scotland from Sluys, which he called "the busiest port in all the West." The outlet for the commerce of Bruges and the site of a big naval battle in 1340, Sluys is nowadays a little Dutch town. It was in the depth of winter, when the winds blew fierce and strong, that Aeneas' ship set sail. Aeneas dramatically described the stormy voyage that followed:

> There he took ship for Scotland; but he was driven to Norway by two violent gales, one of which kept them in fear for their lives for fourteen hours. The other pounded the ship for two nights and a day; it sprang a leak and was carried so far north into the open sea that the sailors, who could no longer recognize the constellations, abandoned all hope. But Divine Mercy came to their aid, raising north winds which drove the vessel back toward land. Finally, on the twelfth day, they raised the coast of Scotland. (Piccolomini, "*Commentaries* …" trans. Gragg, XXII; cf. Watanabe)

He also recorded that, fearful of death, he made a vow to Our Lady that if he reached land safely he would make a pilgrimage barefoot to her nearest shrine.

Aeneas wrote later in his *Commentaries* that "(the sailors) had made harbor." Which harbor did they bring the ship into? Many writers, including Creighton, Boulting and Mitchell, have suggested Dunbar in the county of East Lothian as a possible port. It is about twenty-eight miles from Edinburgh. But, according to Balfour-Melville, the port of entry was Aberlady. Voigt and Ady mentioned no port of landing.

Dunbar, with its almost impregnable castle, built in the latter part of the fourteenth century upon a chain of rocks stretching into the sea, was known in history as the site of the famous battle of April 1296. It was here that Edward I (1239-1307; r. 1272-1307) invaded Scotland and defeated John Balliol (1292-1296), declaring himself King of Scotland. Dunbar was also the castle in which Black Agnes, in the absence of her husband, the Earl of Dunbar, successfully defied the Earl of Salisbury and his army for nineteen weeks in 1338. As "the sunniest and driest town in Scotland," Dunbar is today highly regarded as a holiday resort. It is quite possible that Aeneas landed at Dunbar, but, for lack of his own report, the exact location of entry into Scotland remains uncertain.

On reaching the shore, Aeneas fulfilled his vow made at the time of the worst peril in the North Sea. "He dragged his exhausted body 10,000 pares through the frozen air and across deep snow" (Boulting, 60). He himself wrote: "Aeneas fulfilled a vow by walking barefoot ten miles to the Blessed Virgin of Whitekirk" (Piccolomini, "Commentaries …" trans. Gragg, XXII; cf. Watanabe). After two

hours' rest in the church, he was still so weak and stiff from the wintry cold that his servants had to carry him to shelter. It was a long time before he recovered the use of his limbs. In fact, he suffered continually from rheumatic pains in his ankles and feet for the rest of his life, so that he had to be carried most of the time.

The founding of the original church at Whitekirk is lost in the mists of time. From the time Christianity was first brought to Scotland by St. Ninian (c. 360-c. 432) at Candida Casa, "White House," said to be located at Whithorn in Galloway, and then by St. Columba (c. 521-597) on the island of Iona in 563, its growing influence was felt in many parts of the country. The Christian faith was brought to East Lothian, in which Whitekirk is located, in the late sixth century by St. Baldred (c. 543-c. 608), a Saxon or Celtic monk of Lindisfarne and follower of Columba. He set up his cell on the islet of Bass Rock, where he could retire for solitary contemplation and prayer. From there, he extended his missionary labors, working in the triangle formed by Inveresk, North Berwick and Dunbar. But his name is chiefly associated with Whitekirk (Hamer), Prestonkirk and Tyninghame. He was no doubt content to establish a cross beside which he preached. Some of these sites became in time permanent, including Tyninghame and Whitekirk.

In about the twelfth century, Whitekirk began to be famous for its holy well. It had already become a kind of Lourdes, with a building to house and shelter pilgrims. The hospice is mentioned in the records of lands given by David I (1124-1153) to Holyrood Abbey. During the battle of Dunbar in 1296, the Countess of Dunbar fled from Edward I by sea. She was knocked over while embarking and badly hurt. When forced to land near Whitekirk, in great agony, she is said to have drunk of the holy well and to have been instantly cured. The following year the grateful countess built a chapel in honor of the Virgin. By the fourteenth century, the church had gathered treasure, and in 1356, when Edward III (1327-1377) invaded Scotland, it was raided and pillaged by the English. The glorious abbey at Haddington, known as the Lamp of the Lothians, was burned down, but Whitekirk was merely plundered. An old account records that in 1413 "there were not less than 15,653 pilgrims of all nations and the offerings were equal to 1422 marks." In 1430 James I took the church under his protection.

Today the red sandstone church, with a Norman tower, stands on a site occupied since the sixth century. "The Parish Church of St. Mary's," as the church is now called, is a beautifully restored version of a late medieval church which was burned down on February 26, 1914, by the suffragettes. It belongs to the Church of Scotland and is in the parish of Whitekirk and Tyninghame. Visiting the Church of Saint Mary's on August 1, 1993, the author saw many signs of vigorous religious activities in the publications available in the narthex. But the exact site of the famous well is today not known.

What did Aeneas do after Whitekirk? Pinturicchio's picture of Aeneas' audience with James I, which is in the Siena Cathedral, shows the youthful Aeneas standing on the right of the gray-haired Scottish king against a scenic background of trees, buildings and a river. Aeneas was thirty years old; James I, despite his depiction in the painting, only forty-one. Where did the audience take place?

Some writers, such as W. Boulting, naturally assumed that Edinburgh was the site of the meeting. Since Edinburgh was not far from Whitekirk, Aeneas could easily have gone to Edinburgh Castle to meet James I. Although no historian seems to have suggested it, Linlithgow Palace in West Lothian can also be mentioned as a possible site. In 1424, shortly after returning from England, James I began rebuilding Linlithgow Palace as a suitable residence for himself and his English wife; it was almost completed by 1434 at the then considerable cost of £4,518. Located about seventeen miles northwest of Edinburgh, the palace was frequently used by the king.

The background in the Siena painting, with its buildings, trees and a river, is quite similar to the view that the visitor to the palace sees when they stand in the great hall of the ruined present-day palace and look out towards Linlithgow Loch. Needless to say, this conjecture would become entirely baseless if the background of the painting was merely based on the artist's imagination. Perth has also been mentioned by some historians as the site of the meeting. Since James I loved Perth and visited the place often, it can be regarded as a possible site of the audience. But the city, where James I was murdered in 1437, was perhaps too far away for Aeneas to reach in the cold winter of 1435 or early 1436.

The question of where Aeneas met James I remains open because of the lack of any documentary evidence. The "Itinerary of James I, 1424-37," which the erudite E. W. M. Balfour-Melville published in his book, *James I, King of Scots, 1406-1437*, seems to suggest that the audience took place in Edinburgh. According to the itinerary, James I was there after September 26, 1435, and stayed until the beginning of February 1436.

The rest of Aeneas' experiences in Scotland are well known through his *Commentaries.* Although his description of the countryside, which he found barren and rugged, is brief, he thought Scottish men and women worth describing in some detail. "The men are short and brave; the women fair, charming and lusty" (Piccolomini, "*Commentaries* …" trans. Gragg, XXII; cf. Watanabe). As he told us later, one of the women certainly attracted his attention. When he then disguised himself as a merchant and traveled through England on his way back to Basel, he experienced a great commotion one night near the Tweed River, a panic which was caused by the (false) fear that the Scots were planning an attack. He was later joined by an English judge, who kept denouncing his master, Cardinal Albergati, for his mediating role between England and Burgundy at the Congress of Arras. Aeneas finally returned to the Council of Basel in the spring of 1436 via Newcastle, Durham, York, London and Calais. No matter where he first landed and where he stayed, his sojourn in Scotland must have been one of the unforgettable periods of his eventful life.

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2. Vincent of Aggsbach (c. 1389-1464)

When Bernhard von Waging (c. 1400-1472) wrote his *Defense of the Praise of Learned Ignorance* (*Defensorium Laudatorii doctae ignorantiae*) in 1459 in defense of his own *Praise of Learned Ignorance* (*Laudatorium doctae ignorantiae*, 1451/52) against his critic Abbot Kaspar Ayndorffer (1401-1461) of Tegernsee, he probably did not realize that the work would soon be commented on by Vincent of Aggsbach (Vinzenz von Aggsbach) in the *Rebuttal against the Defense of the Praise of Learned Ignorance* (*Replicatio contra defensorium Laudatorii doctae ignorantiae*, 1459).

Born in 1389, probably in the Wachau or another part of the Austrian wine country, Vincent entered the Carthusian house of Aggsbach sometime between 1409 and 1410. Founded on January 13, 1380, by Heidenreich von Maissau (d. 1381) and his wife, Anna von Kuenring (d. 1385), the charterhouse was only about ten kilometers northeast of the great Benedictine Abbey of Melk. It played an important role in the Carthusian Order until it was suppressed on January 23, 1782, by the "enlightened" Emperor Joseph II (r. 1780-1790) son of Maria Theresa (1717-1790).

At Aggsbach Vincent received a typical monastic education, beginning as a postulant and later becoming a solemn professed monk. As he himself said, he had no university education. Viewing scholastic disputations with disfavor, he later made critical remarks from time to time about "school theology" and bookish learning. He was the typically "anti-intellectual" and contemplative or "affective" product of the "old" order, which was different from the "new" order of mendicant friars who emphasized university education.

The *Mystical Theology* (*De mystica theologia*) of Pseudo-Dionysius (fl. c. 500) exercised great influence on the Carthusian Order in general. The important Latin translations of Pseudo-Dionysius' works by Abott Hilduin of Saint-Denis (d. c. 844), John Scotus Eriugena (d. c. 877), Thomas Gallus Vercellensis (d. 1246), Robert Grossteste (*Lincolniensis*; d. 1253) and Ambrose Traversari (d. 1439), and the commentaries on Pseudo-Dionysius by Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1141), Albertus Magnus (1193-1280), Francis of Meyronnes (c. 1285-c. 1328) and Denys the Carthusian (1402/03-1472), were well known to members of the Carthusian Order. Vincent of Aggsbach, who, like other Carthusians, was deeply influenced by Pseudo-Dionysius, was familiar with the translations of Thomas Gallus and Robert Grossteste, but was particularly influenced by his fellow Carthusian, Hugh of Balma (Hugo de Palmis) (d. 1439), who has been called the father of Carthusian spirituality. In his work *On the Mystical Theology* (*De mystica theologia*), or *On the Three-fold Way* (*De triplici via*), which was long attributed to St. Bonaventure, Hugh

spoke of three types of mystical experience: *via purgativa*, *via illuminativa* and *via unitiva*.

From 1435 to 1448 Vincent served as prior of the Aggsbach monastery, which reached one of its most flourishing periods during that time. Under his direction the number of manuscripts increased, the archives were better arranged and the monastery's property was expanded.

It was only after his resignation as prior in 1448 that he began to compose works on mystical theology. From 1453 to 1460 or 1461, he participated as vicar of the monastery in the controversy over mystical theology which had resulted from Cusanus' *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440) and Bernhard von Waging's *Praise of Learned Ignorance* (*Laudatorium doctae ignorantiae*) and which involved the monks of three monasteries—Melk, Aggsbach and Tegernsee.

Vincent of Aggsbach, a onetime follower of Jean Gerson (1363-1429), wrote on June 1-12, 1453, the *Tract of a Certain Carthusian on Mystical Theology* (*Tractatus cujusdam Carthusiensis de Mystica Theologia*), which he sent to the Benedictine Johannes Schlitpacher, O.S.B. (1403-1482) of Melk. In it he expressed his disappointment that Cusanus and Johannes Keck (d. 1450) of Tegernsee, with whose works he was familiar, were not in agreement with him about the nature of mystical theology. He was afraid that if one group followed Hugh of Balma, a second Gerson, a third Keck and a fourth Cusanus, "schismata" might result.

In an extended letter of December 9, 1454, to Prior Johannes Schlitpacher of Melk, Vincent took a position against the three stars, "Gerchumar," that is, Gerson, Cusanus (Chusa) and Marquard Sprenger (c. 1400-1474), as well as against Bernhard von Waging's *Laudatorium*. On August 26, 1459, Vincent wrote the *Rebuttal*, which, as stated above, was a sharp reply to the defense of the *Laudatorium*. During these years Vincent exchanged letters about mystical theology not only with Bernhard von Waging and Johannes Schlitpacher, but also with Konrad von Geisenfeld (d. 1460), former prior and later sacristan of Tegernsee, and Marquard Sprenger. Over the question of Church politics, Vincent, like many other clergymen in Austria, was a convinced supporter of the Council of Basel (1431-1449). He died on January 19, 1464, in Aggsbach, where he was buried.

The buildings of the former Carthusian house at Aggsbach are extant, but in private hands. The chapel of the house serves as the parish church of Aggsbach. The Second International Congress on Carthusian History and Spirituality was held at Aggsbach in 1980, in commemoration of the six-hundredth anniversary of the charterhouse's founding.

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3. Cardinal Bessarion (1403-1472)

At sunset on November 27, 1437, a papal fleet left the Golden Horn in Constantinople, carrying the Emperor John VIII Palaeologus (r. 1425-1448), the Patriarch Joseph II of Constantinople (1416-1439), Archbishop Mark Eugenicus of Ephesus (c. 1394-1444/1452) and other dignitaries of the Greek Church, to travel to Venice to attend the forthcoming Council of Ferrara (1438). Among them were Archbishop Bessarion of Nicaea and Nicholas of Cusa. Cusanus had arrived at Constantinople on September 24 as a delegate of the minority party of the Council of Basel (1431-1449) to the Greek Church. Cusanus' friendship with Bessarion, which began in Constantinople, was to continue for many years to come.

Born in Trebizond on January 2, 1403, into a family of superior craftsmen, Bessarion came under the guidance of the Metropolitan Dositheos of Trebizond (d. c. 1452) in his youth. At the age of thirteen he was sent to Constantinople to further his education in Greek literature and philosophy. He may have attended the school of rhetoric run by George Chrysococces (1335-1350) there. His fellow students included Francesco Filelfo (1398-1481) and George Scholarios (Gennadius; c. 1400-c. 1468). Later he began theological studies with John (= Ignatius) Chortasmenos (c. 1370-c. 1436/37), the Bishop of Selymbria. After joining the Basilian order on January 30, 1423, he changed his name from John to Bessarion, writing an encomium in honor of the fifth-century saint chosen as his patron. Ordained priest in 1431, Bessarion traveled sometime between 1431 and 1433 to the Peloponnesian city of Mistra and studied with Georgios Gemistos Plethon (c. 1355-1450), *vir platonicus*, whom Bessarion called "the only initiate and true guide to the vision of the Platonic mysteries" (Hankins, vol.1, 218, n.135). It is known that while in the Peloponnesus in 1436, Bessarion settled a dispute between Demetrios Palaeologus and his brother, the Emperor John VIII Palaeologus, thus enhancing his reputation for diplomatic skills. Recalled to Constantinople in 1436, he became abbot of the monastery of St. Basil.

In preparation for the Council of Ferrara, Bessarion was made Archbishop of Nicaea in 1437 by the Emperor John VIII Palaeologus. He took ship on November 27, 1437, as indicated above, as part of the emperor's retinue to the council, and arrived at the Lido in Venice on February 4, 1438. At the council, Bessarion served with Archbishop Mark Eugenicus of Ephesus as spokesmen for the Greek Church. He was at first a firm defender of the Greek position. But after the removal of the council to Florence in 1439, he gradually began to accept the Roman position on the *filioque* question and the procession of the Holy Spirit, and signed the decree of the union on June 6, 1439. Despite an offer to remain in the Roman Curia, he returned to Constantinople on February 1, 1440. Bessarion learned that he had been created a cardinal by Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431–1447) on December 18, 1439, but he did not return to Florence until December 10, 1440. He then accompanied Eugenius IV and the papal court to Rome on September 28, 1443 and took up residence near his title church of the Twelve Apostles. His house still exists in Rome as La casina del Cardinale Bessarione at Via Porta S. Sebastiano, 8.

Mastering Latin and Italian within a few years after 1443, Bessarion became one of the most able and influential members of the Roman Church. He was charged with the beatification process for St. Bernardino of Siena (1360-1444) in 1449 and served as papal legate to settle a peace between Venice and Milan in September 1449. In 1450 he was made legate *a latere* by Pope Nicholas V (1397-1455) to govern the papal city of Bologna, in which position he served until 1455. He then went on difficult embassies: to Naples in 1457, after attending the Congress of Mantua in 1459-1460; to Germany in 1460-1461; and to Venice in 1463, in order to stir the rulers of these lands to join a crusade against the Turks. On the death of Cardinal Isidore of Kiev in 1463, he was made Patriarch of Constantinople by the pope and, aware that he himself was not far from death, he wrote on May 27, 1463 at Viterbo an encyclical letter to the Greeks living under the Turks. The news of the fall of Negropont on July 12, 1470 drove Bessarion the "patriot" into great despondence. But on the same day he wrote the *Orations against the Turks* (*Orationes contra Turcos*), in which he tried to arouse princes to a crusade. The final version of the *Orations* was spread in northern Europe by Guillaume Fichet (1433-1480), Rector of the Sorbonne, who had introduced the first printing press into Paris. On his way back from his last, difficult and disappointing mission to King Louis XI (1423-1483; r. 1461-1483) of France, Bessarion died at Ravenna on November 18, 1472. His body was returned to his title church. At his funeral, the learned Cardinal Nicolò Capranica (1400-1458) delivered his panegyric.

Bessarion's early writings were mostly court elegies, panegyrics and letters. Before the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-1439), he had rejected the doctrine of Gregorios Palamas in a defense of the writings of John XI Beccus. But at the council he delivered a *Dogmatic Oration in Favor of Union* (*Oratio dogmatica pro unione*) in 1439. After the council he wrote a *Refutation of the Propositions of Mark Eugenicus of Ephesus*, a *Letter of Alexius Lascaris Philanthropenius on the Procession of the Holy Spirit* around 1444, and a *Letter to Despot Constantine Palaeologus* on the defense of Greece in 1444. When he was appointed protector of the Greek monks in Italy, he wrote an epitome of the rule of St. Basil, reorganized their government and held a general chapter for the Basilians in 1446.

"From the 1450s until his death in 1472 he increasingly perceived it to be his mission, not so much to restore the Greek empire in Constantinople, as to preserve and transmit to the West the spiritual and cultural heritage of Greek civilization" (Hankins, vol.1, 232).

After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, he decided to collect all the extant Greek literature, both classic and patristic, and bequeathed through the Act of Donation (*Instrumentum Donationis*) of May 31, 1468, a library of four hundred and eighty-two Greek codices and two hundred and sixty-four Latin ones to the Republic of Venice, which he regarded as his second *patria* because of its many contacts with the East and its large population of Greek émigrés. The library has been preserved as the Bibliotheca Marciana in Venice.

Aided by Popes Nicholas V, Pius II and Paul II, Bessarion had the classic and patristic Greek literature translated into Latin; helped and protected a circle of learned humanists such as Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459), Lorenzo Valla (1407-

1457) and Bartolomeo Platina (1421-1481); and translated into Latin, for example, Aristotle's *Metaphysics* between 1447 and 1453 and Xenophon's *Remembrances of Socrates* (*Memorabilia Socratis*). He dedicated the *Memorabilia* to Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444), Cusanus' teacher. Most importantly, Bessarion the Platonist defended the philosopher's reputation in his treatise *Against a Slanderer of Plato* (*In caluminatorem Platonis*), which was directed against the views of George of Trebizond (1395-1484), a champion of Aristotle, expressed in his *Comparisons of the Philosophers* (*Comparationes philosophorum*). Bessarion's treatise provided the West with a good knowledge of Plato's philosophy and demonstrated at the same time its reconcilability with both Aristotle and Christianity. It was edited and printed by Conrad Sweynheym (d. 1477) and Arnold Pannartz (d. 1475) as *Against a Slanderer of Plato* (*In Calumniatorem Platonis*) at Rome in 1469. Bessarion also wrote *On Nature and Art* (*De natura et arte*) between 1464 and 1465, to compare the views of Plato and Aristotle on nature. Lorenzo Valla considered Bessarion "The most Greek among the Latins; the most Latin among the Greeks" (*Latinorum Graecissimus, Graecorum Latinossimus*). But John Monfasani has shown that most of Bessarion's writings were thought out in Greek first and then Latinized, in all probability by Niccolò Perotti (1429-1480), who had entered the service of Bessarion in 1447.

Although there is no concrete evidence, it can be assumed that during the voyage from Constantinople to Venice in 1438, which lasted almost three and a half months, Cusanus had ample time to become acquainted with the leading intellectuals of the Greek Church, including Bessarion. He was indeed "in the company of the greatest minds of the Byzantine world of that day" (Bilaniuk, 118). It is not surprising that, as is well known, Cusanus had his famous vision at sea, receiving "a supreme gift of the Father of Lights," which inspired him to write his most famous philosophical work, *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440), a work very much influenced by Neoplatonic ideas. The paths of the two Platonists, Bessarion and Cusanus, did not cross frequently in their later lives. But both attended the Congress of Mantua in 1439 to support their mutual friend, Pope Pius II, who was determined to organize a crusade against the Turks. On his legation to Germany (1460-1461) around February 13, 1460, Bessarion visited Brixen, Cusanus' seat as bishop. But, afraid of Duke Sigmund's attacks after the so-called Wilten Affair, Cusanus had already left Brixen on July 4, 1457, and was at Castle Bruneck.

Because of the close relations between the two cardinals, both intellectual and ecclesiastical, it is not surprising that Cusanus owned two copies of Bessarion's translation of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. One has been preserved as Cod. Cus. 184 in St. Nicholas Hospital in Bernkastel-Kues, another as Cod. Harl. 4241 in the British Museum. The first was given to Cusanus by the translator; the second was acquired by Cusanus sometime before he wrote *On the Pursuit of Wisdom* (*De venatione sapientiae*) in 1462. Both manuscripts have marginal notes by Cusanus, indicating that he read and used Bessarion's translation, which he considered a very good one. He characterized it as follows:

> The most reverend Cardinal of Nicaea made this translation, a better one than which cannot exist; and I had the book corrected from the original in the hand of the same lord cardinal [1453].
>
> (Istam translacionem fecit reverendissimus Cardinalis nicenus que non posset esse melior, et feci corrigi librum ex originali de manu eiusdem domini cardinalis 1453.)

Bessarion was accused by some contemporary and later Greeks of betraying the Greek Church by promoting the union of the East and West Churches and by becoming an important prelate of the Church of Rome. No less a scholar than Joseph Gill, S.J. (1901-1980) discussed "the sincerity of Bessarion's acceptance of the union of Florence" (Gill, "Cardinal Bessarion"). Did Cusanus, who was also criticized for his change of allegiance from the conciliar to the papal side around 1437, sympathize with Bessarion? Did Cusanus share the views of Bessarion, whom Johannes Irmscher called a "patriot?" To what extent were they interested in the development of humanistic studies? Despite their different backgrounds, they clearly had many things in common.

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4. Giovanni Andrea Bussi (1417-1475)

George H. Putnam wrote in 1896:

> The introduction into Italy of the art of printing was due to Juan Turrecremata who was Abbot of the monastery of Subiaco, and who later became Cardinal … The Abbot was keenly interested in the possibilities presented by the new art, and with the aid of these German monks [of the monastery] he arranged to bring to Subiaco two printers, Conrad Schweinheim of Mayence, and Arnold Pannartz of Prague, who were instructed to organize a printing-office in the monastery. (404-405)

The role played by Conrad Sweynheym (d. 1477) and Arnold Pannartz (d. 1476), as well as Cardinal Juan de Torquemada (Turrecremata, 1388-1468), in the development of printing in Italy is widely recognized. But what contributions Giovanni Andrea Bussi, Cusanus' onetime secretary, and perhaps Cusanus himself, made to the dissemination of the art of printing in Italy is not so well known.

Giovanni Andrea Bussi (Bossi or de' Bussi) was born in Vigevano near Milan on July 14, 1417, into a family of some local importance. As a result, his name often included "Vigevius" (or Vigenius, Vegevenus, Vigerinus). He studied in Paris in 1435 and entered the school of the famous humanist Vittorio da Feltre (1378-1446) at Mantua in 1440. After teaching school in Genoa in 1449, he came to the Roman Curia, where he became an acolyte for Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455) in 1451. On November 1, 1455, Calixtus III (r. 1455-1458) made Bussi Canon of St. Ambrose in Milan. He was also made Abbot of St. Giustina near Sezzadio on November 19, 1455, but, as Erich Meuthen has shown, because of strong opposition from Francesco Sforza (1401-1466), Duke of Milan, his nomination could not take effect for some time. Bussi's family was known for its opposition to Sforza rule. On January 1, 1456, Bussi obtained the post of secretary to Pope Calixtus III. But his position in the Roman Curia was made difficult because of Milanese disfavor. Some sources indicate that he was financially in a miserable condition. It was even said that he had to sell his services in the street as a scrivener.

When Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa, who had come to Rome after the difficult years of service as Bishop of Brixen, chose Bussi as his secretary in 1458, his economic and ecclesiastical positions somewhat improved. But the problem of the Abbey of St. Giustina continued to trouble him. Nominated to the poor Bishopric of Accia in Corsica in 1462 by Pius II (r. 1458-1464), promoted to the office of General Vicar of Genoa in 1464, but, because of Sforzan resistance, transferred to the Bishopric of Aleria in Corsica on June 23, 1466, Bussi continued his precarious ecclesiastical life. Although he was never in Corsica, he began to be known as *episcopus Aleriensis*. After Cusanus' death in 1464, Bussi accompanied Cardinal Juan de Carvajal (c. 1400-1469) on an embassy to Venice in 1466/67 and finally became secretary to Sixtus IV (r. 1471-1484) and director of the Vatican Library in 1472. As the inscription on his tomb in the Church of San Pietro in Vincoli in Rome shows, he died on February 4, 1475, in Rome.

As G. H. Putnam indicated, Conrad Sweynheym and Arnold Pannartz, printers from Mainz, set up a printing press in the Benedictine monastery at Subiaco, some thirty or forty miles from Rome. Of the fifty-five printed books that are attributed to them, four were printed between 1465 and 1467 at Subiaco. In 1465, or possibly a year earlier, they printed an edition of Donatus' grammar book, *Ars minor*, of which no copy survives, but which appeared in a list of their books that they drew up in 1472. They then produced two books in 1465, Cicero's *On the Orator* (*De oratore*), which was published before September 30, and an edition of the *Opera* of Lactantius, which was completed on October 29. The fourth book was by Augustine, *The City of God* (*De civitate Dei*), completed on June 12, 1467.

Sweynheym and Pannartz established their printing press in Rome in 1467; Bussi became their editor around December 13, 1468. Sweynheym and Pannartz printed fifty-one books in Rome between 1467 and 1473. Thirty-one of them were under Bussi's direction from 1468 to May 26, 1472, the date of his retirement from the editorship. According to Remegio Sabbadini, the *editio princeps* of the books which Sweynheym and Pannartz printed under Bussi's editorship included Cicero, Virgil, Caesar, Ovid, Livy, Pliny, Lucan, Quintilian, Suetonius, Silius Italicus, Aulus Gellius and Apuleius. They also published the works of Jerome, Leo the Great, Thomas Aquinas, Nicholas of Lyra and others.

Particularly noteworthy was Bussi's edition of Apuleius, which was published in 1469. M. D. Feld observed:

> Apuleius was the first pagan author in the series published with Bussi's prefaces. As in his two preceding prefaces to Jerome's *Epistolae*, the remarks are formally addressed to Pope Paul II. This preface to Apuleius is, however, unique in that Bussi's opening sentence makes it obvious that he had someone other than the pope in mind: "Bessarion of the Holy Roman Church," it begins, "Cardinal Bishop of Sabina and Patriarch of Constantinople, resoundingly acclaimed throughout all the lands by the venerated name of Nicaea." ("The First Roman Printers," 23)

John F. D'Amico states that:

> especially prominent among (Bussi's) productions were editions of Platonistic writings and Greek translations. His association with Bessarion partly accounts for these interests. (14)

Altogether, Bussi wrote twenty-five or so prefaces. In the preface to the first volume of Jerome, he extols Cusanus' learning and goes on to indicate emphatically that the cardinal took a strong interest in the recently invented sacred art (*sancta ars*) of printing and that Cusanus was instrumental in introducing the press into Italy. He wrote:

> That ever-glorious and heaven-worthy soul of Nicholas of Cusa, Cardinal of St. Peter in Chains, chose that this holy art, which seems to have originated then in Germany, should be brought to Rome.
>
> (Semper gloriosa illa et caelo digna anima Nicolai Cusensis, Cardinalis ad Sancti Petri ad vincula, peroptabat ut haec sancta ars, quae oriri tunc videbatur in Germania, Romam deduceretur.) (Bussi, 4)

After all, Cusanus was a German and a contemporary of Johann Gutenberg (c. 1399-1468). Whether or not Cusanus either actually came into contact with Gutenberg or was influenced by him has been discussed by many scholars. Ferdinand Geldner, the historian of printing, called Cusanus "the key figure in the beginning of Italian printing" (33). Some scholars have tried to show that Cusanus was in Mainz four times in his life. Citing the works of Meuthen and Kapr, Feld stated:

> Recent research supports the hypothesis that printing came to Italy under the sponsorship of Nicolas of Cusa and that it was summoned by him with specific applications in mind. ("A Theory," [I], 351)

But available sources do not clearly establish that Cusanus was ever in touch with Gutenberg in Mainz or elsewhere, or that he was directly involved in the introduction of the printing press into Italy.

As Cusanus' secretary from 1458 to 1464, Bussi must have worked hard and gained the cardinal's confidence. In two of Cusanus' later works, *Trialogus on Actualized-Possibility* (*Trialogus de possest*) of 1460 and *On the Not-Other* (*De non aliud*) of 1462, he appears as an interlocutor, in the Heidelberg edition of the former book as *Iohannes Andreas Vigevius* and in the out-of-print Heidelberg edition of the latter as *Ioannes Andreas Vigevius Abbas*.

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5. Heymericus de Campo (1395-1460)

When Nicholas of Cusa went to the University of Cologne in 1425 as "Doctor of Canon Law from Trier" (*doctor in iure canonico*) after obtaining the degree (*decretorum doctor*) from the University of Padua in 1423, he was starting a new phase of his life, which began to lead him gradually away from the field of law to philosophy and theology. It is true that while in Cologne Cusanus continued to show great interest in law and legal history, as is shown by his investigations of old, dusty law books in the library of the Cathedral of Cologne. He wrote later, in 1433 or 1434, in *The Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*): "For I saw in the major church at Cologne a huge volume of all bulls" (*Ego enim Colonie in maiori ecclesia volumen ingens … omnium bullarum vidi*. [h. XIV, n. 316; *Acta Cusana*, I, 1, 10, Nr. 27]). It is also said that while staying in Cologne, Cusanus taught law. Hermann Keussen, one of the best historians of the University of Cologne, listed Cusanus as a member of the Law Faculty (452). The picture of Cusanus, together with his fellow law and theology professors at the Universities of Cologne and Heidelberg, writing his legal opinion in 1426 on a tax case between the parish church of Bacharach and Elector Ludwig III, can be cited as a good reason for the contention that Cusanus was a professor of law at Cologne. His reputation as a lawyer was so high that the University of Louvain, which had been founded in 1425, tried in 1428 to induce Cusanus to become a canon law professor at the university. Cusanus declined. A similar invitation, extended to him in 1435, was also turned down.

These questions about Cusanus' interest in legal matters while residing in Cologne should not detain us here unduly as we examine his philosophical developments as a member of the Cologne academic community. The person who influenced Cusanus as a student of philosophy at Cologne was Heymericus de Campo (Heimericus van den Velde).

Born in Son, southwest of Eindhoven in the Netherlands in 1395, Heymericus began his studies of the arts in 1410 at the University of Paris, where he became a student of Joannes de Nova Domo (d. 1418), who was known as a strong opponent of Nominalism. He then earned the magister of arts degree in 1415. Summoned by his friend Johannes Carnelii, Heymericus went to Diest near Louvain after his professor's death in 1418 and taught at the chapter school for two years. At the request of Heinrich von Gorkum (d. 1431), the famous Thomist at the University of

Cologne, he moved to Cologne at the beginning of 1422 and obtained the degrees *Baccalareus biblicus* in 1423, *Baccalareus sententiarum* in 1424 and *Baccalareus formatus* in 1425 in the Faculty of Theology while teaching students at the Bursa Laurentiana. The Bursa had a large number of students who were followers of Albertism (*scola Albertistarum*). Eusebio Colomer is of the opinion that Cusanus studied theology under the guidance of Heymericus from 1425 to 1426. It is well to remember that the University of Cologne was at that time a center of theological disputes among Nominalists, Thomists and Albertists.

Having earned his doctorate in 1428, Heymericus began to teach in the Faculty of Theology after 1429 as Rutger Overhach de Tremonia's successor. Thus he began his professional career at the University of Cologne as a distinguished exponent of the school of Albertism. It was shown by Rudolf Haubst in 1980 that Cusanus and Heymericus visited the Carthusian monastery of Vauvert near Paris in March 1426 to copy Ramon Llull's manuscripts. Some Llull scholars believe that Cusanus was already exposed to Llull when he was at Padua from 1417 to 1423. By contrast, Heymericus himself became acquainted with the writings of Llull while he was in Paris as a student from 1410 to 1418. It is difficult to establish who influenced whom, but there is reason to believe that Heymericus urged Cusanus to go to Paris with him in 1426.

Heymericus' academic position at the University of Cologne became increasingly important. In 1431 he was elected vice chancellor. In October 1432 he was chosen to serve as rector for two months. A call came to him the same year from the University of Louvain, but it was not until 1435 that he went to Louvain as professor of theology. One of the main reasons for the delay was that from the middle of December, 1432 to the end of February, 1435 he served as representative of the University of Cologne at the Council of Basel. His lengthy treatise in support of the conciliar position, *Disputation of Master Heymericus de Campo on the Authority of the Church Held at the Council of Basel* (*Disputatio magistri Heymerici de Campo de potestate ecclesiastica in Basiliense concilio collate*), was composed between Easter 1433 and Easter 1434. The statement in the work that a friend of the author suggested that he write it probably refers to Cusanus, who himself completed his *De concordantia catholica* in 1433 or 1434. Heymericus' participation in the investigation of the Hussites at the Council of Basel resulted in his works, *Erroneous Articles Ascribed to the Hussites or Prague Party* (*Articuli erronei asscribuntur Hussitis vel Pragensibus*) and *Whether Greater Grace Is Conferred on Communicants under Both Kinds than under One Kind* (*An maior gracia conferatur communicanti sub utraque quam sub una specie*).

Like Cusanus and other notable members of the Council of Basel, Heymericus abandoned the conciliar party and had moved over to the side of Pope Eugenius IV by 1440. It is notable that he explained and justified the change of his position in a tract titled *Apology for Why He Abandoned the Council of Basel for Eugenius IV* (*Apologia cur recesserit a Concilio Basiliensi et Eugenio quarto adheserit*).

What happened in the relations of the Dutch scholar and his German colleague or friend afterwards is not very clear. But it is certainly conceivable that during his time as papal legate in 1451-1452, Cusanus came to Louvain and met with his old friend Heymericus. By this time Cusanus, who was once a colleague of

Heymericus, was exercising great influence on Heymericus through his writings. There is evidence that Heymericus carefully studied Cusanus' works, including *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*), *On Conjectures* (*De coniecturis*), *Complementary Theological Considerations* (*De complementis theologicis*) and *On the Peace of Faith* (*De pace fidei*). His interest in Llull, like that of Cusanus, continued, as is shown by the fact that he gave courses on Llull in Bethlehem, a monastery near Louvain.

Having served for a long time not only as professor but also as school administrator, Heymericus' position at Louvain as a famous Albertist philosopher was secure. When in 1438 a large number of children began to march as pilgrims towards Mont-Saint-Michel, he was one of those who wondered whether the children were inspired by the Holy Spirit or misled by the devil. His tract on the issue, *Conclusion on Pilgrimage* (*Determinatio super peregrinacione*), is a rather sympathetic attempt to explain the extraordinary event. It has been preserved only in Codex Cusanus 105 in Cusanus' library in Bernkastel-Kues. Sometime before his death in 1460, Heymericus' massive *Centheologicon* was completed. As Ruedi Imbach has shown (1983), it is a compilation of his views on theology which demonstrates his indebtedness not only to Raymond Llull but also to Nicholas of Cusa.

Was Heymericus an unoriginal thinker who merely developed the ideas of others, including Llull and Cusanus? In what sense and to what extent was he a conciliarist? Was there an exchange of positions as teacher and student between Heymericus and Cusanus? Questions like these about this writer of dense and difficult Latin can soon begin to be examined seriously as the *Heymericus de Campo opera selecta*, the critical edition of his writings which was announced some time ago by Ruedi Imbach and Pascal Ladner, and whose first volume was published in 2001, becomes available to the serious reader.

An important article on Heymericus de Campo and Cusanus was published by Klaus Reinhardt on "Werke des Heymericus de Campo (†1460) im Codex Cusanus 24." Reinhardt points out that two codices in the Cusan Library in Bernkastel-Kues, Codex 105 and Codex 106, have been known as containing Heymericus de Campo's writings and that while the latter, with Cusanus' many notations, has been studied by Rudolf Haubst, Eusebio Colomer and others, the former, containing a *Summary Epilogue of the Lord's Passion* (*Summarius dominice passionis epilogus*) and Heymericus' opinion on the children's pilgrimage to Mont-Saint-Michel in 1458, has received little attention until recently. It is the purpose of Reinhardt's article to demonstrate that the Cusan Library has a third codex, Codex 24, which contains another work of Heymericus de Campo.

Although Codex 24 is anonymous, a careful comparison, which was completed by Martinus de Medemblick on May 13, 1439, with MS Theol. Fol. 92 of the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin and MS 13946 (Suppl. 2630) of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, both of which name Heymericus de Campo as the author, shows clearly that despite some minor differences in organization, these three manuscripts all contain a work of Heymericus de Campo, which he delivered as an introduction to his lectures as professor of theology at the University of Cologne in 1429 and which shows traces of the influence of Aristotle, Augustine,

Pseudo-Dionysius, Julius Africanus, Alan of Lille, Nicholas of Amiens and Peter Lombardus. Reinhardt concludes his detailed study by saying that it is difficult to state what significance Codex Cusanus 24 has for Cusanus research. Not only is it unknown when the codex came into the Cusan Library, but also it is not clear if Cusanus read it.

More important than the above article is a new book published in 2006 by Florian Hamann. Especially in its two chapters called "Heymericus and Nicholas of Cusa" and "The Result," Hamann compares the ideas of the Dutch philosopher and those of the young German philosopher. Although they were both in Cologne at the same time, it is not accurate, as is often asserted, to call them teacher and student. Cusanus had already received the degree in canon law from the University of Padua in 1423 and, although clear evidence is lacking, he may have taught canon law at the University of Cologne. Although Hamann does not mention the wine toll case of Bacharach in 1426, which is described elsewhere in this book, Cusanus participated in the legal case together with sixty-eight professors of law and theology from the Universities of Cologne and Heidelberg.

Not only were Heymericus and Nicholas academically and professionally of equal standing at the University of Cologne, they were, as Hamann shows, very close intellectually and philosophically. One of the important signs that show their similar philosophical and theological ideas was their interest in the ideas of Ramon Llull (1232/33-1315/16). As we discussed above, Cusanus and Heymericus visited the Carthusian Monastery of Vauvert outside of Paris in March 1428 and examined the manuscripts of Ramon Llull. Cusanus was to refer to Llull for the first time in 1433 in a sermon. In the case of Heymericus, the first clear reference to Llull appeared in his *Disputation on Ecclesiastical Power* (*Disputatio de potestate ecclesiastica*, 1433).

Clearly, Heymericus and Cusanus were very much interested in each other's philosophical and theological ideas. Hamann shows that Heymericus owned Cusanus' *Complementary Theological Considerations* (*De theologicis complementis*) and *Complementary Mathematical Considerations* (*De mathematicis complementis*), and knew about *On Learned Ignorance*, *On Conjectures* and *On the Peace of Faith*. Cusanus, in turn, owned Heymericus' *Disputation on the Authority of the Church*, *A Gathering Together of Principles* (*Colliget principiorum*) and other short pieces. Hamann also points out that independent of Ramon Llull, Heymericus and Cusanus were both very much interested in Islam. It is known that in January 1454 Heymericus clearly called Cusanus "our teacher" (praeceptor noster) and had expressed similar ideas even before. According to Hamann, then, Heymericus was Cusanus' "intellectual friend and discussion partner" (259).

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6. Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444)

Gerald Christianson

Cardinal, jurist, legate for Bohemia, president of the Council of Basel, victim of the Varna crusade, well-remembered friend of Nicholas of Cusa—Giuliano Cesarini is sufficiently interesting in himself, but readers familiar with Cusanus will especially recall that he dedicated three works to his friend and mentor: *The Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*, 1433/34), *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440) and *On Conjectures* (*De coniecturis*, 1444). These expressions of gratitude remind us that Cesarini's career contains two major enigmas, both of which touch on Cusanus. The first is Cesarini's apparent vacillation between the respective authorities of pope and council, dramatized by his departure from Basel—like Cusanus' before him; and the second, the extent to which Cesarini influenced the young scholar from Kues.

More is known and written about the former than the latter. Born at Rome of a poor but noble family, according to tradition in 1389, Cesarini first distinguished himself as a student and teacher of law. He received doctorates in both civil and canon law at Padua in 1418 and 1421-1422 respectively. As a teacher he gathered a number of admiring friends and students, among them Domenico Capranica (1400-1458), Gregor Heimburg (c. 1400-1472) and Cusanus. Employment with Cardinal Branda da Castiglione, legate to Bohemia and Germany in 1422-1423, helped to determine the two major goals of his life: to restrain heresy and to reform the Church.

Pope Martin V (1368-1431) nominated Cesarini to the cardinalate in May 1426, but did not publish the nomination until November 1430. Shortly thereafter (January/February, 1431) the pope named him legate *a latere* for Bohemia and the Council of Basel. These nominations were among the pope's very last official acts before he died.

Like earlier Catholic forays into Bohemia, Cesarini's crusade against the Hussites ended in dismal failure at Domažlice (Taus) on August 14, 1431. The cardinal barely escaped with his life. Losing little time, he made for Basel to exercise his second legation, arriving in September to join an assembly that his ambassadors had opened in July. Shortly thereafter Capranica and Cusanus were incorporated into the council.

The president-legate's many tasks can be divided into four categories, matching the goals set by the papal bulls of convocation: defense of the faith (the Hussite affair), peace (the Hundred Years War), unity (the Eastern Church) and reform. Besides these matters, Cesarini was called upon immediately to increase the size of the assembly and organize its functions in such a way as to allow as little domination by special interests as possible. The result was a council notable for its size, broad representation and a modus operandi that encouraged free and open discussions, which on occasion could turn raucous.

Circumstances, however, brought an additional task to prominence almost at once. Martin's successor, Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447), tried to transfer and then close the council and recall his legate. Cesarini at first withdrew from the assembly, but as resistance stiffened among all ranks, he returned to his post as president and led the opposition. He personally wrote a formula of adhesion, and then negotiated with the Curia until the pope reluctantly agreed, in 1433, to sign it. Cesarini's most significant writings and speeches played a prominent role during this period when the fate of the council hung in the balance. Even after one has taken into account personal self-interest and political circumstances, this policy of conciliar resistance to the papacy remains his greatest achievement.

There were other accomplishments as well. He brought the Hussite Bohemians to a remarkable conference in Basel during 1433, and kept the two sides talking until the fundamentals of a settlement began to appear. He forged a program of reform out of numerous and disparate individual demands—ranging from the universal to the petty—and saw several major reform decrees through to completion, including a highly controversial one on the withdrawal of annates, a lucrative but often despised tax paid to the papacy. This action, as much as any other, rekindled the resolve of Eugenius IV to resist the assembly and enlist the princes of Europe to support him.

The cardinal also pressed the assembly to take the first steps towards an agreement on unity with the Eastern Church, but it was here that he stumbled. Long-standing mutual distrust between the pope and the council was exacerbated by the issue of where a future union council should be held (in Italy, Basel or some other location). The Fathers polarized into two camps: the majority led by Cardinal Louis Aleman and a minority led by Cesarini with the support of Cusanus. Out of this volatile conflict a famous confrontation took place in May 1437, when both parties read decrees at opposite ends of the cathedral. Cesarini remained after this, his influence diminished, but he finally left Basel in January 1438, a few months after he had sent Nicholas, bearing the minority decree, to Eugenius.

The former president of a now schismatic council played a significant, although different, role at the Council of Ferrara-Florence, where his standing among the Greeks proved effective during debates over the highly disputed issues of purgatory and the *filioqu*e, the clause in the Western version of the Nicene Creed in which the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. His contributions were rewarded when he and Bessarion were given the honor of reading the Latin and Greek texts of the union decree in July 1439.

The Cesarini story ends much as it began, with the total rout of his crusading army by the Turks at Varna on the Black Sea in November 1444. His body was never found, allowing friends like Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (the future Pope Pius II) to hold out hope for some time that their friend was somehow still alive. The Roman Curia delayed as long as possible holding memorial services, hoping the cardinal would reappear.

What most captivated past historians were the dramatic conflicts in the cardinal's career. Among other assessments, he was portrayed as a Roman nationalist, a political humanist, a failed champion of parliamentarianism or simply as an activist

with little or no unified vision. Part of the reason for this variety is the relatively modest size of the written materials from the cardinal's hand. Modern research, however, has found that his lengthy letters, speeches and memoranda constitute a consistent conciliar theology based on a more than superficial reading of history, the Bible and, above all, canon law. Cesarini had sounded the depths of the canonistic tradition and worked its principles into a pragmatic vision of the Church while under the almost continuous pressures of an often conflictual council. Seen from this perspective, he fills remarkably well many of the characteristics of a moderate, mediating conciliar theorist sketched out in the abstract by Brian Tierney's epoch-making book of 1955, *Foundations of the Conciliar Theory*.

A particularly controversial instance of the first enigma in Cesarini's career is his supposed "conversion" from Basel to Eugenius in or around 1438. But opinion within the Church was still in flux and had not so fully hardened into ideological extremes that one is required to make a sharp distinction between a conciliar Cesarini and a papal Cesarini. Even after his departure, the cardinal remained willing to defend conciliar authority against Juan de Torquemada in 1439 while both were active in the Council of Florence.

As to the second enigma—Cusanus' early dependence on Cesarini—some might want to exercise a certain amount of caution about giving too much weight to the dedications Nicholas addressed to his friend. In regard to *On Learned Ignorance*, on the other hand, F. Edward Cranz in personal conversations often urged further study to determine what metaphysical inclinations Cusanus may have learned from Cesarini that would have prompted him to believe that his mentor could grasp a concept as novel as the coincidence of opposites (*coincidentia oppositorum*) or his "shipboard experience," given by the Father of Lights during his return voyage from Constantinople.

We may never be able to answer this question with certainty, but a more precise comparison with *The Catholic Concordance* suggests some striking parallels. To say that Cesarini contributed nothing new to Cusanus' thought in this work does not prohibit us from surmising that Cesarini the teacher passed on to Cusanus not only the canonistic tradition in general, but also mediated to him a specifically corporate and conciliar form of this tradition which he likely derived from the great legist and predecessor at Padua, Cardinal Francis Zabarella (1360-1417). Apart from the mathematical interests and Pseudo-Dionysian speculations of the *Concordance*, the general juridical themes of Cusanus' masterpiece were those that Cesarini expressed in his sometimes heated, but always learned and sharply observant correspondence with Pope Eugenius, and that he attempted to put into practice while he and Cusanus served together in the Council of Basel.

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7. Eleanor of Scotland (1433-1480)

Verena von Stuben (d. c. 1465), the redoubtable abbess of the Benedictine convent of Sonnenburg in the Pustertal, has been discussed in many studies of Nicholas of Cusa. Maria von Wolkenstein (d. 1478), a daughter of the famous Minnesinger Oswald von Wolkenstein (d. 1445), has also been mentioned from time to time in connection with Cusanus' efforts to reform the convent of St. Clare in Brixen in 1455. In his last years Cusanus was in contact with the wives of two Italian princes, Marquise Barbara Gonzaga of Mantua and Duchess Maria Sforza-Visconti of Milan. But Eleanor of Scotland is no doubt one of the most important women in connection with Cusanus, and she should be studied carefully if we are to understand Cusanus' activities in the Tyrol after 1452.

As the sixth child of James I, King of Scots (r. 1406-1437), Eleanor was probably born in 1433. The generally presumed year of her birth is derived from the fact that when she married Sigmund, Archduke of Austria and Duke of the Tyrol (1466-1490), in 1449, she was sixteen years old. Captured on his way to France in 1406 and detained in England for eighteen years, James I met John Beaufort (c. 1373-1410), Earl of Somerset, son of John of Gaunt, possibly at Melun and fell in love with John's sister, Joan. Their marriage took place sometime during the first fortnight of February 1424 in the Church of St. Mary's, Overy (now Southwark Cathedral), in Southwark, across the Thames from London. The match was arranged in conjunction with James' release to ensure a "permanent peace" between England and Scotland, but for a substantial ransom. Joan's uncle, Henry Beaufort (c. 1375-1447), Bishop of Winchester and later known as the "Rich Cardinal," acted as officiating minister and afterwards gave "a great solemnity and feast holden in the bishop's inn of Winchester" near the church (Radford, 120). In May James was crowned at Scone.

James I and Joan had eight children. The first child, James, reigned effectively for twenty-three years as James II after the famous murder of his father in 1437 and died a violent death, like his father, in 1460. The second son, Alexander, died as an infant. Of the six daughters—Margaret, Isabella, Joanna, Eleanor, Mary and Annabella—only one, Joanna, who wed a member of the House of Douglas, was married in Scotland. Margaret, who married Dauphin Louis in 1436, died childless in 1445; Isabella married Duke Francis I of Brittany in 1442. Mary married a stadtholder of Holland, and Annabella was twice married. James I, known in the history of English literature as an imitator of Chaucer through his poem "The Kingis Quair," transmitted his love of literature to two of his daughters, Margaret and Eleanor.

Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who came to the court of King James I at Perth on a secret mission in 1435-1436 wrote:

> The following facts about Scotland seem worth recording. It is an island two hundred miles long and fifty wide, connected with Britain and extending toward the north. It is a cold country where few things

> will grow and for the most part has no trees … The common people, who are poor and rude, stuff themselves with meat and fish, but eat bread as a luxury. The men are short and brave; the women are fair, charming and easily won … There is nothing the Scotch like better to hear than abuse of the English. (*Memoirs of a Renaissance Pope*, 33)

The future pope also reported that James was "irascible and eager for revenge" and "hated the English vigorously because of their having kept him a prisoner so long."

Almost nothing is known about Eleanor's childhood. Probably she spent much of her time at the family castle in Linlithgow. After Joan's second marriage in 1439 to Sir James Stewart, commonly known as the "Black Knight of Lorne," she lost custody of her five unmarried daughters. When she died in straitened circumstances at Castle Dunbar on July 15, 1445, only Joanna and Eleanor were living at Castle Linlithgow.

Even before Joan's death, Duchess Isabella of Burgundy had sent a letter to James II on April 20, 1445, in which she asked him to send Joanna and Eleanor to France so that suitable husbands might be found for them. Dauphin Louis was also in agreement with this arrangement. When they arrived in Flanders between August 16 and 17, they received the report that their sister Margaret had died in Chalons. King Charles VII (1422-1461) of France sent a delegation on August 14 to fetch the princesses in Tournai, and they arrived at the French court in Tours on September 9. Thereafter Eleanor and her sister lived in considerable luxury for three years and participated in many cultural and social activities at the French court. Many marriage proposals were brought for the princesses. King Charles VII, who began to develop a fatherly interest in and sympathy for the maidens, would have liked Eleanor to follow her deceased sister Margaret as Dauphin Louis' wife, but the plan floundered when Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) refused to grant a dispensation. James II's plan to marry Eleanor to Emperor Frederick III (r. 1440-1493) also came to naught.

There was a close relationship between the French court and the Tyrolese branch of the Habsburgs in Innsbruck which went back to the time of Duke Sigmund's father, Frederick IV of Austria (r. 1406-1439). During the contest over the possession of the Tyrolese lands and the guardianship of Sigmund by Emperor Frederick III, Charles VII had sided with Sigmund and intended to marry his daughter Radegunde to him. But Radegunde died in February 1445 in Tours at the age of nineteen. No marriage proposal for Sigmund was made for two years. By 1447 Isabella of Burgundy, well known for her love of matchmaking, began to make various proposals. After overcoming many difficulties and going through complicated negotiations, the Tyrolese delegation, headed by Ludwig von Landsee as representative of Sigmund, was finally able to secure Sigmund's engagement to Eleanor at Tours on February 28, 1448. The wedding itself took place with great pomp in the Augustinian church in Belmont near Chinon on September 8, 1448, with Duke Sigmund in absentia and Ludwig von Landsee again his representative.

Eleanor's trip to the Tyrol began shortly after the wedding. Because of some foreseeable dangers on the way due to the feud between the Austrian knights Hans von Rechberg and Thomas von Falkenstein and the city of Basel, Eleanor and her entourage of some one hundred and twenty persons traveled to the Tyrol via Lyons, Geneva, Fribourg, Bern, Lucerne, Zurich, Constance, Wangen, Buchhorn and Kempten. On February 12, Duke Sigmund asked his counselors accompanying Eleanor to arrive at Meran on the following Sunday, February 16. Thereafter the voluminous documents detailing the lengthy negotiations, wedding preparations and the journey abruptly break off. The reasons for the sudden silence are not too hard to fathom. Despite his nickname, which was "Rich in Coins" (*Münzreiche*), Sigmund's finances were so precarious that expensive matrimonial festivities were beyond his means. The large dowry that Eleanor was expected to bring proved to be an illusion. The Scottish bride, who was not particularly known for her beauty, had been reduced to an orphan dependent on the generosity of the French king.

Little is known about Eleanor's life during the first few years after her arrival in the Tyrol. The young couple first took up residence in a castle at Meran, which has been preserved to this day as Landesfürstliche Burg. She also lived in Bozen and, especially after 1455, spent most of her time in Innsbruck, where she welcomed artisans, musicians and others who came to the Tyrol. She made special efforts at her court to care for not only messengers and delegates but also pilgrims and students from Scotland, the homeland she had left at the age of twelve. It is known that one of her half-brothers, James Stewart, who was called "brother of my lovely wife" (*brueder meiner gnedigen frawen*), was in Innsbruck on his way to Rome, probably in connection with the death of Bishop James Kennedy of Saint Andrews, one of the regents for James III, on May 10, 1465.

Living far from Scotland and France and married to a husband fond of hunting and of pursuing beautiful women, Eleanor, whose only child, Wolfgang, is supposed to have died young, found enjoyment and consolation in literature. Her translation of the French chivalric romance *Ponthus et Sidoine* into German was completed between 1449 and 1456. She may have brought a copy of the romance from France. She was also in touch with Countess Mechthild (1418-1482) of the Palatinate, who was another cultured princess. Mechthild married Duke Albert VI (1418-1463) of Austria, Sigmund's cousin, two years after the death of her first husband, Count Ludwig of Württemberg, in 1450. Since Eleanor knew no Latin, the humanist Heinrich Steinhöwel dedicated to her his translation of Boccaccio's *On Famous Women* (*De claris mulieribus*), which Johann Zainer of Ulm had published in 1473. In his preface Steinhöwel called Eleanor "a connoisseur of all good art and artists" (*ain liebhaberin aller guten* kunst und kunster).

Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa arrived in the Tyrol in 1452 as Bishop of Brixen. He soon began in earnest his program of visiting and reforming the monasteries and convents of the diocese, such as Sonnenburg, Wilten and Stams. He was gradually but inevitably drawn into a long, bitter contest with Duke Sigmund which has been extensively described and discussed by many scholars. During Cusanus' episcopacy from 1452 to 1460 there were also many feuds in the Tyrol, such as the Gradner feud, which he tried to control without much success.

It was only after these events that Eleanor began to play a role in Tyrolese politics. During Sigmund's absence from Innsbruck in 1455, 1456/57 and 1458, as well as later in 1467, Eleanor served effectively as his regent (*Statthalterin*). Her letters, prepared by the ducal chancery, were issued in the name of the duke and signed, "Eleanor, née von Schotten, Duchess of Austria" (*Elionor geboren von Schotten, Hertzogin zu Österreich*). She invariably signed "ELIENOR," which was followed by "given in council" (*datum in consilio*). In about two dozen extant letters which the couple exchanged, both often used the salutation "My beloved spouse" (*Mein hertzn liber gemahel*).

Eleanor would almost always add how much she looked forward to her husband's return. Even during the great ban beginning August 8, 1460, when her husband was condemned because of his attack on Cusanus at Bruneck, Eleanor's relations with the Church remained good and cordial. It was remarkable that she was specifically excluded from the ban because of her good reputation as a devout and compassionate lady. Friar Felix Fabri of Ulm aptly described Eleanor as "a most devout and holy woman" (*mulier devotissima et sancta*). In her letters to Cusanus, although he was quarreling with her husband, she generally showed a deferential attitude.

Eleanor of Scotland died in Innsbruck on November 20, 1480, at about the ninth hour of the night (*um die neunte stunde in der nacht*), probably a victim of an epidemic. She was buried on December 30 in the princely vault within the Cistercian Abbey of Stams in the Tyrol. In his *Tyrolischer Adler*, Matthias Burglechner described Eleanor as follows: "She was regarded by everyone as a virtuous lady and devout princess and a kind mother to all poor widows and orphans." (*Sy war ein tugendreiche frawn und andechtige fürstin von jedmänigliche gehalten und genent zu ihrem leben ein milde mutter aller armen wittiben und weysen.*)

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8. Peter Wymar von Erkelenz (c. 1430-1494)

Right in the middle of the courtyard of St. Nicholas Hospital in Bernkastel-Kues is the grave of its fourth rector, Peter Wymar von Erkelenz. There are probably many visitors to the hospital who, unaware of the existence of the grave, leave without visiting it.

Peter was very active as Nicholas of Cusa's secretary and dealt with many problems Cusanus faced in his life after being named a cardinal in December 1448. Peter was also responsible for a testament that Cusanus asked him to draw up in 1461. Furthermore, he was with Cusanus at Todi on August 6, 1464, to execute Cusanus' second and last testament. Together with his colleagues, Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli, Cusanus' friend of forty years, Fernan (Ferdinand) Martinez, the cardinal's physician, Giovanni Andrea Bussi, the Bishop of Accia, and John Römer, Cusanus' relative on his mother's side, he was at Cusanus' bedside when his master died on August 11, 1464. Thus, Peter Wymar von Erkelenz was one of the persons closest to Nicholas of Cusa.

To our regret, almost nothing is known about Peter's youth. Born in Erkelenz, which is about thirty miles northwest of Cologne and twenty miles northeast of Aachen, he must have grown up in the same area. Erich Meuthen, who has studied Peter's life in detail, is of the opinion that the year of Peter's birth could not have been many years before 1430. His name, which was Petrus Wymari de Ercelencz in Latin, sometimes included "de Genaspen," which was used by the younger generation of his family, such as Wymars de Genaspen, Peter van Genaspen and Wimmarus (van) Genaspen. Did he, like some of the younger generation, go to a university? His later notarial activities indicate that he had some legal training. Did he, like Cusanus, study law in his youth at the University of Cologne or another university? No clear answer is available. On the whole, little information is in existence on his early days or education.

It was in 1449 or 1450 that Peter became Cusanus' secretary. How Peter came to Cusanus is another unclear facet of his life. In 1448-1449 Nicholas of Cusa was in Cologne, Düsseldorf and Maastricht in connection with the feud between Cologne and Kleve. Cusanus also went to Rome in 1449 to receive a red hat. It is possible that Peter accompanied Cusanus to Rome. When the new cardinal left Rome on December 31, 1450, on the famous legation journey to visit Germany and the Low Countries, Peter was with him as his secretary. Although some scholars maintain that Peter began to follow Cusanus when the latter came to Aachen in November 1451 on his legation journey, Meuthen argues that Peter was with Cusanus from the beginning of the journey. As is shown in the *Acta Cusana*, Peter's name appears throughout the legation journey.

After the conclusion of Cusanus' journey in Brixen in April 1452, Peter's role as Cusanus' secretary acquired more importance as the years went by. After 1456 Peter also appears as Cusanus' treasurer or chamberlain (*Kämmerer*). He took care of many public and personal problems Cusanus experienced as Bishop of Brixen. Apparently, Cusanus, for his part, was eager to provide Peter with many benefices in return for his chamberlain's devoted services. On April 18, 1457, Peter became priest at Prutz in the diocese of Brixen and acquired the benefice of the chapel of Catherine in Brixen the same year. He also received the benefice of Geervliet, southwest of Rotterdam, and became a canon of Aachen on July 16, 1457.

When Cusanus fled in 1457 from Brixen to Castle Andraz in Buchenstein in fear of the threat from Duke Sigmund (d. 1490), the faithful Peter was with Cusanus to support and help his bishop in trouble and sorrow. There is a handwritten testimony by him (Cod. Cus. 221; "Chartur des Nikolaus von Kues," Marx, *Verzeichnis*, 218-219). He went back to Brixen with the bishop in 1460. When Cusanus was under siege in Bruneck Castle and humiliated by the duke in 1460, Peter was right with him, supporting and working for the bishop. It is certainly not surprising that when Cusanus wanted to have his first testament drawn up in 1461, he turned, as mentioned above, to Peter for its execution. When Cusanus' second, last will was dictated on August 6, 1464 to Peter and Jean Stam, Peter served as apostolic and imperial notary (*publicus apostolicus et imperiali auctoritate notarius*).

After Cusanus' death on August 11, 1464, Peter, like other servants (*Familiaren*) of Cusanus, had to map out his future course. His ordination as a priest had

occurred on March 31, 1464. It was natural that he began to seek connections and to find opportunities to secure benefices in Rome. In the bull of benefices issued on September 16, 1464, the new Pope Paul II (1417-1471), a good friend of Nicholas of Cusa's and one of the executors of Cusanus' will, stated that Peter had served his lord faithfully for about fifteen years.

In 1466 Peter became Dean of Aachen, although he was exempted from the residence requirement *studii causa*. His first residence year in Aachen began in 1468. Meuthen points out that in 1466-1469 Peter studied at a papal university and received a bachelor's degree in canon law. During this period, he received benefices at Erfurt, Saarburg and Schijndel, north of Enthoven, the Netherlands. Pope Paul II also sent him to Poland in 1467, and asked him on April 5, 1468, to serve as one of the executors of Cusanus' hospital. There were other developments which Meuthen describes in greater detail. In the museum in Aachen, there is a gold-covered dinner bell with the following inscription: *Petrus Wimari de Ercklens decanus Aquen, 1485*.

Peter remained Dean of Aachen, but gradually, especially after 1485, his absences from Aachen increased. He was simply too busy, involved in many problems in many places. According to Jakob Marx, whose *Geschichte des Armen-Hospitals zum h. Nikolaus zu Cues* is one of the basic sources of information about St. Nicholas Hospital in Kues, Peter served, as mentioned above, as the fourth rector of the hospital from 1488 to 1494. But it is very difficult, as Meuthen pointed out, to state clearly when Peter really began to assume administrative responsibilities at the hospital. Since he retained his position as Dean of Aachen, he was even sued for his frequent absences from Aachen. Although he gave up the deanship in favor of Wymarus Wymari, a relative, he was still referred to as "dean" on April 14, 1491. It is clear that his job in Kues often kept him away from Aachen.

One of the most important "nonpolitical" missions Peter was engaged in as rector of the hospital was to create in 1488 a copy of the copper plaque before the altar in the chapel to mark a leaden casket which contained the heart of Cusanus. The plaque has a portrait of Cusanus and the inscription:

> To Nicholas of Cusa, cardinal priest of St. Peter in Chains and bishop of Brixen, the founder of this hospital, who died at Todi on the 11th day of August 1464, and who on account of devotion, wished to be buried in Rome before the chains of Saint Peter … He lived sixty-three years and was dear to God and men … Peter von Erkelenz, Dean of Aachen, took care to make (this) for his most munificent benefactor.
>
> (Nicolao de Cusa tit. s. Petri ad vincula presbytero Cardinali et Episcopo Brixinensi, qui obiit Tuderti huius hospitalis fundator, MCCCCLXIII die XI Augusti et ob devocionem Romae ante cathenas s. Petri speliri voluit … Vixit annis LXIII, Deo et hominibus charus … Benefactori suo munificentissimo P. de Ercklens Decanus aquensis faciendum curavit, 1488.) (Marx, *Geschichite*, 39)

But numerous contentious problems arose at the hospital, especially after 1490, which occupied Peter's time and energy. Seen from this point of view, it is particularly worth noting that during these busy and troublesome years after 1488 as rector, the so-called Strasbourg edition of the works of Nicholas of Cusa, which was based on Cod. Cus. 218 and 219 collected by Peter, was published. Of the manuscripts in the hospital library that Peter copied, one of the most famous is Aristotle's *Ethics* in Cod. Cus. 179, which he completed in 1453 at Brixen. Peter Wymar von Erkelenz died in Kues on February 16, 1494. But Jakob Marx added confusion to this by mentioning not only February 16, 1494, but also June 13, 1494 as the date of his death. Seen from any angle, it is clear that Peter's period of service at the hospital was not really long or very successful.

Was Peter von Erkelenz merely a faithful, trustworthy and reliable servant of Nicholas of Cusa? He has been described as a "best informed" servant, a "constant messenger" (*ständiger Bote*), a "true escort" (*treuer Begleiter*), an "anteroom" (*Vorzimmer*), a "pleasurable, good cleric" (*wohllebenden, gut Klerus*) and an "obviously driving force" (*offentsichtlich treibende Kraft*). In his bull of April 5, 1468, Pope Paul II stated clearly that Peter had served Cusanus for fourteen years with a clear understanding of the purposes and objectives of St. Nicholas Hospital and that because of Peter's familiarity with Cusanus' ideas, he was naming Peter as one of the inspectors (*Visitatoren*) of the hospital.

In Cusanus' important work of April 1464, *On the Summit of Contemplation* (*De apice theoriae*), Peter appears as interlocutor. Of the many of Nicholas of Cusa's *familiaren*, he was the only one to serve in that capacity in the works of Cusanus. Were other *familiaren* not as distinguished as Peter? Was Peter superior or culturally and intellectually more advanced? At the beginning of *On the Summit of Contemplation*, the following conversation takes place between Cardinal Cusanus and the newly ordained Peter:

> *Peter*: I see you rapt for several days in such deep meditation that I was afraid it would disturb you if I beset you with questions occurring to me. But now since I find you more relaxed and joyous as if you had discovered some great thing, I hope that you will forgive me if I question you beyond what is normal.
>
> *Cardinal:* It will please me. For I often wondered about your very long silence, especially since already for fourteen years you have heard me say many things, publicly and privately, about what I discovered in my studies and since you have collected more of the tracts that I have written. Surely now that you have obtained the divine status of the most sacred priesthood through God's gift and my ministry, the time has come that you begin to speak and to ask your questions.
>
> *Peter*: I am embarrassed because of my inexperience; yet I feel encouraged by your kindness to ask what new discovery has come to you in your meditation during these Paschal days. I thought that you

> had completed all your speculation, which you had explained in your many different books. (Bond, 293)

But even in *On the Summit of Contemplation* one detects the reserve, modesty, cautiousness and discretion of Peter's way of thinking. Can it be described as "subaltern respect" (Meuthen, "Peter von Erkelenz," 736)? After all, he was at least thirty years younger than Nicholas of Cusa. Unlike the younger generation of the Wymars, who were better educated and who were more under the influence of the ideas of humanists such as Johannes Reuchlin (1454/55-1522) and Beatus Rhenanus (1485-1547), Peter himself was of more medieval mentality and culture, and less inclined to humanism. His "very long silence" could be broken somewhat by Cusanus' promptings. Some reliable scholars believe that the *Compendium* (1463), which Cusanus wrote shortly before *On the Summit of Contemplation* as a summation of his ideas, was intended for Peter von Erkelenz. In its chapter X, 2, Cusanus called the dedicatee of the book a simple man (*cum sis simplex*). Peter was neither an independent thinker nor a path-breaking theologian. He was a trusted, industrious messenger of Nicholas of Cusa without whom many of the problems Cusanus faced would have posed even greater threats.

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9. Pope Eugenius IV (1383-1447) (r. 1431-1447)

In discussing the relationship between Pope Eugenius (Eugene) IV and the Council of Basel, Hubert Jedin (1900-1980), one of the most famous Catholic historians of modern times, wrote:

> A contest between the Pope's primatial authority and conciliar theory was inevitable. On the other hand we may well ask whether it would have taken so dramatic a turn and one so dangerous for the Papacy if, with all his piety and benevolence, Martin V's successor, Eugenius IV (1431-47) … had been less undecided and less dependent on the men around him. (100)

The predecessor of Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455), Pope Eugenius IV certainly played an important role in a turbulent period of the papacy. "Eugenius believed," another distinguished church historian, Joseph Gill (1901-1980), wrote, "that [the conciliar movement] was wrong and at the cost of much suffering to himself opposed it with all his might" (*Eugenius IV*, viii).

Gabriel Condulmar (Gabriello Condulmaro, Condulmerio, Condulmer) was born in 1383 of a noble and wealthy Venetian family. He gave away his inherited wealth—some say amounting to twenty thousand ducats—to the poor and joined the congregation of the canons regular of St. George in Alga, Venice. At the age of twenty-four he was appointed Bishop of Siena by Pope Gregory XII (r. 1406-1415), an uncle on his mother's side, but resigned from the bishopric when the people of Siena objected to the rule of an outsider. In 1408 he was created Cardinal-Priest of San Clemente by Pope Gregory XII. Promotion of Gabriel and his cousin Antonio Correr helped convince Gregory's cardinals that they had to act on their own for unification of the church, one step toward the convocation of the Council of Pisa (1409). Gabriel later served as a cardinal under Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431).

After the death of Pope Martin, Gabriel Condulmar was elected pope on the first ballot by fourteen cardinals assembled in the Basilica of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome on March 4, 1431, and took the name Eugenius IV. The day after his coronation in St. Peter's on March 11, the new pope issued a bull in which he confirmed a capitulation which he had signed and the College of Cardinals had sworn to before proceeding with the election. According to the capitulation of 1431, the pope was to reform the Roman court "in its head and its members" and not to transfer it to another place without the consent of the majority of the Sacred College. He was also to hold a general council and by its means to reform the whole Church. In essence, the pope was not to undertake any important step in regard to the States of the Church without the consent of the Sacred College.

The new pope was handsome, tall and thin. He was grave and dignified in his bearing, so much so, says Vespasiano da Bisticci (1421-1498), that no one could keep eyes fixed on him. In describing Eugenius' manner of life Vespasiano also tells us that he drank no wine, but only water with sugar and a little cinnamon, and that

for his food he was content with one dish, always boiled. He never ate before the appointed hour, and greatly relished fruits and vegetables. He willingly granted audiences when his business was done. He gave alms most bountiful and, as a result, was always in debt. The great Church historian Ludwig Pastor (1854-1928) stated: "He parted with money as soon as he received it" (285).

The capitulation of 1431, which limited the powers of the pope-to-be-elected, reflected a desire of the conclave to seek someone who would treat them less as servants of the pope and more as his partners than had Martin V, who had been too authoritarian, in their view. But Eugenius acted thereafter without paying much attention to the capitulation or the bull which had committed him to a policy of reform and collaboration.

The new pope first moved against his predecessor's family, the Colonnas, because of his dislike of nepotism and the support that the Orsini, their foes, gave him. In the very first months of his reign, Eugenius forced the Colonna family to surrender the wealth and territories which Pope Martin V had lavished on them, creating a host of enemies. His initial campaign against the Colonnas was brought to an end in September 1431.

The greatest challenge for Eugenius, however, was the Council of Basel. Before his death on February 20, 1431, Pope Martin V had convoked the council and named Giuliano Cesarini (1398?-1444), Cardinal of San Angelo, as his legate to the council. On July 23, 1431, a general council of the Church assembled in the Basel Minster with scant attendance. Since Cesarini was still involved in the anti-Hussites campaign, he had the council officially opened at Basel on July 23, 1431 by his deputies, John of Ragusa, O.P. (1390/95-1443) and John of Palomar (Juan de Palomar).

Contrary to the election capitulation that he had sworn to observe, Eugenius IV opposed the council from the start. Using the sparse attendance as a reason and distrusting the spirit which was reigning at the council, Eugenius IV ordered in the bull *Quoniam alto* the dissolution of the council on November 12, 1431 and called for another council to meet at Bologna in eighteen months. This was the beginning of Eugenius' long struggle with the council, which was destined to trouble his entire pontificate. The move to dissolve the council was seen as an attempt to block any measure of reform and was widely resented and criticized.

The prelates at the council refused to disperse. They found support for their decision from the University of Paris and from the sovereigns of Spain and France, as well as from Sigismund, the King of the Romans (1368-1437) (r. 1410-1437), and the princes of Germany. On December 14, 1431, at its first public session, under the chairmanship of Cesarini, the council reaffirmed the decree *Frequens* of the Council of Constance (1414-1418) to justify its existence. Pope Eugenius IV in turn ordered the dissolution of the council on December 18 in the second version of the bull *Quoniam alto*. On January 13, 1432, Cardinal Cesarini refused to promulgate the pope's order of dissolution.

At its second session on February 15, 1432, the council reaffirmed the decrees *Haec Sancta* and *Frequens* of the Council of Constance, asserted its superiority over the pope and justified its refusal to accept the pope's dissolution. On April 29,

1432, the council, at its third session, formally summoned the pope and cardinals to appear within three months or be punished for contumacy. It is important to note that of the twenty-one cardinals attending the council, only six were on the pope's side. The council was supported by the King of the Romans, France, England, Scotland, Castile, Burgundy and Milan. In contrast, the pope could count on only Venice and Florence as loyal adherents. But the attitudes of the powers to the council continually changed.

The schism which now looked inevitable could be averted for the time being, thanks to the efforts of Emperor Sigismund, who had come to Rome to receive the imperial crown with great ceremony before the high altar of St. Peter's on May 31, 1433. Sigismund, who had played such a large role at the Council of Constance, now declared himself protector of the Council of Basel.

As Joachim Stieber has shown in his detailed study (*Pope Eugenius IV*, 20-21), the pope annulled the bull *Quoniam alto* under much pressure, and acknowledged the Council of Basel as ecumenical in the bull *Dudum sacrum* of December 15, 1433, which he issued from a sickbed. It looked as though stability had returned, but Eugenius had other problems. The papal territories were being invaded in May 1434 by Francesco Sforza (1401-1466), who later became Duke of Milan (1450-1466), and the Condottiere Nicholas Fortebracchio, who was in the pay of the Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria Visconti (1402-1447). Some of Eugenius' enemies, including the Colonnas, stirred up a popular revolt against him in Rome. As a result, revolution broke out. Many cardinals fled from the city as the danger spread, and the pope thought it best to leave town.

On the night of June 4, Eugenius, in disguise, boarded a boat, which was anchored at the Ripa Grande, with a friend and put his fate in the hands of a robust sailor named Valentino. When the boat passed near St. Paul's, the crowds threw stones and shot arrows at it, but Eugenius lay stretched out on the bottom covered by a shield. Once the boat reached the high seas, Eugenius boarded a ship, from which he disembarked at Pisa a few days later. He reached Florence on June 21 and took up his residence in the Dominican convent of Santa Maria Novella.

Eugenius stayed in Florence from June 23, 1434 to March 7, 1443, altogether nine years, except that he resided in Bologna from April 22, 1936 to January 23, 1438 at the invitation of the city and in Ferrara from January 27, 1438 to January 16, 1439, during the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-1439).

During the prolonged sojourn of the Roman court in Florence, which was at the center of the artistic and humanistic movement, it was inevitable that even the ascetic pope came under its influence. The pope consecrated the beautiful cathedral S. Maria del Fiore, the dome of which had been completed by Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446) in 1436. Later, in Rome, the pope commissioned from the architect Filarete the bronze doors which still stand at the entrance to St. Peter's. He also invited to Rome Donatello (1386-1466), Pisanello (Antonio Pisano, c. 1395-1455) and Fra Angelico (1387-1455). It should be noted that two famous humanists, Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459) and Flavio Biondo (1392-1463), served as the pope's secretaries for many years.

Another area of his activity in Florence was the reform of the Church. As Vespasiano described in his famous *Memoirs*, "while His Holiness was residing in Florence, he set himself diligently to reform the Church" (Bisticci, 20). The religious houses which Eugenius reformed in Florence were S. Marco, the Badia and the monastery of Santo Salvi of the order of S. Giovanni Gualberto, the Vallumbrosans. In general, according to Vespasiano, the pope supported the Observants instead of the Conventuals among the orders of friars. He was the most enthusiastic supporter of the Franciscan Observants, and supported Bernardino da Siena (1380-1444), the famous preacher. When Bernardino was accused of heresy by the Dominicans and tried, he was finally acquitted by Eugenius IV.

A third area of Eugenius' activities in Florence was his support of confraternities. In 1435 Ambrogio Traversari (c. 1386-1439), Florentine humanist and general of the Camaldolese monks, sent two letters to the pope, asking for help and support in the molding of future secular and spiritual leaders then in the youth confraternities. As Konrad Eisenbichler has shown, before receiving Traversari's letter, Eugenius had seen the performance of a Nativity play staged by the youths of the Arcangelo Raffaello in 1430 and was so impressed that he gave them space for a permanent oratory and meeting rooms near the Ospedale of Santa Maria della Scala. Still residing in Florence, the pope recognized in a bull of June 24, 1442 four youth confraternities—those of the Natività or Arcangelo Raffaello, the Purificazione or San Marco, the Vangelistà or San Giovanni Evangelista and San Niccolò del Ceppo.

Meanwhile, the Council of Basel, now under the influence of Cardinal Louis d'Alleman (1410-1450) of Arles, confiscated all sources of Eugenius' income. On June 9, 1435, the council decreed the end of annual papal taxes, known as annates, and called for a limitation on the powers of the papacy and the Curia. By abolishing major sources of papal revenue and restricting the papal prerogatives, the council sought to reduce the head of the Church to a mere shadow. In reply the pope published on September 18, 1437 a bull, *Doctoris gentium*, in which he transferred the council to Ferrara. Only one cardinal, a few bishops and a group of theologians defied the pope to remain at Basel.

It was the controversy over the site of a council of reunion with the Greek Church which split the Council of Basel. A minority, including Nicholas of Cusa, was in favor of any place suited to the pope and the Greeks. The majority, however, insisted that the site be Avignon, Florence or Basel itself. The formal rupture occurred on May 7, 1437, when the council was divided into two factions, each adopting its own decree convoking a union council with the Greeks. Three leaders of the minority, including Cusanus, left Basel for Bologna on May 20, carrying a copy of the minority decree and President Cesarini's letters to the Eastern Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople. Cardinal Cesarini himself later left the Council of Basel and joined the papal side. Pope Eugenius IV confirmed the minority decree in Bologna at the end of May, and the minority delegation set sail for Crete in two groups in July on their way to Constantinople. It was during the voyage home from Constantinople to Venice that Cusanus had the famous experience of receiving a precious gift from God which inspired his first philosophical-theological work, the *On Learned Ignorance (De docta ignorantia* (1440)).

In Ferrara itself the council convened on January 8, 1438, under the leadership of Cardinal Niccolò Albergati (1373-1443). With the financial support of Pope Eugenius IV, the Greek delegation, made up of the Patriarch of Constantinople, Joseph II (r. 1416-1439), the Eastern Emperor, John VIII Palaeologus (r. 1425-1448) and their retinue of about seven hundred in number, had set sail from Constantinople on November 27, 1437 and arrived in Venice on February 8, 1438, and in Ferrara on March 4. As a result, the combined council in Ferrara was solemnly inaugurated on April 9, 1438. Partly because of the emperor's delaying policy to get more Western princes at the council and partly because of the Greeks' annoyance with the Latins' tendency to talk endlessly about the thorny issue of the legitimacy of the addition of the *Filioque* to the Creed and the irregularity of the pope's payments and his debt increase, the Greeks became frustrated, irritated, restive and desirous of going home.

In January 1439, one year after its opening, the Council of Ferrara was transferred to Florence, presumably due to an outbreak of plague, but really because the Commune of Florence and Lorenzo de' Medici had offered to accept responsibility for the financial upkeep of the Greeks. The deliberations with the Greeks at Florence focused more on the dogmatic question of the *Filioque* and continued in eight sessions, reaching, however, no resolution. The Greeks became more disillusioned, disappointed and weary after a prolonged stay abroad and anxious to go home. But the emperor implored and urged them to reach an agreement with the Latins. The impasse was finally broken on July 5, 1439, in the famous agreement, signed by Pope Eugenius: "I, Eugenius, bishop of the universal Church, thus defining, subscribe …"

Because of the pope's insistence on the primacy of Rome at the last minute, the agreement included the following statement at its end:

> [We] define that the holy, apostolic See and the Roman Pontiff holds the primacy over the whole world and that the Roman Pontiff himself is the successor of blessed Peter, prince of the Apostles, and that he is the true Vicar of Christ, head of the whole Church and father and teacher of all Christians, and that to the same in blessed Peter was given plenary power of feeding, ruling, and governing the whole Church, as is contained in the acts of the œcumenical councils and the sacred canons. (Crowder, 171)

The Greeks did not accept the primacy of Rome in the Church. They rather believed in the theory of the Pentarchy: that the five patriarchates of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem were essentially equal, except that Rome had predominance in the West and Constantinople in the East. They were, no doubt, annoyed by the added statement, but were much more concerned about going home.

On July 6, 1439 the bull *Laetentur caeli* was read out in Latin by Cardinal Cesarini and in Greek by Metropolitan Bessarion of Nicaea at the end of the papal Mass in the cathedral of Florence. Eugenius IV, who had worked hard for the union, was elated.

He sent out many letters to advise the world of the happy event. (Georgius Fedalto cited some of his letters.) But some critics and anti-unionists, such as Metropolitan Marcus Eugenicus of Ephesus (c. 1394-1443/45), who throughout the council took a negative standpoint and refused to accept the union, and the historian Sylvester Syropoulos (1401-c. 1464), argued that the bull was forced on John VIII Palaeologus because of an imminent attack on Constantinople by the Turks. They even wondered if the Greeks had acted in Florence against their faith and conscience in order to obtain help and assistance from the West in fear of the Turkish threat. Metropolitan Bessarion had changed his views gradually from the Orthodox to the pro-West stance, but returned to Constantinople on February 1, 1440. After he heard that he had been created a cardinal by Eugenius IV on December 18, 1439, he went back to Florence on December 10, 1440 and then accompanied Eugenius IV to Rome, as we shall see below, on September 28, 1443.

Although the Decree of Union, issued on July 5, 1439, turned out not to be permanent, it resulted in a resurgence in the power and prestige of Pope Eugenius IV. Then, decrees of reunion were negotiated with the Armenians on November 22, 1439, with the Jacobites in 1443 and with the Nestorians in 1445. On the other hand, the Basel cardinals had no doubt been encouraged by the action of France, which had produced a document, the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges. Issued by Charles VII of France in 1438, it sharply limited the papal authority over the Church in France. The remaining members of the council at Basel continued to meet, and on June 25, 1439 they claimed to have deposed Eugenius. They elected Duke Amadeus VIII of Savoy, as the antipope Felix V (r. 1439-1449) on November 5, 1439.

Then, in the spring of 1443, Pope Eugenius IV was able to disengage Alfonso V (Alfonso the Magnanimous) of Aragon (1396-1458) from his support of the Council of Basel by recognizing his claim to the throne of Naples. Nicholas de Tudeschis (1386-1445), commonly called Panormitanus, who was believed to be the greatest canon lawyer of the late Middle Ages, had been sent in 1433 to the Council of Basel as Eugenius' representative, but entered in 1434 the service of King Alfonso V, who was then a supporter of the council. With the change of sides by his master in 1443, Aeneas Sylvius tells in his *Commentaries*, Panormitanus experienced a profound moral agony, complaining in his bed about his king for forcing him as lawyer to fight against the truth and to endanger his reputation and his soul (Hay and Smith, 172-173).

On September 28, 1443, Eugenius finally and triumphantly returned to Rome, where he worked hard to ameliorate conditions, attempting to reconcile all parties in the recent disputes and improving spiritual life in Christendom. He also preached crusade against the Turks, but the crushing defeat at Varna in November 1444 put an end to the campaign.

Most historians and commentators are in agreement that Pope Eugenius' personality was admirable. Vespasiano begins his chapter on the pope by saying that he was "a man of the saintliest life and carriage." St. Antoninus (1389-1459), who was appointed Archbishop of Florence by Eugenius IV in 1446, wrote in his *Chronicles*:

> He was tall of stature, pleasing in appearance and not less so in mind, most bountiful to the poor, generous in gifts for the repair of churches; he cherished the God-fearing religious with an affection that was as practical as it was genuine; he was an outstanding promoter of divine worship and the spread of the Christian religion. (Gill, *Eugenius IV*, 170)

But the pope's critics often mention his obstinacy, tenacity and inflexibility. Some tried to speak of his simplicity of outlook, but what they meant was his naiveté, inexperience or lack of concern for others. In order to protect and preserve the possession of the Church and the power of the pope, he is said to have acted in a straightforward or stubborn way. Aeneas Sylvius wrote: "He tried to achieve not what he could, but what he would" (Gill, *Eugenius IV*, 181). If his obstinacy is viewed as tenacity of purpose or fidelity, he was certainly a "simple-minded man" (Gill, *Personalities*, 42). As Joseph Gill pointed out, his "greatness … lies in this, that he would allow nothing to deter him from performing what he thought was his duty" (*Eugenius IV*, 198). In an age of many general councils, Pope Eugenius IV stood out as an obstacle. It is also remarkable to note that during the reign of this saintly man never a year of his pontificate passed that was not marred by a war.

It is easy to understand why Eugenius thought that he should have remained a friar. As Vespasiano reported, shortly before his death, the pope said with a sigh: "O Gabriello, how much better it would have been … if thou had'st never been Pope nor Cardinal, but had'st died a friar!" (Bisticci, *Memoirs*, 31).

Eugenius IV died on February 23, 1447. He was first buried next to the tomb of Eugenius III in the Vatican, but his remains were later moved to the monumental tomb erected by Pisanello in the church of San Salvatore in Lauro in Rome.

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10. Richard Fleming (c. 1378-1431)

In his papal bull of August 15, 1451, Pope Nicholas V (r. l447-l455) asked Nicholas of Cusa to go to England as papal legate to establish peace between England and France, which were engaged in the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453). But Cusanus never went to England. Cardinal Guillaume d'Estouteville (c. 1412-1483) was sent instead. This raises interesting questions about Cusanus' relations with England and the English people. Did he, for example, have any close friends in England? Did he work with any Englishman? Although there is no clear evidence that the two knew each other personally, we can cite as an Englishman who may have come close to Cusanus: Richard Fleming (Flemyng, Flemming).

Richard Fleming was born around 1378 at Crofton, a village near Wakefield, Yorkshire, in England. He studied at University College, Oxford, and, after receiving his M.A. in 1403, held the prebend of S. Newbold after August 22, 1406. He was reported to be in sympathy with Wyclif around this time, but became junior proctor in 1407 and was chosen by convocation in 1409 as one of the twelve commissioners appointed to examine the writings of Wyclif. Advancing further in

his studies, he received the degrees of B.Th. (1414) and D.Th. (1414) from Oxford. He was known as "the most brilliant student of his time."

By August 21, 1415, Fleming was Canon of York and Prebendary of Langtoft. As one of the Magistri, he attended the later sessions of the Council of Constance (1414-1417) and spoke four times (January 4, June 2l, September 9 and October 2, 1417). *Surge, Illuminare*, the sermon he delivered on January 4, was published by Thomas Morrissey. While at Constance, he also established friendly relations with Cardinal Odo Colonna, who was soon to be elected Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431). Martin V made Fleming a papal chamberlain and sent him to England as his envoy on January 31, 1418. The reward for his services was that on November 20, 1419, he received a papal bull of provision to the see of Lincoln. He was consecrated in Florence on April 20, 1420.

In his royal instructions dated December 18, 1421, the English King Henry V (r. 1413-1422) empowered Fleming to seek armed support from Sigismund, King of the Romans (r. 1410-1437), in his fight against the Hussites. Crossing the English Channel soon after February 23, 1422, Bishop Fleming of Lincoln arrived in Regensburg, where he met Sigismund as head of an English embassy to Germany. Not much is known about his later activities in Germany. The list of those who were present at the Reichstag in Nuremberg from July to September in 1422 includes Fleming as "der legat von Rom, ein bischof von Engellant von Lincollen" (Emden II, 648). Leaving Nuremberg soon after September 13, 1422, he probably returned to England towards the end of September, without the soldiers he was supposed to recruit.

At the end of March 1423 Fleming went again to the Continent as head of the English delegation to the Council of Pavia (1423), which was scheduled to open on April 23. The poorly attended council was transferred on June 22, 1423 to Siena owing to the outbreak of plague, and was reopened in Siena on July 2, 1423. Fleming served as president of the English nation during the Council of Pavia-Siena, as was reported by John of Ragusa (1390/95-1443) in *The Initiation and Proceedings of the Council of Basel* (*Initium et prosecutio Basiliensis concilii)*. Fleming's friend Pope Martin V had written to him around June 22, 1423, asking him to promote the peace and concord of all the faithful at the council and to send him information "not only about what was done at the council, but also about what was attempted" (Emden II, 648). Fleming preached before the council on June 22 and July 21, 1423. His especially eloquent sermon preached on January 23, 1424, which strongly championed the right of the papacy, disappointed many conciliarists.

The council, split into rival parties and weakened by papal opposition, was finally broken up on March 7, 1424. But on February 14, 1424, Fleming's support of the papacy had been rewarded by a papal provision which transferred him from Lincoln to the see of York, which had fallen vacant after the death of Archbishop Henry Bowet (r. 1407-1423) on October 20, 1423. The cathedral chapter of York, however, had already elected Philip Morgan, Bishop of Worcester, to be Bowet's successor, and the Crown had given its consent to the election on January l, 1424. Fleming was thus in danger of incurring the penalties of the Statute of Provisors of

1357-1389 and the Statute of Praemunire of 1353, which restricted papal intervention in England. E. F. Jacob (1894-1971) wrote:

> In 1424 Richard Fleming of Lincoln, having accepted translation to York without seeking permission from the [privy] council, was summoned before the lay members of the council, and charged with infringing the statutes. In the end he had to promise formally to renounce the provision and do his best to ensure the transfer of the bishop of Worcester [Philip Morgan] to York and of the treasurer Stafford to Worcester. (235)

After a long dispute, a compromise was reached: Fleming's retranslation to Lincoln and the translation of John Kemp, Bishop of London, to York on July 20, 1425.

Not much is known about Fleming's activities between February 14, 1424, when he was made Archbishop of York by Martin V, and 1427, when he founded Lincoln College at Oxford, principally to educate opponents of Wyclif's teaching, with which he was once suspected of sympathizing, while at Oxford. But it was clearly the same Richard Fleming who, together with the young canon lawyer Nicholas of Cusa and sixty professors of law and theology from the Universities of Cologne and Heidelberg, and two Englishmen, Bishop Thomas Polton of Chichester and John Ixworth, submitted, probably in 1426, to Cardinal Giordano Orsini (d. 1438), the papal legate in Germany, his advisory opinion on the disputed case of Bacharach, about whether the wine shipped down the Rhine River from the vineyard of the parish church of Bacharach to the church of St. Andreas in Cologne was exempt from taxation.

After attending the Reichstag in Nuremberg from May 11 to July, 1426, where one of the main issues was how to combat the Hussites, Cardinal Orsini came to Bacharach on August 5, mainly to preside over a hearing on the proposed canonization of the boy Werner, who supposedly had been killed by the Jews at nearby Oberwesel. The priest of the parish church of Bacharach was Winand (Ort) von Steeg (137l-1453), who was not only King Sigismund's former secretary, but also a learned humanist and doctor of canon law (*doctor decretorum*). As a member of the chapter of St. Andreas in Cologne and also as Cardinal Orsini's secretary, Winand brought the case to the humanist cardinal against Ludwig III, the Elector of the Palatinate (1410-1436), who claimed the right to collect toll taxes from the produce shipped by the parish church of Bacharach to Cologne. With the same kind of care and attention that he gave to the richly illustrated manuscript (Hs. 1139, Stadtbibliothek Trier) which summarized the Werner case, Winand produced a beautifully executed notary instrument on the Bacharach case which was drawn up by the notary public Thomas Cube of Bacharach. It has been preserved as Handschrift Nr. 12 in Geheimes Hausarchiv of the Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv in Munich *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440).

Many scholars have commented on the instrument, and the picture of the young canon lawyer Cusanus writing his opinion has been reproduced often, including in

the letterhead of the American Cusanus Society. But although some past writers, like Karl Voll (*Ein Beitrag*, 532), referred to the picture of the prelate on fol. 9ʳ of the instrument as Richard, Archbishop-elect of York and the Primate of England (*Richardus electus in archepiscopum Eboracensem Anglie primatem*), the full identity of the person and his background was not made clear, it seems, until 1967, in an article published by the present author in the *Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft* (MFCG).

Why did the "Archbishop-elect of York" write his opinion on the Bacharach case? Did he go to Nuremberg on his second trip to the Continent, as he had done on his first, and make friends with Cardinal Orsini, who was fighting the spread of the Hussites? Or, on his way back to England, did he meet Cusanus, who had been in Cologne since 1425? Did he know any such eminent professors as Heinrich von Gorkum, Christian von Erpel, Johann von Spull and Petrus von Neukirch of the University of Cologne, and Jonann von Noet, Otto vom Stein, Nikolaus Burgmann, Hesso Krauwel and Job Vener of the University of Heidelberg, all of whose opinions about the Bacharach case have been preserved in the instrument? Is it possible that Fleming, who was once called professor of Holy Scripture (*sancte pagine professor*) and mentioned in the instrument itself as professor of sacred theology (*sacre theologie professor*), had some connection with the Faculty of Theology in Cologne?

As noted above, Fleming was provided by Pope Martin V with the see of York on February 14, 1424. He was neither archbishop-elect (*Archiepiscopus electus*) nor primate of England (*Anglie primatus*), as described in the instrument. The use of these designations may have resulted from the lack of precise information on the Continent at that time. Or, as Thomas Morrissey suggested, Fleming arrogated to himself these titles. According to a manuscript found by W. Koudelka in the Archivo del Reine de Valencia, Fleming's "election" to York was apparently known in February 1424 among the participants of the Council of Siena. In his *History of the Deeds of the General Council of Basel* (*Historia gestorum generalis Synodi Basiliensis*), written after 1440, Juan de Segovia (1393-1458) still referred to Fleming as "Richard, (archbishop-)elect of York, primate of the English nation" (*Richardus electus Eboracensis, Anglicane nacionis praesidens*).

In their detailed study of the Handschrift 12, published in 1977, Aloys Schmidt and Hermann Heimpel clarified many of the problems related to the Bacharach case and Cusanus' and Fleming's roles in it. But there are still some difficult questions that require further study. For example, was Fleming, the founder of Lincoln College, Oxford, in any way related to the nascent humanist movement in England? Under the patronage of Humfrey, Duke of Gloucester (1390-1447) and the youngest brother of Henry V, humanistic studies in England saw their beginnings. Thomas Bekynton, fellow of New College, Oxford, was chancellor of Duke Humfrey by 1423. Andrew Holes (Hollis), fellow of New College from 1414 to 1420, spent a considerable time in Rome and Florence at the Papal Curia. He is one of the four Englishmen—the others are William Grey, Thomas Polton and John Toptoft—whom the famous book dealer in Florence Vespasiano da Bisticci (1421-1498) discussed in his *Lives of the Illustrious Men*. Piero da Monte, papal collector in England from 1435 to 1440, dedicated a dialogue to Duke Humfrey entitled

Concerning the Differences between the Virtues and the Vices (*De virtutum et vitiorum inter se differentia*). William Grey, a resident of Balliol College, Oxford, from 1431 and later Bishop of Ely from 1454 to 1478, went to Cologne in 1442, and late in 1444 or early in 1445 moved on to Italy. It is recorded that from the foundation of the University of Cologne in 1388 to the middle of the sixteenth century, forty-four Englishmen matriculated at Cologne, in comparison with four hundred and thirty-four students from Scotland who matriculated at Cologne between 1419 and 1523. Like many others, Grey went to study in Germany and Italy because he was prevented by the Hundred Years' War from going to Paris to study theology after the reoccupation of Paris by the French in 1436. Robert Fleming, Richard's nephew and a resident in University College, Oxford, from 1430 to 1443, matriculated at Cologne in 1444 and then went to Padua. Once in Italy, he, like Grey, was attracted to humanism and, after obtaining a degree at Padua, moved to Ferrara to study under Guarino da Verona (1374-1460). The extant collection of manuscripts gathered by Richard Fleming, like that of Robert Grossteste (c. 1175-1253), his famous predecessor as Bishop of Lincoln, seems to show his essentially scholastic interests. But how and if he was related to the future development of humanistic activities in England is an interesting question to be examined further.

As a second question, we may point to the possible relationship between Richard Fleming and another English fifteenth-century crusader against the Hussites and friend of Martin V, Henry Beaufort (c. 1374-1447), Bishop of Winchester and later "Cardinal of England." Because of his immense wealth he was nicknamed the "Rich Cardinal." Without his numerous loans to Henry V and Henry VI (r. 1422-1461), the Lancastrian kings would not have been able to continue the Hundred Years' War. Bishop Beaufort attended the Council of Constance (1414-1418), played an important part in bringing the Great Schism to an end, became, like Fleming, the friend and ally of the new pope Martin V, led the army to Táchov against the Hussites in 1427 and tried, unsuccessfully, to raise an English crusading army in 1428 against the followers of Jan Huss. In domestic politics he was an archrival of Duke Humfrey of Gloucester. The famous painting by Jan Van Eyck that was long thought to represent Cardinal Niccolò Albergati (1357-1443) is now widely believed to be a portrait of Cardinal Henry Beaufort. It would be worthwhile to know more about the relationship of Fleming and Beaufort, especially in regard to their activities on the Continent.

Bishop Richard Fleming of Lincoln died at Sleaford on January 25, 1431 and was buried in the Fleming Chantry on the north side of his cathedral in Lincoln. It should be noted that *A Proper Dyalogue between a Gentillman and a husbandman*, which was printed "at Marborow in the land of Hessen" by Hans Luft probably in 1530, recounted "the demise of Richard Fleming, bishop of Lincoln, who died in 1431."

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11. Emperor Frederick III (1415-1493) (r. 1440-1493)

Why do we discuss Emperor Frederick (Friedrich) III in a book devoted to the life and ideas of Nicholas of Cusa? How was the former related to the latter? What events that took place during their lifetimes affected them and how? Was Frederick III as powerless, ineffective, phlegmatic and problematic as he has been traditionally presented by many contemporaries and historians? Is it true to say that the "nadir of the ruler's impotence" was reached under Frederick III (Wandruszka, 73)?

The noted German historian Friedrich Heer (1916-1983) wrote:

> Few rulers have attracted so much indignant comment from later historians or such venomous contempt from contemporaries. He is attacked for his indolence, his inertia, his inactivity, his "neglect of the interests of the Empire," his apparent reluctance to stand and fight his enemies, his acceptance of defeat upon defeat. (123)

But Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897) had warned:

> Much venomous comment on Frederick III is pure modern national liberalism. After four hundred years one tramples on a man who was helpless in his own time and sneers at anything that in the remotest past brought shame and sorrow to the House of Habsburg. (Quoted in Wandruszka, 62)

In 1993 the quincentenary of Frederick's death was memorialized in Europe. A short reexamination of Cusanus' embattled contemporary in this book might contribute to a better appraisal of his role in history.

Born in Innsbruck on September 21, 1415, the son of Duke Ernst the Iron of Styria, Carinthia and Carniola (1377-1424) and his devout wife, Cymburgis of Masovia (Poland) (1394/97-1429), Frederick, counted as Frederick V (or Frederick IV—see Chmel) of the Leopoldine line of the House of Habsburg, or known as Frederick the Young in contrast with his uncle, Frederick the Old (IV) of the Tyrol (1382-1439), lived in Wiener Neustadt in his childhood. After his father's death in 1424, he, his brother Albert VI (1418-1463) and his sisters, Margarete (1416-1486) and Katharine (1420-1493), were placed under the guardianship of his uncle, Frederick IV. It is not known whether Frederick the Old took the minors to the Tyrol or kept them in Wiener Neustadt.

In 1431 Frederick the Younger reached majority, but his uncle, known in popular tradition as "Freddy of the empty pockets" (*Friedel mit den leeren Taschen*), insisted on extending the guardianship until 1434, when Albert VI was to become an adult. Frederick IV's failure to release Frederick V and Albert VI from his guardianship in 1434 paved the way for a dreary fight between the two branches of the Leopoldine

line, which ended only in May 1435 in victory for Frederick V through mediation by his cousin, Albert V (1397-1439) of the Albertine line of the House of Habsburg.

Since few basic issues were settled in the mediation, the contest and rivalry between the branches continued, later including disputes over family jewels, manuscripts and other possessions. Because of the assertive and demanding attitude Frederick V took towards his uncle regarding his hereditary and ancestral property, which had been managed by his guardian, he began to acquire a reputation for being an "egoist." As he later wrote: "Thus I Frederick assert my rights" (*sic Fridericus ego mea iura rego*). He kept his considerable collection of jewelry and treasure in "Friedrichsburg" in Graz, which was easier to defend than his palace in Wiener Neustadt. Alfons Lhotsky pointed out that Frederick III was one of the richest collectors of jewels at that time. All told, he lived longer in Graz, which was the capital of Styria, than in Wiener Neustadt, which was close to Styria but not in it.

At the Council of Basel, which had been called by Martin V (r. 1417-1431) in 1431 and in which Nicholas of Cusa began to participate in 1433, the relationship between Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) and the council steadily deteriorated, reaching its lowest point around 1437. But Frederick V, who had seemingly taken little interest in the contest between Church and state, decided, like his father, to visit the Holy Land and placed himself in 1436 at the head of a group of Styrian nobles. He departed from Trieste on August 9, 1437, an endeavor which Joseph Grünpeck, author of *The History of Frederick IV and Maximilian* (*Historia Friderici IV. et Maximiliani*), called an "act of great intrepidity" because it was a dangerous sea voyage threatened by pirates.

Many events took place from the end of 1437 to 1439 that greatly affected both Church and state. In his bull *Doctoris gentium* of September 16, 1437, Eugenius IV transferred the council from Basel to Ferrara. On December 9, 1437, Emperor Sigismund died in Znaim. At the Diet of Frankfurt on March 17, 1438, the Electors of the Empire adopted a policy of neutrality in the church conflict. The announcement of the famous policy was read by the lawyer Gregor Heimburg (c. 1400-1472), a long-time critic of Nicholas of Cusa and Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini. The following day the diet elected Albert of the Albertine line of the House of Habsburg as King of Romans. He assumed the title Albert II (r. 1438-1439). Because of the outbreak of a mild form of the bubonic plague in Ferrara, Eugenius IV transferred the council to Florence on January 19, 1439. But the Council of Basel, which remained in defiance of the pope, went on to depose Eugenius IV on June 25. Important and revolutionary as these events were, they apparently had little direct effect on Frederick V's position and policy.

But through the deaths of Frederick IV on June 24, 1439 and of King Albert II on October 27 the same year, the twenty-four-year-old Frederick V suddenly became the sole head and ruling prince of the House of Habsburg, assuming the guardianship of Duke Sigmund of the Tyrol (1427-1496), later Cusanus' archrival, and also of Ladislaus Posthumous of Bohemia and Hungary (1440-1457), when he was born one year later. The eventful year of 1439, in which Lodovico Pontano (1409-1439) fell victim to a severe plague in Basel and Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini

became desperately ill, also in Basel, witnessed the election of the antipope Felix V (1391-1451) by the council on November 5. What was Frederick V's role in these changing and difficult times? What could and did he do?

The Electors, who came to Frankfurt am Main in early 1440 to attend the diet there, elected Frederick V of the House of Habsburg as Albert II's successor on February 2. He began to style himself as King Frederick III. The Electors did not find it necessary to impose any election capitulations on him, thinking that they could manipulate and control him. Frederick III expressed his willingness to become the *rex Romanorum* in a speech delivered at the parish church in Wiener Neustadt by his confidant Thomas Ebendorfer (1388-1464) of the University of Vienna. He was to stay in office for fifty-three years. Did this election catapult him onto a high stage of imperial politics or did it fail to change him from a dynastic, local ruler to a prince of wide European vision and imperial ambition?

It was apparent that Frederick III was no longer a mere local prince and that there was a greater degree of contact thereafter between Wiener Neustadt and Rome. It is quite possible, for example, that a delegation Eugenius IV sent to Wiener Neustadt in June 1441 included Nicholas of Cusa, who stayed at Frederick's court. In March 1442 Frederick III finally decided to go to Aachen to be crowned. After visiting Innsbruck, Augsburg, Nuremberg and Würzburg, he arrived on May 27 at Frankfurt am Main, where an imperial diet was scheduled to start on April 15. But there were so few delegates present at Frankfurt am Main that after setting up July 8 as the opening day of the diet, Frederick III decided to go to Aachen for a coronation. He left Frankfurt am Main on June 6. On Sunday, June 17, 1442, two years after the election in Frankfurt am Main, he was crowned in Aachen. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini was present at the coronation. Frederick's critics said that he could not make up his mind to go to Aachen for one year and that he was indecisive and disinterested in the affairs of the Empire.

After leaving Aachen on June 22, Frederick III returned to Frankfurt am Main on July 7 via Koblenz and Mainz. He then attended the Diet of Frankfurt which, as scheduled, met from July 8 to August 1442 and at which, in the form of the *Reformatio Friderici*, Frederick's proposal for a new council of mediation in the conflict between pope and council was taken up. This was the first imperial diet Frederick III attended. Since Nicholas of Cusa was active at the diet, it is possible that he became more acquainted with the king while in Frankfurt am Main. We should also note that Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini was crowned Poet Laureate by Frederick III on July 27, 1442.

On September 19, 1442, Frederick III reached Zurich. Despite an invitation urgently extended by Felix V and the Council of Basel, he would not participate in any session of the council, studiously maintaining a position of neutrality. Continuing his tour, he came to Winterthur and, after going through Aargau, his ancestral land, visited Solothurn, Bern, Freiburg, Lausanne, Geneva and then Besançon. Coming back to Basel, he entered the city on November 13 and was received by Felix V. During his six-day stay in Basel, serious attempts were made to draw him to the side of the council. Felix V even proposed the marriage of his daughter, Margarita, to Frederick. But the king was not persuaded. Instead of a

queen, Frederick III picked up an important secretary in Basel. Aeneas had been increasingly dissatisfied with the anti-Eugenian developments at the council. He entered Frederick's service and left Basel in the king's train in November 1442. He had been in Basel six years; he was to serve in the Empire for eight years. Shortly after entering Frederick III's service, Aeneas wrote his *Pentalogue on the Affairs of Church and Empire* (*Pentalogus de rebus ecclesiae et imperii*), which the humanist Aeneas based on some classical writers. His unhappy days at the court of Frederick III as secretary under Chancellor Kaspar Schlick (d. 1449) were described in *Letter Concerning the Miseries of the Courtiers* (*Epistola de curialium miseriis*) of 1444. We should also note that Aeneas taught Sigmund of the Tyrol, who had been kept as Frederick III's ward since 1439, at Graz after 1443.

During the period from around 1443 to 1447, Frederick III himself gradually shifted his position from the neutrality of the German princes to the recognition of Eugenius IV as "undoubted" pope. In August 1444, Frederick III, accompanied by Aeneas, appeared at the Imperial Diet of Nuremberg, which was held from August 1 through October 11. This was his second appearance at a diet. A papal delegation to the diet included Cardinal Carvajal and Cusanus. A critic charged that as soon as Frederick III came under attack at the diet, he left the city and fled behind the Styrian mountains, not to attend another diet in the Empire for 27 years.

Frederick III, however, began to take steps to establish friendly relations with the pope. For this purpose, Aeneas was chosen to head a deputation which was sent to Rome early in 1445. In turn, the embassies from Eugenius IV and the Electors came to Frederick's court in Wiener Neustadt from March to May 1446. They included two prominent lawyers, Gregor Heimburg and Heinrich Leubing (d. 1472). Then Frederick III sent his embassy in June 1446 to Eugenius IV, which again included Aeneas. Frederick III agreed to call a meeting at Frankfurt am Main on September 1, 1446, to discuss the whole question of the church conflict with German princes.

The stakes were high at this meeting of the Electors and the representatives of Frederick III at Frankfurt from September 1 to October 11, 1446. The papal party included Cardinal Carvajal and Cusanus. Frederick III was represented by Albert Achilles, Margrave and Elector of Brandenburg (1414-1486), well known for his bravery, decisiveness and pro-imperial position. After many negotiations and maneuvers, the ailing Eugenius IV was recognized in the name of the German nation as the only legitimate pope on February 7, 1447, thanks to Frederick's strong support and Aeneas Sylvius' tireless diplomatic activity. Frederick III's declaration of obedience to the pope, however, did not go unchallenged. Criticism was strong, especially at the University of Vienna, which was still pro-conciliar and anti-Eugenian. After Eugenius died on February 23, 1447, Tommaso Parentucelli was elected as Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455), on March 6, 1447.

On August 21, 1447, Frederick III declared the Empire's policy of neutrality at an end and made his personal declaration of obedience to Nicholas V. His efforts since 1443 to establish a pro-papal position had met with success. Now the stage was set for the next important step for the improvement of the imperial policy towards the Church. The Concordat of Vienna, signed on February 17, 1448, put

an end to the tension between Germany and the Holy See. It was confirmed by Nicholas V on March 19, 1448.

Because of the improved relationship between the papacy and the Empire, Nicholas of Cusa, who was made *legatus a latere* on December 24, 1450, by Nicholas V and who left Rome on December 31 to begin his famous legation journey through the German lands in 1451-1452, arrived in Wiener Neustadt on February 24, 1451 and stayed there until March 1. On March 1 Frederick III formally recognized Cusanus as Bishop of Brixen (Bressanone), an act which strengthened Cusanus' position a great deal in the Tyrol, where he was to have a long, dreary contest not only with Abbess Verena von Stuben (c. 1414-1472?) but also with Duke Sigmund of the Tyrol.

To bolster further his good relations with the Church and also to complete the process for his coronation by the pope, Frederick III traveled to Rome in 1452, accompanied by a retinue of two thousand troops. He also took Ladislaus Posthumous with him. It was Aeneas Sylvius who had worked hard to make the necessary arrangements for the Roman expedition and also for Frederick III's marriage to Eleanor of Portugal (1434/36-1467), daughter of King Edward (Duarte) I (r. 1433-1438) of Portugal and Queen Eleanor, daughter of King Ferdinand I (r. 1412-1416) of Aragon and Sicily. As Frederick III approached Siena,

> A band of splendidly accoutred young men, two hundred strong, went out to meet the emperor, at their head three mounted standard bearers, the one in the center carrying aloft the imperial eagle, black on a gold ground, those on either side the colors of Siena, silver and black in quartered shields. The imperial standard was delivered up to Frederick. At the gate of Siena he was met by a procession carrying olive branches, at their head the magistracy, then the clergy and the university, after them the townspeople and their children. All sang the hymn "*Veni creator spiritus*," after which Frederick, as rightful lord, was given the keys of the city. (Heer, 6)

The marriage of Frederick III to the beautiful sixteen-year-old Portuguese princess took place on March 17 in Rome. His coronation at the hands of Nicholas V occurred on Sunday, March 19, 1452. Frederick III was the last emperor to be crowned in Rome and the only Habsburg in history to enjoy this distinction. The emperor and his bride left Rome on March 24 to spend three weeks at Easter time in Naples as guests of Eleanor's uncle, King Alfonso the Magnanimous of Aragon, Sicily and Naples (1416-1458), who had strongly supported the marriage and who had played an important role since 1448 in the protracted negotiations between Wiener Neustadt and Lisbon. We note with interest that after returning from the Imperial Diet of Regensburg towards the end of June 1452, Cusanus visited Wiener Neustadt twice, in November and December 1452.

As is well known, the fall of Constantinople on March 29, 1453, strongly affected not only the Empire but also the Church. After Aeneas became Pope Pius II on August 19, 1458, much of his energy was devoted to the defense of Europe against

the Turks by means of a crusade. Cusanus himself took a more persuasive approach to the Turkish threat, as evidenced by *On the Peace of Faith* (*De pace fidei*, 1453). Frederick III's reaction to the threat of Islam, however, was much more reserved than that of Pius II, his avowed friend and supporter. He probably shared the views of other European princes and rulers who were preoccupied with internal problems of their own domains. He showed little interest in the Imperial Diet of Regensburg, which was called in April 1454 to discuss how to deal with the Turkish problem. He only sent his representatives, Aeneas Sylvius, Hartung von Cappel, Albert Achilles and others, to a meeting in Frankfurt am Main on September 29, 1454. When Pius II held the Congress of Mantua in 1459 to promote the crusade, Frederick III refused to attend it.

There were indeed many internal problems that occupied his mind. Not only did Frederick III have to contend with a series of wars, known as the *Brüderkriege*, with his assertive, pugnacious brother, Albert VI, over the guardianship of Ladislaus Posthumous, but he also had to wrestle with the two strong rulers of eastern Europe, George Podiebrad of Bohemia (1458-1471) and Matthias Corvinus of Hungary (1458-1490), who had emerged as national kings after the death of Ladislaus in Prague on November 23, 1457. Aargau, the Habsburg heartland, was occupied by the Swiss Confederation. Some other local lords, like the Counts of Cilli, and the popular leader Ulrich von Eczing (d. 1460), were supported by the citizens of Vienna in a revolt against Frederick III. There were countless feuds which brought disorder to Austria. Even after the deaths of Pius II and Cusanus in 1464, Frederick III's position as emperor was not secure because of dangers on all sides. But ineffective and weak as his measures against them were, he eventually overcame them because of his longevity, immobility and patience. He simply outlived them.

Was Frederick III as ineffective as he was widely and generally made out to be? Was he quite oblivious to the famines, plagues, wars and Turkish dangers that affected and threatened his people? Perhaps we can summarize his performance under three categories, although it is difficult to separate them: his roles as German emperor, Austrian prince and church statesman.

Regarding his role as German emperor, his critics were and are right in pointing out his weaknesses. Two prominent Austrian historians seem to agree with critical German colleagues. Whenever possible, Frederick III avoided "engaging in battle to achieve political ends" (Wandruszka, 65). The corpulent, sleepy giant, who was nicknamed "the Fat" or "the Grand Sleepyhead" (*Erzschlafmütze*) (Haller-Reiffenstein), moved slowly and came out of the Styrian mountains only infrequently to attend imperial diets. Although not unlettered, as evidenced by his library, even his secretary Aeneas Sylvius once described him as "almost stupid" (*pene stupidum*). In his defense, his supporters or friends spoke of his "love of peace" and skepticism of the "fortunes of war." But his record as emperor was on the whole not very impressive.

When it comes to the advancement of his dynastic and ancestral interests, Frederick III's performance was quite remarkable. In fact, it can be said that from the point of view of Habsburg history, he was highly significant. As was pointed out

above, he was even considered a strong "egoist" in this regard. It is believed that the root cause of this attitude was a profound belief in the divine election and mission of the House of Habsburg and even in the dignity of the imperial office. Apparently, his model was his granduncle, Rudolf IV (1339-1365), whose accomplishments he wished instinctively to emulate and in whose world of ideas he lived and moved. The famous device A.E.I.O.V., which has been endlessly commented on and which can be traced back to 1437 in Frederick's dwellings and household objects, did in all probability mean "Austria is to rule the whole world" (*Austria est imperare orbi universe*). When one considers his son Maximilian I's expansionist, imperial activity aided by fortunate marriage connections, it is possible to understand why the famous proverb related to the Habsburg dynasty, "Let others fight wars, but you, happy Austria, marry" (*Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nube*), has a special, ringing tone. Seen from this point of view, Frederick III can be regarded as the "real founder of the Habsburg imperial position" (Wandruszka, 64) despite his miserable performance as emperor.

But, finally, in the context of the complicated, tangled relationship of Church and state in the fifteenth century, in which Nicholas of Cusa was also deeply involved, Frederick III is no doubt one of the most important persons to be remembered. At first almost pro-conciliar or at least neutral in his attitude towards the relations between pope and council, he avoided taking any step that would have inclined him towards partiality. But thanks to and with the help of his advisors, like Chancellor Kaspar Schlick and Secretary Aeneas Sylvius, he patiently and gradually took steps from about 1443 that finally aligned him with the papacy. If the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges in 1438, which sharply limited papal authority over the church of France, was a milestone in the ecclesiastical history of France, the Concordat of Vienna of 1448 was of equal or greater importance in the history of imperial-papal relations. Frederick III played his role in ecclesiastical politics patiently, doggedly and, in the long run, effectively. But, as many commentators have pointed out, the man who clung to the imperial throne for fifty-three years knew how to play the game of patience and perseverance by surviving and outliving all his enemies, including his younger brother Albert VI, and also how to weather the storms of his times.

Frederick III died in Linz on August 19, 1493. His body was taken to Vienna and buried in St. Stephen's Cathedral.

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12. Gregor Heimburg (c. 1400-1472)

> Nicholas of Cusa, the crab, you who call yourself the Cardinal of Brixen, why do you not go to the palestra? You who take pride in Greek and Latin, why do you not proceed openly to the combat of letters? Why do you speak as a fictitious person and with made-up words which you counterfeit like a potter? But you suppress your name. But this is the nature of a famous little book, that is, that speech may come from an untrustworthy person. Do not think you can vanquish a person equal to you in this way.
>
> (Cancer Cusa Nicolae, qui te Cardinalem Brixinensem vocas, cur non prodis in palestram? qui te Graecum & Latinum gloriaris, cur non palam pergis, ad certamen literarum? cur ficta persona & sermone composito loqueris, quem finxisti, veluti figulus, nomen vero tuum supprimis? At haec est natura libelli famosi, scilicet ab incerta vt prodeat sermo persona, an ne putas pares tibi reddi posse vices?) (Goldast, 2, 1626[-1631]. cf. Brockhaus, 229; Watanabe *Concord and Reform*, 278, n. 50; 292, n. 47.)

These are the words that Gregor Heimburg hurled at Nicholas of Cusa in 1461 at the beginning of his long *Invective of Gregor Heimburg, Doctor of Both Laws, against the Most Reverend Father Lord Nicholas of Cusa* (*Invectiva Gregorii Heimburg utriusque iuris doctoris in reverendissimum Patrem, dominum Nicolaum de Cusa*). Naturally, we must take into account the fact that an invectiva was a form of literary expression which was often used by humanists at that time. Nevertheless, we may ask why Nicholas of Cusa and Gregor Heimburg were at odds so strongly, and what made Heimburg well known not only as the "greatest German lawyer of the fifteenth century," but also as one of the heretics denounced by Pope Pius II, Cusanus' good friend.

Born in the Franconian city of Schweinfurt am Main near Würzburg around 1400, the son of the burgher Hans Heimburg, who served as mayor of Schweinfurt four times and who attended the Council of Constance (1414-1418), Gregor was in all probability educated at a local school which dated back to the thirteenth century. It was probably a "trivial" school, where only the elements of the *trivium* were taught. Two other famous humanists, Conrad Celtis (1459-1508) of Wipfeld, a small village between Schweinfurt and Würzburg, and Johann Cuspinian (1473-1529) of Schweinfurt, also studied at the school. The Church of St. Johannis, which maintained the school and which is nowadays a Protestant church, had been paying tithes since the Middle Ages to the collegiate church (*Stift*) of Haug in Würzburg, the tithe-owner of the whole region of Schweinfurt. As Schweinfurt became the seat of an archdeaconry in the fourteenth century, the Church of St. Johannis and, as a result, its Latin school acquired more importance in the region.

The educational program of the school was essentially traditional and scholastic at the time of Heimburg's entry. We know that Master Friedrich Marquard, who was an adherent of Scholasticism, was the head of the school from 1430 to 1440. It is not clear whether Heimburg went on to the cathedral school in Würzburg, which was very important in the ecclesiastical and cultural developments of Schweinfurt. There is no evidence that he did, despite the assertion of many scholars in the past. Because of the close relationship between the Latin school in Schweinfurt and the Haug collegiate church, the young Heimburg could have been sent to either the cathedral school or the school of Newminster (Neumünster) in Würzburg.

It is recorded that Heimburg thereafter matriculated in the Faculty of Arts at the University of Vienna on October 13, 1413, as "pauper." The reason for this designation is also not clear. In the fifteenth century, the University of Vienna drew many students from Franconia because of its proximity. The dominant school of thought at the University of Vienna was still Scholastic, but Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, who in November 1442 became a member of the Imperial Chancery under Kaspar Schlick (d. 1449), was to become instrumental in fostering humanistic studies in Vienna. It is not clear whether Heimburg was only in the Faculty of Arts or also entered the Faculty of Law in Vienna.

After studying at some other transalpine universities, which scholars have not been able to identify, Heimburg, like many aspiring youths of his generation, including Cusanus, crossed the Alps and matriculated in 1421 at the Law Faculty of the University of Padua, which was one of the leading universities in Europe at the time. He was therefore a contemporary of Cusanus, who studied there from 1417 to 1423. It is important to note that when Heimburg took an examination in 1430 for the law degree, he was already called the "famous doctor of laws" (*legum doctor famosus*). He received the degree of doctor of canon law (*doctor in iure canonico*) from the University of Padua on February 7, 1430. In an acceptance speech Heimburg spoke not only of his teachers at Padua, but also of transalpine universities which he had attended.

The same year Heimburg started his career as legal advisor to Konrad III of Dhaun, Archbishop of Mainz (r. 1419-1430), who on June 20, 1430 had appointed him his general vicar in ecclesiastical affairs despite the fact that Heimburg was a layman. Such appointments, however, were not unusual in those days. As vicar of Mainz (*vicarius Maguntinus*) he went to the Council of Basel in 1432, which had begun the previous year. What contact he had at the council with Cusanus, if any, is not known. It is, however, interesting to note that, according to Erich Maschke, Heimburg established contact around 1433 with the Teutonic Order through Emperor Sigismund (r. 1411-1437) and worked for the order intermittently until the 1450s. While Heimburg was in Basel, he had the chance to meet many Italian humanists attending the council, which offered them a good opportunity to search for manuscripts in monasteries and libraries in the north.

After serving as representative of the emperor in 1434 at the council, Heimburg became legal advisor to the city of Nuremburg on February 4, 1435, as successor to the famous Dr. Konrad Kunhofer (d. 1452), thus commencing a long period of service to the imperial city almost continuously up until 1461. At the Diet of Frankfurt in

March 1438, Heimburg fought for the adoption of the Electors' neutrality against Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) with a view to ensuring the continuance of the council. It is notable that during these years there were occasional conflicts between the imperial city and Heimburg. His legal counsel was also sought by many prelates and princes, including Duke Frederick II of Saxony, the Margrave of Brandenburg, Duke Albert VI of Austria, the Kings of Hungary and Bohemia, the Archbishops of Mainz and Trier, and the Bishops of Würzburg.

After 1444 Heimburg gathered around him a small circle of friends who were interested in the study of the humanities (*studia humanitatis*) which included Heinrich Leubing (d. 1472), Martin Mair (c. 1420-1480) and Niklas von Wyle (d. 1478). Heimburg's competence as a humanist and orator was demonstrated when he delivered a humanistic speech at the imperial court in Wiener Neustadt on January 31, 1449. Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, Bishop of Trieste since 1447 and Pope Pius II after 1458, was in the audience. After listening to Heimburg, Aeneas sent him a letter the same day, praising him profusely. As Cicero brought eloquence from Greece to Italy, wrote Aeneas, so would Heimburg bring it from Italy to Germany. Aeneas, who was often called the "apostle of humanism in Germany," had joined the imperial court in 1442, as mentioned above, and knew well how limited the influence of humanism was in German lands.

One of the most important disputes in which Heimburg was involved was the prolonged feud between Cardinal Cusanus, Bishop of Brixen (r. 1450-1458), and Sigmund the Rich, Duke of Austria and Count of the Tyrol (1446-1490). After the alleged attempt by Duke Sigmund on Cusanus' life at Wilten in May 1457, the bishop sent a report to Pope Calixtus III (r. 1455-1458) which caused much alarm and anger in Rome. In October the pope condemned the duke and urged him to give Cusanus freedom and security. In reply, Duke Sigmund sent to the "pope better informed" a strong letter of protest on November 1, 1457, which the noted Heimburg scholar Paul Joachimsohn (Joachimsen) believed was written by Heimburg.

In 1459 Heimburg went to the Congress of Mantua (1459-1460), where he made three speeches in defense of Duke Frederick II of Saxony, Duke Albert VI of Austria and Duke Sigmund of the Tyrol. As Duke Sigmund's legal advisor, Heimburg spoke not only to defend Sigmund's case against Nicholas of Cusa, but also to oppose Pope Pius II's plans to launch a crusade against the Turks, who had taken Constantinople in 1453. Heimburg said in the pope's presence that if his manner of speech was different from what the pope was accustomed to at the Curia, it was because his was the German way. It might be said that Heimburg's approach to humanistic studies was in a sense a reflection of nascent nationalistic sentiments. As the feud between Cusanus and Duke Sigmund worsened, the duke took Heimburg into his service, in 1460, on a permanent basis.

On January 18, 1460, four days after the solemn closing of the Congress of Mantua, Pius II issued the famous bull *Execrabilis* in which he prohibited the practice of appealing from the pope's authority to a general council as if the council could overrule him. Despite the papal warnings, Heimburg, who was the author of Sigmund's strong protest of August 13, 1460, appealed to a future pope as well as

to a future general council about the Tyrolean affair. As his relations with the pope deteriorated, it also became increasingly clear that Heimburg regarded the pope as a superficial imitator of ancient writers. No wonder that the pope, in the fall of 1460, initiated proceedings against Heimburg and, in his *breve* of October 18, 1460, condemned and excommunicated not only Duke Sigmund, but also Heimburg as "the son of the devil."

In reaction to the condemnation, Heimburg issued a new appeal in January 1461. In this appeal, which is perhaps the most widely read of his appeals, Heimburg strongly supported the doctrine of the supremacy of the council over the pope. By entering the service of Diether of Isenburg, Elector of Mainz (r. 1459-1461), in February 1461, Heimburg brought about an anti-papal alliance between Duke Sigmund of the Tyrol and the Archbishop of Mainz. Following Heimburg's appeal of March 16, 1461, he who still supported the conciliar doctrine was once more condemned as a heretic, on Maundy Thursday, April 1, 1461.

Excommunicated by the pope in 1460 and 1461 because of his support of Duke Sigmund against Bishop Cusanus and of the doctrine of conciliar supremacy, Heimburg spent most of his later years in Bohemia in the service of King George of Podebrady (r. 1458-1471), "King of Heretics." Although Sigmund and his other followers were absolved in Wiener Neustadt on September 2, 1464, Heimburg alone remained condemned thereafter. He was reconciled with the Church only on March 19, 1472, the year of his death, which occurred in August at Wehlen near Dresden. He was not buried in the Kreuzkirche, as some scholars, including Joachimsohn, have stated, but in the Sophienkirche in Dresden, which was heavily destroyed in the Allied bombing of the city on February 13-14, 1945.

Examining Heimburg's life as a whole, it is not difficult to determine why he became hostile not only to Nicholas of Cusa but also Pope Pius II. A few of the reasons may be briefly mentioned here. First, unlike Cusanus and Aeneas, who shifted from the advocacy of conciliarism to the support of papal supremacy, Heimburg continued to support the conciliar doctrine until the end of his life. To a great extent his anti-Cusanus and anti-Aeneas remarks and actions were related to his steady adherence to the conciliar cause.

Second, Heimburg represented an emergent nationalistic consciousness among the people of Germany. From his point of view, Cusanus was a German who bowed to the power and attraction of an Italian papacy. It is not surprising that Johannes Kymeus, in his famous criticism of Nicholas of Cusa, *The Pope's Hercules against the Germans* (*Des Babsts Hercules wider die Deudschen*, 1538), praises Heimburg as the "highly learned Doctor Gregor Heimburg" (*der hochgelehrte Doctor Gregorius Hiemburg*).

Finally, Heimburg's understanding and appreciation of *studia humanitatis* were different from Italian humanists' approach to the problem. To Heimburg, even Aeneas Sylvius, the father of humanism in Germany, was essentially a verbose imitator of ancient writers. Heimburg was aware, like Cusanus himself, that he wrote a different kind of Latin. He understood that rhetoric was essentially a tool of jurisprudence, which was to him true philosophy. In this regard, Cusanus and Heimburg, both law graduates of the University of Padua, disagreed on some

points and agreed on others. The former had become a defender of the church, the latter one of the Empire.

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13. Johannes Hinderbach (1418-1486)

Johannes Hinderbach is not widely known as a contemporary of Cusanus. But he is certainly important enough to be included in this book as an imperial diplomat, humanist and Bishop of Trent.

Hinderbach was born in Rauschenberg near Kassel in Hessen on August 15, 1418, the son of Johannes Scheib (d. 1428), who was a juror (*Schöffe*) in Rauschenberg. His mother, Immeln (Emeludis) von Langenstein (d. 1429), was a great-niece of Heinrich Hembuche von Langenstein (d. 1397), the famous theologian at the University of Paris and later at the University of Vienna. Since Johannes' father died on August 8, 1428 and his mother on July 27, 1429, he and his two brothers, Heinrich and Konrad (III), were brought up by their great-aunt Hedwig and her husband, Konrad (I) Hinderbach. Adopted by Hedwig and Konrad, Johannes and his brothers began to use the family name Hinderbach.

Not much is known about Johannes' youth. In the winter semester of 1434-1435 he enrolled at the University of Vienna, where his uncle, Dietmar Hinderbach, served as dean. He went on to acquire his *baccalarius* in 1437 and *magister artium* in 1438. The following year he started to teach at the university. But that same year he turned to the study of law in the Law Faculty of the university, and as a student of canon law continued his studies for two years.

In 1441 he began his legal studies in the Faculty of Law of the University of Padua, to which many aspiring German students turned in those days. Among his teachers were such famous professors as Antonio Roselli da Arezzo, Prosdocimo de Comitibus, Angelo da Castro, Leonardo Piccioli and Giacomo Zochi.

After completing his academic studies, Johannes entered the court of King Frederick III (r. 1440-1493) in 1449 as a secretary. Frederick III sent Johannes on a mission to Milan and rewarded him with the benefice of the parish church of St. Martin at Mödling near Vienna. Thus began Johannes' career as Frederick's diplomat. Then followed the benefices of Passau, Regensburg and Trent. When Frederick III was in Padua in 1452 on his way to his coronation in Rome at the hands of Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455), Johannes, who had accompanied Frederick III, was awarded the doctor of canon law degree (*doctor in decretis*), on January 14. It is also important to remember that Johannes, who had escorted the beautiful sixteen-year-old Portuguese princess Eleanor to Rome, participated in the emperor's coronation on Sunday, March 19, 1452.

One of the most important persons Johannes met at the imperial court at Wiener Neustadt was Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini. Crowned Poet Laureate by Frederick III at the Diet of Frankfurt on July 27, 1442, Aeneas, who had increasingly become dissatisfied with the anti-papal developments at the Council of Basel (1431-1449), entered Frederick's service and left Basel with the king in November 1442. He was to remain in the Empire for eight years as secretary under Chancellor Kaspar Schlick (d. 1449). His *Letter concerning the Miseries of the Courtiers* (*Epistola de curialium miseriis*) of 1444 described how unhappy he was at the court of Frederick

III. After Aeneas met Johannes, he described the man from Rauschenberg, perhaps with a certain sneer, as "the emperor's secretary, admirably experienced in papal law and one who spoke in noble eloquence" (*secretarius caesaris, pontificii iuris egrege peritus, ac facundia nobilis*). This coolness between the two was to remain essentially unchanged in later years.

Johannes was sent to the Roman Curia often as imperial delegate. He rendered obedience to Pope Calixtus III (r. 1455-1458) in 1455. After Frederick III's former secretary was elected pope and became Pius II (r. 1458-1464), the emperor sent Johannes to Rome in 1459 to extend imperial congratulations. No doubt Johannes had high hopes for some rewards from the new pope, who had befriended him in Wiener Neustadt. But his expectations were not met quickly, and his writings betray some bitterness towards Pius II. No red hat was forthcoming.

Between 1461 and 1462, Johannes was sent on a mission to Bohemia. But the relationship between Frederick III and his pugnacious brother Albert VI (1418-1463) deteriorated. During the siege of Vienna in 1462, in which the emperor, his empress and child were detained, Johannes served as intermediary between the emperor and Albert VI, thereby losing a considerable amount of his property. What impact this loss had on his financial status, however, is difficult to ascertain.

After the death of Nicholas of Cusa in 1464, the Empress Eleanor recommended to Duke Sigmund of the Tyrol her trusted advisor Johannes Hinderbach as Nicholas' successor as Bishop of Brixen. But instead of Brixen, Johannes was elected in August 1465 by the cathedral chapter of Trent to become its bishop. After the papal confirmation in Rome on May 12, 1466, and the following episcopal consecration on July 20, he triumphantly entered the city of Trent on September 21, 1466, as bishop. He then received the imperial investiture from Frederick III as Prince-Bishop of Trent. The successful diplomat in the service of the emperor was now a prince-bishop of the Empire.

The responsibilities of the diocese do not seem to have slowed down Hinderbach's travels. Soon after the assumption of his office, he went to Rome as imperial ambassador. In the absence of Frederick III, he convoked the so-called "Christian Congress" (*Christentag*) in Regensburg in 1471 and represented the emperor in 1474 at the Imperial Diet of Augsburg. But eager to increase his power and influence in the diocese, and probably because of his gradual loss of favor with the emperor, Hinderbach began to concentrate on his episcopal affairs about this time. Unlike Nicholas of Cusa, prince-bishop in the neighboring diocese of Brixen, who struggled against Sigmund, Duke of the Tyrol, the biggest problem the new Prince-Bishop of Trent encountered in his reign of twenty years, from 1466 to 1486, was the alleged ritual murder of Simon Unferdorben, "Little Simon," in 1475.

There is little doubt that the controversial measures taken by Hinderbach against the Jews of Trent and an intensive campaign he carried on even against a papal commissioner, Giovanni Battista de' Giudici of Ventimiglia, to have Simon canonized by Pope Sixtus IV (1471-1484) cast a dark shadow on the career of a hitherto successful imperial diplomat and episcopal administrator. As R. Po-chia Hsia, Willehad Paul Eckert and other scholars have shown, the proceedings in Trent and Rome were very controversial and complicated, and as Paul O. Kristeller

has shown, in addition to an official Latin record by the scribe Johannes de Fundis (Hans von Fundo) and a German translation, there exist many manuscripts to be studied carefully to understand the real nature of the entire ritual murder trial.

On the positive side, Hinderbach pursued his interest in the arts and the *studia humanitatis* despite his many diplomatic activities and ecclesiastical duties. He avidly collected manuscripts and eagerly corresponded with northern Italian humanists. His collection of six music manuscripts is especially well known. How he could collect expensive manuscripts after the loss of property in 1462 is not clear. He also promoted the new art of book printing, which Albert Kunne (c. 1430-c. 1490) of Duderstadt began in 1475 with the publication of *The Story of the Christ Child Murdered at Trent* (*Geschichte des zu Trient ermoderten Christenkindes*). The complex problem of Hinderbach's literary products, including his letters and his *History of Frederick III* (*Geschichte Friedrichs III.*), is beyond the scope of this short essay.

Hinderbach's final years were occupied with diplomatic activities. After returning from an unsuccessful mission to Venice, he died of a hemorrhage in Trent on September 21, 1486 and was buried in the cathedral in Trent.

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14. Thomas Livingston(e) (d. 1460?)

A close friend of Nicholas of Cusa for many years, Thomas Livingston was an important person in the life of Cusanus not only at the time of the Council of Basel (1431-1449), but also in his later years.

It is difficult to establish when and where Livingston was born. Because of his later connections with institutions in and near West Lothian, Scotland, it is possible that Livingston was born at Livingston, which is about eighteen miles southwest of Edinburgh. According to William Anderson (677), the name Livingston is said to be of Hungarian origin. The progenitor of the families of this name in Scotland was a Hungarian gentleman who came to Scotland with Margaret, queen of Malcome Canmore, in about 1070. Sir William Livingston, of Gorgyn, near Edinburgh, witnessed a charter of the Earl of Lennox in 1270. The Livingstons of Livingston are descended from him. Sir William received the lands of Callendar from David II (1324-1371) in 1347. Sir James Livingston of Callendar was created Lord Livingston in 1458. Alexander, the seventh lord, was raised to the earldom of Linlithgow in 1600.

It was perhaps among the Livingstons of Livingston, who included Sir Albert Livingston, a defender of James II (r. 1437-1460) against the Crichtons after the murder of James I in 1437, that Thomas was born. Ranald Nicholson states, on the basis of Duncan Shaw’s article, that “the baronial family of Livingston was of much the same standing as that of Crichton; and the prolific Livingstons had wide connections, which included the prominent conciliarist, Thomas Livingston, Abbot of Dundrennan” (Nicholson, 328).

Thomas Livingston was one of the first graduates of the University of St. Andrews, completing his studies in 1413 as a bachelor of arts and in 1414 as a master of arts. He even seems to have taught at the university for a while, commencing his career as a *temptator* on April 1, 1419. Entering the Cistercian Order, he became a monk and was elected in 1422 Abbot of Newbattle (Neubotle, i.e., a new dwelling), which is seven miles south of Edinburgh. Today, in the town of Newbattle, the sixteenth-century former home of the Marquises of Lothian stands at the site of the thirteenth-century Cistercian abbey. The building now houses Newbattle Abbey College, Scotland's only adult residential college. On inquiring about Thomas Livingston as Abbot-Elect of Newbattle Abbey, the author was told on his visit to the college on August 5, 1993 that Livingston was not among the names of former abbots and that, in the words of Mrs. A, who gave the author a tour of the college, "this chap was probably not very well liked."

In 1423, two years before Nicholas of Cusa matriculated at the University of Cologne, Livingston entered the university to study theology. At the time of his matriculation, Livingston was a bachelor of systematic theology and shortly after became a doctor of theology. It is possible that while Livingston was in Cologne he made friends with Nicholas of Cusa. Sometime in the 1420s, probably in 1424, Livingston became Abbot of Dundrennan. The Cistercian abbey is said to have been founded by David I (1084-1153) in 1142 and colonized by monks from Melrose. The abbey will be forever remembered as the place where, on May 15, 1568, Mary Queen of Scots spent her last night on Scottish soil.

On November 14, 1432, Livingston was incorporated into the Council of Basel (1431-1449). Some scholars have suggested that he was encouraged to go to Basel by Nicholas of Cusa. No Scotsman was a member of the council before Livingston's arrival. Establishing himself very quickly as an important member, Livingston, who was known as Abbot of Scotland, Abbot of Dundrennan Monastery (*abbas de Scocia*, *abbas monasterii de Dundrana* [*Donarania*; *Donaranya*]) and so forth, went on to become the most distinguished Scotsman at the council. He persuaded James I (1406-1437) of Scotland to support the Council of Basel and served as the king's representative at the council in 1434. Some of his many sermons, including one that he delivered on Trinity Sunday in 1435, have been preserved. In August 1439 Livingston was appointed to an embassy to Frankfurt and also to the provincial diet at Mainz. He delivered speeches on August 2 and 10 in which he defended the conciliar position against the pope.

When the Council of Basel, after deposing Eugenius IV, proceeded to elect Felix V (r. 1439-1449) as pope on November 5, 1439, Livingston, joined by Juan de Segovia and others, supported Felix V. On November 29, 1440 he was provided to the see of Dunkeld by Felix V. It was not surprising that Eugenius IV deprived Livingston of the abbacy of Dundrennan on April 10, 1441, four months later. It is often said that this provision never took place. But *The Scottish Church Calendar* (*Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae*) gives in its list of bishops of Dunkeld "Thomas Livingstone [*sic*] 1440-1460," followed by "James Bruce (Brois) 1441-1447." The list of bishops displayed in Dunkeld Cathedral gives the following bishops in the second half of the fifteenth century:

Alexander de Lauder 1440
Thomas Livingstone 1440-1441
James Bruce (Brois) 1441-1447
William Turnbull 1447-1448
John de Ralston 1448-1452
Thomas Lauder 1452-1475
James Livingstone 1475-1483

The tower of the cathedral, which is dedicated to St. Columba, was completed by James Livingstone, no doubt a relative of Thomas Livingston.

Appointed legate to Scotland by Felix V on March 20, 1447, Thomas Livingston came to Scotland in the spring of 1447, but his efforts to obtain the see of Dunkeld were unsuccessful. On May 25, 1447, a safe conduct was granted by Henry VI (1421-1471) of England

> for Thomas Livingston, bishop of Dunkeld and administrator of the monastery of Saint Christopher outside the walls of Turin, doctor of sacred theology, at present living in the kingdom of the king of England."
>
> (pro Thoma de Levingstonne episcopo Dunkeldensi et administratore monasterii Sancti Cristofori extra muros Taurinenses, sacre theologie doctore, in Regno Anglie ad presens existente.) (Dowden, 71)

Thus Livingston was also in charge of the administration of S. Christopher's Monastery outside the walls of Turin in the area of Italy that recognized Felix V. Supporting Felix V and being favored by the antipope, Livingston was to remain an active and devoted supporter of the council until it was finally dissolved in 1449. Even after the close of the council, he retained his high position within the conciliar party. He was styled as "Bishop in the Universal Church."

After his return to Scotland, he is said to have become the "intimate confessor and counselor" of James II. On July 14, 1449, Pope Nicholas V, who had a policy of reconciliation with the supporters of the council, granted him *motu proprio* (Coulton, 84) the parish church of Kirkinner (Corinsinule, Cairnsmull) in the diocese of Galloway, which was reputed to be "the richest parish church in the diocese" (Dowden, 42). "To all appearance," wrote G. G. Coulton (1858-1947), "Livingston enjoyed the fruits of this rectory (at Kirkinner), valued at about £400 a year in modern money, all the time" (85). It is also recorded that during 1449 Cusanus preached three sermons in German at Hildesheim to the people of the town, while Livingston delivered two Latin sermons to the monks and other clergy in the monastic church there.

It is possible that Livingston was able to meet with Nicholas of Cusa when he was back in Rome on January 11, 1450. He may even have been at Cusanus' consecration as Bishop of Brixen by Pope Nicholas V on March 23, 1450. When Cusanus began his famous legatine tour of Germany and the Low Countries in

1451-1452, Livingston went on the mission with him. In 1456 Livingston, Bishop of Dunkeld, received the abbacy of Cupar *in commendum* and then made himself rector of one of the appropriate churches, Kirkinner in Wigtownshire. Returning to Scotland in 1457, Livingston died, blind, before July 10, 1460.

There has been much discussion recently about the continuance of the conciliar tradition in Scotland. Whether and how Thomas Livingston contributed to the development awaits further investigation.

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15. Ramon Llull (1232/33-1315/16)

Ramon Llull was certainly not Cusanus' contemporary, but Cusanus took a very great interest in him. In 1998 the author wrote in the ACSN:

> It is well known that Cusanus' library in Bernkastel-Kues contains a large number of works by Ramon Lull (Llull) (1232-1316). In fact, sixty-eight manuscripts containing thirty-nine various works of Lull entirely or partially constitute the largest collection of the works of any ancient or medieval writer in Cusanus' library. (Watanabe, 7)

Who was this man in whose ideas Nicholas of Cusa was so very interested?

Born around 1232 at Palma on the island of Majorca as the only child of a wealthy family, Llull entered the services of King James I of Aragon (1213-1276) and Majorca (r. 1230-1276) as a page. He lived a life of ease and amorous exploits, distinguishing himself from about 1246 by writing troubadour poems in Catalan. He was appointed seneschal to the young James II of Majorca (1276-1311), who received the island from his father in 1253. As a result of his marriage to Blanca Picany in 1257, Llull had a son, Domingo, and a daughter, Magdalena. In 1263 and 1264 he repeatedly received a vision of Christ crucified, as a result of which he underwent a profound conversion. In his *Contemporary Life* (*Vita coetanea*), an autobiography which Llull wrote at the Carthusian monastery of Vauvert outside Paris in 1311, he described the results of his five-time experience:

> At last, as a gift of the Father of lights, he thought about the gentleness, patience, and mercy which Christ showed and shows toward all sorts of sinners. And thus at last he understood with certainty that God wanted him, Ramon, to leave the world and dedicate himself totally to the service of Christ. (Llull, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 12)

Between 1265 and 1274 he spent a period of study in the Cistercian monastery of La Real near Palma, devoting himself to studying Arabic language and literature and Islamic culture. In 1275 he retired to Mount Randa not far from Palma. Later the same year he abandoned his family and was fired with ambition to convert the Muslims and the Jews. One of his most famous works, *The Book of the Gentile and the Three Wise Men* (*Libre del gentile e dels tres savis*, 1274/75), was produced as a result. In 1275 he left Majorca and went on to traverse Europe in an effort to enlist support for his plans to fight the infidels and to establish schools for teaching the Arabic language, with little practical result beyond the foundation of a missionary school at Miramar near Palma in 1276. He paid five visits to the Curia in Rome to persuade Pope Honorius IV (r. 1285-1287) and Pope Boniface VIII (r. 1294-1303) to support his plans, but in vain. His disappointments and frustrations were expressed especially in his poem *Disappointments* (*Desconhort*) and *The Tree of Science* (*Arbre de sciéncia*) of 1295.

Thomas Le Myésier (d. 1336) became a faithful disciple in Paris some time between 1297 and 1299.

Llull had met Ramon de Penyafort (d. 1275), the Dominican general, in 1265 and later attended the general chapter meetings of the Dominicans and the Franciscans. But the Dominicans were not friendly to his ideas and missionary plans. Around 1290 he began to establish an association with the Spiritual Franciscans, including Arnold of Villanova (1240-1311), whom he met in Marseilles in 1307/08. He was clearly closer to the Franciscans in thought and spirit than to the Dominicans. But whether he eventually became a tertiary of the Franciscan Order, as is often said, is still a debatable question.

Llull's missionary activities led him to North Africa and the Middle East. In 1292, he visited Tunis on his first African mission. After visiting Cyprus and Armenia in 1301 and 1302, he sailed in 1307 for Bougia in North Africa and preached there, but was first imprisoned, then expelled and shipwrecked on his way home. In 1311 he returned to Europe to address the Council of Vienne (1311-1312). In the intervals between his journeys, he taught not only at Montpellier, but also at Paris, where from 1309 to 1311 he tried to refute Latin Averroists. He then went to Messina in 1313 to seek support from Frederick III of Sicily (r. 1296-1337), a friend of the Franciscan Spirituals with an interest in overseas missions. But Llull received no help from Frederick. His third trip to North Africa was to Tunis and, according to legend, to Bougia in 1314-1315, about which not much reliable information is available.

It has often been said that Llull died a martyr's death in Bougia, stoned by Muslims. But there is no clear evidence for this. Recent scholars think that he died

in Majorca. He was buried at the Church of San Francisco, Palma, Majorca, in 1315 or 1316.

Llull's literary activity in Catalan, Latin and Arabic was prodigious. He wrote about 265 works—Erhard-Wolfram Platzeck ("Descubrimiento …," 1964) listed two hundred and ninety-two and Anthony Bonner (1985) two hundred and eighty-four—not only of theology, logic and philosophy, but also fiction and poetry. Although he had no training in the occult arts, he was also known as an alchemist. The "Works of Ramon Llull—Electronic Versions," which can be examined easily via Google, lists forty-four items. The "Manuscripts Digitalized by the Raimundus-Lullus-Institut of Freiburg," which can also be reviewed through Google, lists four hundred and seventy-eight manuscripts from many libraries and museums, such as those in Barcelona, Berlin, Bernkastel-Kues, Copenhagen, El Escorial, London, Madrid, Milan, Munich (nos. 121-226), Oxford, Palma, Paris (291-342) and the Vatican (406-459).

In the later Middle Ages, when the Scholastic movement was dominant at the University of Paris and elsewhere, Llull's theology and philosophy were deeply influenced by Neoplatonism and Augustinianism, especially the teachings of St. Anselm (c. 1033-1109) and St. Bonaventure (1224-1274). The intellectual historian Dame Frances A. Yates (1899-1981), who wrote perceptive articles on Llull, emphasized the influence of John Scotus Eriugena (c. 800-c. 877) on him. One of the most important reasons for the difficulties which the investigator of Llull's ideas confronts is what Anthony Bonner called "the man's multiplicity." Llull discussed so many topics in so many writings. The vastness of the material is certainly one of the problems in Llull studies. Another difficulty is the incomplete state of the sources and research materials available to the researcher at present. Since the time of Ivo Salzinger (1669-1728), attempts have been made to produce a reliable edition of Llull's writings, but the work has not been completed, or, to appreciate what has been accomplished, there is more work to be completed. The modern Latin edition of Llull's works is still in progress.

Despite the vastness of his material and the incomplete condition of available sources and research materials, we are quickly impressed by the fact that Llull was certainly a system-builder. At the center of his system is what is called the "Art," which was first described and discussed in his *Greater Art* (*Ars major*) or *Comprehensive Art of Discovering the Truth (Ars compendiosa inveniendi veritatem*), completed shortly after he received a "revelation" on Mount Randa in 1274. According to Yates, the Llullian Art was "a kind of universal scientific method, working with letter notions and geometrical figures on what its author believed to be the diverse structure of reality" (*Renaissance and Reform*, 84). In his discussion of the Art, there are many circles and other diagrams. The use of many kinds of trees with a Christian, a Saracen or a Jew standing nearby, or Ramon and a monk facing each other around the tree is notable. The most peculiar and impressive aspect of his Art is the use of letters of the alphabet. BCDEFGHIK represent the Dignities, or Attributes, of God—*Bonitas*, *Magnitudo*, *Eternitas*, *Potestas*, *Sapientia*, *Voluntas*, *Virtus*, *Veritas* and *Gloria*. In addition, there are the four letters ABCD, which are to be used in combination with the nine Attributes of God. The four elements, *Aer* (Air), *Igniz* (Fire), *Terra* (Earth)

and *Aqua* (Water), are "fundamental forces" on all levels. To quote Yates again: "(The) Art was a way of finding out and 'demonstrating' truth in all departments of knowledge" (*Renaissance and Reform*, 117).

Llull valued his Art for its missionary purposes. He was convinced that by the Art, which was based on principles central to the three great religions—Christianity, Judaism, Islam—he could convert Jews and Muslims by providing infallible arguments for the truth of the Trinity and for conversion of them all to Christianity. As Harvey Hames put it, "[t]he most significant element of the Art was its generality, which was supposed to provide a common starting point which members of all faiths could agree to, and then by 'necessary reasons' would conclusively demonstrate the Christian truths" (135).

Of the many subjects in numerous works Llull touched on, we can pick up only one more topic briefly, chosen especially because of its relation to Cusanus' ideas. In his recent discussions of Llull's concept of "chaos," as presented in his *Liber chaos* (1285-1287), Charles Lohr pointed out that in the second book of *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia)*, Nicholas of Cusa "described the realm in which the absolutely infinite made itself manifest in the infinite possibilities of the contract infinite" and that that which "Nicholas of Cusa called the 'contract infinite' is that which Ramon Lull called 'chaos'" (*Mathematics and the Divine*, 219). Lohr further developed his discussion on Llull's concept of "chaos" in his recently published articles "Chaos Theory According to Ramon Lull" and "Chaos nach Ramon Lull und Nikolaus von Kues."

Let us briefly recall the history of recent studies on the relationship between Llull and Cusanus. Eusebio Colomer, S.J., discussed their relationship in his notable 1961 book, *Nikolaus von Kues und Raimund Llull*. In many of his studies, Charles Lohr emphasized the importance of recognizing Llullian ideas in the works of Cusanus. In a stimulating study, Rudolf Haubst showed conclusively that Cusanus was in Paris in 1428 to copy and extract from the *Liber contemplationis* and twenty-six other works of Llull at the Carthusian monastery of Vauvert near Paris. In response, Colomer wrote an article in MFCG 15 (1982). Theodor Pindle-Büchel in 1990 and Ulli Roth in 1999 discussed in detail the marginal notes written by Cusanus in the works of Llull contained in Codex Cusanus 83, now in the St. Nicholas Hospital Library in Bernkastel-Kues. No doubt, there will be more studies along these lines.

In the *Blanqueria* (1283-1285), Llull is presented as a "fool"; in his *Phantasticus* (1311), a priest described Llull as a hopelessly impractical and idealistic "fool" (*vir fantasticus*). It is possible that the popes and the kings whom Llull approached to seek support and help did not regard his plans as realistic. Perhaps his Art was too difficult for many to understand. Despite the large number of Llull's works which he owned and perused, Cusanus specifically mentioned Llull's name only twice in all of his writings, *Sermo* 1 of 1431 and *Sermo* 12 of 1432. Colomer wondered if Cusanus forgot about Llull's works he had read. Probably one of the reasons for Cusanus' caution was based on his knowledge of the campaign started by Nicholas Eymerich (1320-1399), the Dominican inquisitor general of Aragon, against the "rationalist" teachings of Llull and their repercussions. But, as Colomer and Roth pointed out, even towards the end of his life, Cusanus, in his *Compendium*

(1463), referred to Llull with admiration. When Cusanus first became acquainted with Llull's works is still an unresolved question. Was it in Kues, as Honecker and Colomer suggested, or in Padua, as Batllori, Lohr and Pindl believe? Was it through Heymericus de Campo (Heimeric van den Velde, 1395-1460) or someone else?

Yates, who was one of the pioneers in English Llull studies, acknowledged that to study Llullian thought was to explore a "huge unclimbed mountain" (*Renaissance and Reform*, 166) and that writing her two articles on Llull for the *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, which she completed towards the end of her life, was "the hardest task I have ever undertaken." More recently, Bonner wrote, in his edition and translation of Llull's works: "Many aspects of Llull's thought entered his (Cusanus') philosophy and theology … No other thinker influenced Cusanus as much, and it can probably be said that no other later thinker understood Llull so well" (Llull, *Doctor Illuminatus*, 63). Is Bonner's statement true? In our desire to understand Cusanus, we are undoubtedly called upon to delve into the writings and ideas of the Majorcan thinker.

[The author is indebted to Charles Lohr of the University of Freiburg i. Br. for his assistance in matters of recent Llull studies and Il Kim of Columbia University for his help in obtaining some of the important publications on Llull.]

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16. Pope Nicholas V (1397-1455) (r. 1447-1455)

Morimichi Watanabe and Il Kim

In his attractive and well-illustrated book, *The Medieval Papacy*, the distinguished English medievalist Geoffrey Barraclough (1908-1984) wrote on the reform of the Church in the late Middle Ages:

> (T)he close of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries were an age of great religious zeal and seriousness. Martin V and Eugenius IV, and Eugenius' successor, Nicholas V (1447-55)—the best pope of the century—made some effort to give this new fervour a lead … Nicholas V sent the great cardinal Nicholas of Cusa to lead reform in Germany, and in only two years, from 1451-1452, he made remarkable progress—a real indication of what Rome might have achieved, had it only continued to support and guide the strong local movements which were springing up throughout Europe, now that the prospect of general reform had crumbled. But after Nicholas V nothing was done. His successor, Pius II—the famous humanist Aeneas Silvius—was tepid and half-hearted, too much the cultured scholar to be the religious zealot. After him all was sacrificed to the exigencies of Italian territorial policy. (192-193)

Barraclough seems a bit too harsh in his judgment of Pius II. He could have taken into account how the mind of the Piccolomini pope was afflicted by the great burden of the Turkish expansion and its threat to Christendom. Compared with Pius II, how does Nicholas V, another humanist pope, look, and what is the difference between them? According to one commentator, Nicholas V is "a name never to be mentioned without reverence by every lover of letters" (Macaulay, 740).

Tommaso Parentucelli was born on November 15, 1397, at Sarzana, about ten miles southeast of La Spezia in the Liguria region of Italy. Because in both *The Life of Nicholas V* (*Vita Niccolò V*) by his friend, the humanist Giannozzo Manetti (1396-1459) and *The Lives of Illustrious Men of the Fifteenth Century* (*Vite di uomini illustri del secolo XV*) by Vespasiano da Bisticci (1421-1498) Parentucelli's birthplace was given as Pisa, it was often believed that he came from Pisa, which is only about thirty-five miles south of Sarzana. This question of whether he was born in Pisa or Sarzana divided scholars for some time, until in 1884 Giovanni Sforza (1846-1922) argued on the basis of notarial documents he found in Sarzana that Tommaso Parentucelli hailed from Sarzana. Recent research has established his place of origin more clearly. On the occasion of the six hundredth anniversary of his birth in 1997 at least two commemorative events were held at Sarzana. In this connection, it should be noted that many new books and articles on Nicholas V were published in 1997 and 1998, such as those by Casimiro Bonfigli, Giuseppe Coluccia, Anna Maria Corbo and Massimo Miglio.

Tommaso's father, Bartolomeo, was a skillful, though not wealthy, surgeon (*chirurgo*). According to Vespasiano da Bisticci, he died when Tommaso was nine years old, but recent writers like Bonfigli and Coluccia say he died perhaps in November, 1400 in an outbreak of plague at Lucca, leaving the infant Tommaso. This is one of the aspects of Tommaso's life which, like his birthplace, will be cleared up eventually. Bartolomeo's wife Andreola (d. 1451) married Tommaso Calandrino one year after her husband's death. Because the household was shared by Calandrino's several children from a previous marriage, the young Tommaso experienced poverty and hard times in childhood. The stepfather was not able or not willing to support Tommaso's education. Tommaso was, as Ludwig Pastor (1854-1928), the great historian of the papacy, put it, "entirely dependent on his exertions" (Pastor, II, 15). Because he was anxious to learn, he acquired excellent knowledge of grammar and Latin by the time he was sixteen. To follow the general outline of Vespasiano's chronology, he then left for Bologna and studied there, until in 1418 he obtained a master of arts degree. But the economic conditions of the family made it necessary for him to discontinue his studies. Fortunately he found a position as tutor in two wealthy Florentine families, first with the Rinaldo degli Albizzi family and then later in the household of Palla de' Strozzi. He worked for the families in Florence for two years altogether and was strongly influenced by the humanistic and artistic atmosphere of the city.

After returning to the University of Bologna and obtaining the doctor of theology degree at the age of twenty-two, Tommaso Parentucelli entered in 1422 the service of Niccolò Albergati (1357-1443), who was the Bishop of Bologna (r. 1417-1426). Three years later he was ordained priest. Then for twenty years he

worked faithfully for the bishop, later a cardinal, who was widely known for his saintly character. When Bishop Albergati went on various legatine missions to France and Lombardy, Parentucelli accompanied his patron. After the elevation of Albergati to the purple in 1426, he went to Rome with the new cardinal and then to Florence, following the migration of the papal court. These ecclesiastical and diplomatic experiences gave Parentucelli maturity and wisdom. After Albergati died at Siena on May 9, 1443, Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447), a new, more powerful patron, named Parentucelli Bishop of Bologna on November 27, 1444, but because the city was in a state of revolt, his entry was barred. Instead the pope, having found enough proof of Parentucelli's skills in diplomatic affairs, entrusted him with important missions in Italy and Germany. Succeeding in breaking up the League of the German Electors, which constituted a serious threat to Rome, Parentucelli was rewarded with a cardinal's hat in December, 1446.

On February 23, 1447, Eugenius IV died. Parentucelli, who had only recently become a cardinal, was chosen to deliver a funeral oration. "The oration was spoken with great dignity and eloquence," reported Vespasiano, "and gave such great satisfaction to all the College, and to the others present that it moved the cardinals to make him Pope" (Vespasiano, 43). The twenty-four cardinals who entered the conclave at the Dominican monastery of S. Maria sopra Minerva on March 4, 1447 unanimously elected Parentucelli pope at the third scrutiny on the second day. Neither the Colonnas nor the Orsinis, the two most influential Roman families, could produce a pope. The Spanish cardinal Juan de Carvajal (c. 1400-1469), who was looked upon as the most eminent of the Sacred College of Cardinals and who it was generally believed would become the next pope, was also passed over. This meant that in the course of three years Parentucelli went quickly from bishop, to cardinal, to pope. And yet the general reception of the new pope, who took the style of Nicholas V in memory of his longtime patron, was favorable. It was known that he was a man of integrity and peace who would work for the settlement not only of many issues in the Church that had arisen as a result of the Great Schism (1378-1417) and the Councils of Constance (1414-1418) and Basel (1431-1449), but also of knotty political disputes and problems among the rising nations in Europe. Pastor described the new pope as follows:

> His disposition was lively, impatient, and hasty; he was extremely exact in all he did, and expected to be understood at a glance. He was wont to speak much and rapidly, and dispensed with all irksome ceremony. Dissimulation and hypocrisy were hateful to his open-hearted nature. He was affable, obliging, and cheerful; he showed himself to the people more frequently than Eugenius had done, and gave audiences at all hours of the day … Alike as Bishop, Cardinal, and Pope, he was so kind and affable to all comers that no one went away unsatisfied. He loved peace; probably no prince of the time had so profound a horror of war. (II, 19-20)

Demonstrating his diplomatic skill, Nicholas V quickly came to a settlement with King Alfonso V (the Magnanimous) of Naples (r. 1443-1458), who had become a threat to the papacy under Eugenius IV. He then succeeded in concluding the Concordat of Vienna on February 17, 1448 with King Frederick III (r. 1440-1493) and the princes of Germany, who had adopted a position of neutrality between the pope and the council. The concordat strengthened the papal position greatly in relation to the imperial electors and princes and guaranteed the Church's autonomy and strength for some time to come. The marriage of Frederick III to Eleanor of Portugal in Rome on March 17, 1452 and the imperial coronation of Frederick III on March 19 by Nicholas V, in which the humanist Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, then Frederick III's imperial secretary and later Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464), played an important role, further strengthened a strong tie between the papacy and the Empire. Looking at the ecclesiastical side, we note that after Frederick III withdrew safe conducts from the rump Council of Basel, it moved to Lausanne in 1448. Then Nicholas V agreed to generous conditions for its dissolution, accepting the resignation of antipope Felix V (r. 1439-1449) on April 7, 1449. Four days later the rump council recognized Nicholas V as the legitimate pope and dissolved itself. Thus Nicholas V was able to solve not only serious political problems, but also the grave ecclesiastical ones that had shaken and challenged the role and position of the papacy in the fifteenth century.

On January 19, 1449, in the presence of the assembled cardinals, Nicholas V solemnly announced a Jubilee for the following year as a symbol of the cessation of the Schism and the restoration of papal authority. To quote from Pastor once more:

> The "golden year" opened on the Christmas Day of 1449. The concourse was immense. Then began a pilgrimage of the nations to the Eternal City, like that which had taken place a century before. All the miseries of recent years, the bereavements which war and plague had wrought, the manifest tokens of Divine wrath, were a call to serious reflection and self-examination. (II, 76)

A little later, Pastor adds:

> The terrible calamities through which they had just passed had touched the hearts of many, and turned them from earthly to heavenly things, and awakened a spirit of devotion. Moreover, the personal affability of the Pope may have induced many to undertake the long and difficult journey. (II, 77)

Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini's estimate that about forty thousand pilgrims arrived in Rome daily could not have been an exact one, but the number was impressive. No doubt one of the most important attractions of this Jubilee was the canonization on May 24 of St. Bernardino of Siena (1380-1444), one of the most popular saints in Italian history. An outbreak of plague forced the pope to retreat to Castle Fabriano and to stay away from Rome from June 18 to October 25. The

number of pilgrims to Rome dropped in June, July and August. After the pope's return, the pilgrims poured in again and another peak was reached in November. Giannozzo Manetti (1396-1459) reported that an eyewitness likened the thronging multitudes of pilgrims to a flight of starlings and a swarm of ants. But a catastrophic traffic accident occurred just before Christmas, on Saturday, December 19, on the Ponte Sant'Angelo, in which more than one hundred and seventy-two pilgrims were pushed into the Tiber or trodden underfoot when they came into contact with some horses and mules which had taken fright. This caused a nervous depression in Nicholas V.

On the basis of his study of the petitions submitted to the Papal Penitentiary during the Jubilees of 1450 and 1475, Ludwig Schmugge concluded that the number of pilgrims in 1450 from France and Germany, two major countries of origin, was at least three times larger than that of 1475 and that the number of the Jubilee indulgences granted or sold to the pilgrims was extraordinarily large (1999 and 2005). The petitions for the remission of illegitimacy (*De defectu natalium*) and diverse forms (*De diversis formis*) by the penitentiary shot up. Needless to say, immense sums of money poured into Rome during the Jubilee. Clearly, the Holy Year of 1450 was an especially successful one in the history of the Church.

It is difficult to ascertain when Tommaso Parentucelli first came to know about or met Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464). When Cardinal Albergati of Bologna, together with Parentucelli, attended the Council of Basel in 1432, 1434 and 1436 as legate of Eugenius IV, Cusanus might have met the future pope there. It is also known that Albergati and Cusanus, together with Juan de Torquemada (1388-1468), attended the Diet of Nuremberg in October 1438 and defended the pope against the representatives of the council. This was another chance for their possible encounter. By the time Eugenius IV created Cusanus a cardinal *in petto*, probably on December 20, 1446, Cusanus was undoubtedly well known to the members of the Curia. Then it was Nicholas V who actually promoted Cusanus to the cardinalate on December 20, 1448. Both were men of learning, piety, devotion and commitment to the Church, with a great interest in collecting manuscripts.

As special legates in commemoration of the Jubilee, Nicholas V sent Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa to Germany and the Low Countries in December 1450, Cardinal Guillaume d'Estouteville (1403-1483) to France in August 1451 and the famous Franciscan friar and preacher Giovanni Capistrano (1386-1456) to Bohemia, Hungary and Poland. Cardinal Cusanus left Rome on the last day of 1450 to proclaim the Jubilee, to offer indulgences to those who had not been able to visit Rome during the privileged season and to reform monasteries and the clergy in the regions he visited. Until his return to Brixen (Bressanone) in April 1452, Cusanus' trip lasted sixteen months and extended to about 4,500 kilometers. During Cusanus' long legatine journey, Nicholas V took great interest in his activities. Pastor published four "unpublished documents and extracts from archives" (Pastor, II, 502-503, 505, 506-507), which had been sent by the pope to the legate in 1450 and 1451. In the *Acta Cusana*, I, 2-3a, which cover the period from May 17, 1437, to March 1452, eighteen extant letters from Nicholas V to Cusanus are edited and published. They show the close relationship these men had despite the difficulty of the changing

times in which they lived. Altogether, eleven letters or documents were written and sent by the pope to Cusanus between January and April 1451 on his legatine journey, which can be found in the *Acta.* In his letter of August 13, 1451, the pope named Cusanus legate to England, but Cusanus was never able to visit the country.

Nicholas V had a special passion for books and buildings. According to Vespasiano, he is supposed to have said that if he had wealth, he would spend it on those two things. From childhood he showed considerable talent for collecting manuscripts. Wherever he went, he looked for new manuscripts. On the legatine journeys with Cardinal Albergati, both in France and in Germany, he made new discoveries, enriching his manuscripts with marginal notes written in beautiful handwriting, which was widely admired. His agents searched for rare codices in many countries, and a large number of copyists were used to multiply them. The future founder of the Vatican Library was no doubt one of the best connoisseurs of his day.

Although it was the design of Nicholas V, as he said in his letter of 1451 to Enoch of Ascoli (c. 1400-c. 1457), to found a library at St. Peter's not only for clergymen, but also "for the common convenience of the learned," he left it unfinished at his death in 1455. But he is usually regarded as the first "founder" of the Vatican Library. According to the late Leonard E. Boyle (1922-1990), the former prefect of the Vatican Library, Pope Sixtus IV (r. 1471-1484), who is often regarded as the "second" or "real" founder of the library, inherited "from Nicholas a large library of some 1,100 codices in Nicholas' Latin and Greek libraries, not to speak of the unrecorded contents of the *Bibliotheca secreta*, or papal library proper" (Boyle, 1993, xi). There were eight hundred and seven manuscripts in Nicholas' *Bibliotheca latina* and three hundred and fifty-three in the *Bibliotheca graeca*. Nicholas V made Giovanni Tortelli (1400-1466) his librarian and went on to collect not only spiritual works, but also pagan literary and historical contents. Vespasiano mentions that the library had the *Iliad* of Homer, the *De situ orbis* of Strabo translated by Guarino da Verona, Herodotus and Thucydides translated by Lorenzo Valla, Xenophon and Diodorus by Poggio Bracciolini, Polybius by Niccolò Perotti, the works of Philo Judaeus, the works of Plato done by George of Trebizond, Aristotle's works and others. Among sacred writings, he mentions the works of Dionysius the Areopagite translated by Ambrogio Traversari, the works of St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. John Chrysostom and many others. Vespasiano concludes his discussion of these projects by saying: "Pope Nicholas was the ornament and the light of literature and of learned men" (Vespasiano, 51). It should be noted that Nicholas had a special respect for St. Augustine.

What did Nicholas V do in the area of building? According to Gianozzo Manetti, the pope envisioned grandiose building and restoration projects both in Rome and in the towns of the papal territories, the scale of which had not been imagined since the age of Imperial Rome. Although a majority of architectural historians today dismiss Manetti's accounts either as inaccurate or as exaggerated, it is highly probable that the pope knew the importance of displaying his political stance, both ecclesiastical and secular, through architectural and urban renewal projects in his state. His experience in architecture had started before he became

pope. In Bologna, when he was in the service of Bishop Albergati, for example, one of his assignments was to renew the city's episcopal residence, which stood in terrible shape. Vespasiano notes that Albergati gave Tommaso a commission to carry out the work and in a very short time the bishop's home was rebuilt from the foundation.

When Nicholas was elected pope in 1447, one of the problems he inherited from Eugenius IV was the action of the nobility in Rome in constantly seeking to negate the papal power over the city. This was a result of the activities of Cola di Rienzo (1313-1354), the self-proclaimed "tribune of the sacred Roman republic." On Pentecost Sunday in 1347, supported by the nobility, he presented to the public the recently discovered bronze tablets, *lex romana*, which attested to the people's voluntary concession of power to the Emperor Vespasian (A.D. 9-79). Cola had the tablets built into a wall of the Basilica of St. John Lateran, which was at that time the location of the papal palace. In 1381 the Society of San Salvatore at the Sancta Sanctorum, composed of members of the nobility, acquired jurisdiction over the area stretching from the Lateran to the Coliseum, and exercised economic privileges and tax remission for those who lived and conducted commerce there.

In order to reestablish papal supremacy over the nobility, Nicholas V moved the Apostolic See from St. John Lateran to St. Peter's which, because it housed the saint's tomb, finally established the absolute image of the pontiff as the Vicar of Christ based on the Gospel of St. Matthew. At the same time he discarded his family coat of arms and symbolically assumed the two crossed keys of St. Peter. Like Eugenius IV, he believed that Christ had given the keys to Peter, not to the Church, and therefore the pope, not the council, should hold the keys.

Manetti described Nicholas V's efforts to transform the city into the indisputable capital of Christendom for the purpose of manifesting the legitimacy of the pope's spiritual authority through architecture. According to Manetti, on his deathbed Nicholas V explained:

> Not for ambition, nor pomp, nor vainglory, nor fame, nor the eternal perpetuation of my name, but for the greater authority of the Roman Church and the greater dignity of the Apostolic See among all Christian peoples and the more certain avoidance of the usual persecutions we conceived such buildings in mind and spirit. (Westfall, 33)

It is clear, however, that Nicholas V was also interested in establishing absolute temporal power by means of architectural, urban projects. Manetti divided Nicholas V's building projects into two categories: those planned within the city and those to be constructed in other papal towns. He wrote that Nicholas V focused in his early reign on repairing fortifications, churches, aqueducts and bridges for the 1450 Jubilee year and for the visit of Emperor Frederick III in 1452. During his later years, according to Manetti, the pope was interested in the expansion of the Vatican Palace, in reorganizing the Borgo area lying between the Ponte Sant'Angelo and St. Peter's and in replacing the old Constantinian Basilica of St. Peter's with an entirely

new structure. He also retained his attention to the building projects in the papal territories.

Manetti accorded credit in this huge undertaking to Florentine sculptor/architect Bernardo Rosselino (1409-1464) rather than to his fellow Florentine Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), who worked in the court of Nicholas V and was undoubtedly the most prominent architectural dilettante/connoisseur of his time. In 1452 Alberti had dedicated to the pope his *On the Art of Building* (*De re aedificatoria*), the first architectural treatise of the Renaissance, which described principles of structure, style, proportion and meaning. Manetti wrote his *Vita* of Nicholas V immediately after the pope's death in March 1455. It is easy to understand that in order to accord to the pope personal responsibility and glory for these extensive projects and to reinforce his power, Manetti did not mention Alberti's name. However, the records of the Vatican treasury during the reign of Nicholas V, which provide accurate evidence of what was actually carried out and who was involved in it, testify that none of the grandiose projects praised so hugely by Manetti actually took place and that the humanist exaggerated even the simplest restoration work as a glorious accomplishment of the dead pope. Further, the records show that Rosselino was involved in only two of the projects discussed by Manetti: the design of two hoists used in the last phase of constructing the Torre Grande in the Vatican and the restoration and renovation work of the Church of Santo Stefano Rotondo.

Many architectural historians specializing in fifteenth-century Italy believe that Alberti was not involved in any of the construction projects of Nicholas V. According to the records of the Vatican treasury, mentioned above, it is unlikely that there was a project which specifically needed his advice. Moreover, Alberti's relationship with the pope could not have been smooth. They did not share the same political ideology. Nicholas V was pursuing the establishment of a "pope-king" state, while Alberti drew a distinction between a "state" (*natio*), an entity run by a tyrant/king, and a "country" (*patria*), one administered by a republican government. In *Concerning the Porcari Conspiracy* (*De porcaria coniuratione*) Alberti clearly showed sympathy for Stefano Porcari (d. 1453), the humanist, who thought that he could not do better than deliver his country from the hands of the prelates and restore the ancient republican form of government. In his *Momus* Alberti discreetly disguised his severe criticism of the Curia of Nicholas V. Thus Alberti would hardly have supported architectural or urban projects which were designed to glorify papal power.

There is one document, however, which connects Alberti with Nicholas V's urban renewal plan. In his *Concerning His Times* (*De temporibus* suis), Pisan chronicler Mattia Palmieri (d. 1483) mentioned Nicholas V's expansion of St. Peter's. According to him, the pope, who had already laid the foundations and erected a wall of thirteen *braccia*, stopped the construction, which could have compared well with any great ancient building, because Alberti advised him to discard the project. All in all, it is highly probable that Alberti was the inspiration for Nicholas V's vision of a new Rome, because there was nobody else who could provide images as erudite, intricate and profound as those described in both Manetti's biography of Nicholas V and Alberti's *On the Art of Building*.

For a pope who followed a policy of peace, reconciliation and order, the year 1453 was a sad, disastrous one. In January the conspiracy of the republican Stefano Porcari on the life of Nicholas V was discovered. The execution of Porcari and his co-conspirators was not something the pope had expected. The sack of Constantinople on May 29 by the Turks was a great shock not only to the pope but also to Christendom as a whole. Nicholas V tried to start a crusade in September, but was unsuccessful. Weakened by gout, he died on March 24, 1455, and was buried in St. Peter's. Vespasiano da Bisticci wrote:

> All men of letters are under heavy obligation to Pope Nicolas for the favour he extended to them, and for the high estimation he gained for books and for writers everywhere. (38)

But he must also be remembered, as Pastor said, for his "bloodless restoration of peace and order to the States of the Church" (II, 62). Some complaints were heard about his absence from Rome during the Jubilee year, and his grand project, the renovation of Rome (*Renovatio Romanae*) was criticized. Intelligent, well-educated and industrious as he was, he was not an original thinker. But, after describing the pope's last moments as recorded in Book III of Manetti's *Life* (*Vita*), Vespasiano affirmed that "(i)t is a matter of wonder that, up to the last moment of his life, he never failed either in speech or in sanity of mind" (58).

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17. Johannes Nider (c. 1380-1438)

When the Council of Basel (1431-1449) opened in the Basel Minster on July 23, 1431, Johannes Nider (Nieder, Nyder), Prior of the Dominican priory of St. Barbara in Basel, delivered an opening sermon. Since Nicholas of Cusa came to Basel and was formally incorporated on February 29, 1432, as one of the three representatives of Ulrich von Manderscheid (c. 1400-1438), he was not present to hear Nider's sermon. But since Nider and Cusanus became active members of the council, it is conceivable that they came into contact with each other.

Born around 1380 at Isny, which is on the southeastern border of Württemberg in Germany, Johannes Nider was probably educated at a local Benedictine school. Shortly after 1402, he entered the Dominican priory at Colmar, which was the earliest reformed Dominican cloister in the Province of Teutonia. After the Black Death of 1348-1349 and the beginning of the Great Schism in 1378, the reform movement within the Dominican Order, which had begun around 1300, was resumed by Raymond of Capua (c. 1330-1399), master general of the Dominicans and the confessor of Catherine of Siena (1347-1380). The reform emphasized the importance of strict observance of the order's rules. Under the guidance of the saintly prior Conrad of Prussia (d. 1426), Nider was trained in the spirit of strict observance.

Following his novitiate in 1412, Nider began his philosophical and theological studies at the University of Cologne, probably in 1413, according to Hermann Keussen. It must be noted that scholars are not always in agreement on Nider's career after this point. Without completing his studies at Cologne, he moved to the University of Vienna, where he began to study in 1422. His admittance to the university created some difficulties in his academic program which were resolved only by a faculty meeting held on November 10, 1422 and a letter of permission from Leonardo Dati, master general of the Dominican Order (r. 1414-1425) in Florence, which was dated November 27, 1422. The letter stated:

> You whom I depute and assign to read the Bible and the *Sentences* continuously at the convent and the nourishing university in Vienna for the form and rank of master, according to the manner and custom of the said university, approving, ratifying and conforming every promotion made or to be made by the masters of sacred theology of the said university from now on as if done then and to be done.
>
> (*Vos ad lengendum bibliam ac continenter sentencias in conventu et alma universitate Wyennensi deputo pariter et assigno pro forma et gradu magisterii secundum morem et consuetudinem dicte universitatis approbans, ratificans et confirmans omnem promocionen per sacre theologie magistros dicte universitatis ex nunc pro tunc vobis factam vel fiendam.*) (Frank, "Hausstudium," 86)

On January 24, 1423, Nider was presented to the chancellor of the university as *cursor* in theology and began delivering his lectures. Admitted as *sententiar* on September 18, 1423, he styled himself as *baccalarius* in theology in a document written on June 20, 1424. He was then promoted to *magister* in theology on June 18, 1425 under Franz von Retz, who was the first Dominican to obtain the doctor of theology degree at the University of Vienna. Nider's teaching activities at the university were acknowledged by the general chapter of the Dominican Order in Bologna in 1426 with the words: "We approve of Brother Johannes Nider's lecture at the University of Vienna" (*Lecturam fratris Johannis Nider in eodem [Wiennensi] studio approbamus*).

On June 26, 1426, Nider asked the Faculty of Theology to release him from teaching duties as *magister*. It is not quite clear what followed thereafter in his career. In 1428, however, he was called to the Dominican priory of St. Catherine in Nuremberg as prior. After introducing reform in October with the support of Bartholomew Texterius, master general of the order, Nider rejuvenated the religious and intellectual life of the convent. As Franz Jostes and Philip Schmidt showed, St. Catherine's, like St. Catherine's in St. Gall, began to build a fine collection of spiritual and religious books, including works of the German mystics and hagiographical and homiletic writings. Named as vicar-general of the Dominican Observants in the Province of Teutonia after the death of Conrad of Prussia, Nider became active in reforming various priories in the following years. In 1429, the master general of the Dominican Order sent Nider to Basel as prior of the Dominican priory in order to reform it before the opening of the Council of Basel. The priory became an important center of the Dominican reform movement in the region under the influence of the new prior. "Before accepting the reform," reports W. A. Hinnebusch, "it had a dwindling community: in 1400 there were twenty-seven members present in the house; in 1405, twenty; in 1407, sixteen. After introducing reform in 1429, the priory jumped in membership. Between 1429 and 1482 it enrolled no fewer than 175 friars."

As vicar-general over all the reformed Dominican priories in Germany, Nider preached throughout Germany and became celebrated as one of the most popular preachers of the fifteenth century.

As the Council of Basel began in 1431, Nider participated actively as a theologian. Johann (Stojkvic) of Ragusa (Dubrovnik), O.P., mag. theol. (1390/95-1443), John of Gelnhausen, O.Cist., Abbot of Maulbronn, Henry Tocke, mag. theol. (1390-1453) and envoy of the Archbishop of Magdeburg at the council, and Henry Kalteisen, O.P. (c. 1390-1465), were some of the members who were also very active. Nider placed the refectory of his cloister at the council's disposal, first as the meeting place of the plenary sessions and later for the meetings of the German nation. Especially interesting and important for him was the Hussite problem. Nider and John of Gelnhausen were sent to Bohemia as conciliar ambassadors; the two reached an agreement with the Hussites at Cheb (Eger) in May 1432 which influenced the later course of debates at Basel. While in Bohemia, Nider preached against the Hussites and tried to reunite those who had broken with Rome. Since Cusanus was also active as a member of the Deputation for the Faith, which dealt with the first, or Utraquist, article of the Four Articles, Cusanus and Nider may have worked together on the issue. In 1434 Nider was sent to the Diet of Regensburg as one of twelve conciliar delegates.

Most scholars say that Nider returned to the University of Vienna in 1436. But according to Sigmund Ferrarius, the year was 1434. The move may have been related to his dissatisfaction with the developments at the Council of Basel. As the conflict between Pope Eugenius IV and the Council of Basel sharpened in the middle of the 1430s, Nider, like Cusanus, probably became increasingly disillusioned. It is to be noted that in his unusually voluminous extant writings we find little expression of sympathy for the Council of Basel or the conciliar movement, despite his active participation in the council at the beginning. He was elected dean of the Theological Faculty at Vienna in 1436. While on a visitation tour, he died in Nuremberg on August 13, 1438, exactly twenty-six years before the death of Pope Pius II. He was buried in the Dominican church in Nuremberg near the tomb of Raymond of Capua.

Most of Nider's voluminous writings have not been edited. Many of them are in Latin, but some in German. Usually not dated, they are now found in many archives and libraries in Europe and the United States, either as manuscripts or as incunabula. One of the main themes running through them is his earnest desire to reform the Dominican Order and the Church. In his ascetic, moral-theological writings and his letters and sermons, Nider expressed his great concern about the practical problems of his time. The authorities he cited in his writings include Chrysostom, Gregory, Augustine, Jerome, the *Glossa*, Bernard, Peter Lombard, Albertus Magnus and Hugh Ripelin. But, without doubt, he held Thomas Aquinas in the highest esteem. Clearly, he was anxious to show that there was nothing new in his own writings, but that he merely wished to expound on the old teachings of the Church Fathers, great theologians and philosophers.

Nider's writings can be subdivided in this manner:

1. Writings on the Hussites. To this category belongs his tract *Against the Hussite Heresy* (*Contra heresim Hussitarum*), which has been preserved only in a complete manuscript and a fragmentary one. He tried to show in such writings the heretical nature of Hus' teachings by formulating his own ideas about Jan Hus (1374-1415) and Jerome of Prague (c. 1370-1416). The sharp language he used in the tract began to soften as he negotiated with the Hussites.
2. Letters. A collection of his letters can be found in Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*. William Oehl published the German translation of some letters to and from Nider, including those to John of Ragusa and the nuns of Schönensteinbach (508-515).
3. Writings concerning the reform of the Dominican Order. As a promoter of strict observance, Nider expressed reform ideas in two tracts. The first, *The Twenty-Four Golden Harps* (*Die vierundzwanzig goldenen Harfe* [Hain, 11846-11854]), which is the sole tract written in German, has been studied by Norbert Weinrich and recently by John Dahmus. The second is the *Treatise on the Reform of Religious* (*Tractatus de reformatione religiosorum* [Paris, 1512]), which examined the decline of discipline in the order and discussed concrete steps to be taken for a successful reform.
4. Writings on spiritual and religious renewal. The important tracts that fall under this category include, *On the Religious Communities of Secular Persons* (*De saecularium religionibus*), in which Nider presented his views on the Beghards, the Beguines, the Third Order of the Franciscans, the recluses and others. Another tract that belongs to this group is *On the Perfect Poverty of Secular Clerics* (*De pauperitate perfecta saecularium*), in which Nider contemplated the ideal of poverty.
5. Writings on general pastoral office, particularly on confessions and preaching. Nider's *Manual for Confessors* (*Manuale confessorum*, Cologne, c. 1457-1472 [Hain, 11834-11836, 11842-11845; Copinger, 4421-4423]) was widely used, as is shown by a large number of extant manuscripts and incunabula. His *Commentary on Divine Law* (*Praeceptorium divinae legis*, Cologne, 1472; Munich, 1932 [Hain, 11780, 11796; Copinger, 4411-4415]), which is an exposition on the Decalogue, was so popular that it underwent seventeen editions before 1500. Similar ideas are contained in the *Tract on the Moral Lepers* (*Tractatus de lepra morali*, Basel, c. 1474 [Hain, 11813-11819, 11843; Copinger, 4419]). *On the Vigor of Custom and Canonical Dispensation* (*De vigore consuetudinis et dispensatione canonica*) explores the question of how an obligatory custom or canon should be understood. Nider examined the concept of conscience in *The Book of Consolation for Fearful Consciences* (*Consolatorium timoratae conscientiae*, Cologne, 1470; Cologne, c. 1471 [Hain, 11806; 11808]), and contemplated the meaning of death in the *Guide for the Dying* (*Dispositorium moriendi*, Augsburg, 1473 [Copinger, 4420]).

Also interesting are two other writings that deal with two leading social groups of his time, nobles and merchants. The first is examined in the *Tract on*

True and False Nobility (*Tractate de vera et falsa nobilitate*). The *Tract on the Contracts of Merchants* (*Tractatus de contractibus mercatorum*, Cologne, 1468; Esslingen, 1474?; Paris, 1514 [Hain, 11820-11827]), which discusses the difference between a good and bad merchant, has been called "the first printed discussion of business ethics known to the Western World." Stating that "in these modern times the operations of merchants are recognized to be wrapped up in so many suspicious contracts that expert physicians of souls can hardly separate what is just from what is unjust," Nider wished to provide a moral guide to those connected with buying and selling.

Naturally, some of his sermons, such as *Sermons for Every Season of the Year* (*Sermones totius anni tempore*, n.p., 1480; Ulm, 1478-1480 [Hain, 11797, 11800-11802]) dealt with many practical problems of life from a pastoral point of view. The undated *Golden Sermons* (*Sermones Aurei* [Hain, 11799, 11803; Copinger, 4410-4417]) is a collection of sermons for Sundays, the days of Lent and the feasts of saints. Dahmus has shown that Nider borrowed heavily from Jacobus de Voragine, O.P. (c. 1230-1298) and "from other doctors" in composing his sermons. It is recorded that on April 15, 1429, the Senate of Nuremberg sent an urgent request to the master general of the Dominican Order that Nider be returned from Basel to Nuremberg because of his great appeal as a preacher.

6. Finally, in a five-volume work called the *Formicarius* (Cologne, c. 1475; Augsburg, 1484; Strasbourg, 1517 [Hain, 11630-11833]), which was written in 1437, Nider presented a collection of anecdotes and dialogues as well as a detailed account of witchcraft. This "Ant-Book" is Nider's best-known work and indispensable for an understanding of customs and mores in fifteenth-century Germany and Europe.

In view of the works discussed above, what can we say about Nider's position in the development of theological and moral ideas and his contribution to European thought? Did he, as Franz Jostes said, move from mysticism to a practical Christianity? "The spirit is gone; the pressure to the high was weakened. One stays on the guard and is satisfied with seeking practically obtainable." (*Der Geist ist dahin, der Drang in die Höhen ist verschwunden, man hält sich am Boden und begnüt sich bei der Seelenleitung mit dem praktisch Erreichbaren*.) Or, as G. M. Gieraths suggested, did he emphasize the importance of a practical and pastoral religion rather than the *unio mystica*? "The goal Nider set before his audience, he says, was paradise, not mystical union" (Dahmus, "Preaching to the Laity," 61). Would it be better to say, with Gieraths, that Nider's strength and creativity lay in his desire to bring the spirituality of the cloister to the lay Christian outside? Or, as Weinrich believed, did Nider express humanistic ideas in some of his writings? Why was he reticent about the Council of Basel? Was he, after all, like Torquemada, Montenigro and Kalteisen, one of "the outstanding champions of the papacy"? And what were his relations with Nicholas of Cusa? These are some of the questions that await further investigation. William Hinnebusch observes:

> St. Vincent Ferrer and the leaders of the reform movement, John Dominici, John Nider, and John Meyer, produced both homiletic and ascetical writings. Pursuing pastoral goals, they wrote for the average Christian who was engrossed in the problems of daily life and not for the spiritually elite. (*The Dominicans*, 90)

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18. Lodovico Pontano (1409-1439)

In his *Commentaries on the Proceedings of the Council of Basel* (*De gestis concilii Basiliensis commentariorum*) Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464), wrote:

> When the words of Panormitanus had ended, Lodovico the Roman protonotary rose, a man versed in the whole range of human law, whose memory was so good that he was not considered as yielding precedence to any of the ancients, whether we honor for the god-like quality of his memory Simonides or Theodectes or Cineas, the envoy of Pyrrhus to the senate, or Carneades of Seriphus, or Metrodorus, or Hortensius, or (the latest of them) Lucius Seneca. For he remembered everything he had ever read or heard, and had not forgotten anything he had himself seen. Unlike other legal experts he did not merely quote the first words of laws in debate, but, as though he were reading the book, would recall the (whole) text from memory. He was a man worthy not only of Rome but of heaven, one to whom no mortal seemed comparable. He was marked out to be an object not of admiration but of astonishment to all peoples … (100-104)

Who was the object of such astonishment? Lodovico Pontano (Ludovico Pontano, Ludovicus Pontanus, Ludovicus Romanus, Ludovicus Pontanus de Urbe, Ludovicus de Ponte Romanus) was born in Spoleto or its vicinity in 1409. He was taken to and brought up in Rome, which later gave him one of his names, Ludovicus Romanus. As for his education, it is known that he first entered the University of Perugia and that he then studied at the University of Bologna. In his legal studies at Bologna, Lodovico was very much influenced by John de Imola (d. 1436). Aeneas Sylvius himself described John as follows:

> John of Imola, doctor of both laws, once read (law) at Bologna and commented on the whole corpus of law. He was the light of the law in his time, but he was ignorant of the affairs of (this) world.
>
> (*Ioannes de Imola I.U.D. diu Bononiae legit totumque Corpus iuris commentatus est; fuit enim suis temporis lumen iuris, sed in agibilibus mundi ignarus*) (Schulte, II, 297, n.13)

In 1429 Lodovico received the doctorate in law from Bologna. By 1433 he was professor of laws at the University of Siena. It is regrettable that not much is known about his activities as law professor. But his output as a legal scholar was very impressive. It included the often-reissued *Deliberations and Pleadings* (*Consilia et allegations*), *Notable Remarks on Criminal Cases* (*Singularia notabilia in causis criminalibus*), *On Bequests for Pious Causes* (*De relictis ad pias causas*) and the *Tract on the Power of the Universal Church and the General Councils* (*Tractatus super potestate universalis ecclesie et generalium conciliorum*).

After briefly serving as advocate in Florence, Lodovico was then made apostolic protonotary by Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447). After the Council of Basel was convened in 143l, King Alfonso V (the Magnanimous) of Aragon (r. 1416-1458) decided to press his claims at the council. Two of the most renowned lawyers of the time, Panormitanus (Nicholas de Tudeschis) (1386-1445) and Lodovico Pontano, were among his legal delegation to the council. Lodovico himself seems to have arrived in Basel in 1438. Very quickly he became one of the most important voices at the council. Aeneas Sylvius, in the above-mentioned *Commentary*, often describes the activities of both lawyers as if they were working together. It is interesting, as Johannes Helmrath pointed out, that these two men of such divergent characters should have worked hard and displayed their legal talents for the same powerful king of Aragon. Aeneas refers to Lodovico in the *Commentaries* as "that Homer of the legists."

It is recorded that while Lodovico was a member of Basel he went to Baden and in the summer of 1438 to Louvain and Cologne on missions. But most of his time was spent in Basel. He was a man of great physical strength and still very young. But quickly and unexpectedly he was taken from the scene when the dreadful plague visited Basel in 1439. To quote from the *Commentaries* again:

> When Sirius was now scorching the fields with drought, and all the grass withered, the plague raged everywhere more widely, and the disease, gaining in virulence every day, sent an incredible number of souls down to Orcus. It was dreadful to see funeral processions every hour in the streets, and always at the street corners there was the Lord's body or the sacrament of extreme unction, and everywhere wailing and groaning was heard. No house in the whole city was free of mourning, nowhere could laughter or joking be observed. At one place matrons were weeping for their husbands, at another, husbands for their wives. Throughout the whole city both men and women were on the move, and some were mourning for children, some for parents, some for brothers, others for friends. Yet as everybody grew frightened, so everyone avoided contact with others. Some stayed home, others, as they went through the city, guarded their noses and mouths against the plague by the use of the perfumes … So great was the virulence of the disease that after seeing someone in the street now cheerful and well, you would hear ten hours later of him being buried … For this reason the Fathers (of the Council of Basel) were so alarmed that none had any trace of ruddy colors in his face. (192-195)

It was between June 16 and the middle of August 1439 that Lodovico died suddenly at the age of thirty. Aeneas stated:

> Most of all the unexpected and sudden death of Lodovico, the protonotary, alarmed everyone for, as we have related above, he was a strong man in the flower of his youth, and pre-eminent in the knowledge of both branches of law, when within a very few hours this hateful disease struck him down. (194-195)

At about the same time, Bernat of Serra, another man of great learning, a friend of Lorenzo Valla and the Cistercian almoner of King Alfonso of Aragon, also died. The plague raged from Easter to November 1439. While the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-1445) issued the decree *Laetentur caeli* on July 6 and celebrated the union of the Roman and Greek Churches, the plague devastated Basel, taking, it is believed, the lives of some five thousand people.

Lodovico was buried in the Church of Theodor of the former Carthusian monastery in Lesser Basel (Klein-Basel) across the Rhine, which is now part of the Civil Orphanage (*Bürgerliches Waisenhaus*, Theodorskirchplatz Nr. 7). The death escutcheon (*arma*) for the protonotary in the church reads:

> The arms of the reverend father, Lord Lodovico Pontano, by the license of the apostolic see protonotary of the same, envoy of the King of Aragon. He died in 1439.

> (Arma.r.p.d. lodovici pontã
> romañ.sedis.ap.lice.pthonot'.eiusde'
> regis aragonum oratoris.obiit.1439.)

In his study of Aeneas Sylvius and jurisprudence, *Enea Silvio Piccolomini und die Jurisprudenz*, the legal historian Guido Kisch (1889-1985) indicated that while Aeneas immensely admired Lodovico as a lawyer, there was perhaps a degree of envy on his part which was evident in some of his remarks about Lodovico. An example Kisch gives is in *Concerning Illustrious Men* (*De viris illustribus*), which Aeneas wrote shortly after Lodovico's death. He said of Lodovico:

> His name was great on account of expertise in both laws. For this science required memory rather than genius, from which it follows that even a fool could be an expert in law.
>
> (Magnum huius nomen propter peritiam iuris utriusque fuit; nam scientia haec memoria magis quam ingenio constat. ex quo fit, ut stultus etiam possit esse iuris peritus.) (7)

The learned legal historian might be right. But we must remember that in defending himself about changing positions from an advocate of the Council of Basel to a supporter of the pope, Aeneas wrote the famous apology in which he told Pope Eugenius IV:

> Many are the things that, while I was at Basel, I spoke and wrote and did against you. I deny nothing. And yet it was my intention less to hurt you than to defend God's church. For when I persecuted you I thought I was obeying God. I erred: who would deny it? And yet I erred not with few or obscure men. I followed Giuliano of Sant'Angelo [Giuliano Cesarini], the Archbishop Niccolò of Palermo [Panormitanus], and Lodovico Pontano, notary of your see; these were thought to be the eyes of the law and the masters of truth. (Mitchell, 98-99)

In the opinion of Aeneas Sylvius and others, Lodovico Pontano was one of the great lawyers and wise men of the fifteenth century.

Nicholas of Cusa, who had left the conciliar party by 1437 and moved over to the papal side, probably did not meet Lodovico Pontano, but as lawyers they might each have found the other's company stimulating.

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19. John of Ragusa (1390/95-1443)

John P. Kraljic

John of Ragusa (known as Ioannes Stojkovic de Ragusio, Ioannes Stoyci de Ragusio or Ioannes Sclavus de Carvatia) is one of the best-known conciliarist contemporaries of Cusanus. Born sometime between 1390 and 1395 in Dubrovnik, John began his education in his native city, where he also joined the Dominican Order. Recognizing John's talents, Dubrovnik's senate decided in 1413 to sponsor his education at the University of Padua from 1414 to 1417. After completing his bachelor's degree in theology at Padua, John received his master's and doctor's degrees from the University of Paris on November 8, 1420. By 1422 John was a prominent professor of theology at the Sorbonne, having been influenced by the ideas of the reformist Jean Gerson (1363-1431). Henry Kalteisen (c. 1390-1465) called him "his master" (*magistrum suum*). Juan de Torquemada (1388-1468) may also have been his student.

As "outstanding professor" (*egregius professor*) and "man of venerable circumspection" (*venerandae circumspectionis vir*), John was sent to Rome by the University of Paris to urge Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431) to open a general council. In a solemn sermon before Martin V, "Take counsel! Call a council" (*Ini consilium, coge concilium*), which he delivered on December 7, 1422, he asked the pope to open a general council, as had been decided at the Council of Constance in 1417. When the Council of Pavia was opened in 1423, the university sent him as its delegate to the council, which was later moved to Siena because of a plague. At both Pavia and Siena, John strongly criticized the papacy's absence from the council.

After visiting his native town in 1424, John returned to Italy and taught theology at the University of Bologna until 1429. Thereafter he was named procurator of the Dominican Order in Rome. When Pope Martin V called a new council at Basel in 1431, he appointed Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444) president of the new council. John and John of Palomar were designated as his deputies. As Cardinal Cesarini was still preoccupied with the campaign against the Hussites, the two Johns proceeded to make the many arrangements with the city of Basel for the holding of the council.

On July 23, 1431, they formally opened the Council of Basel. Later John of Ragusa was selected as general secretary and became a leader in the talks with the Hussites, being one of the harshest critics of John of Rokycana (d. 1471). During his debates with the Hussites, John wrote not only an *Oration about Communion under Both Species* (*Oratio de communione sub utraque specie*, 1433), but also one of his best-known works, *Tract on the Church* (*Tractatus de Ecclesia*, 1433-1439/40), the entire text of which has been published for the first time under the editorship of Franjo Šanjek and others.

Also of interest are John's actions in promoting the union of the Eastern and Western Churches. The representatives of the Council of Basel, John of Ragusa, Henry Menger and Simon Frèron, left on June 24, 1435 for Constantinople,

where John tried for over two years to persuade Emperor John VIII Palaeologus (r. 1425-1448) and Patriarch Joseph II of Constantinople (r. 1416-1439) to support a union council at Basel. Father Joseph Gill described John as "a man of single purpose and one of the staunchest upholders of the Council's pretensions, who had labored in immense difficulties for more than two years" (82-83). When it was feared that fighting would break out between the papal and the conciliar fleets in Constantinople, an attempt was made to kill John. In secret, he fled to Pera. John also asked his native Dubrovnik to assist him, requesting its senate to ask the schismatic and Bogomil rulers of Serbia and Bosnia to send envoys to Basel. Although the senate did make the request, the two states were in such anarchy at the time due to Turkish incursions and internal squabbling that no attention was paid to John's initiative. In the end, his efforts in Constantinople were not successful. The emperor, the patriarch and the Greek delegation left in November 1437 for the Council of Ferrara, which was to open on January 8, 1438 under the presidency of Cardinal Nicholas Albergati (1357-1443). Disappointed, John returned to Basel on January 19, 1438. He described his activities in Constantinople in *Journals of the Journey to Constantinople* (*Diarii de itinere Constantinopolim facti*) and *Report of the Mission to Constantinople* (*Relatio de missione Constantinopolitana*).

Especially important to Dubrovnik were John's successful efforts at Basel to obtain dispensation for the city-state to trade with the heathen Turks, similar to the privileges already granted to Constantinople and Venice. He also went to Frankfurt am Main, Vienna, Bohemia, Nuremberg, Mainz and other places to defend the cause of the Council of Basel.

John of Ragusa was elected Bishop of Arges by the Council of Basel on October 10, 1438. When antipope Felix V (r. 1439-1449) was elected by the council, John threw his support behind him. John was named cardinal on October 12, 1440. Remaining loyal to Felix V, he followed the anti-pope to Lausanne in 1442. In a testament drawn up on July 19, 1443, he gave to the Dominican monastery of Basel all his manuscripts, including many valuable Greek manuscripts which he had apparently acquired during his stay in Constantinople. He died probably on October 20, 1443. His burial site is not known, but is believed to be in Lausanne.

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20. Johannes Rode (c. 1385-1439)

Nicolo Treverensis, as Nicholas of Cusa was known to some Italian humanists of his day, such as Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459) and Nicolò Niccoli (1364-1437), was long associated with the diocese of Trier in which Kues, his place of birth, was located. Johannes Rode, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of St. Eucharius-St. Matthias near Trier, was another person from the church province of Trier who was close to Cusanus by family relations and who may have influenced him in some ways.

Johannes Rode was born around 1385 in a bourgeois family in Trier, which had its residence in the parish of St. Gangolf near the Main Market. His parents were Johannes Rode and his wife, Katharina, whose maiden name has not been handed down. The younger Johannes had a sister Katharina, who was married to Wilhelm von Euskirchen, a city scribe, and a brother Goebel, who lived in Metz with his wife, Else. Peter Rode, a cousin of Johannes, appeared in many documents of the late fifteenth century because of his position as magistrate (*Schöffe*). Katharina, Goebel's daughter, became in her second marriage the wife of Paul Bristghe, who served as Mayor of Trier in 1461. After Katharina's death, Bristghe married Klara Cryfftz (Krebs), Cusanus' younger sister. The abbot had another brother called Mathys. In addition, there was Gotfried de Rode, who later became a monk at the monastery of St. Matthias and entered the University of Heidelberg in 1430.

The elder Johannes was a merchant whose business seems to have been quite extensive and his possessions considerable. His property included *Zum kleinen Stern*, *Zum Heiden* and *Zu dem More*, houses on the corner of Diedrichgasse (today Dietrichstrasse), and another one opposite the Carmelites near Fleischstrasse. The family's generous support of the houses of various orders, such as the Benedictines, Carthusians, Carmelites, Dominicans, Augustinians and others, can be gauged from a testament left by Katharina, Johannes the Elder's wife.

The abbot's year of birth is not known. It is possible to surmise, however, that it was around 1385 and that when he died on December 1, 1439, he was about fifty-four years old. He began his higher education probably in Paris around 1402, but continued it from 1404 onwards at Heidelberg, where he completed his general studies in 1406 with a *magister artium*. He went on to become a bachelor in theology in 1410, a bachelor in canon law in 1413 and a licentiate in canon law in 1414. While studying at Heidelberg, he also taught there. In fact, he was even elected Dean of the Department of Liberal Arts in June, 1404 and served as rector of the university from June 6, 1413 to December 20, 1413. Even after he became Abbot of St. Matthias, he remained attached and loyal to the university and sent in 1430 not only Gotfried de Rode, his relative, but also another monk of his monastery, Reyner von Hompesch, his ablest pupil, to Heidelberg for study.

There are indications that Johannes Rode was a studious student at Heidelberg who laid a solid academic foundation for a successful future career, taking those courses that were of importance to the son of a bourgeois family to whom, in his own time, advancement to a higher aristocratic rank was difficult or denied. As was

customary, he was given prebends during his Heidelberg days, which supported his academic pursuits. In 1412 he became a canon in Metz, a priest in Emmel (Nieder- or Oberemmel) and an archpresbyter in Merzig.

After returning to Trier from Heidelberg in 1414/15, Johannes Rode became an official of the diocesan office under Archbishop Werner von Falkenstein (r. 1388-1418). There is evidence that about the same time he served as Dean (*Dechant*) of the Collegiate Church of St. Simeon in Trier.

After a short period of service as an official of the archbishopric, however, Johannes Rode, to many people's surprise, entered the Carthusian Order in 1416 and rose rapidly, partly because of the family's generous gifts to the order, and became Prior of St. Alban in Trier in 1419.

On October 13, 1418, Otto von Ziegenhain was elected Archbishop of Trier (r. 1418-1430) as Werner von Falkenstein's successor and, after being consecrated on March 12, 1419, entered his episcopal city on March 24. From the beginning of his episcopacy Otto took the reform program of the Council of Constance (1414-1418) very seriously and began to apply reform measures to cloisters and churches in his province. His main concern was undoubtedly a spiritual renewal, and his idea was to seek help from the Carthusians, who were noted for their purity and incorruptibility—as the famous adage said, "the Chartreuse was never reformed because it was never deformed" (*Cartusia numquam reformata, quia numquam deformata*). In his attempts to reform monasteries and churches in Trier, Otto sought permission from Rome to appoint suitable persons as his co-workers. He chose, with papal dispensation, Johannes Rode, Prior of St. Alban, for the reform of the Benedictine monastery of St. Matthias and made him its abbot on July 6, 1421.

The new Abbot of St. Matthias undertook both the spiritual and the economic renewal of the monastery with vigor and repaired and rebuilt many of its fallen or decayed buildings. In carrying out these tasks, he was considerably aided by his family, his archbishop and even the Vatican, which exempted St. Matthias from half the taxes owed to the Holy See. In his most important writing, *Regulations* (*Consuetudines*), which he wrote and published between 1431 and 1437, Johannes described clearly his basic views on church and cloister reform, which he gradually formulated after his change of membership from the Carthusian to the Benedictine Order in 1421. It was no doubt during the twenty years from 1410 to the death of Archbishop Otto von Ziegenhain in 1430 that Rode's reform program and its basic foundation was laid.

The death of Otto von Ziegenhain on March 13, 1430 marked the end of one phase of Johannes Rode's activity as the reform-minded Abbot of St. Matthias. Without Otto's support and help it was necessary for Johannes Rode to demonstrate his self-reliance and autonomy. The first test he encountered was the contested, disastrous episcopal election of 1430 in Trier, in which Ulrich von Manderscheid (c. 1400-1438), supported by the minority of the cathedral chapter, and Jakob von Sierck (1398/99-1456), nominated by the majority, were confronted by Raban von Helmstadt (d. 1439), the papal nominee. When Ulrich took the case to the Council of Basel (1431-1449), Nicholas of Cusa and Johannes Rode appeared at the council on January 3, 1432, representing Ulrich von Manderscheid as his procurators. We

might note in this connection that Johannes celebrated a pontifical mass on March 16, 1432 at the council. Petrus Becker has tried to show how, working closely with Johannes for Otto von Ziegenhain and Ulrich von Manderscheid from 1427 to 1432, Nicholas of Cusa may have influenced Johannes Rode, as is evidenced by some similar ideas in Johannes' *Regulations*, written between 1431 and 1437, and Cusanus' *Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*), completed in 1432/33. It might be well to remember that both men were trained in the law, as well as in theology, and that they both exhibited in their writings and undertakings a legal turn of mind. But, methodologically, it is difficult to establish convincingly that the younger man from Kues, with a deep interest in theological, philosophical and historical ideas, did exercise influence on the older man from Trier, whose intellectual horizons were narrower and whose main interests were in monastic reforms.

When Johannes returned to Trier in March 1432 after the failure of the council to resolve the disputed episcopal election, he found that the members of the reform party in Trier, especially the abbots Lambert of St. Maximin, Heinrich of St. Martin and Heinrich of St. Marien, had changed sides and stood now on Raban's side. How Johannes eventually accommodated himself to the changed situation in 1432 is difficult to explain. In fact, we find him not taking any prominent position in a later dispute over the relationship between the papacy and the local episcopal office which engaged the minds of many contemporaries, including Nicholas of Cusa.

While in Basel, Johannes made acquaintance with men of the reform party such as Prior Petrus of Rosenheim, Abbot Johannes of the Scottish Abbey in Vienna and above all Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini, President (1431-1438) of the Council of Basel. It would be helpful to learn more about his relations with Ludovico Barbo (1408-1437), abbot of the congregation of S. Giustina in Padua, but Johannes' activities from 1433 onwards are rather difficult to establish. Little is known about his life at a time when the opposition of the citizenry and the farmers against the clergy in Trier became intensified and the worst results of the Manderscheid feud (*Fehde*) were felt throughout the entire region. It is therefore notable that Abbot Johannes Dederoth (d. 1439) of Clus visited Johannes Rode to seek advice and help. Rode gave Dederoth a copy of his *Regulations* and sent four monks to Clus. Dederoth later became Abbot of Bursfeld and initiated the famous Bursfeld reform movement.

In the last seven years of his life, Johannes Rode was active, carrying out commissions issued by the Council of Basel and visiting and reforming monasteries in many regions. As general visitor of the Council of Basel after 1434, he worked in the church provinces of Trier and Cologne. Then he tried to reform some dioceses in the Province of Mainz and abbeys in Hornback, Cologne, St. Gall, Reichenau, Sponheim and others. When the chapter of abbots in the Province of Mainz met in Basel on June 25 and 26, 1435, Rode presented to the chapter a long treatise under the title *Treatise on Charity in which an Abbot Is Instructed How He Should Conduct Himself toward God and (His) Brother* (*Tractatus caritatis, quo instruitur abbas de modo se habendi quoad deum et fratrem*), which was published by Bernhard Pez of the Benedictine monastery of Melk in 1723 in the *Bibliotheca ascetica antiquo-nova* as *De bono regimine abbatis*. Father Becker discussed many other works of Johannes Rode

in his *Das Monastische Reformprogramm des Johannes Rode, Abtes von St. Matthias in Trier*.

The year 1437 was a turning point in the history of the Council of Basel. In April it was split into majority and minority parties over the issue of the Greek union. Cusanus left Basel for Bologna on May 20 with representatives of the minority party in order to go to Constantinople. Pope Eugenius IV transferred the council to Ferrara on September 18. But we know little about Rode's activities during this tumultuous period. He did not break with the council, nor did he finally go to Ferrara with Cusanus. Probably he was so concerned about the spiritual renewal of the Church that the contentious question of whether the pope or the council was superior within the Church did not interest him very much. When Rode was on a tour to Villmar an der Lahn, death began to approach him. On the way home he was possessed by a pestilential fever, and as a result, he died in Montabaur on December 1, 1439.

Was Johannes Rode an opportunist, as some said, who changed sides according to changing times? Or is it better to call him a pragmatist who, because of his strong concern about a spiritual renewal of the Church, wished to avoid being involved in dogmatic issues of the day over the relationship of the pope and the council? Was he merely a mild conciliarist? How did he differ from Cusanus in this regard? These questions can be answered only when they are examined carefully against the personal, religious, ecclesiastical and political events of the day, whether in Trier or in the Church as a whole. At any rate, it is remarkable that Johannes Rode and Nicholas of Cusa, both the sons of bourgeois families in the province of Trier, could reach high positions within the Church thanks to their university education, their talent and their intelligence. In the fifteenth century, as Father Becker pointed out, an important goal of the Benedictine reforms was to challenge the aristocratic monopoly of the monasteries. Johannes Rode was a good example of this trend.

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21. Juan de Segovia (c. 1393-1458)

Jesse D. Mann

Nicholas of Cusa and Juan de Segovia knew each other well. Despite differences in detail, there is a striking structural similarity between their relationship and that of two other important statesmen and political thinkers: John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. Like Adams and Jefferson, Cusanus and Segovia, when young, supported a common cause, were subsequently separated by ideological and political differences, but were reconciled late in life through a fruitful and significant correspondence.

Juan Alfonso de Segovia was born around 1393, most probably in the Castilian town whose name he bears. His long and important association with the University of Salamanca began in 1407, when he commenced his study of grammar there. About six years later, Segovia obtained the B.A. degree, and the baccalaureate in theology followed around 1418. Toward the beginning of 1422, Segovia received his final academic degree from Salamanca, becoming a master of theology.

Not only did Juan de Segovia study at the University of Salamanca, he also taught there. Indeed, he may well have been among the first professors in the newly established Faculty of Theology, which had come into existence only at the end of the fourteenth century. According to his own testimony, Segovia's teaching career began before he had received his master's degree, probably in 1418, and lasted about fifteen years. Between 1418 and 1433 Segovia held, either in title or in fact, all three chairs in theology (Bible, Prime and Vespers) at his alma mater.

That Segovia was one of the most prominent figures at the University of Salamanca in the early fifteenth century is attested not solely by his rapid rise within the Theology Faculty, but also by his activity as a representative of the university. Twice, in 1422 and in 1431, Segovia was sent to Rome to obtain both papal approbation for his school's constitutions and financial support for the faculty. Clearly, no institution would entrust such important missions to anyone but a highly intelligent and persuasive emissary.

No doubt such considerations figured largely in Salamanca's decision to send Segovia as its sole official representative to the recently opened Council of Basel in the spring of 1433. His participation in the council was undoubtedly the single most significant experience in Segovia's life. It was, of course, at the council that he met Nicholas of Cusa.

Shortly after his arrival at Basel, Segovia, like Cusanus, was incorporated into the council's Deputation on the Faith, and he quickly became one of its leading members. As such Segovia was involved in almost all of the principal debates which occupied the Council of Basel in its early years, including the presidency issue, the discussion on the Immaculate Conception, the *Filioque* and relations with the Greeks, and the question of communion under both species (*communio sub utraque specie*). He wrote substantial tracts on all of these matters.

However, Juan de Segovia's most significant contributions at Basel came in the realm of ecclesiology and Church politics. When Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) dissolved the Council of Basel a second time in 1437, the conflict between the Basleans and the pope became increasingly acrimonious and desperate. This conflict made adversaries of Segovia (who stayed at Basel) and Cusanus (who followed Eugenius to Italy), and they soon emerged as leading spokesmen of the "conciliar" and "papal" causes, respectively.

Segovia's role in the council's proceedings against Eugenius IV is well known. He played an important part in the decision to suspend the pope (1438) and an even more important part in the council's debate in April and May of 1439, which ultimately led to the deposition of the pope on June 25, 1439. In the course of these debates, the Salamancan master so distinguished himself as an advocate of Basel's "three truths of faith" (l. that a general council is the supreme authority in the Church; 2. that the pope may not dissolve, translate or prorogue a council against its will; and 3. that anyone who pertinaciously denies either of the first two truths, or both, is to be considered a heretic) that Cusanus later referred to these as the *veritates Segovianae*.

Crucial to both parties in the conflict between the pope and the council was the support of the German princes. Consequently, Segovia was sent as a representative of the Council of Basel to most of the relevant imperial diets held in Germany between 1438 and 1444. His aim at these diets was to persuade the German rulers to abandon their policy of neutrality and to side with the council against Eugenius. On at least two noteworthy occasions, at Mainz in 1441 and again at Frankfurt in 1442, Segovia came head to head with Nicholas of Cusa, the "Hercules of the Eugenians." Their exchange at Mainz seems to have been especially direct and pointed (Hernández Montes, "Obras de Juan de Segovia," 296-297).

For his efforts on behalf of the council, Segovia was made a cardinal by the conciliar pope Felix V on October 12, 1440. However, unlike several other cardinals created by Felix V, Segovia's title was not confirmed by Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455) when the Council of Basel finally dissolved itself in 1449. As compensation he was named Bishop of St. Paul-Trois-Chateaux (Savoy) in 1449, but he apparently resigned from this office within a year without ever having taken possession of the bishopric. In September 1451, Segovia became Bishop of St. Jean de Maurienne, likewise in Savoy. Together with this bishopric, he also came into possession of a priory at Aiton in the same diocese. When, in 1453, the Salamancan master was translated to the titular archbishopric of Caesarea, he was permitted to retain his claim to the priory by apostolic dispensation (*ex dispensatione apostolica*), and it is likely that, by that time, he had already established his residence at Aiton.

In any event, it was from Aiton that, in 1454, Segovia wrote to Nicholas of Cusa regarding the "Islamic question." The fall of Constantinople in 1453 seems to have drawn Segovia away from his monumental *History of the Council of Basel* to the more pressing problem of the relations between Christendom and Islam. In writing to Cusanus, Segovia recalled their collaboration at Basel and, of course, their mutual interest in the religion of Mohammed (Haubst, 116; Biechler, 189). He then outlined a remarkable plan for establishing a peaceful end to Muslim-Christian conflict,

which involved a new, more accurate translation of the Qur'an and a meeting of Christian and Muslim intellectuals, and solicited Cusanus' opinion of this pacifistic proposal. In his response, the German cardinal praised Segovia, apparently even for his work in support of the Council of Basel (Black, *Council and Commune*, 125 with n. 8), and expressed pleasure at the renewal of their friendship (Haubst, 118). The great fruit of Segovia's interest in Islam, his trilingual Qur'an (Latin, Arabic and Spanish), has unfortunately been lost. However, his correspondence and several other works dealing with the Islamic question survive and await further study. For, as James Biechler puts it, Segovia's was "a new face toward Islam."

Segovia's "retirement" in Aiton was anything but unproductive. Not only was he at work on his history of the Council of Basel and on various projects relating to Islam, but in the later years of his life he also composed several other tracts dealing with the proper relationship between a council and the pope. These works, notably his *Book on the Essence of the Church* (*Liber de substantia ecclesiae* [Biblioteca Universitaria de Salamanca MS 55; see Santiago Madrigal Terrazas]), reflect Segovia's post-conciliar conciliarism and therefore merit closer scholarly attention.

In May 1458, Juan de Segovia died after a lingering illness of which he occasionally complained in his correspondence. Seven months before his death, however, aware that his health was failing, Segovia donated his substantial personal library to his alma mater; for, like Cusanus, the Salamancan master was an avid bibliophile. The University of Salamanca has clearly not forgotten his generous act. In the reading room of the University Library there is a plaque which lists the names of library benefactors. The list includes such renowned figures as Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936) and Francisco Franco (1892-1975), but the very first name on the plaque is none other than Juan de Segovia.

A final word on the future of "Segovia studies" is in order here. Two points deserve mention. First, essential to all future research are reliable, critical editions of all of Segovia's works, including those which exist in editions of dubious quality as well as those which survive only in manuscript. (Rolf DeKegel's recent edition of the *Liber de magna auctoritate* provides a ready model.) Secondly, closer examination of Segovia's sources remains a desideratum, particularly his ties to Franciscans such as John Duns Scotus (c. 1266-1308) and William of Ockham (d. c. 1349). The examination of Segovia's sources should help clarify our view of Segovia the theologian in addition to the view of Segovia the political theorist so ably presented by Antony Black.

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22. Verena von Stuben (c. 1414-1472?)

In the public life of Nicholas of Cusa there were only a few women who measurably affected his life and decidedly influenced his course of action. Most famous (or infamous, as some have argued) was Verena von Stuben, the abbess of the Benedictine convent at Sonnenburg near St. Lorenzen, in the middle of the Puster Valley (*Pustertal*) in South Tyrol.

It is not known exactly when Verena was born. Her parents, Knight Hansen von Stuben and Elizabeth (née Westernach) of Schwaben, Germany, are shown with Verena in the picture *The Martyrdom of St. Ursula* (*Die Marter der Hl. Ursula*), which is now owned by the Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum in Innsbruck. It is believed that the picture was painted by the school of the Master of St. Sigmund in 1448. The determined, grim-looking Verena, kneeling close to the middle near the family coat of arms, is contrasted with her modest-, even prayerful-looking parents on the left, who are also kneeling by the family coat of arms.

When Nicholas of Cusa completed his legation journey of 1450-1452 and entered his own diocese of Brixen (Bressanone) at Easter 1452, Verena von Stuben had been abbess at Sonnenburg since 1440. Founded originally in 1018, the monastery was by the fifteenth century a flourishing institution in the Tyrol. The monastery had been originally placed under the protection of the Bishop of Trent, but it had slowly extended and spread its jurisdiction over the valleys of Enneburg, Wengern and Abtei St. Leonard. Thus, although in the twelfth century the Bishop of Brixen controlled the entire region, by the fifteenth the de facto and probably de jure ruler of the region was the Duke of the Tyrol. The monastery of Sonnenburg itself had not come under the immediate jurisdiction of the Empire, and the abbess had a place and voice only in the provincial diet (*Landtag*). Nevertheless, the process of secularization was taking place all around. How much could the reform-minded cardinal and the new Bishop of Brixen reverse the trend and establish his control over the region?

Like many convents of the time in the Tyrol, Sonnenburg recruited its nuns from the daughters of the Tyrolese nobility and was known for its liberal, almost loose, ways of life. The strict application of the Rule of St. Benedict was not known. Despite the famous decree *Periculoso* issued by Pope Boniface VIII (r. 1294-1303) in 1298, which demanded that all nuns, no matter what rule they observed, be perpetually cloistered and which banned relaxed traffic between the convents and the outside, the monastery of Sonnenburg was known for its relaxed attitude toward the decree. The decrees of the Council of Basel on the subject were almost without effect. Judging by the convent's records, Verena did not tighten up the conditions around the monastery, wishing to maintain the status quo.

Having arrived at Brixen from a two-year legation journey during which he seriously attempted, and often failed, to reform the monasteries in Germany and the Low Countries, Cusanus was ready to launch a strict reform plan for monastic institutions in his own diocese. In a letter to his friend Bernhard von Waging (c.

1400-1470), prior of the monastery of Tegernsee, he spoke of a "perfect observation and reformation" (*[p]erfecta observatio et reformatio*) as his goal in Brixen.

Shortly after the entry into his diocese, Cusanus proceeded with his plans to reform the monasteries in the Tyrol. On May 2, 1452, he ordered the reform decree of Salzburg, which had been accepted on March 15, 1451, and which prescribed the strict enclosure of nuns, to be affixed to the doors of Sonnenburg. In her defense, Verena asked Duke Sigmund (Sigismund) of the Tyrol on June 21, 1452, to become protector (*Vogt*) of the convent of Sonnenburg. Taking a more positive step, Cusanus sent a first visitation group on September 27, 1452, to Sonnenburg.

Cusanus summoned a first diocesan synod on February 6, 1453, to bring about the reform of the clergy in the Tyrol, among whom concubinage was fairly widespread. Then, on March 5, 1453, he left for Rome and stayed there until May 29, 1453. While there, he received from Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455) a papal bull to visit and reform the monasteries of his diocese. The convent of Sonnenburg was an especially important one, to his mind, but, empowered by the papal bull, he proceeded to reform the monastic houses at Wilten, Stams, Neustift, Sonnenburg, Georgenberg and the Clarissen convent in Brixen, where Maria von Wolkenstein (d. 1478), the famous poet Oswald von Wolkenstein's daughter, was a nun. These six houses had paid no attention to the 1451 reform decree of Salzburg, which Cusanus had publicized.

One of the methods Verena used to defend her convent's position against Cusanus was to combine the issue of monastic reform with the so-called Enneberg dispute. This dispute had a long history and had troubled Cusanus' predecessors as Bishops of Brixen. In 1447, five years before Cusanus' entry into his diocese, an agreement was reached which recognized the bishop's authority over the three valleys of Enneberg, Wengen and Abtei for ten years. In fact, it was Cusanus himself who took the initiative in heightening the dispute. On April 13, 1452, soon after entering the diocese, he sent his secretaries, Lorenz Hammer and Wigand von Homberg, to Verena to request that the abbess recognize him as guardian (*Vogt*) of Enneberg. By combining the two issues, monastic and regional, the tenacious abbess was able to "politicize" the whole situation and could appeal to Duke Sigmund for support and help. The duke himself naturally wanted to acquire the guardianship of Enneberg.

The first visitation team, which was made up of the Abbot of Ahausen and Michael von Natz (d. c. 1475), vicar-general, was sent to the monastery of Sonnenburg on September 27, 1453. But due to Verena's noncooperation, the mission was not successful. As a result, Cusanus himself visited the convent on November 29, 1453, together with a team consisting of Bernhard von Waging, Eberhard von Walfratshausen, the Abbot of Andechs, Michael von Natz, Johann Fuchs, the Abbot of Neustift and Johann von Westernach, Verena's relative. After the visitation, Bernhard is said to have told Cusanus that there was no chance that Sonnenburg would reform.

In early March 1454 Verena's desire to resign with a pension was announced by her cousin, Johann von Westernach. But the plan was delayed, and there were no signs that things would actually move in that direction. Verena sent an appeal

to Nicholas V on July 28, 1454, but on October 19, 1454, the pope, in the bull *Ut monasteria*, rejected the appeal of the abbess and directed Cusanus to depose her. On the last day of 1454, an agreement was reached between Cusanus and Duke Sigmund for another visitation of Sonnenburg by the Benedictine abbots.

Cusanus threatened Verena with excommunication and an interdict over Sonnenburg. On April 3, 1455, the third visitation of Sonnenburg by the abbots took place, but because of Verena's resistance, Cusanus issued an interdict on Sonnenburg on April 30, 1455. Finally, on August 1, 1456, Cusanus named Afra von Velseck, the former prioress of the convent, as administrator of Sonnenburg. Duke Sigmund, meanwhile, hired Balthasar von Welsberg (1444-1470), the captain of St. Michaelsburg and Cusanus' enemy, to defend Verena and Sonnenburg.

After Cusanus felt that his life was threatened by Duke Sigmund because of the so-called "Wilten Affair" of June 23-July 2, 1457, he left Brixen on July 4, 1457, and found refuge in Castle Andraz in Buchenstein, the southern corner of the Tyrol, on July 10 or 11, 1457. He was never to return to Brixen.

While in Andraz, Cusanus received many messengers, such as Thomas Pirckheimer (d. 1473) and Lawrence Blumenau (d. 1484), who were sent by Duke Sigmund to discuss with him the Sonnenburg reform and other matters. Duke Sigmund himself left the Tyrol for Vienna on March 12, 1458, leaving Duchess Eleanor, originally from Scotland, in Brixen to take care of the affairs of the Tyrol. As a result, two of the major players in the diocese of Brixen, Cusanus and Sigmund, were out of Brixen and Innsbruck. But the Sonnenburg situation did not improve. No compromise between Cusanus and Verena seemed possible.

The result was the so-called "Battle (*Schlacht*) of Enneberg" on April 1, 1458. A band of mercenaries engaged by the convent of Sonnenburg and under the command of Jobst von Hornstein, Verena's brother-in-law, were sent down to Enneberg to enforce the convent's rent claims on the inhabitants of the disputed Enneberg. But they were attacked before reaching Enneberg by the peasants of Enneberg, led by Gabriel Prack of Thurn, an officer of the bishop and the peasants' head. It resulted in the "massacre" of Enneberg, in which many mercenaries—fifty-six of seventy-eight, it was said—were killed and Jobst von Hornstein was captured. Coming up to Sonnenburg, Prack and his followers drove the nuns of Sonnenburg out of the convent and forced them to flee to Burg Schoneck.

Relying on Mathias Burglechner's *Tiroler Adler* (c. 1620) and especially after Albert Jäger's critical study of Cusanus' activities as Bishop of Brixen, *Der Streit des Cardinals Nicolaus von Cusa mit dem Herzoge Sigmund von Österreich als Grafen von Tirol*, many historians were very critical of Cusanus' legalistic approach and overuse of excommunication in the administration of his diocese and especially his "brutality" in the Enneberg battle. But, in preparation for the compilation of the *Acta Cusana* concerning Cusanus' life and events related to our topic, Hermann Hallauer has particularly endeavored to collect the "new" facts about Cusanus in this period. Instead of relying primarily on the testimonies of Verena von Stuben and Gregor Heimberg, which Jäger and other historians followed, Hallauer introduced the statements about the events made by Duchess Eleanor, Simon von Wehlen, Cusanus' secretary, Gabriel Prack and Afra von Velseck. According to Hallauer,

for example, Jobst von Hornstein had eighty-six mercenaries, not seventy-eight, and fifty-two to fifty-four of them were killed by the Enneberg peasants. Contrary to the widespread local legend, the peasants did not act on orders from the bishop. Sending a letter to Cusanus on April 7, 1458, Verena called him a murderer. But Hallauer has shown that in her letter of April 10, 1458, Eleanor criticized Verena.

Verena had been residing throughout this period in the convent of Sonnenburg. But finally, on August 28, 1458, an agreement was reached and signed at Lüsen near Brixen that Verena be asked to resign. Cusanus, who had been at Castle Andraz since November, 1457, traveled to Lüsen for the occasion. On September 11, 1458, Verena wrote to Cusanus, soliciting absolution from the ban, but in vain. Cusanus was not willing to retreat or compromise. It was on September 4, 1458 that Cusanus left the Tyrol and traveled to Rome and came to Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464), who had urged him to leave the "snows of the Tyrol" for Rome, the only home for a cardinal. As far as the Sonnenburg dispute was concerned, Duke Sigmund proposed on April 14, 1459 that Barbara Schöndorf, a nun of Passau, be chosen as Verena's successor. The Bishop of Trent intervened in the dispute, and he and Duke Sigmund secured Verena's resignation on April 17, 1459. It was believed that Verena von Stuben died sometime after 1465. The recent discovery of her letter dated January 1, 1472 has indicated that she lived in Sonnenburg as a pensioner until around 1472.

Because of his involvement in the Sonnenburg reform and dispute with Verena von Stuben, Nicholas of Cusa was accused of being a "power politician" (*Machtpolitiker*) and a "murderer." Verena von Stuben herself was called "obstinate," "wily and stubborn" and a "passionate fighter." Cusanus called her a "Jezebel." It is clear that Verena influenced Cusanus' later life measurably. We must remember at the same time that during this difficult period in his life from 1452 to 1459, Cusanus somehow found time to write many philosophical works, *On the Vision of God* (*De visione Dei*, 1453), *On the Peace of Faith* (*De pace fidei*, 1453), *On the Beryl* (*De beryllo*, 1458) and *On the Beginning* (*De principio*, 1459), and a number of mathematical works, *Complementary Mathematical Considerations* (*De mathematicis complementis*, 1452), *On Squaring the Caesarean Circle* (*De caesarea circuli quadrature*, 1457), *On Mathematical Perfection* (*De mathematica perfection*, 1458) and *The Golden Proposition in Mathematics* (*Aurea propositio in mathematicis*, 1459).

The convent of Sonnenburg on the bank of the Rienze River was in ruins by the middle of the twentieth century. But in the 1970s restorative work began. Today it is a hotel called "Hotel Schloss Sonnenburg" that attracts many tourists.

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23. The Monks of Tegernsee

When Nicholas of Cusa was on his way to Regensburg from Brixen in 1452 to attend the Diet of Regensburg, he visited the Benedictine monastery of St. Quirin in Tegernsee. Staying at the monastery from June 22 to June 27, he made good acquaintance with Abbot Kaspar Ayndorffer (Aindorffer) (1401-1461), Prior Bernhard von Waging (c. 1400-1470) and other monks.

Founded around 746 by two brothers, Adalbert and Oatker, of the noble Huosi family in Bavaria, the monastery expanded and became prosperous in the following centuries. It was a center of German culture in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. But a period of decline began in the thirteenth to the fourteenth century. Like many fifteenth-century monasteries in Austria and southern Germany, the monastery of Tegernsee under Abbot Hildebrand Kastener (r. 1424-1426) in the early 1420s was in poor moral condition and in great need of reform. As a result of the Council of Constance (1414-1418), which in its famous decree *Haec sancta* adopted the policy of "bringing about the union and reform of the Church of God in head and in members," the first visitation of the monastery by Jonannes Grünwalder (r. 1448-

1452), Vicar-General of Freising, and Petrus von Rosenheim (c. 1380-1433), of the famous Benedictine monastery of Melk, took place in July 1426 and resulted in the appointment of Kaspar Ayndorffer, the youngest monk, as abbot.

With its twenty-four-year-old abbot at its head, Tegernsee entered a period of reform, growth and prosperity. Not only did Abbot Kaspar bring about the needed reform of the monastery, following the example of the reform of Melk, but he controlled financial conditions and renovated the sleeping rooms, the infirmary, the guest rooms, the living quarters for the abbot and the refectory. Abbot Kaspar also built and developed a good library and began to send promising young monks to the University of Vienna to elevate the intellectual level of the monastery. He contributed so much to the elevation of Tegernsee in matters both spiritual and temporal that it would be incorrect to call him merely a *Bauabt* ("building abbot"), as did his contemporaries. Like Subiaco in Italy and Melk in Austria, Tegernsee under Abbot Kaspar Ayndorffer became a model Benedictine monastery and a flourishing cultural center in southern Germany.

By 1450 Cusanus' *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440) was known to the monks of Tegernsee. Prior Johannes Keck (1400-1450), who had attended the Council of Basel in 1441 and attempted to raise the musical level of the monastery, praised Cusanus' philosophical, theological and linguistic knowledge in 1450. Although he had not read *On Learned Ignorance*, he had heard about the book. After reading the work, Prior Bernhard von Waging wrote *In Praise of Learned Ignorance* (*Laudatorium doctae ignorantiae*) in April 1452.

On April 14, 1452, twenty-six years after the first visitation of the monastery, the second visitation of Tegernsee was carried out by Abbot Martin von Leibitz (d. 1464) of the Scottish Abbey in Vienna, Abbot Lorenz of Mariazell in Wienerwald and Prior Johann Schlitpacher (1403-1482) of Melk. The visitors found the monastery of Tegernsee in commendable condition, both spiritually and materially. It was because of this monastic renewal that the monks of Tegernsee turned to Cusanus for spiritual guidance.

After 1452 the monks of Tegernsee, especially Ayndorffer and von Waging, eagerly sought to maintain close contact with Cusanus and exchanged letters with him until 1458 about the essence, methods and roles of mystical theology. Four hundred and fifty-four of their letters have been preserved in Codex Clm 19697 (Teg. 1697) of the Staatsbibliothek in Munich, which is often referred to as the "Tegernsee letter-codex." The great Cusanus scholar Edmond Vansteenberghe (1881-1943) edited and published thirty-six of them in 1915, Maurice de Gandillac's French translation of seventeen of the letters written by Cusanus appeared in 1985, and early in 1998 Wilhelm Baum, together with Raimund Senoner, published the German translations of the thirty-six letters Vansteenberghe had previously published.

In his letter written before September 22, 1452, Abbot Ayndorffer put this question to Cusanus:

> This is the question: Whether the devout soul can attain to God without intellectual knowledge, and even without prevenient or

> accompanying knowledge, and only by means of affection or of the highest capacity of the mind, which is called synderesis.
>
> (*Est autem hec questio, utrum anima devota sine intellectus cognicione vel etiam sine cogitacione previa vel concomitante solo affectu seu per mentis apicem, quam vocant synderesim, Deum attingere posit.*) (Vansteenberghe, 110)

The question dealt with the relationship between *intellectus* and *affectus*, which is one of the "difficult" questions about the nature of mystical theology and which was at the center of the so-called Tegernsee debate. Concerning the interpretation of Jean Gerson's On *Mystical Theology* (*De mystica theologia*), Cusanus, Vincent of Aggsbach, Konrad von Geisenfeld, Johann Schlitpacher, Marquard Sprenger and others expressed different opinions.

In contrast to Cusanus, who essentially took the position in his letter of September 22 that both *intellectus* and *affectus* were needed, Prior Vincent (c. 1389-1464) of the Carthusian monastery of Aggsbach, under the influence of another Carthusian, Hugh of Barma, was insistent that *affectus* was the most important thing that was needed to reach God. Like many Carthusians and academics of Austria, Vincent was a strong supporter of conciliarism and never changed or abandoned his conciliar position. It was therefore easy to understand his strong dislike of Cusanus, who switched from the conciliar to the papal side after 1437. Extolling the high quality of Pseudo-Dionysius' *Mystical Theology* (*Theologia mystica*) and depreciating Gerson's *On Mystical Theology*, Vincent bitterly criticized the error of "Gerchumar" (Gerson, Cusanus and Marquard Sprenger). But as far as the monks of Tegernsee were concerned, Vincent's position was losing out. Led by Bernhard von Waging, Nicholas of Cusa and Marquard Sprenger, they adhered to the position that to love anything one must have recognized it as good on the strength of *intellectus*.

In his letter of February 12, 1454, sent to Kaspar Ayndorffer from Brixen, Cusanus expressed the desire to spend his closing years among the monks in a cell at Tegernsee to enjoy a holy quietness:

> Therefore, I told the brothers to prepare a cell for me. Would that holy leisure were given to me to be enjoyed among the brothers who are free and see that the Lord is sweet!
>
> (*propter fratribus dixi michi cellam parari. Utinam concederetur michi sacro ocio frui inter fratres, qui vacant et vident, quoniam est suavis dominus!)* (Vansteenberghe, 122)

But the life of the reforming Bishop of Brixen became very busy and even violent as he struggled with Duke Sigmund of the Tyrol. After 1458 no exchange of letters with the monks of Tegernsee continued. Cusanus' desire to live at Tegernsee remained unfulfilled.

Today, one finds the old building of the monastery, which was remodeled in Baroque style in 1684-1694, near the lake of Tegernsee. Dissolved as a result of the great secularization of ecclesiastical institutions in 1803, it ceased to be the domicile of the Tegernsee monks. The building now houses a ducal palace, a parish church, a local museum and a beer hall. Tegernsee is advertised as "one of the most popular altitude resorts and winter sports areas in Upper Bavaria" in Baedeker's *Germany*.

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24. Juan de Torquemada (1388-1468)

Thomas M. Izbicki

In many ways Nicholas of Cusa and Juan de Torquemada, although each became a cardinal, represent contrasting elements in the fifteenth-century Roman Curia. Torquemada was a Spaniard of high birth but "tainted" by a suspicion of Jewish blood; Cusanus was a German of more modest origins. Torquemada was a Dominican friar trained in the Thomist doctrines of his order; Cusanus was a secular cleric, whose professional training was in law. At Basel, Cusanus was a conciliarist, and he kept his interest in ideas of consent even after his entrance into the Curia. Torquemada, despite his membership of the Reform Deputation, rapidly emerged as a defender of the papacy, the source of his order's privileges. In curial circles, Cusanus represented, in his individual manner, the Renaissance, including its Platonizing tendencies. Torquemada represented Scholasticism with its Aristotelian emphasis. Both were interested in reform, but Torquemada's work with individual religious houses was more successful than Cusanus' grander efforts in Germany and the Tyrol. Both, however, remained outsiders in the Curia. Pius II (r. l458-1464) would treat Cusanus shabbily for his resistance in the promotion of Jean Jouffroy (c. 1412-1473) to the cardinalate. The Piccolomini pope also complained that, at the Congress of Mantua (1459-1460), no one but a Greek, Bessarion, and a Spaniard, Torquemada, supported his effort to launch a crusade against the Turks.

Juan de Torquemada was born in Valladolid, probably in 1388. He joined the Dominican Order at San Pablo de Valladolid at an early age. After accompanying his provincial to the Council of Constance in 1417, Torquemada studied theology in Paris. It is possible that John of Ragusa was one of his teachers. Then he served as a prior in Spain before going to the Council of Basel to represent both his order and the King of Castile.

At Basel, Torquemada participated in the deliberations of the Reform Deputation, wrote in defense of orthodoxy and composed his first papalist polemics. In response to these endeavors, Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) named the friar Master of the Sacred Palace, virtually the pope's theological advisor. When in 1437 Eugenius translated the Council of Basel to Ferrara to meet with the Greeks, Torquemada left to promote that effort. In 1438 the majority party at Basel moved to declare conciliar supremacy a dogma and to depose Eugenius; Torquemada went to Germany to present the pope's case to the princes. His orations for that mission represented first drafts of his later ecclesiological tracts.

After returning from Germany in 1439, Torquemada went to Florence, where the Latins and Greeks were reaching a temporary agreement on reunion. Torquemada spoke in defense of Western Eucharistic beliefs and practices, as well as helped to draft the Decree of Union. When, buoyed by this success, Eugenius IV took the offensive against the conciliarists and their pope, Felix V (r. 1440-1449), he issued the bull *Moyses*, which denounced the Basel assembly as a group of rebels following

a false doctrine. To support this decree, Eugenius staged a debate between Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444), defending the conciliar dogma of Basel, and Torquemada, arguing the traditional papalist viewpoint of the Order of Preachers. Building on his previous works, Torquemada wrote a coherent and effective defense of the Roman primacy. While sojourning in France as a papal legate, the friar received his reward, promotion to the cardinalate.

After returning from France in 1440, Torquemada remained in the Curia until his death in 1468. His one notable absence was his journey with Pius II to the Congress of Mantua in 1459. Otherwise, the Spanish cardinal took part in the business of the Curia, including the elections of four successive popes, promoted the interests of his order and took an active interest in the reform of religious houses. A notable stream of writings issued from his pen. Many of these were devotional, including his *Meditations*, which became the first illustrated book printed in Italy. Other tracts were polemical, including a refutation of the "errors" of Islam, a defense of Jewish converts in Toledo and justifications of the mendicant doctrine of apostolic poverty. The most important of these writings, however, were a commentary on Gratian's *Decretum*, which reinterpreted key passages employed by the conciliarists in a papalist sense, and the monumental *Summa de ecclesia* (1453). That work combined a defense of the ecclesiastical institution against Hussite doctrines, reaffirmation of papal monarchy in the governing power of ecclesiastical jurisdiction and the traditional Thomist argument that the pope possessed temporal power only indirectly. This papalist synthesis influenced later generations of papal apologists, including those, like Cajetan and Bellarmine, who were concerned with the Reformation's fundamental challenge to the assumptions on which papal primacy was founded. Even in modern times, Catholic writers like Jacques Maritain and Joseph Gill have resorted to Torquemada's authority in defense of their political and ecclesiological ideas.

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25. János Vitéz (c. 1408-1472)

John P. Kraljic and Morimichi Watanabe

There is no evidence that Nicholas of Cusa came into contact with János Vitéz, or Vitéz János, as he was called in Hungarian. But because Vitéz was a friend of many of Cusanus' contemporaries, a brief description of his life and work deserves a place in this book. He was a friend of Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464); a Croatian lawyer who received many letters from Gregor Heimburg (c. 1400-1472), Cusanus' severe critic; an uncle of the famous humanist Janus Pannonius (1434-1472); a promoter of scholarship, especially astronomy, to whom the great Viennese astronomer Georg von Peuerbach (1423-1461) dedicated his treatises, such as the *Tables from Oradea* (*Tabulae Varadiensis*) and *New Theories of the Planets* (*Theoreticae novae planetarum*); the man to whom Johannes Müller of Königsberg, commonly called Regiomontanus (1436-1476), presented *Tables and Problems of the Prime Mover* (*Tabulae ac problemata primi mobilis*); and a supporter of the Italian humanist Galeotto Marzio (c. 1427-c. 1498), who spent much time at Esztergom (Gran) with Vitéz and offered to him a treatise *On Man* (*De homine*).

The exact date of Vitéz's birth is not known. On the basis of scant extant documents, scholars have suggested that it lies sometime between 1400 and 1410. The most often mentioned year is 1408. The place of his birth is known to be the village of Sredna, also known as Zredna or Zrednamellekey in history, which was located in the area of the towns of Ilove, Garśnica and Čazma in the western

Slavonian part of Croatia. According to Vilmos Fraknói (Wilhelm F. Frankel) (1843-1924), a distinguished nineteenth-century Hungarian historian, the Vitéz family originated from the county of Pilis in Hungary. But Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini called Vitéz a Slav. Vespasiano da Bisticci (1421-1498) says that Vitéz was "by birth a Slavonian."

Zredna was first mentioned in a document of 1257. Its name again appeared in 1395 in connection with Vitéz's family, when his great-grandfather, Stephanus de Zredna, was mentioned. Stephanus' son Gele (Geleth, Gelethic or Gyeleth), mentioned first in 1400, became the founder of the Vitéz family, usually described as "of petty nobility."

Gele had three sons, one of whom was Dionysius, Vitéz's father. On March 23, 1403, King Sigismund (r. 1410-1437) gave Dionysius and his brothers, Philip and Peter, the village of Rogozna, located in the area of Zredna, for their services to the country in the "previous war." Dionysius' distinction in military service explains the origin of the name Vitéz, which means "heroic" in Hungarian and "knight" in Croatian.

We know almost nothing about Vitéz's primary education. As Iván Boronkai said in his recent edition of Vitéz's speeches and letters, we can only surmise that Vitéz probably received it in Zagreb. Scholars have not agreed on where or if Vitéz received his university education in Italy. Following Fraknói's opinion, Endre Veress (*Matricula et acta Hungarorum in universitatibus Italiae studentium*, 1915), Pietro Verrua (1924) and Giovanni Fabris (1941) said that Vitéz studied at the University of Padua. According to E. Veress (*Matricula et acta Hungarorum in universitatibus Italiae studentium*, 1941), Vitéz went to the University of Bologna. But recent historians are much more cautious about the question. Leslie Domonkos ("János Vitéz," 1979) argued: "Although his contemporaries called him 'most learned' we have no certain evidence to support the view that he attended a university at all." Marianna Birnbaum (*Janus Pannonius*, 1981) stated: "[I]t is not precisely known how educated Vitéz actually was" (127).

The first mention of his name occurred in a document drawn up on January 10, 1417, in which he appeared as one of the recipients of the village of Kisbersschanowch. He is called in the document a son of Dionysius. Then we see him mentioned as a member of the royal chancery. It has sometimes been suggested that Matthias of Gathalocz, provost of Zagreb from 1417 to 1428 and of Pécs from 1428 to 1438 and chancellor of not only the Great Chancery (*Nagy kancellária*) but also the Secret Chancery (*Titkos kancellária*) from 1433 to 1437, called Vitéz into the royal chancery as a notary around 1433. Perhaps Vitéz entered the chancery after the death of János Albeni, Bishop of Zagreb, in 1433, in search of security and advancement.

The question of how, after becoming a notary at the chancery in 1433, Vitéz matriculated in the *Natio Ungarorum* of the University of Vienna on April 14, 1434, paying four *Grosschen*, and whether, as Birnbaum suggested, he returned to the chancery in 1437 without completing his studies in Vienna, must be clarified further. His name was cited again when he received Zredna from King Sigismund as a fief on November 24, 1437, as "the discreet Master John, son of the late Dennis, son of Galeth de Zrednamlleke, notary of our majesty" (*discreti magistri Iohannis filii*

quondam Dionysii, filii Geleth de Zrednamelleke, notarii nostre maiestatis). He was by this time serving as protonotary of King Sigismund (*Regni Hungariae prothonotarius*).

Vitéz's rapid rise after the death of Sigismund in 1437 may have been due in a large measure to his possible relationship with János Hunyadi (c. 1387-1456), the famous soldier and father of King Matthias Corvinus (1428-1490). Hunyadi's wife, Elisabeth (d. 1456), was from the Garázda family, previously known as the Vojk family, which obtained extensive landholdings in the Zredna area in the late fourteenth century. Vitéz's mother, Dorothy, was also from the Garázda family.

Vitéz was also a friend of the humanist Pier Paolo Vergerio (the Elder) (1370-1444), who had followed Sigismund to Hungary in 1417 after the emperor left the Council of Constance (1414-1418). Living in Hungary for four decades, Vergerio had a very important influence on the development of Vitéz as a man of culture.

Vitéz's participation in the affairs of the nation expanded steadily from this time on. As a canon (*custos*) of Zagreb and protonotary of Hungary, he went in 1440 to Cracow on a mission to discuss the elevation of Vladislas I (r. 1440-1444) to the Hungarian throne. In 1442 Vitéz was made Provost of the Cathedral Chapter of (Great) Várad (Nagyvárad, Grosswardein). After the disastrous Battle of Varna on November 10, 1444, in which not only Vladislas I but also Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444), the Bishop of Várad and other ecclesiastics and nobles perished, it was János Hunyadi who rescued the country from total disintegration. In response to Hunyadi's request, Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) named Vitéz Bishop of Várad on June 4, 1445.

After Hunyadi was made Governor of Hungary in June 1446, he increasingly relied on Vitéz not only as a close friend and relative, but also as a skillful diplomat. Vitéz was responsible for the release of the young Ladislas V (Posthumous) (1440-1457) in his negotiations with Emperor Frederick III (r. 1440-1493). Rising within the chancery, Vitéz had become vice chancellor of the Great Chancery in 1445 and attained the position of chancellor of the Secret Chancery in 1453.

As the threat of the Turks became serious after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Vitéz tried very hard to contain the Turks, especially at the Congress of Wiener Neustadt in 1455. The victory of the Christian army at Belgrade in 1456 was certainly a milestone in his long endeavors to stem the tide, but the death of Hunyadi in 1456 was a severe blow to Vitéz. The fiery Franciscan preacher Giovanni Capistrano (1386-1456), who exhorted the Hungarians to resist the Turks and personally led the left wing of the Christian army at the battle of Belgrade, also died in 1456, at Villach, of the plague that followed. Because of Vitéz's close relations with the Hunyadi family, he himself rapidly lost influence and power in government after Hunyadi's death. Without the intervention of the papal legate, Cardinal Juan de Carvajal (c. 1400-1469), Vitéz might have been arrested and killed like Laszlo Hunyadi, János' eldest son. Although taken to Esztergom from Várad, Vitéz was freed, thanks to the appeal of Aeneas Sylvius, the future Pope Pius II, and was able to return to Várad as its bishop.

But, after the sudden death of Ladislas V on November 22, 1457, the pro-Hunyadi forces were on the rise again, and Vitéz began to play an important political role in the following period. Thanks to his vigorous campaign, Matthias,

the fifteen-year-old second son of János Hunyadi, who had been at the court of George of Podebrady (1420-1471) in Bohemia, was brought back to Hungary and elected king on January 24, 1458. The young king then asked the pope to name Vitéz Archbishop of Esztergom, and the petition was granted in 1465. As Primate of Hungary and again chancellor of the Secret Chancery from 1464 on, Archbishop Vitéz held the most important and powerful position in the realm. But soon he became increasingly disaffected towards the policies of the king. He and his nephew, Janus Pannonius (1434-1472), who had become Bishop of Pécs (Fünfkirchen) in 1459, became members of a conspiracy to unseat King Matthias. After the discovery of the plot, Vitéz was arrested and imprisoned. Although released later, he was broken. He died on August 9, 1472 and was buried in the crypt of the Cathedral of Esztergom. Pannonius, who tried to flee to Italy, where he had studied as a youth, could only reach Zagreb and died at Medvedgrad near Zagreb on Good Friday, March 27, 1472.

It is difficult to give an adequate assessment of Vitéz's contributions to education, humanism and other intellectual pursuits in a short article. His role as a founder of the University of Pozsony (Bratislava, Pressburg), his splendid courts at Várad and Esztergom and his love of books since his days as a canon of Zagreb are some of the most important aspects of his life as a man of culture. As a collector of manuscripts at Várad and Esztergom and as chancellor of the Royal Chancery, Vitéz became "the real founder of classical studies in Hungary" (Fabris, 12). He was a friend of the learned Greek Cardinal Bessarion, another famous collector of manuscripts. It was undoubtedly Vitéz, the builder of what Vespasiano da Bisticci called "a magnificent library," who helped King Matthias Corvinus (1440-1490) establish the world-famous Bibliotheca Corviniana. Vitéz is believed to have sent Pannonius, Petrus Garázda, another relative, and others to the famous school of the humanist Guarino da Verona (1374-1460) in Ferrara. It is also known that Ivan Vitéz (Ivan Wytez) of Zagreb went to the University of Padua in 1465, and Michael Vitéz (Mychael Wytez), Prior of Zagreb, was also mentioned as a student at the University of Padua later.

In all likelihood these relatives of János Vitéz studied at the University of Padua at his expense. We should remember that Vitéz was one of the first to establish a modern national chancery, which was made up of teams of humanists who had studied in Italy, in an attempt to centralize the government of Hungary in face of the growing Turkish threat. In this sense, as well as from other points of view, János Vitéz can truly be called the "father of Hungarian humanism."

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26. Bernhard von Waging (c. 1400-1472)

Born around 1400 at Waging in southern Bavaria, Bernhard received his bachelor's degree at the University of Vienna. When he was very young, he became a member of the Augustinian Canons in Indersdorf, but left the canons to avoid their eating of meat, as he said in a letter to Cusanus. In 1446 Bernhard moved to the Benedictine

monastery at Tegernsee where he was prior from 1452 to 1465. He was one of the most important protagonists of reform within the Benedictine Order in southern Germany. He died on August 2, 1472, as father confessor of the Convent of Bergen near Eichstätt, which he had reformed.

His interest in Cusanus' *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440) resulted in *In Praise of Learned Ignorance* (*Laudatorium doctae ignorantiae*), which he completed, at the latest, by April 1452. Becoming a close friend of Cusanus after 1452, Bernhard exchanged letters with him about mysticism and monastic reform. He was involved in the "Gerchumar" controversy about mystical theology, which started as a result of Cusanus' *On Learned Ignorance*. Wilhelm Baum and Raimund Senoner have published some of the letters exchanged by Cusanus and Bernhard between 1450 and 1455 (112-184).

In accordance with Cusanus' reform plans, Bernhard and Brother Eberhard von Wolfratshausen tried unsuccessfully to introduce reform to the convent of Sonnenburg on November 29, 1453. In April 1454 Bernhard and Brother Konrad von Geisenfeld went to visit the abbey of St. Georgenberg. Stung by the utter failure of their reform attempts, Bernhard wrote his *Lamentation against the Demolition, Throwing Down, Plundering and Desolation of Mount Saint George and the Wretches Living in it* (*Threne in excidium, deiectionem, everdionem desolationemque montis Sancti Georgii atque scelestorum inhabitantium in eo* [Clm 19697]). When Kaspar Ayndorffer (1401-1461), Abbot of Tegernsee, criticized his *Laudatorium*, Bernhard wrote *Defense of the Praise of Learned Ignorance* (*Defensorium laudatorii doctae ignorantiae*) in 1459.

In 1946 Martin Grabmann (1875-1949), the great scholar of medieval philosophy, asserted in his "Bernhard von Waging (d. 1472), Prior von Tegernsee," that because of the numerous manuscripts of Bernhard von Waging that are available at the *Staatsbibliothek* in Munich, the *Stiftsbibliothek* of Melk and others, it would be difficult to grasp the total ideas of the Tegernsee Prior (Grabmann, "Bernhard von Waging," 86). In his important *Theologia Mystica in altbairischer Übertragung* (1971), Werner Höver listed many works of Bernhard von Waging, most of which have been preserved in the *Staatsbibliothek* in Munich. In addition to those mentioned above they include: *Treatise on Death as well as the Preparation for Death or Savings against Death* (*Tractatus de morte necnon de praeparatione ad mortem seu peculum mortis*, 1458), *On Knowing God* (*De cognoscendo Deum*, 1459), *Consolation or Remedies against Tribulations* (*Consolatorium seu remediarium tribulatorum*, 1461) and *Book of Remedies against the Petty and Scrupulous* (*Remediarius contra pusillanimes et scupulosos*, 1464/65). Focusing more broadly than Grabmann on the relationship between Cusanus and Bernard of Clairvaux, Jean Gerson, Hugo of Barma, Bernhard von Waging and others, Höver discussed the German translations of the works of Bernard of Clairvaux grammatically and textually and raised the question at the end of his book of whether Bernhard von Waging was the translator of the sixteen existing Latin manuscripts of Bernard of Clairvaux in Tegernsee, Munich, Indersdorf, Salzburg and others. Höver was certain that the translator was a resident of Tegernsee, but, despite the almost overwhelming evidence, did not or could not conclude that Bernhard von Waging was the translator. According to him, only future research can clarify the point.

The most recent systematic treatment of Bernhard von Waging's ideas is a dissertation published by Heide Dorothea Riemann, but it is limited in scope and does not deal with the questions which Grabmann and Höver raised about Cusanus and Bernhard von Waging. Further studies of von Waging's unpublished manuscripts are necessary and would be welcome.

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III. Places

1. Kues: The Town

In 1401 Nicholas of Cusa was born in the village of Kues on the Moselle River in Germany. Today the village is a part of Bernkastel-Kues. Although some writers have given October 22 as the date of his birth, the exact date is not known. What kind of place was Kues in 1401? This simple question acquired more significance as the sixth centennial of Cusanus' birth was celebrated in 2000, in Japan, and in 2001, in Germany, Italy, Spain, the U.S.A. and other countries. Unfortunately, the question cannot be answered in any detail due to lack of reliable data and documents. An attempt will be made here to provide a picture, especially in relation to Cusanus' family and development in his youth.

Kues, or Cues, Cusse and Coesse, was located in a region which was under the jurisdiction of the archbishopric of Trier. When Cusanus was born, the Archbishop of Trier was Werner III von Falkenstein (r. 1388-1418), who reigned over Trier for thirty years in a laudable way. Together, the Archbishops of Mainz, Cologne and Trier constituted the powerful ecclesiastical rulers of the Electoral College of the Empire. It was, however, much later that Cusanus, who was known at one time as Nicolaus Treverensis, established any important contact with the Archbishop of Trier himself or the office of the archbishopric in Trier.

Cusanus' family lived on the left bank of the Moselle River in Kues. The impressive stone house in which he was born still stands at the corner (Nikolausufer 49) of Nikolausufer and Kardinalstrasse. It has been renovated and restored, most recently in 1980, through the efforts of Hans Gestrich, the recently deceased president of the Cusanus-Gesellschaft. Cusanus' father bought the house in 1401 or shortly before. Since his father, Johan or Henne Cryfftz or Krebs (d. 1450), was a boat owner or operator (*nauta*), Cusanus must have been brought up to be familiar with customs and conventions related to the nearby river. It is important to remember that his father was also a man of considerable economic power and social standing and served as a juror (*Schöffe*) in the village. He is said to have made a monopoly of boat traffic on the Mosel, fishing rights and landed property.

Cusanus' mother, Katharina Roemer (d. 1427), was from Briedel near Zell and had many relatives who later entered Cusanus' life in various capacities and relations. It is known that Cusanus had two sisters, Margaretha and Klara, one older and the other younger than he, and one younger brother, Johann. Margaretha married Matthias, an influential juror probably of Trier, remained childless and died young. Klara (d. 1473) married twice, first Johan Plynisch, a burgher of Trier, and after 1441 Paul von Bristge, a juror and magistrate who served as Mayor of

Trier from 1458 to 1468. She, however, also remained childless. Johann (d. 1456), who became priest of the parish church of St. Michael in Bernkastel in 1450, is best remembered as a kneeling worshiper next to Cusanus in the altar picture in the Hospital Chapel of St. Nicholas in Kues.

What education, spiritual and intellectual, did the boy have as he grew up in Kues? The parish church of St. Michael, whose original building was completed in 1386 in Bernkastel on the opposite side of the river, must have been a center of his spiritual growth, though we have little detail because reliable sources are lacking. Erich Meuthen, who examined Cusanus' life exhaustively and has published the results of his research in the *Acta Cusana*, stated that there are many things concerning Cusanus' youth about which we know little or nothing.

There is almost no information about his intellectual development. The story is told that since the boy was very studious and had little interest in learning about his father's profession, which was the use and management of water traffic and the wine trade, the irritated father one day struck him off the boat with an oar. But the story may be a fable, as Meuthen called it (*Nikolaus von Kues*, 11). It is surprising that although most of them state that the story is legendary, not only some romance and nonacademic writers, such as Künkel (29), Lübke (17) and Meffert (32), but also scholars like Vansteenberghe (5-6), Bett (4) and Hoffmann (9) seem to have given some credence to it by citing but not rejecting it. Meuthen states simply that extant sources show that father and son were on good terms.

It is also alleged that, fearful of the father's further anger, Cusanus left Kues and found refuge in the house of the Counts of Manderscheid in the Eifel. Certainly, Manderscheid is within a reachable distance from Kues for a young boy. But how could Cusanus have sought help from and found shelter with the Manderscheid counts? As his father had close relations with many nobles in the region as a boatman and merchant, it is possible that the Manderscheid counts were well known to the boy. But it is difficult to produce any reliable data that certify Cusanus' supposed stay in the castles of the Counts of Manderscheid.

Since it is possible that when Cusanus was at the University of Cologne from 1425 onwards he was able to gain access to and examine manuscripts and documents in the cathedral archives thanks to the help of Ulrich von Manderscheid (c. 1400-1438), who was then a member of the cathedral chapters of both Cologne and Trier, there were undoubtedly good relations between him and the ducal family, and they continued throughout his life. When Cusanus established the Hospital of St. Nicholas in Kues in 1458, he set aside one of the six cells reserved for the nobles forever (*in perpetuum*) especially for Count Dietrich (d. 1469) of Manderscheid and his descendants. He wrote: "Likewise we give in the same form to the city of Trier one cell for priests and another for common folk. Likewise to Lord Dietrich von Mandersheid and his heirs one cell for nobles." (*Item damus in eadem forma Civitati Treverensi duas cellas, unam cellam presbyterorum et alium communium; Item domino Theoderico de manderscheit et heredibus suis unam cellam nobelium*.) The nature of the contact between Cusanus and the family must be clarified further on the basis of reliable documentary evidence.

It might help us to examine the nature and characteristics of Bernkastel, located on the opposite side of the Moselle. Now a flourishing town based on trade and the wine industry, Bernkastel occupies an important position within the Moselle and Rhein regions. First mentioned in the seventh century in the *Cosmographia* of the geographer of Ravenna as *Princastellum*, Bernkastel was occupied by the Archbishop of Trier, Poppo von Babenburg (r. 1016-1047), during his battle against Adalbero von Luxemburg (d. 1036 or 1037). Because of the many campaigns against the Luxemburgers that followed, the Archbishop Heinrich II von F(V)instingen (r. 1260-1286) of Trier built a new castle called the Landshut in 1277. It was enlarged by Heinrich's successor Boemund I (r. 1286-1299) for defensive purposes. Even today the ruined Castle Landshut occupies a commanding position in Bernkastel and is a popular tourist attraction. In 1291 Bernkastel obtained a city charter. By the end of the thirteenth century, walls with towers encircled the city. The castle often served as the residence of the Archbishops of Trier in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Especially in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Bernkastel developed into an important trade center because of the wine industry and increased traffic on the Moselle.

Dependent on the development and prosperity of Bernkastel, the village of Kues must have been in a fairly prosperous condition at the time of Cusanus' birth in 1401. Unless more reliable documents can be found, which seems unlikely, any further discussion on the state of affairs at Kues remains conjecture.

Cusanus left Kues for the University of Heidelberg in 1416 at the age of fifteen. Although he certainly must have come back from time to time, it is difficult to document his visits to his home village. He definitely returned to Bernkastel-Kues in 1452 during his legation tour throughout Germany in 1451-1452. In accordance with the foundation charter of December 3, 1458, the Hospital of St. Nicholas was completed in Kues the same year, which, however, he himself did not see in his lifetime.

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2. Manderscheid

Located in the valley of the Lieser River, about fifteen miles northeast of Trier and fourteen miles northwest of Bernkastel-Wittlich, Manderscheid can easily be approached by car through Autobahn A1/A48 from Trier or Koblenz. It is nowadays one of the most famous health resorts in the Eifel region.

The place-name "Manderscheid" was first mentioned in a document of Otto II (r. 961-983). In a diploma of 973 Otto gave Archbishop Theodorich or Dieterich of Trier (r. 964-977) an area in the southern Eifel which spanned from Echternach to "Manderscheit" on the Lieser via Erlesbura (St. Thomas) on the Kyll. Thus Manderscheid became a corner pillar of the archbishop's territory.

The story of Manderscheid is that of the Oberburg (Upper Castle) and the Niederburg (Lower Castle). Their dates of construction are completely unknown, although experts are in agreement that the Oberburg is of more ancient origin than the Niederburg. The Oberburg was in the possession of Count Heinrich von Luxemburg-Namur in the first half of the twelfth century. Albero von Montreuil, the Archbishop of Trier (r. 1132-1152), took it from him in a bitter feud over the abbey of St. Maximin in Trier and kept it as the only one of his acquired properties after the reconciliation of 1147, which was negotiated by King Konrad III (r. 1138-1152).

The Niederburg was the ancestral seat (*Stammsitz*) of the Counts of Manderscheid. The genealogy of the family of Manderscheid can be traced with some certainty only from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The most important source is the *Handbook* (*Manipulus Hemmenrodensis*) of Heesius, the chronicler of the Cistercian abbey of Himmelrod.

Although the exact dates of their rule are not known, the ruling members of the Manderscheid family in the twelfth century were Richard I (ca. 1133), Walter (1142-1171), Richard II (1157-1171) and Dietrich (1173-1206). After Winnemar of Manderscheid married Hildegard von Kerpen, the castle came into the possession of the Lords of Kerpen, who established a collateral line here around 1250. Winnemar set an example by marrying the daughter of a neighboring prince. The practice was followed by Wilhelm V (r. 1320-1345), who married Johanna von Blankenheim; Wilhelm VI (r. 1345-1370), who married Elisabeth von Sponheim; Wilhelm VII (r. 1370-1386), who married Lucia von Neuenah; and Dietrich I (r. 1386-c. 1426), who married Elisabeth or Else von dem Steine in 1381. Dietrich I's marriage to Elisabeth von dem Steine was of special importance. As a result, the Manderscheiders took possession of Castles Steinkallenfels and Wartenstein, two important fortifications which the von dem Steine family had owned.

In the fifteenth century the family extended its possession widely. Its control reached the Lordships (*Herrschaften*) of Schleiden, Daun, Jünkerath, Blankenheim, Gerolstein, Neuerburg, Kronenburg, Virneburg, Saffenburg, Dollendorf, Bettingen and Falkenstein. It became a dominant power in the regions of Jülich, Luxemburg, Trier and Cologne.

According to legend, Nicholas of Cusa, reprimanded by his father for his inattention to the family business because of his studious habits, left Kues and entered the household of the Counts of Manderscheid, where he first worked in the kitchen. Soon recognized by his employers as a bright and dexterous boy, he is said to have been educated with the children of Count Dietrich I. The *Repertorium aller notwendigen Nachrichten*, which is in the St. Nicholas Hospital Library in Bernkastel-Kues, says on page 82:

> Everywhere he served, starting—so people say—in the kitchen, he demonstrated his intelligence and skill already at a young age, as a result of which he was placed in the company of the Count's young sons who were studying at the time. He was given his assignment in part for his own enjoyment and in part to wait upon the youth and

> carry their books. Subsequently, he also traveled with the young men to universities in foreign countries, eventually going as far as Rome where he then achieved happiness and success through his scholarly studies and learning.
>
> (*Allow er, der gemeinen Aussage nach, anfänglich in der Kuch gedient, nachgehends aber wegen seines Verstandes and Geschicklichkeit, so man in ihm schon in seiner Jugend verspürte, denen damalen studierenden jungen Herrn Grafen teils zur Zeitvertreib teils auch zur Aufwartung und büchertragen beygesellet wurde, auch ist er nachgehends mit den jungen Herrn in fremde Länder auf Universitäten verreiset und endlich bis in Rom, allwo er dann durch seine Scienz und Wissenschaft sein Glück und Fortun gemacht.*) (Uebinger, 452-453)

It is often said that he and the Manderscheid boys went to the Brethren of the Common Life at Deventer for their education. As Marx, Meuthen and others have indicated, there is no solid evidence for this tradition. The *Acta Cusana* I, 1 has no entry about Cusanus going to Deventer at this time of his life.

Dietrich I had six sons, Dietrich II (d. 1469), Wilhelm IX (d. 1455/56), Gerhard (d. 1434), Johannes (d. c. 1434), Ulrich (c. 1400-1438) and Heinrich. The older two, Dietrich II and Wilhelm IX, divided the family estates in 1428, Dietrich inheriting the Niederburg, Daun and Schleiden and Wilhelm taking possession of Kail and half of Wartenstein. The other four brothers took orders and found benefices in the region. Unlike the two married brothers, they were educated in universities.

Gerhard, who matriculated at the University of Cologne in 1412, and Johannes, who became a student at the University of Heidelberg in 1414, became canons in Cologne. Ulrich, who enrolled in 1415 in the Faculty of the Arts of the University of Cologne, became a member of the cathedral chapter of Trier in 1415 and held the position until his death on October 18, 1438, while at the same time holding his membership in the cathedral chapter of Cologne. Ulrich became dean of the cathedral chapter of Cologne and archdean of St. Mauritius in Tholey. Heinrich, the youngest brother, became a monk in the abbey of Echternach, where his mother, Elisabeth, was buried in 1403. It is possible that Cusanus, when choosing Heidelberg in 1416 as his first university, was influenced by the Manderscheid brothers.

After the death of Otto von Ziegenhain, the Archbishop of Trier (r. 1418-1430), on February 13, 1430, a majority of the cathedral chapter of Trier chose Jakob von Sierck, scholastic of the chapter, Provost of Würzburg and priest of St. Marien at Kreuznach, as Otto's successor, while a minority, led by the provost of the chapter, Friedrich von Kröv, selected Ulrich von Manderscheid as its candidate for the vacant position. When both Jakob and Ulrich appealed to Rome, Pope Martin V, instead of choosing one of them, designated on May 22, 1430, Raban von Helmstadt, the Bishop of Speyer, as the next Archbishop of Trier. Although Jakob von Sierck withdrew, Ulrich von Manderscheid, supported by Count Ruprecht von Virneburg

and other local nobles, decided to contest the papal provision of Raban to Trier at the Council of Basel.

We find among Ulrich's supporters not only Count Ruprecht of Virneburg (Rupertus comes de Virneburg), but also Dietrich II and Wilhelm IX of Manderscheid (Teodericus et Wilhelmus de Manderscheyt germani) and Johan Cryfftz (Henne Krebs de Cusa), Nicholas of Cusa's father (Meuthen, "Obödienz," 57-58). The Manderscheiders had been in the service of the archbishopric of Trier for many years, but had not produced an archbishop. Incensed also by the papal intervention in the affairs of Trier, Ulrich and his supporters were anxious to defend his candidacy. It was Nicholas of Cusa the canon lawyer, a *doctor decretorum* of the University of Padua, who defended Ulrich's case at the Council of Basel. As Gerhard Kallen (1884-1973) showed, Cusanus' legal "brief" was developed into *The Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*), which he presented to the council probably in 1434. This disastrous episcopal election of 1430, which is referred to as the Schism of Trier or the Manderscheid Feud (*Manderscheider Fehde*), caused havoc in the archbishopric of Trier. Although the council finally reached its decision on May 15, 1434, against Cusanus' client, the legal battle over the Manderscheid case no doubt drew the young lawyer closer to the Manderscheid family.

As is well known, after Cusanus matriculated on April 8, 1425, at the University of Cologne as *doctor in iure canonico Treverensis* under the one hundred and forty-fifth rector, Peter von Weiler from Julich, he began to take an interest in theology, partly because of the influence of Heymericus de Campo (Heymeric van den Velde, 1395-1460). But he continued to study law and did his research in legal history. Since Ulrich von Manderscheid was then dean of the cathedral chapter of Cologne, Cusanus probably had easy access to the library of the cathedral in Cologne, in which he could study many old documents, manuscripts and records.

Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459), the famous humanist, had discovered a manuscript of Petronius in Cologne around 1420. In his letters written from 1427 to 1429 to his friend Niccolò Niccoli (1364-1437), Poggio praised the humanistic activities of Nicolaus Treverensis. Another humanist, Guarino Guarini (1374-1460), wrote to Giovanni Lamola in 1426 that a certain secretary of Cardinal Orsini had found in a dusty library Cicero's *On the Republic* (*Cicero de Republica nuper inventus sit Coloniae, urbis Germaniae, in bibliotheca pulverunlenta. Eum repperit, repertum transcripsit quidam secretarius cardinalis Ursini* [Vansteenberghe, 19, n.10]). It was believed among the humanists that the discoverer was none other than Cusanus, although recent research has shown that it was Winand von Steeg (1371-1453). Cusanus himself wrote later in the *De concordantia catholica* that he studied in the library a large volume which is believed to be *Codex Carolinus* and the imperial decree *Saluberrima*, and found the acts of the provincial Council of Arles held in 417-418. Such activities would have been difficult without the support of Ulrich von Manderscheid and his two brothers in the cathedral chapter.

When Cusanus decided to found the Hospital of St. Nicholas for poor men at Kues, he specifically stated in the foundation charter of December 3, 1458, that of the six cells reserved for the nobles forever (*in perpetuum*), one was to be set aside for Count Dietrich I and his descendants. He wrote:

> Likewise we give in the same form to the city of Trier two cells, one cell for priests and another for common folk. Likewise, one cell for nobles to Lord Dietrich von Mandersheid and his heirs.
>
> (*Item damus in eadem forma Civitati Treverensi duas cellas, unam presbyterorum et alium communium; Item domino theoderico de manderscheit et heredicus suis unam cellam nobelium.*) (Marx, 58-59)

This was certainly his way of expressing loyalty and gratitude to the Manderscheid family.

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3. The University of Heidelberg, 1416-1417

Nicholas of Cusa matriculated as *clericus Treuerensis dyocesis* at the University of Heidelberg during the chancellorship of Nicholas Petri de Bettenberg from December 20, 1415 to June 22, 1416. He went on to the University of Padua to begin the study of canon law in October, 1417. It is not clear whether he left Heidelberg with any academic degree (*Acta Cusana*, I, 1, 3-4).

Ruprecht I, Count and Elector of the Rhine Palatinate (r. 1356-1390) desired to establish a *studium zu Heidelberg* to give his house and lands additional prestige. Pope Urban VI (r. 1378-1389) issued a bull of foundation on October 23, 1385, and Ruprecht I granted a foundation charter on October 1, 1386 (according to Hermann Weisert, *Die Verfassung d. Universität Heidelberg*). The elector asked Marsilius von Inghen (d. 1396), a distinguished theologian and former rector of the University of Paris, to organize his university and to become its first chancellor (*Rektor*, *fundator huius studii et iniciator*). Although he was by birth a Netherlander, Marsilius was one of those famous "German" professors at Paris who, because of their support for the Roman pope after the beginning of the Great Schism (1378-1417), left Paris and went to Vienna or Heidelberg.

This is not the place to discuss in detail the development of medieval European universities. In the twelfth century, the first universities were spread from Oxford in England to Salerno in southern Italy, with Paris, Montpellier and Bologna in between. Within the Holy Roman Empire, Prague and Vienna had their universities established in 1348 and 1365 respectively.

Following the Paris model, the chancellors of Heidelberg were chosen usually from among the members of the Faculty of the Arts (*Artistenfakultät*) for a period of three months. Marsilius von Inghen was so much respected that he was elected as chancellor nine times—November 17, 1386; December 16, 1387; November 1388;

December 18, 1388; June 23, 1389; October 10, 1390; June 23, 1391; October 10, 1392 and June 23, 1396—before his death on August 20, 1396.

On October 18, 1386, the University of Heidelberg was inaugurated in a ceremony held at the Holy Ghost Church. The next day, the lectures delivered by three professors initiated a new academic period: a professor of theology, Reginald von Alna (Reginaldus de Alna, 1386-1389) (Weisert, *Die Verfassung d. Universität Heidelberg*, 25), and two masters of the Faculty of Arts, namely Marsilius von Inghen and Heilmannus (Heylmannus) Wunnenberg of Worms (Weisert, *Die Verfassung d. Universität Heidelberg*, 74), who had come to Heidelberg from the University of Prague. The Faculty of Law also started its activities on December 22, 1386 with the coming of Johannes de Noet (d. c. 1432). The Faculty of Medicine was able to begin its academic period after the arrival of Jacobus de Nermenia in the second half of 1388. In the meantime Marsilius von Inghen was elected chancellor of the University on November 17, 1386. Thus began the first university in Germany.

Like other universities, the University of Heidelberg had the Faculty of the Arts as a lower faculty and the Faculties of Theology, Law and Medicine as higher faculties. According to Peter Classen and Eike Wolgast, more than two years' study was needed on average to take an examination for the *Baccalaureus* and at least two and a half more years for the *Magister*. It is known that in the early period only about twelve percent of the matriculated students obtained the bachelor's degree (Classen and Wolgast, 3).

When Cusanus came to the University of Heidelberg in 1416 to study the liberal arts, Nicholas Petri de Bettenberg was the seventy-fifth chancellor of the school. There is no reliable source to show whether the fifteen-year-old Cusanus was influenced by the more dominant philosophical, theological school of thought, the *via moderna*, at the University of Heidelberg, which had become prominent because of Marsilius von Inghen. Nicholas was perhaps a little too young and his stay at Heidelberg too short to come under the influence of either of the ways (*via moderna* or *Marsiliana* and *via antiqua*). Given the short matriculation period mentioned above, the case of Nicholas of Cusa at Heidelberg was not an unusual one.

Most of the books on the history of the University of Heidelberg, listed at the end of this article, do not mention Cusanus. Only Peter Classen and Eike Wolgast refer to him in connection with his later debate with Johannes Wenck (d. 1459), who became chancellor of the university three times: in 1435 he was the one hundred and fifteenth chancellor; in 1444, the one hundred and thirty-fifth; and in 1451, the one hundred and forty-sixth. But Cusanus probably had started to think of acquiring advanced education in canon law that would prepare him well for a future career in church administration, and decided to cross the Alps to go to Padua like many other German students.

Commenting on "The University of Heidelberg" in the ACSN (2, 1), Astrik L. Gabriel, President of the International Commission for the History of Universities within the International Committee of Historical Sciences, has pointed out that he knew of a work by Marsilius von Inghen, now in the Staatsbibliothek in Munich, which is accompanied by at least fifty epigrams honoring Marsilius and celebrating the one hundredth anniversary of the University of Heidelberg. In Gabriel's opinion,

this is the earliest publication commemorating the centenary of any university (ACSN, 2, 2, July 1985, 7).

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4. The University of Padua, 1417-1423

Crossing the Alps probably in 1417, Nicholas of Cusa became a student at the University of Padua, which had been founded in 1222. We do not know Cusanus' route. He is believed to be the maker of the earliest map of central Europe. But he has not given us a description of the scenic views he must have enjoyed as he crossed the Alps. If he went to Padua via the most frequently used Brenner Pass, his itinerary might have been similar to that used by three noblemen from Franconia who went to Padua in 1585. Their itinerary from Augsburg was as follows:

			Distance (km)
6.30	Wednesday	Augsburg	
7.2	Friday	Partenkirchen	130
7.3	Saturday	Innsbruck	55
7.4	Sunday	Sachsenklamm	
		Brenner	40
7.5	Monday	Clausen	50
7.6	Tuesday	Pergine	110
		Bassano di Grappa	80
7.10	Saturday	Padua	45

Source (Hanns H. Hofmann et al., *Eine Reise nach Padua 1585* [Sigmaringen: J. Thorbecke, 1969], 55.)

Surely, Cusanus found much more sunshine in Padua and Italy than in Heidelberg, and felt more keenly the influence of Renaissance culture.

Although the *Acts* of the university (*Acta graduum academicorum Gymnasii Patavini ab anno MCCCCVI ad annum MCCCCL*), which Gaspare Brotto and Giovanni Zonta published in 1922, does not mention Cusanus, we learn from his short autobiography, *The Story of the Reverend Lord Nicholas of Cusa* (*Historia Reverendissimi Domini Nicolai de Cusa*), which was probably written or dictated by him in 1449, that he obtained a doctorate at the university shortly after his twenty-second birthday (*dominum Nicolaum de Cusa, qui parum post 22. annum aetatis doctor studii Paduani*). The recently published short biography of Cusanus which was written around 1550 states: "This Nicholas, a little after his twenty-second year, was created a doctor at the University of Padua" (*Qui Nicolaus parum post etatem secundum et vicesimum doctor studii Pataviensi creatus*). It is estimated that Cusanus

received his *doctor decretorum* degree from Padua sometime between April and July in 1423 (*Acta Cusana*, I, 1, 1, 6).

Cusanus attended the lectures given by the prominent canonist Prosdocimus de Comitibus (d. 1438) (*Prosdocimus Comes dominus meus et pater singularis*), as shown by the extant notes that he took on the *Lectures on Book II of the Decretals* (*Lectura in librum II. Decretalium*). And Paolo Sambin (1979) established that Cusanus boarded with his teacher Prosdocimus while at Padua.

Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444), who later became the Cardinal of San Angelo and president of the Council of Basel, had received the doctorate in civil law at Padua in 1418 and undoubtedly became Cusanus' teacher there. He probably gave lectures at the university and obtained a doctorate in canon law in 1421 or 1422, thereafter leaving Padua for his hometown, Rome. Cusanus dedicated to him three works, *The Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*, 1433/34), *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440) and *On Conjectures* (*De coniecturis*, 1444).

The possible influence of such men as Prosdocimus de' Beldomandis (1370/1380-1428) and Paulo Veneto (1369-1428) on Cusanus in Padua has been suggested for some time. The noted Italian scholar, Graziella Federici Vescovini, discussed in her recent article, "Cusanus und das wissenschaftliche Studium in Padua zu Beginn des 15. Jahrhundert," not only the teachings of the astronomy and mathematics scholar Piagio Pelcani da Parma (Blasius da Parma), who taught at Padua in 1384-1388 and 1407-1411, but also Piagio Pelcani's important influence on Cusanus through his student, Prosdocimus de' Beldomandis. It is possible that between 1418 and 1423 Cusanus also made friends with Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli (1397-1482), to whom he later dedicated *On Geometrical Transmutations* (*De geometricis transmutationibus*, 1445). Although he lived in his canon law professor's house as a boarder, the better to master the subject, Cusanus was certainly under the influence of many other academic disciplines. His years at one of the top universities in Europe constituted a critical phase in his intellectual growth.

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5. Rome in 1424

After receiving the doctor of canon law degree (*doctor decretorum*) from the University of Padua in 1423, Cusanus went to Rome, probably in June or July 1424 (*Acta Cusana*, I, 1, 6).

Long abandoned as the papal residence during the Babylonian Captivity of the Church in Avignon (1308-1377) and then neglected during the time of the Great Schism (1378-1417), Rome, like the Papal States, was in the hands of local barons and powerful mercenaries. Its churches and civic buildings were in ruins, and its economic life was at a standstill. The Eternal City once more became home to an undivided papacy when Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431), who had been elected at the Council of Constance, finally gained entry into the city on September 28, 1420. Despite Martin V's considerable efforts to rebuild the papal residence, churches and other buildings in Rome, especially the Lateran and Vatican basilicas, the city remained essentially undistinguished in comparison with the brilliant Florence. Of Florence, Leonardo Bruni (1370-1444) could boast: "Florence is of such a nature that a more distinguished or more splendid city cannot be found on the entire earth" (Bruni, *Laudatio Florentinae Urbis*).

After four unhappy years in England in the service of the powerful and rich Bishop Henry Beaufort (1377-1447) of Winchester, the young humanist Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459) had returned to Rome in 1423 to become Martin V's secretary and advisor. In his letter of November 6, 1423, he urged his Florentine friend Niccolò Niccoli (1364-1437) to visit Rome, saying:

> [T]he air is pure here and there is abundance of everything except wine. You have been saying for thirty years now that you want to see Rome. There never was a better time: everything is completely peaceful and quiet; the journey is safe, the inns are not bad, and the road is easy. (Gordan, 84)

In one of his later sermons, given on January 23, 1457, Cusanus says that he saw Pope Martin V while in Rome. Although there is some doubt about whether the Franciscan Bernardino of Siena (1380-1441), one of the most dynamic preachers of his time, was in Rome in 1424 (*Acta Cusana*, I, 1, 6), Cusanus says that he heard San Bernardino preach in the streets. Of contemporary churchmen, only San Bernardino was regarded as a competent preacher by the curial humanist Poggio, who was always critical of contemporary society and clerical corruption. In Poggio's *On Avarice* (*De avaritia*, 1429), Antonio Loschi (1368-1441), the Vincentine humanist and another papal secretary, says the following about San Bernardino, whose preaching Loschi often heard in 1427 in Rome:

> Of all the preachers whom I have heard, Bernardino is the one who, in my opinion, is the most polished and learned. But I think he excels most of all in that one thing that is a chief concern of rhetoric; he has the power of persuasion, for he can work up the emotions of the people, moving them to tears or to laughter, as it is appropriate. (Kohl and Witt, 243-244)

What impressions did Cusanus have of San Bernardino if he really heard the noted preacher at Rome in 1424? How did they affect his later sermons? Sometime before 1424 Cusanus had already purchased Jean Gerson's *On Mystical Theology* (*De mystica theologia*) and St. Bonaventure's *Journey of the Mind to God* (*Itinerarium mentis in Deum*). Did the recent graduate of the Paduan Law School now become more interested in theological studies as he listened to San Bernardino?

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6. Trier and St. Matthias Abbey

This article is dedicated to the late Father Petrus Becker of St. Matthias Abbey in Trier

According to legend, Trebata, son of Queen Semiranis in Babylon, founded Trier (Trèves) around the time of Abraham, about 1,300 years before Rome. Thus the famous inscription on the wall of the "Red House" at the marketplace in Trier informs us that "Trier existed 1,300 years before Rome" (*Ante Romam Treviris stetit annis mille trecentis*). No doubt this is an exaggerated fiction.

Trier, Germany's oldest town, was founded in the year 16 B.C. under the rule of the Emperor Augustus as *Augusta Treverorum*. In A.D. 117 the settlement in the Mosel valley became the capital of the province of *Belgica Prima*, and towards the end of the third century Emperor Diocletian (284-305) made the town, then called *Treviris*, the capital of the West Roman Empire and an imperial residence. Six Roman emperors, including Constantine the Great (306-337), held court here. A center of early Christianity developed in Trier at the end of the third century.

Shortly after the death of Roman Emperor Postumus (d. 269?), the invasion of the Teutons in 274-275 brought catastrophe to Trier. The Frank tribes overran the Limes and penetrated deep into the defenseless hinterland. Trier was left in ruins and ashes. The Teutons were forced back.

A period of splendor began under the Valentinian dynasty after a short duration of unrest. Valentinian I (321-375) (r. 364-375) promoted centers of study. His son Gratian was instructed by one of the most famous scholars of his time, Decimus Magnus Ansonius (c. 310-c. 395) of Bordeaux. Emperor Gratian was responsible for the reconstruction of the monumental east wing of the Constantine cathedral. After murdering Gratian in 383, the Spanish usurper Maximus ruled in Trier until he was vanquished and executed in 388 by Emperor Theodosius (346?-395). When the Germanic tribes increased their military pressure, the imperial residence was transferred to Milan. The decline of Trier set in. The assault on the city began around 400. The city was conquered four times between 406 and 431, and it finally fell into the hands of the Franks in 480.

During the following, troubled period, the bishop of Trier and his clerical organization alone preserved the city from total anarchy. Bishop Nicetius (526-566) restored the cathedral, which had been burned down. The remaining Roman civic

buildings were left to their decay. The Franconian nobility settled in the ruined buildings of the Imperial Baths (*Thermae*).

Under Charlemagne (742-814), the Bishop of Trier regained the metropolitan rights he had lost during the Merovingian period. But in one of their raids in 882 the Normans destroyed the Carolingian city of Trier. Only the ruins of the civic buildings survived the catastrophe.

In 958 Otto the Great (936-973) (r. 962-973) granted the market monopoly, which had previously been a royal prerogative. A new marketplace was built in the vicinity of the cathedral, and in the same year, with the erection of the Market Cross, the *Hauptmarkt* became the center of the medieval town.

The powerful position of the archbishops became visible in the wall built in 1000 by Archbishop Ludolf around the cathedral and in its grand extension by Archbishop Poppo von Brabenberg (r. 1016-1047). Under Archbishop Bruno (r. 1102-1124) the gradually growing city was fortified by a wall. In 1134 Archbishop Albero von Montreil (r. 1131-1152) completed further walls and controlled the city's expansion for many years.

At the height of the Middle Ages, the city rulers and patricians of Trier disputed the archbishop's rights of governing the city. The discord at the time of Archbishop Albero was so great that the archbishop moved his residence to Pfalzel. Through the intervention of his teacher, Bernard of Clairvaux (c. 1090-1153), Albero succeeded in visiting Pope Eugenius III (r. 1145-1153) in order to settle a dispute between the archbishop and the powerful abbey of St. Maximin.

The formation and development of the Electoral College in the Holy Roman Empire (c. 1125-1300) is a long, complicated process which cannot be discussed in detail here. The Golden Bull of 1356, issued by Emperor Charles IV (r. 1346-1378), formally sanctioned imperial succession by election and designated seven German princes as Electors (*Kurfürsten*): the Archbishops of Cologne, Mainz and Trier; the Count Palatine of the Rhine; the Duke of Saxony; the Margrave of Brandenburg; and the King of Bohemia. It strengthened Electors at the expense of cities, the papacy and minor rulers. During the fourteenth century the city of Trier had to struggle for self-government and a constitution. It had succeeded in separating the local government from the electoral jurisdiction. The mayor, who was the representative of the archbishop, had been excluded from the town council. But soon the council's independence aroused the distrust of the rulers. Archbishop Balduin von Luxemburg (r. 1307-1350) was one of Trier's most important Electors and strong enough to defend his authority. But, under Kuno von Falkenstein (r. 1362-1388) after the Golden Bull, the conflict could no longer be avoided, resulting in the victory by the citizens of Trier. The archbishop was so bitter about his defeat that he lived mostly at Pfalzel or the Ehrenbreitstein near Koblenz. His preferences worked later on towards the disadvantage of Trier, which began to lose important administrative positions.

The Porta Nigra, a colossal city-gate built by the Romans probably in the fourth century, was changed into a church called the Church of St. Simeon in the eleventh century. When the Archbishop of Trier became one of the Prince-Electors in the twelfth century, Trier began to serve as the capital of the Electoral State

and remained so until towards the end of the eighteenth century. In 1984 Trier celebrated the two thousandth anniversary of its founding.

After visiting Rome in 1424, Cusanus must have come to Trier early the next year. He wrote in a cover leaf of his manuscript, now Ms. 212 of his library in Bernkastel-Kues, that on January 31, 1425 the Archbishop of Trier gave him a yearly income of forty florins, a *Fuder* of wine and four measures of wheat (40 *florenos, unum plaustrum vini, 4 maldra slignis*).

He was also collated by the archbishop to the church of St. Andrew in Altrich the same day. Interestingly, he went on to write in the same note that he saw a camel in Kues the following day (*in proxima die sequenti vidi camelum in Cusse* [J. Marx, *Verzeichnis*, 203; *Acta Cusana*, I, 1, 7-8]). Thus began Cusanus' service for Otto von Ziegenhain, who served as Archbishop of Trier from 1418 to 1430.

Having briefly discussed the history of Trier up to Cusanus' time, let us now turn our attention to St. Matthias Abbey in Trier.

The history of St. Matthias Abbey is long and complicated. It can be presented here only in a summarized form. The abbey traces its origins back to a group of clergymen who in the fourth or, at the latest, fifth century—perhaps 450?—gathered around the mausoleum of the first Bishops of Trier, St. Eucharius and St. Valerius, which was built by Bishop Cyril. According to an inscription in the abbey, Eucharius and Valerius were sent to Trier in A.D. 50 by none other than St. Peter himself, thereby placing Trier's bishops' see in direct apostolic succession. Almost nothing is known about the two original bishops.

By the eighth century, the church was operating under the Benedictine Rule. Both the monastery and the church outside the south gate of the city wall were rebuilt after the disaster of Maundy Thursday in 882, when Norman hordes conquered Trier and reduced it to dust and ashes.

In 1127, during the building of the Romanesque structure, the bones of the Apostle Matthias were discovered in the abbey. According to legend, Empress Helena, mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine I (r. 288-337), had originally brought the bones to Trier. As a result of the discovery, the abbey began to draw many pilgrims, which is still the case today. The Brotherhoods (*Bruderschaften*) of St. Matthias from many parts of Germany continue to send their pilgrims to the abbey basilica. The abbey and the basilica of St. Matthias began to be known more commonly as the abbey of St. Matthias than as the abbey of St. Eucharius.

The west tower, the abutment piers of the central nave, the lateral aisles with their rib-less cruciform vault, the transept and the towers at the east choir were built during the Romanesque period (1127-1160). In 1148 Pope Eugenius III consecrated them in the presence of Archbishop Albero of Montrei. We should perhaps note that the pope was a correspondent with the famous Abbess Hildegard von Bingen (1098-1179) and familiar with her *Scivias*.

It was during the reign of Archbishop Otto von Ziegenhain (r. 1418-1430) of Trier that the influence of the conciliar movement began to be felt strongly. He had attended the Council of Constance (1414-1418) and was anxious to introduce reformist ideas to his see. Two major consultants on the reform efforts were Johannes von Berg (de Monte), a suffragan bishop (1400-1442), and Johannes Rode,

Abbot of St. Matthias (r. 1421-1439). Nicholas of Cusa, who had received the *doctor decretorum* in 1423 from the University of Padua, was made secretary of Otto von Ziegenhain in 1425 and received the parish church (*Pfarrkirche*) of Altrich as his prebend. Many benefices were also bestowed upon Cusanus by the Archbishop.

The abbot Johannes Rode of St. Matthias deserves particular attention. A graduate of the University of Heidelberg as a "licentiate in both laws" (*in utroque iure licentiatus*), Rode was a close friend of Cusanus. He is best known for his influence on the Bursfeld Congregation. As Father Becker's study clearly shows, in his *Regulations* (*Consuetudines*, 1431-1437), Rode discussed with Cusanus how to bring about a real monastic reform.

The death of Archbishop Otto von Ziegenhain in Koblenz on February 13, 1430 brought the archbishopric of Trier into a state of confusion, initiating the so-called Double Election (*Doppelwahl*), the Manderscheid feud (*Manderscheid'sche Fehde*) or the Trier Schism (*Trierer Schisma*). Two weeks after Otto's death, a majority of the cathedral chapter elected Jakob von Sierck (r. 1439-1456), the chapter's scholastic, as Otto's successor. But a minority, led by Friedrich von Kröv, supported Ulrich von Manderscheid (c. 1400-1438), dean of the cathedral chapter of Cologne. When both Sierck and Ulrich appealed to Rome for papal support, Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431) designated on May 22, 1430 Raban von Helmstadt as papal appointee to the archbishopric. After Sierck stepped down, the conflict between Raban and Ulrich continued, bringing to Trier destruction and disaster. When Ulrich appealed the case to the Council of Basel (1431-1449), it was Cusanus and Johannes Rode, together with Helwig of Boppard, who were incorporated into the council towards the end of February 1432 to represent Ulrich of Manderscheid.

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[For more publications on Trier and St. Matthias Abbey, see Petrus Becker, *Die Benediktiner Abtei St. Eucharius— St. Matthias*, 28-37.]

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7. Altrich

When Otto von Ziegenhain, Archbishop of Trier (r. 1418-1430), gave Cusanus a yearly income of forty florins, a large measure (*Fuder*) of wine and four measures of wheat on January 31, 1425, he also gave Cusanus the church of St. Andrew in Altrich (*ecclesia in Altreya*).

Located about seven miles northwest of Bernkastel-Kues and about two to three miles south of Wittlich, Altrich was called Alta Regia in the eleventh century. North of Altrich, near the bend of the Lieser River, a Roman "Porticus Villa" was excavated in 1904-1905. In the Merovingian time, Altrich, as well as Wittlich, Platten, Maring and Noviand, was offered by Dagobert I (r. 623-639) to the Archbishop of Trier. Altrich is now in the District of Bernkastel-Wittlich and has an easy access to Autobahn 1/48. The church of St. Andrew (St. Andreas) runs a kindergarten and a grade school today.

Although only an acolyte, not yet a priest, Cusanus received from the church of St. Andrew a benefice which was recorded in a later document as "10 Mark Silber" (Meuthen, "Die Pfründen," 16).

It was this income that enabled him to register at the University of Cologne sometime between March 26 and June 29, 1425 (*Acta Cusana*, I, 1, 9). Winand von Steeg (1371-1453), humanist and artist, seems to have been associated with Cusanus by 1425 (*Acta Cusana*, I, 1, 8). It is possible that Winand, who had friends both at the University of Heidelberg and at the University of Cologne, induced Cusanus to go to Cologne (cf. Schmidt and Heimpel).

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8. The University of Cologne

Julius Caesar crossed the Rhine River for the first time in 55 B.C. It was about five years later that the Germanic tribe of the Ubii settled on the left bank of the river. In 50 B.C. the *Colonia Claudia Ara Agrippinensium* was founded by Agrippina, the wife of the Roman Emperor Claudius. A Christian community was found there by A.D. 180. With the establishment of the first Christian churches, Maternus became the first Bishop of Cologne around A.D. 313. Charlemagne raised Cologne to an archbishopric around A.D. 800. His archbishop and chancellor Hildebold of Cologne (784-819) was the builder of the first cathedral.

Although Cologne was demolished by the Normans in A.D. 881, it was a flourishing center of marketing and trade by A.D. 950. Archbishop Anno (r. 1056-1075), imperial administrator and guardian of Henry IV (r. 1056-1075), founded many churches and built the Benedictine abbey at Sieburg in 1064. But a revolt of the citizens of Cologne against him took place in A.D. 1074. In 1164 the relics of the three Magi were brought from Milan to Cologne by Archbishop Reinald von Dassel (1159-1261), chancellor of the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. It was in 1248 that Archbishop Konard von Hochstaden (r. 1238-1261) laid the foundation stone of the present cathedral. The German Hanse was formed from Cologne and the Lübeck Hanse around 1250.

The Benedictine monasteries in and around Cologne, St. Martin, St. Pantaleon and St. Heribert, were important members of the religious community in the city from the tenth century. The mendicant orders, such as the Augustinians, Dominicans and Franciscans, began to be active in Cologne in the thirteenth century. The school of the Dominicans (*studium generale*, established in 1248 with Albertus Magnus as its head) and that of the Franciscans (*studium generale*, established in 1260) were especially important places of higher education. Albertus Magnus (1193-1280) taught at the *studium generale* of the Dominicans from 1248 to 1254, 1257 to 1260 and finally 1270 to 1280. He often acted as a mediator in the quarrels between Archbishop Konrad von Hochstaden and the citizens of Cologne. Duns Scotus (1265-1308), the famous Franciscan theologian, is said to have taught at the Franciscan *studium generale* in 1308 and died and was buried in the city.

As Gabriel M. Löhr showed in his *Die Kölner Dominikanerschule*, many learned Dominicans, such as Johannes (Picardi) von Lichtenberg (1300/05-1365), Gerhard von Sterngassen, Nikolaus von Strassburg (fl. fourteenth century), Berthold von Moosburg (d. 1361), Heinrich von Lübeck (d. 1336?), Dietrich von Freiberg (c. 1250-c. 1310) and others, were associated with the *studium generale* in the fourteenth century (35).

The difficult question of the relationship between the Dominican *studium generale* and the University of Cologne cannot be fully dealt with here. It is generally assumed that the Dominican school constituted a first step, *Vorstufe* (W. P. Eckert, 13), toward the medieval university.

The Great Schism of 1378-1417 gave impetus to the founding of new German universities after Prague (1348) and Vienna (1365). Within thirty years five

universities, Heidelberg (1386), Cologne (1388), Erfurt (1392), Würzburg (1402) and Leipzig (1409), were founded. But unlike Prague, Vienna and Heidelberg, which were founded by secular princes, the University of Cologne was the first university established by a municipality. In response to a request from the city government of the prosperous Rhenish town, Pope Urban VI (r. 1378-1389) signed the foundation charter on May 21, 1388. Henry of Langenstein (1325-1397), who himself had moved from Paris to Vienna, wrote in his letter of 1391 to the Duke of Bavaria that while the universities of France were breaking up, the transfer of learning to German universities was taking place, and that there now existed four lamps of learning among the Germans (Prague, Vienna, Heidelberg and Cologne) (Thorndike, 257-258).

Nicholas of Cusa, doctor of canon law (*doctor decretorum*) from the University of Padua, entered the University of Cologne sometime between March 26 and June 29 in 1425. The matriculation record reads: *Nyc(olaus) de Cusa, d(octo)r (in) iur(e) can(onico), Trev(erensis) d(yocesis). N(on) dedit ob rev(erenciam) pers(onae), sed i(uravit) c(omplete)* (H. Keussen, *Die Matrikel*, 213). His main purpose was to study philosophy and theology, and he came under the influence of the famous Albertist Heymericus de Campo (Heimeric van den Velde) (1395-1460). It should be noted, however, that Keussen himself listed Cusanus as a member of the Law Faculty at Cologne (*Die alte Universität Köln*, 452) and that together with other law and theology professors from the Universities of Heidelberg and Cologne, Cusanus wrote his legal opinion in 1426 on a tax case between the parish church of Bacharach and Ludwig III, Elector of the Palatinate, which was adjudicated by the papal legate to Germany, Cardinal Giordano Orisini (Meuthen in *Acta Cusana*, I. 11-12, Nr. 33).

Cusanus was involved in many other legal cases during his stay in Cologne. We must also note his activities as a manuscript hunter. The dean of the cathedral chapter at that time was Ulrich von Manderscheid, through whom Cusanus was probably able to gain access to the treasures of the cathedral library. He wrote later, in 1433 or 1434, in his *Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*): "I saw in the cathedral at Cologne a large volume of all the major letters of Hadrian I to Charlemagne and his replies, as well as copies of all papal bulls." (*Ego enim Colonie in maiori ecclesia volumen ingens omnium missivarum Hadriani I. ad Carolum et ipsius Caroli responsiones et insuper copias omnium bullarum vidi* [h. XIV, Nr. 27, 316; cf. Meuthen, *Acta Cusana*, I, 1, 10].) There is no doubt that Cusanus' years in Cologne were important for his intellectual development both as a lawyer and as a philosopher.

After the closing of the "old" University of Cologne on April 28, 1798, by the French government, Cologne had no university until May 29, 1919, when the Prussian government signed an agreement with the city of Cologne to reestablish the University of Cologne. In 1988 the University of Cologne celebrated the six hundredth anniversary of its founding. The celebration began on May 21, 1988, exactly six hundred years after the acceptance of the foundation charter by Pope Urban VI. The jubilee program contained a large number of events—lectures, colloquiums, faculty weeks, concerts, exhibitions, sport programs, campus celebrations and others—but its emphasis was on "a jubilee of dialogue," in

which university students, faculty and staff together with Cologne citizens participated actively. The high point of the festivities was the official festival week of the university (November 2-9, 1988), with the main ceremonies taking place on November 4.

It is especially interesting that Erich Meuthen, one of the leading Cusanus scholars and medievalists in the country, opened a series of four commemorative lectures with his "Die mittelalterliche Universität" on May 20, 1988. The university chose the official signet for the jubilee and the two official commemorative medals. In order to celebrate the jubilee of the third largest university in the country, the postal service of the Federal Republic of Germany issued on May 5, 1988, thirty million copies of a special 80-pfennig commemorative stamp designated as "600. Jahrestag der Kölner Universität."

Meuthen also published a new history of the "old" University of Cologne, *Kölner Universitätsgeschichte*. It is an impressive book that deals with the history of the university up to the eighteenth century. Chapters I-VI will be of special interest to those interested in Cusanus and his period. Their titles are:

Chapter I: Die Mittelalterlichen Universitäten
Chapter II: Die Kölner Generalstudien
Chapter III: Gründung, Verfassung und allgemeine Geschichte der Kölner Universität bis zum 16. Jahrhunderts
Chapter IV: Fakultäten bis zur Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts
Chapter V: Die Kölner Scholastik
Chapter VI: Der Humanismus

It is no exaggeration to say that in the intellectual development of Nicholas of Cusa, his days at the University of Cologne were very important and perhaps crucial. For this reason, we welcome the publication of a scholarly book that throws new light on the history of the old University of Cologne.

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9. Chartreuse de Vauvert in Paris

Nicholas of Cusa entered the University of Cologne in 1425 and studied not only canon law but also theology. It is well known that through a professor and friend, Heymericus de Campo (Heimeric van den Velde) (1395-1460), Cusanus was influenced by the ideas of Pseudo-Dionysius, Albertus Magnus (1193-1280) and Ramon Llull (1232/3301315/16).

Born in 1395 in the village of Son in the Low Countries, Heymericus studied in the Faculty of Arts at Paris from 1410 to 1415 under Joannes de Nova Domo (Jean de Maisonneuve), the founder and leader of the *Albertistae* of the *antiqui*. The Albertists had gained the upper hand in 1407 over both the *Thomistae*, who also were called the *antiqui*, and the *moderni*, and kept this position until 1437. During this time a large number of masters and students migrated from Paris to German universities, including the University of Cologne. Heinrich von Gorkum (d. 1431) came to Cologne in 1419 and soon after established a "Thomist" *bursa*, which was later called the Bursa Montana. Then in 1422, Heymericus made a move to Cologne at the invitation of Heinrich von Gorkum. In 1428, Heymericus circulated a work entitled *Contentions between Albertus Magnus and St. Thomas* (*Problemata inter Albertum Magnum et Sanctum Thomam*), supporting the authority of Albertus and criticizing the Thomists. After he began to disagree with Heinrich von Gorkum

several years later, Heymericus founded his own *bursa*, the Bursa Laurentiana, which was manifestly "Albertist."

As Jocelyn N. Hillgarth showed in her important study, *Ramon Lull and Lullism in Fourteenth-Century France*, Heymericus de Campo was quite familiar with the works of Ramon Llull, although his interest in Llull became more manifest after 1432 than it had been between 1425 and 1432. It is probable that Heymericus came to know about Llull during his Paris days.

Ramon Llull visited Paris four times—1287-1289, 1297-1299, 1306 and 1309-1311—was active at the court of Philip the Fair (r. 1285-1314) and at the Sorbonne, and had contact with the Chartreuse de Vauvert outside Paris. Founded by St. Louis in 1257, the Chartreuse de Vauvert was the most celebrated of the many religious houses which the good king established in and around Paris. Its chapel was constructed in 1326, and the charterhouse remained an important institution throughout the fifteenth century and until its destruction in 1792. Nowadays we find the Luxemburg Garden on the former site of the charterhouse.

Some scholars believe that Cusanus first encountered Llull's works in Padua, but he may have been fully introduced by Heymericus to Llull's works during his first years at Cologne. We certainly know that in later years he read and annotated Llull's works. "No other writer, ancient or medieval, is as fully represented in his surviving library at Kues" (Hillgarth, 270, citing Martin Honecker's 1937 article). Altogether, sixty-eight Llullian works in full or in part are present in Cusanus' library in Bernkastel-Kues (see J. Marx, *Verzeichnis*, 81-90).

It has been known for some time that Cusanus was in Laon about this time. Some Llull scholars, such as M. Honecker, E. Colomer and J. N. Hillgarth, recognized a possible connection between Cusanus' interest in Llull and Paris. But in his study of Llull and Cusanus published in 1961, Eusebio Colomer argued that Cusanus copied Llull's manuscripts in Kues. Hillgarth, reinforcing Colomer's argument, wrote in 1971:

> [Cusanus'] first knowledge of Llull appears to date from 1428 and be connected with Paris, not Padua. It was in March 1428, while living in his native Kues, that Cusanus extracted a manuscript of Llull's *Liber contemplationis*, which he tells us was written in Llull's own hand and given by him to the Carthusians of Paris (271). It would seem that Nicholas of Cusa drew his Llullian library from the Chartreuse de Vauvert, not from the Sorbonne. There is a close resemblance between a list of seventy-seven books of Llull drawn up by Nicholas of Cusa and the catalogue of the collection of Vauvert, drawn up in 1311. Almost all the books listed by Cusanus are found in the Vauvert collection. (272-273)

None of these scholars were aware that Cusanus was indeed in Paris in early 1428. On the basis of a careful examination of the marginal notes written by Cusanus in Cod. Lobkowitz 249 of the University of Prague, and pursuing previous suggestions made by Jakob Marx and Erich Meuthen, Rudolf Haubst showed in

his 1980 article published in the *Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft* (= MFCG, 14 [1981], 57-70) that it was in Paris, not in Kues, that Cusanus began, on March 28, 1428, to make excerpts from Llull's *Great Book of Meditations* (*Liber magnus comtemplationis*) and twenty-six other manuscripts which are now in Cod. Cus. 83. According to Haubst, Cusanus was also at the royal court and the Bibliothèque Royale during his stay in Paris.

An anonymous visitor to Paris in 1428 wrote:

> After Easter this year which was 4th April 1428, there were more caterpillars than anybody had ever seen. They ate vines, almond trees, walnut trees, and other trees to such an extent that by the fortnight before St. John's day there were no leaves left on any of these, especially the walnut trees, in the districts where the caterpillars were. (J. Shirley, 222)

How did Cusanus spend his days in Paris? Were the trees in the yard of the charterhouse also without leaves because of the invasion of the caterpillars?

It is tempting to believe that Heymericus, who was himself in Paris from 1410 to 1415, either accompanied the young Cusanus in 1428 to Paris to assist him or arranged the trip in such a way that Cusanus could have access to the libraries where he could make a serious study of Llull's works. Perhaps it is well to remember in this connection that on November 10, 1432 the University of Cologne made Heymericus one of its two delegates to the Council of Basel, at which his friend Cusanus made himself famous as the author of his first major ecclesiological work, *The Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*). Heymericus later moved to Louvain and taught at the university from 1453.

Cusanus himself had received an invitation in 1428 to come to Louvain to teach canon law, but turned it down. Another invitation from the University of Louvain in 1435 was also declined. It is interesting to note, however, that as Ruedi Imbach showed in his study "Das *Centheologicon* des Heymericus de Campo," Heymericus owned Cusanus' works, such as *On the Peace of Faith* (*De pace fidei*), *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*), *On Conjectures* (*De coniecturis*) and *Complementary Theological Considerations* (*De complementis theologiciis*), and was influenced by Cusanus' ideas.

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10. Bacharach

Nicholas of Cusa matriculated at the University of Cologne in 1425 as a graduate of the University of Padua with the doctor of canon law degree (*doctor decretorum*). Specialists are not in agreement about whether he taught canon law in the Law Faculty of the University of Cologne. Yet, most probably he did. Thanks to a codex (no. 12) preserved in the Geheimes Hausarchiv of the Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv in Munich, we know that Cusanus participated in a legal case pertaining to the Rhenish town of Bacharach with sixty-nine other theologians and lawyers.

Bacharach is located near Oberwesel and *Die Pfalz*, the picturesque toll station in the Rhine. According to tradition Bacharach was established in pre-Roman times, possibly by the Celts. Its original name may have been Baccaracum. The medieval interpretation of its name as "Bacchi ara" would have us believe that it is of Roman origin.

The poet Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) spoke of the "dark, very ancient city of Bacharach." But Bacharach expanded during the time of Heinrich I (r. 919-936). Its name first appears in a 923 document related to Cologne. Otto I (r. 939-972) gave the four-valley region of Bacharach, Steeg, Diebach and Manubach to his brother, St. Bruno, Archbishop of Cologne (d. 965). Goswin of Stahleck became the first feudal tenant in 1135. Count Hermann, Goswin's son, who was married to a sister of King Konrad III (r. 1138-1152), was elevated to the rank of count palatine (*Pfalzgraf*) in 1142. His successor, Konrad of Hohenstaufen, created the territory called the Palatinate by the Rhine (*Pfalz bei Rhein*) with Bacharach as his residence. After 1214 the territory was made a possession of the House of Wittelsbach and remained so until the end of the old *Reich* in 1806. Heine's "Rabbi von Bacharach" (1890) describes one of many persecutions of the Jews that occurred in Bacharach in the Middle Ages.

In the same period Bacharach became one of the most famous wine markets in Germany. The trade reached its peak from the middle of the fourteenth century to about 1600. Bacharach wines became so popular that Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464) is said to have had a cartload (*Fuder*) sent to Rome every year. Bacharach was also a

good harbor for the ships which had to sail through the dangerous Binger Loch nearby.

A very important meeting of princes took place at Bacharach in 1314 at which Ludwig IV (r. 1314-1347) was elected German king. When King Charles IV (r. 1346-1378) married Countess Anna of the Palatinate in 1349, a splendid wedding took place at Bacharach. As the town expanded further, Count Palatine Ruprecht I (r. 1353-1390) raised it to the position of a *Stadt* on May 4, 1356. The city's walls, with sixteen towers, which he completed in 1366, stand well preserved to this day.

In 1094 Archbishop Hermann III of Cologne incorporated the parish church of St. Peter at Bacharach with the religious establishment of St. Andrew (*St. Andreasstift*) in Cologne. As a result, one of the canons of St. Andrew usually became its priest. He would have jurisdiction over some twenty-five clergymen in the large parish of Bacharach. Perhaps the most famous of the priests of Bacharach was Winand (Ort) von Steeg (1371-1453), a learned early humanist and accomplished artist from the nearby Steeg. A graduate of the University of Heidelberg in 1396 with the bachelor of arts degree (*baccalaureus artium*), he received the bachelor of canon law (*baccalaureus in iure canonico*) at Heidelberg on January 11, 1401. Then, after obtaining his licentiate and doctorate at the University of Würzburg, he taught there from 1403 to 1411. As *iurista* or *advocatus* for the city of Nuremberg, he appeared at the Council of Constance (1414-1418) three times. After a short stay in Passau, he was called to the court of Sigismund, King of the Romans (r. 1410-1437) and accompanied the king to Hungary. But he soon returned to Nuremberg. On October 2, 1420, he became a canon of St. Andrew in Cologne. By 1421 he was given the parish of Bacharach.

Traffic along the Rhine River in the Middle Ages was difficult because of many customs barriers and toll stations. It remained so until 1868, when the signing of the Mannheim Agreement on Rhine shipping finally ensured unimpeded passage for all. In the fifteenth century Bacharach was still under the jurisdiction of both the Archbishop of Cologne and the Elector of the Palatinate. The number of disputes between the two over river tolls began to increase, especially after 1370. In 1423 there arose a famous legal case about tax exemption for the Church of St. Peter in Bacharach.

Ludwig III, Elector of the Empire and Count of the Palatinate (r. 1410-1436), ordered on May 13, 1423 that, like other goods, the tithe-wines of the Church of St. Peter, which were sent down to St. Andrew of Cologne through the Rhine River, were subject to taxation, and demanded payment of tolls at Bacharach. In response, Winand von Steeg initiated a legal action on December 16, 1423 against Ludwig III to defend St. Peter's exemption from taxation. In order to support his position, Winand asked sixty-nine high-ranking church officials and university professors between May 1, 1424 and August 7, 1426 to submit their advisory opinions on the case. Many of them were professors of theology and law at the Universities of Heidelberg and Cologne, and they included such famous professors as Johannes von Noet, Dytmarus Treisa, Otto de Lapide, Heyso Krauwel, Gerardus Brant, Job Vener and Nikolaus Burgmann from Heidelberg, and Heinrich and Christian von Erpel, Johannes de Spul, senior and junior, Henricus Gorinchem (Gorkum) and

Wilhelmus de Weghe from Cologne. Four participants from the British Isles were Richard Fleming, Archbishop-Elect of York, Thomas Polton, Bishop of Chichester, John of Ixworth, Archdeacon of Worcester, and Thomas de Morov, Prior of Coldingham in Scotland.

Among these lawyers and theologians is found Nicholas of Cusa, *doctor decretorum*, who was described in the margin of the folio with the ambiguous title *iuvenis magnus*. The description can no longer be fully seen in the margin; it is only with the aid of a quartz lamp that it can be read in part today. The young lawyer wrote:

> After I, Nicholas of Cusa, doctor of canon law, was asked what the law is in the present case, I reply that guild dues, tolls, etc. should not be exacted by any person from a cleric under penalties expressed in the laws that often were cited above, unless on account of negotiations, as in the introduction [*thema*] [of this document]. Therefore, accordingly I have subscribed and made [my] sign.
>
> (*Postquam ego Nicolaus de Cusa decretorum doctor requisitus fui, quid iuris sit in presenti casu, respondeo a clerico non debere exigi a quacumque persona gwildagia, padagia etc. sub penis in iure expressis superius sepe allegatis, nisi negociaci causa, ut in themate; quare pro tanto me subscripsi et signum apposui.*) (Acta Cusana, I, 1, 11-12, Nr. 33)

The picture of the young lawyer writing this opinion has been reprinted in many books and articles, as well as on the stationery of the American Cusanus Society.

Cardinal Giordano Orsini (1405-1438), the papal legate in Germany sent by Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431), came to Bacharach and stayed at the parish court from August 5-17, 1426. He was Winand's guest in connection with an appeal from Bacharach to canonize Werner of Bacharach. Taking advantage of the occasion, Winand collected the advisory opinions (*Inscriptiones*) and presented them to the cardinal in a beautifully illuminated codex. On August 5, 1426, Cardinal Orsini made his decision in favor of the Church of St. Peter. His opinion was added to the codex, which, as stated above, is still preserved in Munich. According to two distinguished German historians, Aloys Schmidt and Hermann Heimpel, the beautifully produced codex was meant as much for Cardinal Orsini as for the devout Ludwig III and his pious wife, Mechtild of Savoy-Achair. Winand was influenced by early humanism and can also be called one of the earliest students of Hebrew in Germany. Thanks to his desire to preserve the pertinent documents on the Bacharach case well and beautifully, we can now know something about Cusanus' activities as a lawyer while he was at the University of Cologne.

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11. Koblenz

Koblenz is one of the oldest towns in Germany. The name is derived from its position at the confluence (*confluentes*) of the Rhine and the Moselle. The exact time of its establishment is not known. It is said that the Roman general Drusus built a fortress here (*castrum ad confluentes*) in 9 B.C. to protect the Moselle crossing. By the time of Emperor Tiberius (A.D. 14-37) there was a fortified camp (*castellum*) in Koblenz.

After the departure of the Roman troops from the Rhine region at the beginning of the fifth century, the Franks took over Koblenz and maintained a royal palace there. According to a report of Bishop Gregory of Tours (c. 540-594), the historian of the Franks, the Frankish Koblenz was so small that when in 585 King Childebert II (r. 575-595) received a delegation of his uncle, King Guntram of Orléans, he was not able to find enough room for the royal delegation within its walls.

The existence of Christians in Koblenz in the late Roman period can be established by some of the tombstones with Christian names and inscriptions. A small church (*oratorium*) with a graveyard dating from the fifth or sixth century was discovered in 1951 by Josef Röder under the twelfth-century Romanesque Church of Our Lady (*Liebfrauenkirche*), which still stands in the heart of Old Koblenz. With the establishment of a court in 807 by Charlemagne (r. 768-814), Koblenz gained in importance and stature. Emperor Louis the Pious (r. 814-804) resided there in 819 and 823. Many important political events took place and weighty decisions were made in Koblenz.

The Romanesque Collegiate Church of St. Castor (*Stift St. Kastor*) was consecrated by Archbishop Hetti of Trier (814-847) on November 12, 836 in the presence of the Emperor Louis the Pious (r. 814-840). The present building mostly dates from the twelfth century. The Collegiate Church of St. Florin (*Stift St. Florin*) was built in the second half of the tenth century on Roman foundations. Regarded as an architectural "sensation," it has a Gothic chancel which is built over a tower of the Roman city wall. It was in this church that Nicholas of Cusa was dean (*Dechant*) from 1427 to 1439.

In 1018 Koblenz was given to Archbishop Poppo of Trier (1016-1047) by the Emperor Henry II (r. 1014-1024). The town, which had been under direct imperial jurisdiction, became an episcopal town. Thus was ushered in a new chapter in the history of Koblenz in which the Church played an especially important role. It became a favorite residence of the Archbishop-Electors of Trier from the thirteenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century. For example, Archbishop Otto von Ziegenhain of Trier (r. 1418-1430) the *Procurator* (*Ottonis archiepiscopi Treverensis secretarius ac illius in Romana curia procurator*), died in Koblenz on February 13, 1430.

Besides the Churches of St. Castor and St. Florin there existed from 1143 the Benedictine Convent of St. Oswald on the nearby island of Oberwerth. The Benedictine cloister at Beatusberg, which was founded around 1140 under Archbishop Albero of Trier (r. 1131-1152) was changed to a Carthusian cloister in 1331. We should note that Cusanus had a cell in the cloister. The Carthusians

of Koblenz, who also had another house at "Zum Vogelsand," enjoyed special respect because of their strict discipline, their care for the poor and sick and their good financial management. The Knights of the Teutonic Order (*Deutscher Orden*) founded a settlement in 1216 in the vicinity of the confluence of the Rhine and the Mosel. A "Commander's House" (*Komtureigebäude*) is the only building of the once extensive complex owned by the Teutonic Order. The "German Corner" (*Deutsches Eck*), which is the most famous point in the town, is a reminder of the fact that the Teutonic Order was once a dominant force in the area. The Dominicans arrived and settled on *Weissergasse* in 1233. Then, in 1236, the Franciscans established their abbey on *St. Kastorgasse*. Thus both mendicant orders settled down outside the *Altstadt*.

Ludolph of Saxony (c. 1300-1377), whose *Life of Christ* (*Vita Christi*) influenced Cusanus, was prior of the Carthusian cloister in Koblenz from 1343 to 1348. Heinrich Kalteisen, a papalist who attended the Council of Basel with Cusanus and who later became a renowned professor and Archbishop of Drontheim, was born in Koblenz around 1390 and began his career as a member of the Dominican cloister there. Winand von Steeg, a learned lawyer, a humanistic artist and a friend of Cusanus, was Dean of St. Castor from 1439 to 1447.

Across the Rhine from the "German Corner" is the historic fortress of Ehrenbreitstein. Built in the eleventh century by a noble named Erembert or Erembrecht, the fortress was destroyed and rebuilt many times. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Koblenz-Ehrenbreitstein became the seat of the Archbishop-Electors of Trier, thereby acquiring more importance and influence not only in ecclesiastical matters but also in social and economic fields.

After the outbreak of the French Revolution, French troops occupied Koblenz in 1794. In 1815 the Congress of Vienna awarded it to Prussia. It is certainly worth remembering that Prince Metternich, who was not only master of Austria and chief arbiter of Europe from 1815 to 1848, but also the guiding spirit of the Congress of Vienna, was born at Metternich near Koblenz, of a noble Rhenish family, as Clemens Wenzel Nepomuk Lothar Metternich (1773-1859). After World War I Koblenz was the headquarters of the Joint Allied Commission for the Rhineland (1918-1929). It was captured by the Allies during World War II after four-fifths of the city had been destroyed.

Was Cusanus a "good" dean while he was at the Church of St. Florin? The relationship of the two important prelates of the Collegial Church of St. Florin, the prior and the dean, was undergoing changes during the fifteenth century. The prior, as the statutes of the church stated, headed the church, assuming responsibility not only for the spiritual needs of the faithful but also the property and income of the church. Because of his duties he was often absent from the church. As a result the dean began to play an increasingly greater role in the administration of the ecclesiastical affairs of the church. Unlike the prior, the dean was under strict obligation to stay in the church. It is not therefore surprising that because of his familiarity with the affairs of the church his position vis-à-vis the prior became stronger than before.

Viewed in this light, the case of Nicholas of Cusa as dean at St. Florin was a peculiar one. In fact, he was one of the most frequently absent deans of the church. It may well be that his absence was caused by his active participation in various reform activities, his involvement in the episcopal schism of 1430 in Trier and his attendance at the Council of Basel (1431-1449). Despite his frequent absences from Koblenz, he does not seem to have lost influence at St. Florin. But it is also clear that Prior Elman Joel von Linz (1420-1458) began to acquire more power and influence because of Cusanus' absence.

Especially in the fifteenth century, the Collegial Church of St. Florin was closely related to the Collegial Church of St. Martin and Severus in Münstermaifeld. Many canons had benefices in both St. Florin and St. Martin and Severus. Cusanus himself had become Rector of St. Gangolf in Trier and Dean of the *Liebfraukirke* in Oberwesel before he was elected Prior of St. Martin and Severus in 1435. It is known that while retaining the deanship at St. Florin, he stayed at Münstermaifeld often. He wrote the following in the so-called *Propsteibuch* of the Church of St. Martin and Severus, which is now preserved in the *Staatsarchiv* in Koblenz:

> Be it known that I, Nicholas of Cusa, doctor of canon law, dean of Saint Florin, Koblenz, in the aforementioned year 1435, was elected to the provostship of Münstermaifeld and confirmed by the reverend father lord Giuliano [Cesarini], cardinal of the apostolic see, legate for Germany, president of the holy Council of Basel, and by that universal council and the most holy father Pope Eugenius IV.
>
> (*Sciendum quod ego Nikolaus de Koesa, decretorum doctor, anno prenominato 1435 decanus Canonicus sancti Florini Confluentini ad preposituram Monasteriensem electus et per reverendum patrem dominum Julianum cardinalem apostolice sedis per Germaniam legatum, presidentem in sacro Basiliensi concilio, ac per ipsum universale concilium et sanctissimum patrem Eugenium papam quartum confirmatus.*) (Acta Cusana, I, 1, 166-167, Nr. 249)

Many of Cusanus' extant sermons delivered between 1430 and 1441 were most probably given in Koblenz. It is known that the Church of St. Martin and Severus had a fairly good library. It remains to be established whether Münstermaifeld, like Koblenz, was an oasis for the busy, budding Church statesman who was to complete his first and most famous philosophical work, *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*), on February 12 in 1440.

More recent views on Cusanus and Koblenz are discussed by Sylvie Tritz in her book, *"… uns Schätze im Himmel zu sammeln."* The author mentions many foundations (*Stiftungen*) established by Cusanus, not only the Church of St. Florin in Koblenz itself, but also the Carthusian Monastery of Beatusberg near Koblenz and the Augustinian Cloister of Niederwerth in the neighborhood of Koblenz (Tritz, 174-190). We now realize that Cusanus, the busy dean of the Church of St. Florin, who sometimes was criticized for his absence from Koblenz, was indeed engaged in many activities inside and outside the city.

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12. Würzburg

Located in a beautiful valley on both sides of the Main River, Würzburg is the seat of a Catholic bishop, an old university town and the administrative center of Lower Franconia, Bavaria. Famous as Germany's foremost rococo city, it lies midway between Nuremberg and Frankfurt am Main at the starting point of the famous Romantic Road (*Romantische Strasse*).

Of its population of 131,320 in 2006, approximately seventy-two percent are Catholic and twenty-five percent Protestant. Throughout the Reformation, the city remained staunchly Catholic and is nowadays known as the "city of the Madonnas" because of the more than three hundred statues of the Virgin Mary that adorn many of the house fronts in the city. The old stone bridge, called the *Alte Mainbrücke*, which is Germany's second oldest, dates from the fifteenth century and is decorated with twelve statues, the best known of which is that of the Patron of Franconia (*Patrona Franconiae*).

About one thousand years before Christ a Celtic fortified retreat was established on the strategically important hill (eight hundred and seventy-five feet) across the river. Christianity was brought to the Main valley in the sixth century by Frankish colonists. Early in the sixth century we find the Franconians in possession of the hill and its environment, which began to be called Würzburg. About A.D. 650 Würzburg became the residence of the Franconian dukes.

Around 685 the Irish bishop-missionary Kilian (c. 640-c. 689) arrived in Würzburg with the priest Kolonat and the deacon Totnan. They quickly gained converts. But when St. Kilian advised Duke Gozbert and his wife, Geilana, that she could not be baptized because she had been married to Gozbert's deceased brother, Kilian and his companions were murdered in 687 or 689. Reliable traditions relate that the martyrdom took place on the right side of the Main near present-day Neumünster.

The name *castellum Virteburch* appeared for the first time in a document written in 704. In 706 Duke Hetan II (d. 741) built a church dedicated to the Virgin Mary on the hill, which later became known as the Marienberg.

When St. Boniface (675-754?), the "Apostle of Germany," established the Bishopric of Würzburg in 742, he chose the Church of St. Mary on the Hill as his cathedral. To the same site St. Burkard, the first Bishop of Würzburg (r. 741-791), transferred the remains of St. Kilian and his companions Kolonat and Totnan on July 8, 752.

A new cathedral was erected above the original sepulcher of St. Kilian and his companions by Maingut, Duke of Rotenburg (753-794), St. Burkard's successor. It was consecrated in 788 by Bishop Berowulf (r. 785-800) in the presence of Charlemagne, who held court in Würzburg in 788 and 793.

By 1030 the Bishop of Würzburg had also become the secular ruler of the town, a relationship that was not always harmonious. In a splendid ceremony the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa (r. 1155-1178) married Beatrix of Burgundy at Würzburg in 1156. He held an imperial diet at Würzburg in 1165 which was attended by most of the lay princes of Germany and some forty German bishops. In 1168, twelve years

after the wedding, Barbarossa made the Bishops of Würzburg Dukes of Franconia. Under Bishop Hermann von Lobdeburg (r. 1225-1254), the conflict between the bishop and the townspeople intensified. (It is worth noting that despite the continuation of the conflict, the only national council to be held in Germany took place in the cathedral in 1287.)

King Wenceslaus (r. 1376-1419) placed Würzburg under his protection and that of the Empire in 1397 because of a great confrontation between the bishop and the burghers that occurred in that year. Although numerous struggles took place between the prince-bishops and the burghers, the prince-bishops continued to rule until the secularization of Würzburg in 1802 during the Napoleonic period. As a result, from 1253 until 1719, the Marienberg Fortress was the seat of the prince-bishops of Würzburg and the Dukes of Franconia. It served as a place of refuge and a stronghold against the rising power of the townspeople.

The history of Würzburg in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is replete with political and ecclesiastical disputes, but there are some cultural facts that must be noted here, albeit briefly. Walther von der Vogelweide (c. 1178-c. 1230), the greatest of the German minnesingers, is believed to have spent his last days in Würzburg and died there about 1230. To the north of the Baroque Neumünster lies the so-called Lusam Garden where a modern funerary monument commemorating the singer was erected in the Walther Commemorative Year of 1930. Although his burial place, as well as his birthplace, is a subject of fierce academic debate, the monument in Würzburg was certainly designed to perpetuate his name. Pursuant to the legend of his bequest to the birds (*Vögel*), water and food are placed to this day in the four saucer-shaped depressions on the surface of the monument. In the *Chronico Wirceburgensi MS*, which has been lost since 1738, it was recorded:

> In the precinct of New Monastery, *Lusems-Garden* in the vernacular, someone named Walter is buried under a tree. Here, in his lifetime, he ordained in his testament that grain and drink should be given to the birds on his stone, and this is found down to the present day. He had four holes made in the stone under which he was buried for daily feeding of the birds.
>
> (*In Novi Monasterii ambitu, vulgo Lusems-Garten, sepultus est aliquis nomine Waltherus sub arbore. Hic in vita sua constituit in suo testamento volucribus super lapide suo dari blanda [sic] et potum, et quod adhuc die hodierna cernitur, fecit 4 foramina fieri lapide, sub quo sepultus est, ad aves quotidie pascendas.*)

In his “Walter von der Vogelweide,” Henry W. Longfellow (1807-1882) wrote:

> Vogelweid the Minnesinger,
> When he left this world of ours,
> Laid his body in the cloister,
> Under Würzburg's minster towers.
> And he gave the monks his treasures,
> Gave them all with this bequest:
> They should feed the birds at noontide
> Daily on his place of rest;
> Saying, "From these wandering minstrels
> I have learned the art of song;
> Let me now repay the lessons
> They have taught so well and long."

Many other minnesingers, including Wolfram von Eschenbach (c. 1170-1220) and Konrad von Würzburg (c. 1230-1287), were closely related to Würzburg and Franconia.

Another prominent person to visit Würzburg shortly after Walther von der Vogelweide was Albertus Magnus (1193/1206-1280). After the end of his tour of Germany from 1263 to 1264 to preach a crusade, a document shows that he was in Würzburg on December 4, 1264. The famous Dominican philosopher not only taught and preached in Würzburg, but also served in 1265 as mediator to restore order after the guilds in the city had risen up against Bishop Iring von Rheinstein-Homburg (r. 1254-1266). His mission was successful when a peace treaty was signed on August 26, 1265 by the two parties. Andreas Pfaff, the Dominican of Würzburg, reports in *Auszug aus P. Andreas Pfaffs Ms. Annales Praedocatorii Herbipolenses* the following:

> Albertus made a public list of [the provisions of] this treaty [of August 26, 1265], and he reinforced it by adding his seal. In addition, twenty-two of the most honored citizens sealed it before Bishop Iringus as sureties, sponsors and pledges for the stability of peace.
>
> (*Compositionis hujus publicas tabulas confecit Albertus, easque sigillo suo appenso communivit, insuper viginti quatuor ex honoratioribus civibus Iringo episcopo in stabilitate pacis vades sponsores et obsides consignavit.*)

Cusanus' visits to and relations with Würzburg were limited, but well documented. From the time he registered at the Council of Basel in February 29, 1432 as Count Ulrich von Manderscheid's chancellor to his departure from Basel on May 17, 1437, he often left Basel to visit other cities. He was in Koblenz more than a few times. After the Council of Basel made a decision on May 15, 1434 against Ulrich's appeal, the council decided to send a committee to Würzburg to mediate between Bishop Johann II of Brunn (r. 1411-1440) and the members of the cathedral chapter. Together with Bishop Peter of Augsburg and Bishop Walram of Utrecht, Cusanus arrived at nearby Kitzingen on April 17, 1436. He was in Würzburg on

April 25 and thereafter to carry out the mission of the committee. According to Lorenz Fries (1489-1550), the author of the *Würzburger Chronik*, Cusanus was back in Würzburg from January 22 to 24 in 1441 as a member of the delegation from the Council of Basel (*Acta Cusana*, I, ii, Nr. 460-462). Later in his life, when he was in Bamberg in May 1451 during the famous legatine tour of Germany and the Low Countries, Cusanus, assisted by the Scottish churchman Thomas Livingston (d. 1460?), issued a decree to permit St. Mary's Chapel (*Marienkappelle*) on the Market Place (*Marktplatz*) in Würzburg to issue indulgences. Then he stayed in Würzburg from May 13 through May 25, during which time he wrote, on May 17, to the mayors and city councils of Danzig, Lübeck and Bremen about the Teutonic Order (*Deutsche Orden*). He also participated on May 24 in the General Chapter of the seventy Benedictine abbots in the Archbishopric of Mainz and demanded that the statutes of the so-called Bursfeld Congregation be adopted for the reform of the Benedictine monasteries.

A quick look at the relationships of Cusanus' contemporaries with Würzburg is worth undertaking here. Gregor Heimburg (c. 1400-1472), Cusanus' lifelong rival and critic, was born in the imperial city of Schweinfurt on the Main, which is about twenty-five miles northeast of Würzburg. It is said that, like his famous humanist relative Conrad Celtis (1459-1508), Heimburg went to the Latin school (called the *Altes Gymnasium* in 1634) in Würzburg. Another pupil who probably studied at the school was the humanist Johann Cuspinian (1473-1529). Johannes Trithemius (1462-1516), the famous Abbot of Sponheim, was like Cusanus a man from the Mosel region, very proud of his origin in Trittenheim on the Mosel. Conrad Celtis wrote in his *Four Books on Love* (*Quattor libri amorum*): "On these riverbanks the famous Trithemius was born. And Cusanus, who was altogether distinguished, was born on the banks of the Moselle." (*His ripis duxit clarus Trithemius ortum—Cusaque, Mosellae qui decus omne fuit* [H. Rupprich, 284].)

When in 1506 Trithemius was forced to leave Sponheim after an illustrious career of twenty-three years as abbot, manuscript collector and reformer, the forty-four-year-old Benedictine humanist became abbot of the Scottish abbey (*Schottenkloster*) of St. Jakob at Würzburg. During his ten-year abbacy Trithemius, who was singularly well informed of the history of Würzburg, wrote, among other works, *A Brief Compendium of the Foundation and Reform of the Monastery of St. Jacob in the Suburb of Würzburg* (*Compendium breve fundationis et reformationis monasterii sancti Jacobi OSB in suburbio herbiopolensi*) and *Würzburg Letters* (*Epistolae Herbipolenses*).

Winand von Steeg (1371-1453), who produced MS 12 of the Bavarian Secret House Archive in Munich in which Cusanus' legal opinion on the question of toll exemption on the wine of the Bacharach church is included, taught at the University of Würzburg from 1403 to 1411 and was especially active as lawyer and mediator under Bishop Johann I von Egloffstein (r. 1400-1411).

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13. St. Goar

What is the significance of St. Goar in the life of Nicholas of Cusa? Have many commentators on his ideas and activities dwelt on the importance of this small town on the Rhine River?

Attractively situated on the Rhine under the massive ruins of Castle Rheinfels (*Burg Rheinsfels*), St. Goar had a population of about 4,624 in 2005. It is the headquarters of the pilotage and warning service responsible for helping ships through the narrow passage at the legendary Lorelei rock, which was immortalized by Heinrich Heine's 1823 poem "Die Lorelei." Castle Rheinfels, blown up by the French in 1797 and maintained as a Romantic ruin, attracted numerous literary figures, such as Hans Christian Andersen and A. H. Hoffmann von Fallerstein, and became an important source of inspiration for German Romantic poets.

Although the Roman origins of Boppard (Boudobriga), Oberwesel (Vosavia) and Bacharach (Bacchi Ara), three neighboring towns that featured often in Cusanus' life, are well known, it has not been established whether a Roman settlement existed at St. Goar. Judging from the direction of the Roman roads, it is possible that the place was used as a traffic center on the bank of the Rhine for military purposes. After the Roman legions pulled back from the Rhine in 400-402, fishermen, boatmen and pilots began to settle in the area. The *Vita Goaris*, which was written probably by a monk of Prüm in the eighth century, states that in the days of Childebert I (r. 511-558), King of the Franks, a missionary named Goar came from Aquitaine, settled down there, and established, with the permission of the Bishop of Trier, Fibicius or Falicius, a cell and a chapel at the mouth of the Wocherbach (now Lohbach) near Oberwesel. He carried on missionary work, took care of travelers and the sick and lived there until his death in 575 or 611. At his grave, later a place of veneration, there was probably a *collegium* of clerics called the *monasterium St. Goaris confessoris*. Supported by many gifts from Frankish kings, the "monastery" grew and was given in 765 to Abbot Assuerus of the Benedictine abbey of Prüm by King Pepin the Short (r. 752-768). The Benedictines later entrusted the protection of the monastery and its exercise of secular jurisdiction to the Counts of Arnstein, who acted as stewards (*Vögte*). After the extinction of the Arnstein family in 1185, the office of steward was transferred to the Counts of Katzenelnbogen in 1190. The collection of Rhine tolls at Sankt Goar by the Katzenelnbogens is clearly demonstrated in a document of 1219.

A castle already existed in Lohbach, but in 1245 Count Dieter V (r. 1245-1276) of Katzenelnbogen commenced the construction of Castle Rheinfels in order to guarantee the right of collecting Rhine tolls. As a result, he was able to defend the right successfully in 1255 against the troops of the Rhenish City League, which consisted of twenty-six cities on the Rhine. For over one year and four weeks, some eight thousand soldiers and one thousand knights laid siege to the castle in protest against the raising of Rhine tolls by Dieter V. About fifty ships supported the attack. Because of their failure to take the castle, it soon acquired a reputation of impregnability. In 1264 Count Dieter V declared St. Goar his residence, an

indication that the Abbots of Prüm had gradually given way to the might of the Katzenelnbogens. They continuously increased their power and wealth, becoming one of the strongest and richest noble families of the Old Empire. St. Goar itself expanded under the protection of the family and became the most strongly fortified town on the Middle Rhine.

By the time of the Abbots of Prüm, who had established their residence temporarily in St. Goar, the town was an important place of pilgrimage, where the Abbey Church (*Stiftskirche*) had been built at the end of eleventh century in place of the small chapel of St. Goar. Some have doubted whether there was really a monastic *collegium* at St. Goar, but by about 1100 there was a collegial foundation (*Chorherrenstift*). In about 1200 there was an important settlement around the *collegium* because of an increase in the amount of pilgrims and shipping traffic. Surrounded by a circular wall with towers, St. Goar became known in 1222 as a city (*oppidum*), according to Abbot Caesarius of Prüm. After the settlement of merchants, artisans, sailors and the servants of the *collegium*, abbots and stewards, there came later the patricians, servants and officers of the residence. In a document of 1332 the city hall is mentioned. The population of the city, which was approximately one thousand until about 1600, was divided into five neighboring sections.

Nicholas of Cusa's visits to St. Goar were related to his activities as a lawyer in the archdiocese of Trier. After the death of Archbishop Otto von Ziegenhain on February 13, 1430, the majority of the cathedral chapter elected as his successor the scholastic of the chapter, Jakob von Sierck (1439-1456), Provost of Würzburg and priest of St. Marien in Kreuznach. But a minority, led by the provost of the chapter, Friedrich von Kröv, supported Count Ulrich von Manderscheid, dean of the cathedral chapter in Cologne and Archdeacon of St. Mauritius in Tholey. Thus, as a result of the disputed election of 1430, a long, bitter contest began. Since neither side would give in, both Jakob and Ulrich, accompanied by their advisors, went to Rome in May to appeal to the pope for his support.

Instead of choosing one of the two, Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431) designated on May 22, 1430 Raban von Helmstadt (d. 1439), the aged Bishop of Speyer, as the next Archbishop of Trier. Although Jakob withdrew, Ulrich rejected both a papal offer to make him Provost of Frankfurt and Raban's appeal to comply with the papal decision. Strongly supported by the minority of the chapter, headed by Friedrich von Kröv, and also by local nobles, such as Count Ruprecht von Virneburg, Ulrich succeeded in a second election, held in Koblenz on July 10, 1430, to gain the unanimous support of the cathedral chapter, but was excommunicated by the pope on September 15, 1430 because of his intransigent rejection of Raban, the papal choice. On January 21, 1431, the see of Trier itself was placed under an interdict, which lasted for about four years, causing many hardships in the city.

Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) confirmed the decision of his predecessor, Martin V, to convoke the Council of Basel (1431-1449), but the council got off to a slow start on July 23, 1431. Ulrich von Manderscheid then decided to bring his case to the council to obtain a favorable decision on the contested election of 1430.

Cusanus, together with Johannes Rode (d. 1439) and Helwig of Boppard (d. 1439), was incorporated into the council on February 29, 1432, to represent Ulrich as

his secretary and procurator, but the Council of Basel did not make any decision on the disputed election for a long time. When the city of Trier declared its readiness to accept Raban as archbishop, Ulrich began to attack the city early in 1433 and wrought heavy damage. Repelled partly by Ulrich's obstinacy and partly by the great damage done to the city, the cathedral chapter turned its back on Ulrich at the end of March 1433. It was during this period between 1433 and 1434 that Cusanus presented to the council his first major ecclesiological work, *The Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*), which he had started to write in order to defend Ulrich's cause on the basis of the doctrine of the supremacy of the council over the pope.

The Council of Basel reached its final decision on the election of 1430 on May 15, 1434, deciding against Cusanus' patron, upholding Raban von Helmstadt as the rightful Archbishop of Trier. Emperor Sigismund (r. 1411-1447), who had taken a neutral position on the election, accepted the decision of the council and issued an imperial ban against Ulrich on August 7, 1434. Excommunicated by the pope, deserted by the cathedral chapter, the city of Trier and the Council of Basel, and now placed under the imperial ban, Ulrich still refused to submit.

Ulrich, Count Ruprecht von Virneburg, Friedrich von Kröv and other supporters were summoned before the Council of Basel on July 14, 1435, for their obstinacy and heresy. Negotiations on the case began on July 26, 1435 at St. Goar, which was the residence of the Katzenelnbogen family and which was within the archdiocese of Trier. Both Ulrich and Raban were present, accompanied by their supporters and counselors. Hugo Dorre spoke for Raban; Nicholas of Cusa represented Ulrich as his negotiator.

In the course of the negotiations, an eight-point plan was first presented by the Electors of Mainz, Cologne and the Pfalz, a "First plan at the Diet of St. Goar offered by the aforesaid lords, the Archbishop of Mainz, the Archbishop of Cologne and the Count Palatine of Rhine, to secure the peace of the church of Trier" (*Via prima in dieta aput Sanctum Gwarum per prefatos dominos archiepiscopos Moguntinum, Coloniensem et Palatinum Reni pro pace ecclesie Traverensis procuranda*). While Raban accepted it, Ulrich turned it down. The second plan was based on a proposal made by the Dean of Mainz. "Another plan for making peace offered by the Lord [Archbishop] of Mainz" (*Alia via pro medio pacis per d. Maguntinum fuit oblata*) had four points. Although Ulrich was willing to accept it, Raban refused to agree. As a result, after the failure of the two proposals, the chief contestants left St. Goar on July 27, although they remained in the vicinity. The negotiations were continued only because the ambassadors of the Council of Basel, whom Ulrich had not consulted previously, submitted two mediation plans: "A way of finding concord offered by the ambassadors of the holy council to the said diet" (*Modus concordie inveniende per ambasiatores sacris concilii ad dictam dietam destinatos apertus*), and "The second way offered by the ambassadors of the holy council …" (*Secunda via oblata per ambasiatores sacri concilii partibus hincinde*). Raban rejected both plans, but Ulrich essentially took a favorable position towards the council's proposals, and since no definitive agreement could be reached, negotiators broke up without arriving at any conclusion.

There is much ambiguity about the second round of negotiations, which began at St. Goar on November 5, 1435, although a description of them by Hugo Dorre has been preserved. The Archbishops of Mainz and Cologne were present in person from the beginning of the procedure. Ludwig, Count of the Pfalz, and Friedrich, Bishop of Worms, sent their counselors. The ambassadors of the Council of Basel were also in attendance. The gathering chose the Archbishops of Mainz and Cologne and the Bishop of Worms as arbitrators whose judgment would be accepted as binding. It was then decided to charge a nine-man committee with the task of working out a statement of agreement. The committee consisted of Friedrich von Kröv, Christian von Erpel, Dietrich Knebel, Ludwig von Ast, Otto von Stein, Wiprecht von Helmstadt, Nicholas of Cusa, Heinrich von Fleckenstein and Johann Boos von Waldeck. After the arrival of Bishop Friedrich of Worms on December 17, the negotiations progressed considerably.

Finally, on February 7, 1436, a settlement was reached by the three arbitrators. Only six out of nine negotiators signed the document, with Ulrich's representatives, including Nicholas of Cusa, refusing to accept it. The result of the arbitration was clear: Ulrich had lost; Raban was recognized as the legitimate Archbishop of Trier. Thus ended the so-called *Manderscheider Fehde* (1433-1436) that brought so much misery and destruction to the Archdiocese of Trier.

Nicholas of Cusa, who worked so long and hard for Ulrich von Manderscheid, was no doubt aware that the negotiations at St. Goar were decisive for the ecclesiastical and political future of his client. In view of the doctrine of conciliar supremacy which he clearly supported in *The Catholic Concordance*, the failure of the Council of Basel to accept Ulrich's cause must have been a galling experience to him. His confidence in the council could not have been strengthened as a result of the tragic experiences at St. Goar. As the Council of Basel split into the pro-conciliar and the pro-papal parties towards the end of 1436 over the question of where to hold a reunion council with the Greek Church, it was not surprising that Cusanus began to show readiness to move over to the papal side. To this crucial shift of his position, for which he has often been severely criticized, his experiences at St. Goar must have contributed a great deal. In this sense, St. Goar is one of the most important milestones in the life of Nicholas of Cusa.

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14. Basel

Situated on the bend of the Rhine River (at a width of eight hundred and seventy-five feet), where three countries, France, Germany and Switzerland, meet, and between the Jura mountain chain, the Black Forest and the Vosges, Basel is the second largest city in Switzerland, with a population of 166,663 (2004). Today, the city is divided by the Rhine into Greater Basel (*Gross-Basel*) on the left bank, which is the intellectual and commercial center, and Lesser Basel (*Klein-Basel*) on the flatter right bank, where industries—producing chiefly chemicals, drugs (Novartis, Ciba, Clariant, Hoffmann-LaRoche), metal products, cloths, foodstuffs and silk—are concentrated. The first wooden bridge was built in 1226 over the Rhine by Bishop Heinrich von Thun (r. 1216-1238). Today, the two sides are connected by six bridges and three ferries. Basel is the terminus for navigation on the Rhine.

It is often said that the Celts were the first people to settle in Basel, but there is little historical evidence. In 44 B.C. the Roman settlement *Colonia Raurica* was founded by Munatius Plancus seven miles east of present-day Basel. It was elevated in the second century to a Roman encampment called *Augusta Raurica*. The first known bishop residing in Augusta Raurica, around A.D. 345, was Justinian. By the third century the Romans had moved their town to the hill at the bend of the Rhine where the cathedral (*Münster*) now stands. The name Basilica was mentioned for the first time during the visit of Emperor Valentinian I (321-375) in A.D. 374. In the year 400 the Bishop of Augusta Raurica moved his see to Basel, and his successors stayed there for eleven centuries. Basel became part of the Frankish Empire at the end of the fifth century and part of Burgundy in 912. In 1019 the famous red sandstone Minster was consecrated. Then in 1032 Basel, together with Burgundy, was absorbed into the Holy Roman Empire and became a free city. Bishop Buchard (r. 1072-1107) established Basel's first monastery, the Cistercian priory of St. Alban, in 1083. St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) preached the Second Crusade in the Minster in 1146, and Bishop Ortlieb (r. 1137-1164) was the first to take the cross. Until the end of the twelfth century, the bishop was Basel's undisputed overlord and the representative of imperial authority. But by the thirteenth century a city of merchants had grown up beside the bishop and the officials of his episcopate. Johannes Tauler (c. 1300-1361) came to Basel in 1338 and stayed there until 1343.

In 1349 the Black Death swept through Basel. The chroniclers reported that between the *Aeschentor* and the *Rheintor* only three couples were left alive. Scarcely had the town recovered when another great catastrophe occurred. On October 18, 1356, towards evening, the first shocks of an earthquake were felt and many houses and buildings collapsed. In the night a more intense earthquake occurred, causing the roofs of the Minster and the *Rathaus* to collapse. Within six years of the earthquake, however, the *Rat* could proclaim that "all debts were paid so that no man owed anything more, nor had to pay interest to any man." Under these improving conditions, the city freed itself from the rule of the bishops in 1386.

In accordance with the decision of the Council of Pavia-Siena (1423-1424), made on February 19, 1423, Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431) decided in February 1424 to call a new

council, to be opened in 1431. He chose the town of Basel as its venue and appointed Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444), Nicholas of Cusa's teacher at the University of Padua, to preside as his legate to the council. As a result, in 1424, seven years before the opening of the Council of Basel (1431-1449), the town of Basel began to prepare for receiving participants in the council. If the decree *Frequens* of the Council of Constance (1414-1418) had been followed strictly, the Council of Basel would have begun on March 8, 1431, but only one delegate, Abbot Alexander of Vézelay, had appeared by February 28.

It was only on July 23, 1431 that the council was opened in the so-called *Konzilssaal* (or *Kapitelsaal*), which is above the chapel of St. Nicholas located in the *Pfalz* north of the Minster. The ceremony took place under the presidency of John of Ragusa (1390/95-1443) and John of Palomar (Juan de Palomar), the famous Spanish canon lawyer, with about a dozen representatives in attendance. Then arrived bishops, abbots, priors, representatives of universities, as well as secular princes from Burgundy, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy and other countries. The first Scottish delegation of representatives, for example, was incorporated on November 14, 1432. The delegation included Thomas Livingston(e) (d. 1460?), Abbot of Dundrennan, who later accompanied Nicholas of Cusa on his legatine tour of Germany in 1451-1452. Fifteen Hussites, led by William Kostka of Postupice (d. 1436) and John of Rokycana (d. 1471), arrived at Basel on January 4, 1433 to plead their case. There were some splendid scenes when the various national embassies arrived. Of these processions, none was more impressive than the arrival of the Castilian ambassador, with his fourteen hundred horses, his silver-clad pages and his twenty-eight mules. By July 1433 the number of incorporated persons had increased to seven cardinals and three hundred and eighty-six members.

Cardinal Cesarini himself did not appear at the beginning of the council because he was involved in the crusade against the Hussites. He took his position as president of the council on September 9, 1431, after his escape from the disastrous Battle of Domažlice (Taus) on August 14. Nicholas of Cusa came to Basel in February 1432 and was incorporated on February 29 as one of the representatives of Count Ulrich von Manderscheid, who was seeking the position of Archbishop of Trier against the papal nominee for the position, Jakob von Sierck (r. 1439-1456).

Another famous participant in the council, Nicholas de Tudeschis (1386-1445), better known as Panormitanus, Abbas Siculus or Abbas Modernus, came to Basel on March 7, 1433, as a representative of Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447). Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464), Cusanus' close friend and later Pope Pius II, arrived at Basel in April 1432 in the company of Domenico Capranica, Bishop of Fermo (1400-1458), who sought a cardinal's red hat, which had been promised by Martin V but which his successor Eugenius IV denied him. After being crowned as emperor, Sigismund, King of the Romans (r. 1411-1437) came to Basel on October 11, 1433, having traveled from his coronation in Rome by way of Zurich and the Rhine. He presided over the meetings of the council in the Minster, residing in Basel for seven months. Nicholas of Cusa's first major work on the reform of the Church and the Empire, *The Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*), was completed after Sigismund's arrival in Basel and submitted to the council, dedicated to Cardinal Cesarini and the emperor, probably at the end of 1433 or in early 1434.

At the beginning of the council, many meetings took place in the refectory of the Dominican cloister or in the *Konzilssaal*. But after June 14, 1433 the general meetings of the council met in the Minster. Even today one can see the pictures of Emperor Sigismund and Panormitanus on the wall of the *Konzilssaal*.

Aeneas Sylvius, who wrote *Two Books of Commentaries on the Proceedings of the Council of Basel* (*De gestis concilii Basiliensis commentariorum libri duo*) sometime between November 1439 and July 1440, stressed the role played by Panormitanus at the council, calling him "a man eminent among all for learning" (*vir inter omnes scientia eminenns*). After Panormitanus became King Alfonso of Aragon's representative, Aeneas called him "a man gifted with the highest intellect and a store of knowledge, leader among his king's orators" (*vir summo ingenio et scientiae copia praeditus*, *primusque inter sui regis oratores*).

The year 1439 was an especially important one in the history of the Council of Basel. On June 25 the council took a final step to depose Pope Eugenius IV. This took place amidst the plague, which raged from Easter to November 1439. While the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-1439) issued the decree *Laetentur caeli* on July 6, in which the union of the Roman and Greek Churches was proclaimed, the plague devastated Basel and took the lives of some five thousand people, including many members of the council. Protonotary Lodovico Pontano (also called Lodovico of Rome) (1409-1439), whom Aeneas described admiringly as "a man worthy not only of Rome but of heaven, one to whom no mortal seemed comparable" (*Vir non Roma tantum sed coelo dignus, et cui nemo mortalium comparandus videretur*), "that Homer of the legists" (*legistarum Homerus*) and "a strong man in the flower of his youth, and pre-eminent in the knowledge of both branches of law" (*virum robustum, aetate florentem, et urtiusque iuris scientia eminentissiumum*), died at the age of thirty during the plague of 1439. He was buried in the Carthusian church (now the *Bürgerliches Waisenhaus*, Theodorkirchplatz Nr. 7) in Lesser Basel. The death escutcheon (*Totenschild-arma*) for the protonotary in the church reads:

> The arms of the reverend father lord Lodovico Pontano, by license of the apostolic see protonotary of the same, envoy of the king of Aragon. He died in 1439.
>
> (*Arma. r.p.d. lodovici ponta. roman. sedis. ap.lice. pthonot' eiusde' regis aragonum oratoris. obiit. 1439.*)

The famous wall painting of the "Dance of Death" (*Totentanz*) in the Historical Museum of Basel, which was originally in the Dominican church, is believed to date from 1440-1450.

As a result of the plague, many members of the council left Basel, thereby delaying the election of a new pope after the deposition of Eugenius IV. It was only after the plague began to subside in October that many members returned. A conclave gathered in the *Trinkstube* in the *Haus zur Mücke* (Schlüsselberg Nr. 15) and elected a layman, Amadeus VIII, the former Duke of Savoy, to the papal throne

on November 5, 1439. He was enthroned as Felix V on July 24, 1440, not in the Minster, which was too small for a large audience, but in the open Minster plaza.

We might note in this connection that the *Reformation of Sigismund* (*Reformatio Sigismundi*), which has been a topic of endless discussion and debate, was in all likelihood written in Basel by a member of the council in the momentous year 1439. The painting of Panormitanus, which can be found on the wall of the Chapter Room of the Minster in Basel, shows the great lawyer probably writing a legal opinion.

Aeneas Sylvius left two famous descriptions of Basel. The first one, which was written in 1433/34, was sent to Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini. The second, written in 1438, was part of a letter sent to Philippe de Coëtquis, Archbishop of Tours. In the latter Aeneas described how little culture and learning there was in Basel (*Nulla hic studia gentilium literarum. Poeticam oratoriamque prorsus ignorant*.) But the council contributed greatly to the rise of cultural activities in Basel. One of the direct results was a "council university" from 1432 to 1448.

It was Pope Pius II, the former Aeneas Sylvius, who established the oldest university in Switzerland on April 4, 1460, through a papal bull of November 12, 1459. It is particularly interesting for students of Cusanus to note that, as Virgil Redlich and Guido Kisch pointed out, the Benedictine monastery of Tegernsee played some role during the period of the council university and perhaps in the establishment of the new university.

A second result of the council was the development of printing in Basel. Because of the gathering of learned men from many parts of Europe during the council, Basel became a "book market." The introduction of printing into Basel by Gutenberg's immediate pupil, Berthold Ruppel (?-1495) led to the establishment of presses in the city by Michel Wensler, Bernhard Richel and others. The famous printer Johann Amerbach (1443-1513) set up his press in 1477. Johann Froben (1460-1527) and his son Hieronymus Froben (d. 1563) were active in Basel as printers, setting high standards of scholarship and accuracy. Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469-1536) lived from August 1514 to May 1516 in the *Haus zum Sessel* (Totengässlein Nr. 3) as the guest of Johann Froben. Serving as advisor to the Froben family, he published his famous *editio princeps* of the New Testament in Greek at Basel in 1516. The Reformation came to Basel in 1529. It was in the *Haus zum Luft* (Bäumleingasse Nr. 18), the home of his friend Hieronymus Froben, that Erasmus died on the night of July 11-12, 1536. His friends set up a large marble gravestone in the left-side aisle of the Minster bearing the words: "His friends put Desiderius Erasmus under this stone." (*Desiderium Erasmum Roterodamum amici sub hoc saxo condebant*.)

It should be noted here that the fourth pre-modern edition of the complete works of Nicholas of Cusa appeared in Basel in 1565 in three volumes, edited by Henri Petri (Henricpetrina), who was the third in succession of the famous family of printers in Basel. The *Opera omnia* of the great lawyer Bartolus of Sassoferrato (1313-1357), who exerted great influence (*Nemo legista nisi Bartolista*) at the University of Basel during the controversy over the *mos italicus* and the *mos gallicus*, were also published in Basel in 1588-1589.

Basel became one of the most important intellectual centers of Europe by the end of the sixteenth century. After all, the city in which the Frobens, Erasmus, Hans

Holbein the Younger and Calvin (and later such famous writers as Nietzsche) lived was no longer a provincial northern town devoid of culture and learning. In *The Diary of Montaigne's Journey to Italy* (*Journal de voyage en Italie*), written in 1580 and 1581, Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592) said of Basel:

> Basel, three leagues; a handsome town, of the size of Blois or thereabouts, in two parts: for the Rhine passes through the middle, under a large and very wide wooden bridge … We here saw a great many men of learning, such as Grineus, and the man who wrote the *Theatrum* [Samuel Grynaeus was Theodor Zwinger (1533-1588), a professor of Greek, morality and theoretical medicine at the University of Basel, who wrote the *Theatrum vitae humanae* (Basel, 1571)], and the said physician, Platerus [Dr. Felix Platter (1536-1614), known as "Beloved Son Felix," who wrote *Beloved Son Felix: The Journal of Felix Platter, a Medical Student in Montpellier in the Sixteenth Century*], and François Hottoman. [Hotman (1524-1590), one of the most learned humanist lawyers of the sixteenth century, who escaped the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day in 1572 and took refuge first in Geneva and then in Basel, where he died on February 12, 1590.] (17-19)

The *Rathaus* of Basel, first built in 1519 and repaired in 1610, 1710 and 1760, was renovated in 1825; it has an inscription in its *Grossratssaal* which reads "Public well-being, the supreme law" (*Salvs Pvblica Svprema Lex*).

Having looked briefly at the history of Basel, let us turn our attention to recent developments in the study of the Council of Basel. In the late 1970s and early 1980s several important studies of the council were published, and they were of great interest to many historians and Cusanus scholars. They are Joachim W. Stieber, *Pope Eugenius IV, the Council of Basel and the Secular and Ecclesiastical Authorities in the Empire*; Antony Black, *Council and Commune*; Gerald Christianson, *Cesarini: The Conciliar Cardinal*; Giuseppe Alberigo, *Chiesa conciliare*; Thomas M. Izbicki, *Protector of the Faith*; and Arnulf Vagedes, *Das Konzil über dem Papst?*

Another important book on the subject, however, does not seem to have received as much attention in the United States as it certainly deserves. It is Werner Krämer, *Konsens und Rezeption*. The book grew out of the author's doctoral dissertation, which he completed at the University of Mainz in 1974 under Rudolf Haubst's direction. Believing that the Council of Basel, which was commonly regarded as a "radical" and "anti-papal" council, had received only a one-sided, politically motivated criticism from its successful opponent, Pope Eugenius IV, and his followers, and that the works of the condemned advocates of the council, which could give us a true, more balanced view of the council, had not been sufficiently studied, the author not only studied the works of famous writers such as Juan de Segovia, Giuliano Cesarini and Nicholas of Cusa, but also rehabilitated and examined the writings of such less well-known Baslean writers as John of Ragusa, Heymericus de Campo, Heinrich Tocke, Juan Gonzales, Jean Mauroux, John of Palomar and Heinrich Kalteisen by going to half-forgotten and scattered

manuscripts in many libraries and archives. Some pertinent selections were edited by the author and included in the *Textanhang* of the book, which argues that men like Giuliano Cesarini, John of Ragusa, Juan de Segovia and Nicholas of Cusa were not really radical thinkers, but were fundamentally interested in the maintenance of the unity of the Church. To be sure, they upheld the superiority of the council over the pope, but they also emphasized the importance of according to the pope due respect and were not interested in "democratizing" the Church by the frequent use of the council.

One of the important features of Krämer's study is that it was based on a careful, extensive use of the material which is now available only in manuscripts. It was, as Heribert Müller put it, a *Pionierarbeit*. Probably one of the main contributions of this study is to have promoted further studies of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts which are related to the Council of Basel. The reviews of Krämer's book that have appeared in journals include:

Heribert Müller, in *Annuarium Historiae Conciliorum* 12 (1980), 418-426;
Yves Congar, in *Revue des sciences phil. et theol.* 64 (1980), 598-600;
Klaus Schatz, S.J., in *Theologie und Philosophie* 56 (1981), 603-605;
J. Muhlsteiger, S.J., in *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie* 103 (1981), 473f.;
Friedrich Merzbacher, in *Zeitschrift der Savigny-Stiftung für Rechtsgeschichte*, Kan. Abt., 66 (1981) 420-423;
Remigius Bäumer, in *Theologische Revue* 78 (1982), 33-35;
Alfred Stoecklin, in *Theologische Literaturzeitung* 107 (1982), 761-763;
Wolfgang Beinert, in *Theologie und Glaube* 72 (1982), 115f.;
Benigno Hernandez, S.J., in *Revista española de Derecho Canónico* 38 (1982), 138-141;
Thomas E. Morrissey, in *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 19 (1982), 117-118;
Herbert Smolinsky, in *Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft* 15 (1982), 163-164;
Rudolf Reinhardt, in *Rottenburger Jahrbuch für Kirchengeschichte* (1982), 257-258;
Quellen und Forschungen aus italienischen Archiven und Bibliotheken 62 (1982), 407-409;
Deutsches Archiv für die Erforschung des Mittelalters 40 (1984), 315.

Some reviewers, like Müller and Merzbacher, were not too enthusiastic about the study. But more recently Johannes Helmrath wrote a sympathetic review, "Selbstverständnis und Interpretation des Basler Konzils," *Archiv der Kulturgeschichte* 66 (1984), 215-229. Helmrath's final judgment on the book and its author is emphatic:

> The author took on the very real difficulties and, expending a tremendous amount of energy and effort, has produced an impressive result. The book is guaranteed to rank as a fundamental work on the

> subject, as its echo in subsequent scholarship proves. It is a milestone that successive works will naturally have to follow. (228-229)
>
> (*Der Verfasser hat sich [den grundsätzlichen Schwierigkeiten] unter höchsten Aufwand von Kraft und Mühe gestellt und ein eindrücksvolles Ergebnis vorgelegt. Der Rang eines Grundlagenwerks zum Thema ist dem Buche sicher—das bisherige Echo in der Forschung beweist es,—eines Meilensteins, dem naturgemäss weitere folgen müssen*.)

Those who are interested in a good survey of scholarship on the Council of Basel can now turn to Erich Meuthen, *Das Basler Konzil als Forschungsproblem der europäischen Geschichte*, which has detailed, useful notes, and brief comments on many of the books mentioned above.

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15. Constantinople in 1437 and 1438

In February 1424, Pope Martin V (r. 1417-1431) convoked the Council of Basel (1431-1449) to meet in 1431 in accordance with the decree of the Council of Siena-Pavia (1423-1424). On February 1, 1431, Martin V appointed Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini (1389?-1444) as his legate to the Council of Basel. Two unexpected things happened. Two weeks before the scheduled opening of the council on February 20, the pope died, and was succeeded by Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447). The council should have opened on March 8, but by that date only one delegate, Abbot Alexander of Vézelay, had appeared in Basel. Several more came during the next few weeks, but the gathering of delegates was certainly slow. The council actually opened on July 23 with about a dozen delegates present. Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini, who had been involved in the crusade against the Hussites, did not appear until six weeks later.

He assumed his seat as president of the assembly on September 9, one month after his escape from the disastrous Battle of Domažlice (Taus). He presided over the first public session on December 14.

Nicholas of Cusa himself came to Basel in February 1432 and was incorporated on February 29 as one of the members of the Deputation for the Faith. Cusanus, who had obtained the doctor of canon law degree (*doctor decretorum*) in 1423 from the University of Padua, came to Basel as Ulrich von Manderscheid's procurator. Ulrich was contending with a papally appointed candidate in the disputed episcopal election in 1432 after the death of Otto von Ziegenhain, Archbishop of Trier (r. 1418-1430). Appointed on February 1, 1433 a member of the Deputation on the Hussites as well, Cusanus wrote not only the *Little Book against the Errors of the Bohemians* (*Opusculum contra Bohemorum errorem*, March/April 1433), *On the Practice of Communion* (*De usu communion*, March/April 1433) and *On the Superiority of the Sacred Council over the Authority of the Pope* (*De maioritate auctoritatis sacrorum conciliorum supra auctoritate papae*, April/May 1433), but also *The Catholic Concordance* (*De concordantia catholica*, 1433/34). He was undoubtedly one of the leaders of the conciliar party at the council.

What changed Cusanus' position at the council was the question of the reunion of the Greek and Latin Churches, which arose in December 1435. As Henry Bett put it, the reason for the change was the "turbulent conduct and the extreme measures of the council itself" (28). Cusanus was in favor of holding a reunion council in any place suited to the pope and the Greeks. The majority of the council members, however, insisted that the site be Avignon, Florence or Basel itself. In a stormy public session on May 7, 1437, the council voted on the issue and formally split into a majority and a minority. Gerald Christianson described the event:

> There was no violence, but the now famous twenty-fifth session on May 7 came near to anarchy … The negotiating was still going on when members gathered in the cathedral, but this too came to naught, so both parties read their decrees, shouted *placet*, and sang *Te Deum* from opposite ends of the sanctuary—as if two choirs chanted in dissonant antiphony. The more plain-speaking Aeneas thought they were noisier than drunkards in a tavern. (168-169)

Cusanus' transfer of allegiance from the conciliar majority party to the pro-papal minority has often been discussed and criticized. It was essentially his belief that the boisterous majority group, which included not only the higher echelon of the Church, but also the laymen and, as Aeneas put it, drunkards, was no longer capable of maintaining the unity of the Church, and that only through papal guidance could the unity and order of the Church be preserved. It is notable that when the momentous issue of the union with the Greek Church surfaced and its resultant effects were perceived, not only Cusanus, but also a good many other leaders of the conciliar party, such as Lodovico Pontano (1409-1439), Giuliano Cesarini and Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, later Pope Pius II, went over to the papal camp.

The three leaders of the minority group, Pierre de Versailles, Bishop of Digne, Antonio Martins de Chaves, Bishop of Oporto, and Nicholas of Cusa, Prior of Münstermaifeld, left Basel for Bologna on May 20 (*Acta Cusana*, I, 2, 204-205), carrying a copy of the minority decree and President Giuliano Cesarini's letter to the Eastern Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople. Pope Eugenius IV confirmed the minority decree in Bologna after the three leaders arrived there at the end of May. On July 9 the Bishops of Digne and Porto left Bologna for Venice, accompanied by the apostolic nuncios, Mark Condulmaro, Archbishop of Tarantaise, and Cristoforo Garatone, Bishop of Corone. There is evidence that Cusanus was still in Bologna on July 17.

The description of Constantinople in the later Middle Ages is too complex an issue to be discussed in a short essay. There are descriptions of Constantinople written by some fifteenth-century visitors from various countries that help us understand the nature of the city. We should mention, for example, Beltrandon de la Broquiere of France, Cristoforo Buondelmonti and Cyriaco of Ancona (1391-1452) from Italy, Alexander the Clerk, Archbishop of Novgorod, and Ignatius of Smolenski of Russia, author of the *Journey to Constantinople* (1389), and Ruy Gonzalez de Clavijo and Pero Tafur (1419?-1484?) of Spain. George Majeska's book is especially useful on the activities of these travelers. The reader of this book is also referred to some of the modern standard works, such as Franz Babinger, Norman H. Baynes, Deno John Geanakoplos, Colin Imber, Ludwig Mohler, Donald Nicol, Steven Runciman and others (see Select Bibliography below).

One of the issues we can examine here, at least briefly, is to what extent Cusanus was familiar with the Greek language. In a letter to Piero Candido Decembrio (1392-1477), Francesco Pizzolpasso (d. 1443) spoke of Cusanus' familiarity with Greek. Since the time of Martin Honecker's famous discussion on the topic, published in 1938, the view had become prevalent that Cusanus' mastery of Greek was not impressive. But in recent years the opposite view has been increasingly expressed. In a recently published article, John Monfasani showed how well acquainted Cusanus was with the Greek language, especially in his later years. It can be said that his familiarity with the language was no doubt one of the reasons why Cusanus was chosen to serve as a member of the minority group to visit Constantinople.

The first group of the papal delegation, consisting of the Bishops of Digne, Oporto and Corone, set sail for Crete on July 26. The second group, which included the Archbishop of Tarantaise and Cusanus, left Venice a little later to go to Crete in three galleys. We have many questions about Cusanus' voyage to Constantinople, but regrettably few details are known.

Arriving at Candia (Iráklion) in Crete on August 15, 1437, the Bishops of Digne, Oporto and Corone stayed there a few days before continuing their voyage, reaching Constantinople on September 3. The galleys of the Archbishop of Tarantaise and Cusanus also stopped at Candia, to hire three hundred Cretan arbalesters whom Pope Eugenius IV had agreed to supply to the emperor in order to guard Constantinople during the latter's scheduled absence to attend the Council of Ferrara (1438). There must have been many "managerial" problems of recruitment and organization with regard to the arbalesters. Why Cusanus was assigned to this task is another

of the questions concerning his voyage to Constantinople. The papal galleys finally sailed into the Golden Horn in Constantinople on September 24, after making a stop at Carystos (Euboea, Évvoia) to pick up the Despot Constantine. It should be remembered that the Council of Basel sent its own delegation to Constantinople. Its fleet, which arrived a little after the papal galleys, almost clashed with the latter.

The papal ambassadors' activities during the following three months in Constantinople were headed by Cristoforo Garatoni and described later not only by the Bishop of Digne, but also John of Ragusa, O.P. (1390/95-1443) and the Bishops of Viseu and Lausanne, who were the ambassadors of the Council of Basel to the Byzantine emperor, John VIII Palaeologus (r. 1425-1448). It is known from various documents that Cusanus was engaged in the important task of persuading the Greeks to come to the Council of Ferrara via Venice with the papal minority party. But, as he later described in the prologue of his *Cribratio Alkorani* (1461), he also made an effort while in Constantinople to learn more about Islam and the Koran:

> I left the book [a Latin translation of the Koran] with Master John of Segovia and journeyed to Constantinople, where among the Minorities, who were living at [the Church of] the Holy Cross, I found the Koran in Arabic. (Hopkins, vol. 2, 965)

Later, in Pera, the hilly northern suburb of the city across the Golden Horn, which was also called Galata or Sycae, Cusanus found in the convent of St. Dominicus a copy of the Koran "that was translated in the same manner as the one I had left behind in Basel." In addition to the copies of the Koran, he was able to acquire many Greek manuscripts. It is difficult to establish clearly which works Cusanus found in Constantinople. But they included the following:

Greek Fathers' *Commentaries on St. John* (Cod. Cus. 18) [=Codex Cusanus in St. Nicholas Hospital library, Bernkastel-Kues]
Chrysostom's *Homiliae* (Cod. Cus. 47)
Nicetas David Paphalagon's *Exposition of Gregory Naziansan's Poems* (Cod. Cus. 48)
Basil's *Homilies* (Cod. Harl. 5576) [=MS in the Harley Collection, British Library]
Acts and Epistles (Cod. Harl. 5588)
Plutarch's *Vitae* and *Moralia* (Cod. Harl. 5892)
The records of the sixth, seventh and eighth councils (cf. *Acta Cusana*, I, 2, Nr. 372)
Basil's *Adversos Eunominum* in Greek (*Acta Cusana*, I, 2, Nr. 333)
Proclus' *In theologiam Platonis* (*Acta Cusana*, I, 2, Nr. 398)

In the *Acta Cusana*, Erich Meuthen showed that Cesarini and Cusanus later found the records of the sixth, seventh and eighth councils useful in supporting the Roman position on the *Filioque* question at the Council of Ferrara-Florence.

The light ship that had brought the first papal group to Constantinople set sail for Italy on November 9, 1437. At sunset on November 27, the papal fleet, accompanied by the Greek triremes, left the Golden Horn. Altogether the Greek delegation to the forthcoming council numbered about seven hundred. The papal bull *Sicut pia mater*, issued on September 7, 1434, decreed that the expenses of the Greek delegation for food, lodging and subsistence during the council would be provided for by the pope. Among the Greek delegation were the following notables:

Emperor John VIII Palaeologus (r. 1425-1448)
Patriarch Joseph II of Constantinople (r. 1416-1439)
Metropolitan Mark Eugenius of Ephesus (c. 1394-1444/45?)
Metropolitan Bessarion of Nicaea (1402-1472)
Silvester Syropoulos (1401?-c. 1464), the ecclesiast and the future author of the *Memoirs*, a lengthy account of the Council of Ferrara-Florence

Although there is no concrete evidence, it can be assumed that during the stormy return voyage from Constantinople to Venice in 1437-1438, which lasted almost two and a half months, but which was devoid of "managerial" problems, Cusanus had enough time to get acquainted with the leading intellectuals of the Greek Church. He was indeed "in the company of the greatest men of the Byzantine world of that day" (Petro Bilaniuk). As is well known, it was during this voyage back to Venice that Cusanus had a famous vision which was to inspire the composition of his first important philosophical-theological work, *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440), a work very much influenced by Neoplatonic ideas. He wrote in his dedication of the book to Giuliano Cesarini:

> Accept now, Reverend Father, what for so long I desired to attain by different paths of learning but previously could not until returning by sea from Greece when by what I believe was a celestial gift from the Father of Lights, from whom comes every perfect gift, I was led to embrace incomprehensibles incomprehensibly in learned ignorance, by transcending those incorruptible truths that can be humanly known. (Bond, *Selected Spiritual Writings*, 205-206)

Some scholars, such as Marjorie O'Rourke Boyle, wish to de-emphasize the significance of Cusanus' experience at sea as an apparition. But, as Erich Meuthen pointed out, Cusanus must have been inspired by the infinitesimal size of the ships against the immense size of the ocean during an unusually prolonged and strenuous voyage. He was undoubtedly forced to think of the great gap between the infinite and the finite.

The second papal fleet arrived at the Lido in Venice on February 4, 1438, but it was only on February 8 that the emperor landed. It is even said that he had not really decided whether to accept the site chosen by the minority papal party or that chosen by the majority Basel party for the reunion council. The Bishop of Digne

and Cusanus hurried on to Ferrara where the bishop gave his report on the voyage. After the arrival of the Greeks at Ferrara in April, the Council of Ferrara opened and held its first session in the Church of St. George on April 9, 1438.

In his unique, carefully written book, *The Antiquities of Constantinople*, published in 1561, Pierre Gilles (Petrus Gyllius) (1490-1555), a French traveler to Constantinople in 1544, demonstrated his single-hearted humanist outlook and a strong desire to examine firsthand the monuments, ancient sculptures, inscriptions and architecture of Constantinople. He emphasized at the end of the book, however, that he was a stranger in the land. He went on to say that the people were not only unhelpful, but "they were downright hostile, both Greeks and Turks" and that "[they] are also Philistines, with no regard for the glories of antiquity all around them. Not only that: they are ignorant and contemptuous of classical learning." Thus, he concluded:

> Yet I would willingly persuade myself that my resolutions were good and my design honorable, confirmed in the opinion of the Platonists that "we ought to be indefatigable in the search for truth." (223)

Nicholas of Cusa's visit to Constantinople in 1437-1438, fifteen years before the fall of Constantinople in 1453, apparently took place under more favorable and less restrictive conditions than those of Gilles. He had been active as a legal expert and ecclesiastical statesman at the Council of Basel, having even written an important political treatise and tracts in the first half of his sixty-three-years of life. It is clear that his attention and interest became increasingly focused in the latter part of his active life on the philosophical, theological and religious aspects of human experience, as is shown by the nature of his later writings, which began with *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*) of 1440. He never after wrote a major "political" or "legal" treatise. Judging from this development, his visit to Constantinople was a very important, perhaps decisive, turning point in his life.

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16. Regensburg

Regensburg (Ratisbona, Ratisbon, Ratisbonne) is located eighty-five miles southeast of Nuremberg, at the confluence of the Danube and the Regen. It is on the right bank of the Danube at its most northerly bend. Since Roman times it has been a trading center. In the Middle Ages it was at the crossroads of commerce and trade from Vienna, Nuremberg, central Germany (*Magdeburger Strasse*), Prague, Ingolstadt and Landshut. In modern times it is a road and rail junction and a river port. The Danube is navigable from Regensburg for most of the year.

In its early times, Regensburg was a Celtic settlement called Radasbona. The Romans first settled there after A.D. 69 under Emperor Vespasian (r. 69-79) and established a camp. The City Museum of Regensburg has a Roman tablet commemorating the founding in A.D. 179, under Emperor Marcus Aurelius (120-180), of Castra Regina, a camp for three legions and a main Roman stronghold. The Porta Praetoria, which served as the north gate of Castra Regina, and parts of the Roman walls still survive.

After the retreat of the Romans from the region around A.D. 450, Regensburg fell into the hands of invading Germanic tribes. The Alemannen and Thuringer came and went, until around A.D. 530 the Bajuwaren, originating from Bohemia, took possession of Regensburg. It became the residence of the Bavarian dukes, the Agilolfingers, and was called Reganesburg (-burh, -bure or -purc). In 739 St. Boniface (c. 675-754?), the "Apostle of Germany" made Regensburg the seat of a

bishopric. In the meantime, Charlemagne (r. 768-814) had incorporated Regensburg into the Carolingian empire around 735 and had begun to use it as the capital. He resided in Regensburg three times: in 788, when he subjugated Duke Tassilo of Bavaria, in 791, at the beginning of the battle against the Awaren, and in 792, on the occasion of an imperial meeting. Otloh, monk of St. Emmeram, wrote around 1050:

> The city of Regensburg is old and new at the same time; it is the first among all great cities.
>
> (*Die Stadt Ratisbona ist alt und neu zugleich, Sie ist die erste unter allen grossen Städten*.)

During the twelfth through the thirteenth centuries Regensburg, mostly called "Regenspurch," was the most prosperous city in southern Germany. It was the only free and imperial (*freie und reichsunmittelbare*) city from 1245 onwards in old Bavaria.

Regensburg had many monuments of historical, architectural and artistic interest in the Middle Ages. Many of them still exist today. The Stone Bridge (*Steinerne Brücke*, 1135-1146) across the Danube was a medieval accomplishment in construction and was called a *Bauwunder*. The towers erected by wealthy patricians occur rarely in Germany and gave the city a characteristic profile, though only twenty of sixty towers now remain. The construction of the present cathedral of St. Peter (*ecclesia S. Petri*), the first incarnation of which was first mentioned in 778(?), was begun in 1275 and continued through 1580. It is the most important Gothic church in Bavaria, with its beautifully proportioned interior and fine stained-glass windows. The church of St. Emmeram, which was the church of the former Benedictine abbey, is now a beautiful Romanesque basilica. The Benedictine Abbey of St. Emmeram itself, which was founded in the seventh century, has been the palace of the princes of Thurn and Taxis since its secularization in 1812. The "Scottish" church (*Schottenkirche*) of St. Jacob, which was founded and consecrated by Irish monks in 1111 and 1120, was another Romanesque basilica, rebuilt from 1150 through 1200. The Dominican church of St. Blaise was an early Gothic basilica. Building began in 1230 and was completed at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The town hall, built in the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, contains the *Reichssaal* (c. 1350), with fine tapestries.

Some notable persons were associated with or lived in Regensburg in the Middle Ages and early modern times. Honorius Augustodunensis (d. after 1130), a hermit theologian and the author of such works as the *Mirror of the Church* (*Speculum ecclesiae*) and the encyclopedic *Portrait of the World* (*Imago mundi*) probably lived near Regensburg. Gerhoch von Reichersberg (1092/93-1169), one of the principal agents of the Gregorian reforms in Germany, stayed in Regensburg before becoming prior in Reichersberg in 1132. From 1260 to 1262 Albertus Magnus (1193/1206-1280) was Bishop of Regensburg. In 1272 the most famous preacher of the time, Berthold von Regensburg (c. 1210-1272), died in Regensburg. Konrad von Megenberg (d. 1374), canon and priest and the author of the *Treatise on the Translation of the Empire*

(*Tractatus de translatione imperii*) and *On the Boundaries of the Parishes in the City of Regensburg* (*De limitibus parochiarum civitatis Ratisbonensis*), died in Regensburg in 1374. Johannes Turmeier of Abensberg (d. 1534), commonly known as Aventus, resided in Regensburg after 152l and died there in 1534. Probably the most famous early modern scientist associated with Regensburg was the astronomer Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), who lived in Regensburg in 1620, 1626-1628 and 1630, dying there in the latter year. His memorial house is located at Keplerstrasse 5.

Nicholas of Cusa visited Regensburg at least three times. Together with Johannes Schele, Bishop of Lübeck, Cusanus was first in the city from July 19 to August 7, 1436 as an ambassador of the Council of Basel (1431-1449) to mediate in a conflict between Margrave Friedrich of Brandenburg and Duke Ludwig of Bavaria. During his famous legatine tour of Germany and the Low Countries from December 31, 1450 to April 7, 1452, Cusanus made his second visit to Regensburg. It is recorded that from March 29 to April 2, 1451, he bestowed indulgences and preached in Regensburg. Cusanus, who had been named legate *a latere* to Bohemia, came back to Regensburg on June 4, 1452 to begin negotiations with the Hussites, led by Zdenek of Sternberk and John Smiricky.

It is to be noted that during Cusanus' negotiations with the Hussites in Regensburg, the fiery Franciscan preacher of the crusade against the Hussites and the Turks, Giovanni Capistrano (1386-1456), who had warned Cusanus against dealing with the heretics, was in Regensburg and preached penitential sermons. The presence of Capistrano in Regensburg, which served as a steady pressure on Cusanus, so hampered the diplomatic hand of the cardinal that all hopes were destroyed for even a provisional understanding between him and the Bohemians. After the negotiations, which lasted from June 18 to June 26, 1452, Cusanus sent letters to the Bohemians, on June 27. On July 20, Cusanus published indulgences at the convent of St. Clare in Nuremberg and also visited monasteries in Regensburg.

It was, however, in 1454 that Cusanus' most important visit to the imperial city took place. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453 an imperial diet was called by the Emperor Frederick III (r. 1440-1493) to meet at Regensburg, from April 23, St. George's Day, through May 16, 1454. The first "Turkish" Imperial Diet was planned to be an important European gathering of princes, secular and ecclesiastical:

> But when the time drew near the disappointment was immense. The emperor did not come in person, but only sent a representative. The pope sent Bishop John of Pavia as his legate, and an embassy came from Savoy, but otherwise the Italian powers were unrepresented. The only foreign prince who came to Ratisbon was the Duke of Burgundy, and of all the many princes of Germany none but the Margrave Albert Achilles of Brandenburg and Duke Louis of Bavaria appeared. Stranger still, no one came on behalf of the young King of Bohemia, for whom the help of Christendom had been in a special manner invoked. (Pastor, 301)

In his role at the diet as mediator between the Teutonic Order and Poland, Cusanus worked hard for the unity of Europe as a whole rather than for regional, local or particularistic interests such as Poland's. One of the results of the Imperial Diet of Regensburg in 1454 was that Pope Nicholas V, in two bulls issued in September 1454, asked Cusanus to serve as legate *a latere* to Prussia. The pope, however, expressly excluded Cusanus' role as a mediator between the Teutonic Order and the Polish king who stood behind the Prussian estates. Already disappointed by the failure of the Imperial Diet of Regensburg in 1454 to mount an effective front against the Turks, Cusanus was not willing or ready to accept the nomination as legate *a latere*. Cusanus had been engaged in a long, debilitating struggle with Duke Sigmund of the Tyrol since his appointment as Bishop of Brixen in 1450. He had even thought seriously about stepping down as bishop and securing a cell in the Benedictine abbey of Tegernsee. The Imperial Diet of 1454, as Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini showed in his *History of the Regensburg Diet* (*Historia de dieta Ratisponensi*), had been arranged and promoted by him in defense of the Christian West against the Turks. It was perhaps the point in Cusanus' life at which his sense of gloom and resignation about the general ecclesiastical and political conditions in Europe became especially strong, in contrast to a little more positive, sanguine attitude about Europe's future which was represented by such men as Aeneas Sylvius. Viewed in this light, Regensburg in 1454 was an important milestone in the cardinal's career.

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17. Bologna

Before leaving for Constantinople from Venice in 1437, Nicholas of Cusa came to Bologna from Basel and stayed there briefly. What was the purpose of his visit and what was the ancient city like at that time?

Bologna is the most important city of Emilia-Romagna in Italy. Situated at the northern foot of the Apennines and between the Rivers Reno and Savena, Bologna was of unique importance as the chief junction of the peninsula. The country around Bologna has been inhabited since prehistoric times. In the Bronze Age the earliest inhabitants of Bologna territory were the Ligurians. They were then succeeded by the Umbrians. Since the first excavations in 1853-1855 of an Iron Age cemetery by Giovanni Gozzadini (1810-1880) in the small town Villanova near Bologna, archaeologists have called the period and people preceding the Etruscans "Villanovans." According to them, the Villanovans came to Italy from central Europe, bringing with them a fairly advanced Iron Age culture.

When the Etruscans advanced from the south of the Apennines in the mid-sixth century B.C., they established Felsina, the most important Etruscan city north of the Apennines, on the site of the flourishing Iron Age settlement to which modern scholars gave the name Villanovan culture. Later, when the Gauls began to descend into the valley of the Po, the tribe of the Boii conquered the Etruscans and took possession of Felsina in 389 B.C. It may be that from this Gallic tribe its later name "Bononia" was derived. In the ensuing warfare between the Romans and the Gallic tribes, the Boii were frequently defeated by the Romans. It was in 191 B.C. that the Romans took Bologna from the Boii. The town was elevated in 189 B.C. to the rank of a Roman colony, named Bononia. Within two years of the date,

Consul Marcus Aemilius Lepidus (d. 13 B.C.) was constructing the great highway connecting Rimini and Piacenza which became known as the Via Aemilia. Three thousand military colonists were said to have settled in Bononia.

Christianity was first introduced into Bologna in A.D. 94 by St. Apollinaris (first century), first Bishop of Ravenna. But not much is known about the history of Bologna during the first period of Christianity except that the city was subject to the rule of the Greek Exarchate of Ravenna and remained so until the time of the barbarian invasions. Zama was the first bishop, around A.D. 300. During the reign of Emperor Diocletian (r. 284-305) and Co-Emperor Maximian (r. 286-305) many martyrs perished in the persecutions they ordered. The first to be canonized were St. Vitale and St. Agricola, his slave. Another renowned saint in the later history of Bologna is St. Proculus (d. 542), who was named Bishop of Bologna in 540. Since the fifth century, the city has also retained its devotion to St. Petronius (d. c. 445), who was Bishop of Bologna in about 432.

Bologna first flourished under the Roman Empire, but it gradually began to suffer severely because of imperial contests. At the beginning of the fifth century it was reduced to desolation by barbarian invasions. The Visigoths, the Huns, the Vandals, the Ostrogoths and the Lombards took possession of it. During the long wars between the Byzantine Exarchate of Ravenna to the east and the Lombards who held the territory to the west, the conditions in Bologna worsened. Later, taken from the Lombards by the Franks, Bologna was part of the Donation of Pepin given by Pepin the Short (r. 752-768) to the papacy in 756. When Charlemagne (r. 768-814) took Bologna in 773 after a long campaign, it became part of the Empire until the reign of Otto I (r. 936-973), who crossed the Alps for the conquest of Italy in 961 and ordered it to be a free city. From this time on, German influences and interests played an important part in the affairs of the Italian peninsula.

By the beginning of the eleventh century, Bologna, like other Italian towns, was becoming a prosperous commune. Many patrician families of Bologna, such as the Garisenda, the Ramponi, the Lambertacci, the Bianchetti, the Geremei and the Gozzadini, participated in the crusade in 1096. The city flag, with a red cross on a white field, dates from this period. But it was in the same century that the Investiture Contest, which was started by Gregory VII (r. 1073-1085) in 1075, affected Bologna's position because of its relations with the pope and the emperor. Besides, Frederick Barbarossa (r. 1155-1190) came down to Italy, though unsuccessfully, to press for his rights to control Italian communes. In the midst of these bitter divisions arose the factions of the pro-papal Guelfs and the pro-imperial Ghibellines. Pro-papal feelings were gaining ground. Bologna, a strong free city by the twelfth century, became a member of the Lombard League of 1167, which was a union for mutual defense against the emperor.

It should also be noted that from the eleventh through the thirteenth centuries Bologna experienced its first artistic flowering. C. M. Radding noted, "In the second half of the eleventh century the signs of a legal renaissance in Italy became unmistakable" (115). The origin of the University of Bologna is closely related to the rebirth of the study of law, which occurred in the eleventh century as a result of general prosperity and the rise of communes or, some have said, the Investiture

Contest. The other famous, but not nowadays widely accepted, interpretation was the rediscovery of the *Digest* itself around this time.

According to tradition, a certain Pepo, the first known teacher of Roman law at Bologna and supposedly Irnerius' teacher, headed a school in Bologna around 1080. It was, however, under Irnerius, or Wernerius, (c. 1050-c.1125) that the Bolognese school is believed to have really begun. The University of Bologna officially celebrated its nine hundredth anniversary in 1988. By the middle of the twelfth century students had flocked to *Lo Studio* of Bologna not only from the various regions of Italy, but even from the farthest parts of Europe.

In the middle of the twelfth century, instruction in canon law was introduced by Gratian, who is no longer widely accepted as a Camaldolese monk of the Bolognese monastery of SS. Nabor and Felix. Around 1150 he published the *Harmony of Discordant Canons* (*Concordia discordantium canonum*, or *Decretum Gratiani*), a textbook on Church law, whose significance was recently described as follows:

> In the hundreds of years since it first came into circulation in the middle of the twelfth century, this textbook, formally entitled the *Harmony of Discordant Canons*, has helped to shape the thinking of lawyers and legal scholars, clergy including popes from Alexander III to John Paul II, and, however indirectly, lay people of all standings. For the canonist, it was long the starting point of study, a fundamental text to be mastered and made an integral part of one's mental furniture. Its contents had to be reckoned with by merchant and theologian, politician and pastor. The modern scholar cannot genuinely understand the high medieval Church without coming to terms with its nature and its influence. (Gratian, ix; Katherine Christensen's introduction)

The flourishing Roman and canon law studies in Bologna established Bologna's reputation as the "learned one" (*La Dotta*). Some of the most famous lawyers connected with the university were, in addition to Irnerius and Gratian, Accursius, Rolandus and Sinibaldus de Fieschis who later sat on the papal throne as Innocent IV (r. 1243-1254). Outside the field of law, the university drew in such prominent figures as Dante, Petrarch, Bessarion, Copernicus and Erasmus of Rotterdam.

The victory of Bologna over Enzo, King of Sardinia and a natural son of the Emperor Frederick II (r. 1220-1250), at Fossalta in 1249 added political power to its intellectual prestige. King Enzo was imprisoned for twenty-three years until his death in 1272. His memory is preserved in Luigi Serra's picture *L'apoteosi di Irnerio* in the Hall of the Provincial Council, where the background shows the Bolognese army returning in triumph from Fossalta with the captive monarch seated in a war chariot. The predominance of the Guelf tendency was accentuated in 1274 when Rudolf of Habsburg, King of the Romans (r. 1273-1291) ceded his claims to the ancient Exarchate of Ravenna to the Holy See. In 1326 papal sovereignty, theoretically, was established over the city. It was renewed in 1360 by Cardinal Gil Alvarez Cabrillo de Albornoz (1302-1367).

It should be noted here that from the eleventh through the thirteenth century there was a religious renaissance in Bologna based on monasticism, which was clearly associated with the growth of the university. S. Procolo, SS. Nabor and Felix, S. Giovanni in Monte and S. Maria di Rena were built in the eleventh century. Mendicant orders were active from the thirteenth century. St. Dominic (1170-1221), founder of the Order of Friar Preachers, worked in Bologna and died there on August 6, 1221. He was buried in the Church of S. Domenico.

Although the first tower in the town was said to have been built in 910 by the Rodaldi family, it was in the twelfth century that most of the grand towers were built throughout the town. In the year 1257 no fewer than thirty-six were erected, thus making Bologna known not only as "the learned one," because of the university, but also as "the turreted one" (*La Turritta*). Today, the landmarks of the city are the twin "leaning towers," the sole survivors of more than two hundred such fortresses that once stood in central Bologna. The taller of the two, the Asinelli, is 318 feet (97 meters) high; the lower Garisenda tower, mentioned by Dante in canto XXXI of his *Inferno*, rises 155 feet (48 meters) and tilts notably.

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the conflict between the Guelfs and Ghibellines led to the weakening and eventual domination of the city by a series of *signori*. The Pepoli were succeeded by the Visconti of Milan and, after a short period of papal domination, by the Bentivoglio in 1446. It was on March 14, 1401 that Giovanni I of the Bentivoglio was elected Signore of Bologna. He was in theory as well as in fact lord of Bologna. He preferred the title *Giovanni of Bentivoglio, lord of Bologna, preserver of the peace and justice* (*Johannes de Bentivoglis bononie dominus ac pacis et justicie conservator*). On March 17, 1401, the Consiglio di Seicento recognized him as *gonfaloniere perpetuo*.

After his death in 1402, a brief reign of the Visconti followed. It was not until ten years later, in 1412, that one of Giovanni's sons, Antongaleazzo, became mature and powerful enough. A doctor in civil law from the University of Bologna, Antongaleazzo not only spent his energies on legal studies but also directed his attention towards a Bolognese lady, who gave birth to a son, named Annibale. Because of the pressure from Martin V (r. 1417-1431) and the papal league, Antongaleazzo was forced to exile himself to Naples in 1420. But his triumphant return to Bologna on December 4, 1435, disturbed the papal governor, who saw Antongaleazzo as a dangerous rival. His murder on December 23, 1435, in the Palazzo del Comune by a band of soldiers sent by the papal governor created a distrust of the papacy and a prejudice against ecclesiastical rule. But the personal presence of Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) in Bologna from April 1436 to January 1438 postponed its fall.

When Cusanus arrived in Bologna in 1437, the town was under the rule of the detested trio made up of Baldassare da Offida, the Podestà, Gaspare da Todi, head of the office of the *Bollete*, and the papal governor, Daniele, Bishop of Concordia. On September 8, 1438, one year after Cusanus' arrival, Annibale, who had not followed his father to Bologna but had remained in Naples, came back to his city. Handsome, charming, valiant and well-mannered, Annibale was welcomed by enthusiastic

multitudes and quickly became the people's idol until his assassination in 1445. Bologna in the middle of the fifteenth century was certainly in a turbulent period.

Cusanus' visit to Bologna was intimately related to the situation prevailing at the Council of Basel. On March 12, 1431, the day after his coronation, Pope Eugenius IV confirmed the convocation of the Council of Basel, which had been called by his predecessor, Martin V. But, in his bull *Quoniam alto* of December 18, 1431, he attempted to dissolve the council. The fathers of the council, who refused to obey the papal bull, were finally able to force the pope to withdraw his dissolution and to recognize the council in the bull *Dudum sacrum* of December 15, 1433. Then, because of the revival of republicanism supported by the Colonna family, Eugenius IV was forced to escape from Rome in disguise, down the Tiber by boat. He arrived in Florence on June 23, 1434, being received by the city with great jubilation. Shortly before his departure from Florence he consecrated the cathedral whose cupola had been completed by Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446) two years before. It was on April 22, 1436 that the pope moved to Bologna and stayed there until January 1438.

On May 7, 1437, the Council of Basel itself split into two factions over the site of a council of union with the Greeks, each adopting its own decree that selected a different site for this council. It is well known that at this time Cusanus abandoned the pro-conciliar majority and switched over to the pro-papal minority party. Three leaders of the minority, Bishop Pierre of Digne, Bishop Antonio of Oporto and Nicholas of Cusa, left Basel for Bologna on May 20, carrying a copy of the minority decree and President Giuliano Cesarini's letters to the Eastern Emperor and the Patriarch of Constantinople.

Arriving in Bologna at the end of May, the three leaders met with the pope and had the minority decree confirmed. Together with two apostolic nuncios, Archbishop Mark of Tarentaise and the Bishop of Corone, the Bishops of Digne and Oporto left Bologna on July 9 for Venice, but there is evidence that Cusanus was still in Bologna on July 17. Aside from submitting many petitions to Eugenius IV, what did Cusanus, Prior of the Church of Saints Martin and Severus at Münstermaifeld and doctor of canon law (*doctor decretorum*), do in Bologna? Did he visit the university at all? Did he meet famous professors or lawyers? Unfortunately, we have little information about his sojourn in Bologna. It is not known exactly when he left Bologna for Venice.

The first group of the papal delegation, consisting of the Bishops of Digne, Oporto and Corone, set sail from Venice for Crete on July 27; the second group, which included the Archbishop of Tarentaise and Cusanus, left Venice a little later in three great galleys.

Pope Julius II (r. 1503-1513) made Bologna part of the States of the Church in 1506. Papal governance continued until Bologna, which began to earn a third epithet, "the fat one" (*La Grassa*), because of its special fame in cuisine, was annexed to the Kingdom of Italy in 1859.

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18. Crete

After a formal split of the Council of Basel (1431-1449) on May 7, 1437, over the site of a council of reunion with the Greek Church, three leaders of the pro-papal minority party, Bishop Pierre of Digne, Bishop Antonio of Oporto and Nicholas of Cusa, left Basel for Bologna on May 20, carrying a copy of the minority decree and President Giuliano Cesarini's letters to the Emperor John VIII Palaeologus (r. 1425-1448) and Joseph II, Patriarch of Constantinople (r. 1416-1439). Accompanied by the apostolic nuncios Archbishop Mark of Tarentaise and Bishop Cristoforo of Corone, the Bishops of Digne and Oporto left Bologna for Venice on July 9. Unlike the delegation of the pro-council majority party which was to sail from Avignon, the bishops of the minority party were headed for Venice, where they were to start their voyage to Constantinople. Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) had made arrangements at his own expense for the preparation of four galleys in Venice and placed the fleet under the command of his nephew, Antonio Condulmaro. Nicholas of Cusa himself seems to have left Bologna for Venice around July 17.

The first group of the pro-papal delegation, consisting of the Bishops of Digne, Oporto and Corone, sailed from Venice for Crete sometime after July 25. A little later (*paulo post*) the second group, which included Archbishop Mark of Tarentaise and Cusanus, left Venice in three big galleys for Crete.

What was Crete like in those days? Why did Cusanus' group, as well as the advance group, stop over at Crete before going on to Constantinople? In mythology, it was in Crete that Zeus was born. The complicated history of Crete since the Neolithic Period (4000-3000 B.C.) cannot be told briefly. Since the excavations of Sir Arthur J. Evans (1851-1944) from 1900 onward, our knowledge of the Minoan era (2700-1100 B.C.) and its civilization has been greatly expanded due to the discovery of more pre-Minoan and Minoan remains. It is now believed that the coming of the Dorians to Crete around the twelfth century B.C. was not as sudden and destructive as was once thought. But the native population was reduced to the status of serfs under the Dorian kings and nobles. The island itself was on the whole isolated and inactive, until it reestablished contact with Syria, Phoenicia, Assyria and Egypt. In Greek tradition and history, Crete at the beginning of the Iron Age (1100-67 B.C.) was regarded as a land in which Dorian institutions were preserved in their greatest purity in the city-states, which were estimated to be about fifty in number. In his *Laws*, Plato makes a Cretan, Kleinias, one of the chief characters. Culturally, the Cretan contribution to pottery and sculpture during this period is particularly notable.

In the latter part of the period of Dorian domination, which consisted of the Classic Period (490-323 B.C.) and the Hellenistic Period (323-67 B.C.), there were continual feuds and wars among the city-states. As a result, the island came to be known as the haunt of lawless pirates, mercenaries and even "liars" (see Titus 1:12). It is also true that in the Hellenistic Period Cretan mercenaries were much sought after because of their courage. It was to settle the island's feuds that the Romans came, achieving their final conquest of the island in 67 B.C. by Quintus Caecilius Metellus (d. c. 55 B.C.). They stayed on, establishing Gortyna as the capital of Crete, which was annexed to Cyrenaica in West Africa. They carried out many public works and left their familiar marks all over the island. There was extensive construction at Gortyna, and an impressive settlement was established near Knossos. We note with particular interest the Apostle Paul's description in Acts 27:1-26 of his first landing in the autumn of A.D. 61 at "Fair Havens" (*Kali Limenes*), not far from the town of Lasaia, on the south coast of Crete, while on his way to Rome as a prisoner. According to tradition, he came back to Crete after he was released from prison in Rome in A.D. 64 and appointed his disciple Titus as the first Bishop of Gortyna in order to complete Paul's missionary work in Crete.

When the Roman Empire was divided into the western and eastern sections, Crete fell under the sway of Byzantium and was annexed to the Patriarchate of Constantinople under Constantine V (r. 741-775). The Byzantine Period (A.D. 395-824) witnessed the expansion of Christianity in Crete, with many basilicas established, including the Basilica of Ayios Titos at Gortyna. Towards the end of the first period of Byzantine history in Crete, however, the Arabs began to menace Crete, always considered "the most Greek" of the Greek islands. A captain named Abou Hafiz Omar came to Crete in 824 with his band of brigands. After destroying Gortyna, he overran the island and built a military stronghold at Rabdh-al-Khandah (Chandax or Kandak), which Europeans began to call Candia, a name that they eventually used for all of Crete.

The Arabs held Crete for 137 years (A.D. 824-961) despite repeated attempts by the Byzantines to recover "the big island," as it was called in the colloquial tongue. There was little colonizing during the Arab occupation, but considerable intermarriage and conversion took place. Finally, in 961 the Byzantine general Nikephoros Phokas recovered Crete, thereby starting the second Byzantine Period (A.D. 961-1204). Phokas went on to become Emperor of Byzantium, ruling as Nikephoros II (r. 963-969). To rehabilitate Crete, which had been devastated during the Arab occupation, Nikephoros II "imported" aristocratic Greek families from the Greek mainland, Christians from the eastern regions of the Byzantine Empire, including many Armenians, and European merchants. They were to reestablish the Byzantine presence in Crete and to renew the Christian character of the island.

But Byzantium fell during the Fourth Crusade (1202-1204). In 1204 Crete was "given" to Boniface, Count of Monferrato (1203-1253), who in turn sold it to the Venetians for a thousand silver marks. Thus began a long period of Venetian rule (1210-1669). In 1210 Jacopo Tiepolo was appointed first governor. The Venetians named the island and its capital city Candia (Iraklion or Herakleon) and began to organize, fortify and adorn their new territory. The native Cretans were never quiet for very long. Beginning in 1212, there were several bloody rebellions, despite savage repressions.

It was to this Crete under the Venetians that both of the pro-papal delegations came in 1437. The Bishops of Digne, Oporto and Corone arrived at Candia on August 15. Pope Eugenius IV had agreed to supply three hundred Cretan crossbowmen (*trecentis balistariis*) to the emperor in order to defend Constantinople against the Turkish threat during the emperor's forthcoming absence from the city to attend the Council of Ferrara-Florence (1438-1445). In his *Travels and Adventures*, the Castilian traveler Pero Tafur (1410?-1484?), who in 1435-1439 visited the Holy Land, Egypt, Cyprus, Rhodes, Constantinople and other European cities, wrote:

> The Turks have a vast dominion, but the country is very sterile and sparsely populated and mountainous. Greece, which they occupy, is a flat and fruitful land, although now it is depopulated by war, for the Greeks bear the whole burden of the struggle, and the Turks are ruthless and treat them with great cruelty. Indeed, it is difficult to believe how so great an army can be provisioned. (128)

After announcing the hire of the arbalesters, the bishops continued their voyage a few days later, reaching Constantinople on September 3. Arriving in three galleys at Candia a little later, the Archbishop of Tarentaise and Cusanus had what we would nowadays call a managerial problem of organizing and loading three hundred mercenaries on to three galleys and sailing with them to Constantinople, which they reached on September 24. It is well known that the Cretan archers had had a very good reputation since ancient times. Plato, in his *Laws* (625d), explains that the unevenness of the terrain in Crete necessitated the use of light bows and arrows rather than heavy arms and horses. In *The Peloponnesian War* (VI, 25.2), Thucydides speaks of "archers from Athens and from Crete"; Xenophon, in his

Anabasis ("The Persian Expedition"), states that Clearchus "arrived with a thousand hoplites and eight hundred Thracian peltasts and two hundred Cretan archers" as part of the soldiers on the march. Caesar also refers to "Cretan bowmen" and "archers from Crete" in his writings, such as *The Gallic War* and *The Alexandrian War*. Apparently, this tradition continued through the Middle Ages. It is recorded that in 1404 crossbowmen on Crete in the service of Venice drew a salary of twelve (Cretan) hyperpyra per month and archers on Crete nine (Cretan) hyperpyra per month (Bartusis, 152).

There are many questions which we would like answered about Cusanus' voyage to Crete. Why was Cusanus in the second group instead of the first? As many scholars have asked, how well did he understand the Greek language? Could he use it well enough to speak with the mercenaries aboard the Venetian galleys? Was the son of the Moselle bourgeois preoccupied only with the recruitment of the soldiers in Crete and a safe voyage to Constantinople? Did he take any interest in the beauty of the ocean and the island? As his galleys approached Crete from the north, unlike St. Paul's ship, which sailed "under the lee of" the island (Acts 27:7), did he note the splendor of the White Mountains (*Lefka Ori*) in western Crete? Or, like Petrarch, who, though undoubtedly impressed with the scenery from the summit of Mount Ventoux, sat down and read St. Augustine's *Confessions*, did Cusanus show little interest in Crete's natural charms? Was Jacob Burckhardt right when he said that the main achievement of the Renaissance man was the discovery of Man and Nature? Was Cusanus a semi- or half-Renaissance man? While at sea on his way back from Constantinople to Venice between November 27, 1437, and February 4, 1438, Cusanus, as he described in his famous letter to his esteemed teacher Giuliano Cesarini, had a dramatic experience of receiving "a heavenly gift from the Father of Lights," which led to one of his most important philosophical concepts, learned ignorance (*docta ignorantia*). Did his voyage to Constantinople via Crete in any way pave the way for the revelation?

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19. Spittal

In the bulls issued on December 24 and 29, 1450, Pope Nicholas V (r. 1379-1455) appointed Nicholas of Cusa papal legate to the German lands. His journey through Germany and the Low Countries, which covered about 2,800 miles and lasted sixteen months from December 1450 through April 1452, was no doubt one of the most important periods in Cusanus' life. In his lecture "Der deutsche Kardinal in deutschen Landen," Josef Koch stated: "The legation journey was the summit in the life of our great countryman" (*Die Legationsreise war der Gipfel im Leben unseres grossen Landsmannes* [1964, 3]). Although Cusanus was directed in the papal bull of December 29 also to go to Bohemia to mediate in disputes between Rome and the Hussites, he could not go because of unsafe conditions prevailing in the region.

In contrast to the several hundred who often followed traveling cardinals, only about thirty people accompanied Cusanus when he left Rome on December 31, 1450. He is said to have ridden on a mule. Before describing his itinerary briefly, we should point out that according to scholars such as Josef Koch and Erich Meuthen, who studied the legatine journey with care, there are still parts of the journey that are not definitely established. After crossing the Alps, he came to Spittal an der Drau and then proceeded to Wiener Neustadt by way of Salzburg, Mattsee and Passau. Vienna, his next stop, was followed by Melk, Lambach, Laufen an der Salzach and again Salzburg. Entering Germany, he visited Tegernsee(?), Munich, Andechs, Freising, Landshut, Regensburg, Eichstätt, Nuremberg, Bamberg, Würzburg, Erfurt, Halle, Magdeburg, Halberstadt, Wolfenbüttel, Braunschweig, Hildesheim, Hanover and Minden. Leaving Minden on August 9, 1451, he entered the Low Countries and visited Nordhorn, Deventer, Zwolle, Kampen, Utrecht, Amsterdam, Egmond, Haarlem, Leiden, Arnheim, Nijmegen, Roermond, Heinsberg and Maastricht. The remainder of the journey, which bounced back and forth like a ball on the map, took him to Aachen, St. Trond (Belgium), Hasselt, Liège, Malmedy, Trier, Kues, Mainz, Cologne, Aachen, Louvain, Brussels, Koblenz, Frankfurt, Aschaffenburg and finally, just before Easter, the undoubtedly tired cardinal entered his episcopal town of Brixen.

On this legatine journey, Cusanus presided over four provincial synods, at Salzburg, Magdeburg, Mainz and Cologne. He also held a diocesan synod in Bamberg. He and his party made over eighty visitations to monasteries and churches that lasted from less than a day to two weeks. In fact, Erich Meuthen has pointed out that Cusanus' itinerary was arranged in accordance with his great plan of reform and unification of the Church, which called for provincial and diocesan synods. Cusanus also delivered many sermons both in Latin and in German. In 1991 Rudolf Haubst (1912-1992) published a new list of Cusanus' sermons on the basis of the list compiled by Edmond Vansteenberghe (1881-1943) of forty-five sermons (1451-March 1452), published in 1920, and Josef Koch's list, including forty-five sermons and references to eleven non-extant sermons (1451-March 1452), published in 1942. Haubst gave in his list forty-eight extant sermons dating from

the beginning of 1451 to April 1452. In the two parts (3a and 3b) of volume 1 of the *Acta Cusana*, Meuthen collected documents related to the journey.

Turning our attention to Spittal an der Drau, Cusanus' first stop after crossing the Alps, it is not known by what route he and his party reached the town from Italy. How Hannibal (247-182 B.C.), with twelve thousand African and eight thousand Spanish infantry, six thousand cavalry and all thirty-seven of his elephants, descended into Italy on the way to Ticino, Trebbia, Lake Trasimene and Cannae has been discussed endlessly, but, where he crossed the Alps is still an open question. Although Cusanus' route was not quite the same way as Hannibal's, the cardinal's itinerary deserves closer study. The eastern part of the Alps, through which Cusanus and his party traveled in the midst of winter in 1450-1451, had had since ancient times many passes. The Romans were the great builders of roads in the Alps. During Cusanus' time, Duke Sigmund of the Tyrol, Cusanus' archenemy, was to improve the Alpine highways considerably.

It was assumed by authorities such as Johannes Uebinger (1854-1912) and Edmond Vansteenberghe that Cusanus first came to Brixen from Verona and that he then proceeded to Spittal via the Pusterthal. The itinerary (see the map in this volume) is also based on this old assumption, although Ekkehard Meffert, from whose book *Nikolaus von Kues* (65) the map was reproduced, was uncertain about the initial stage of Cusanus' journey. He used a dotted line between Verona and Spittal. But in a fairly recent study Erich Meuthen, following Josef Koch's suggestion, has pointed out that an extant document in Treviso demonstrates Cusanus' presence in Verona on January 18, before he went to Spittal, and that he and his party could have crossed the Alps at the Pontebba pass in the Canale valley, known during the Middle Ages as the *via per Canales*, and then gone up first to Villach and then to Spittal through the Drava valley. As J. E. Tyler pointed out in his study *The Alpine Passes*, "the most important route leading into Carinthia from the plains of Venetia was that which crossed the Pontebba pass (2,615 ft.)" (135).

When Cusanus and his party reached Spittal on January 25, 1451, it was a small village whose existence and survival depended not only on agriculture, but also on traffic and trade. Lying at the confluence of the Lieser and the Drava (Drau) Rivers near the Lake of Millstatt, Spittal traces its origins back to Celtic times. But the expansion of the town as a resting place and a center of traffic took place as soon as long-distance commerce and trade began to develop in the Middle Ages. Spittal's importance as a junction of many thoroughfares (*Pusterthal-Tauernbahn, Katschbergstrasse, Möller- and Drautalstrasse*) was easy to recognize. In the Carolingian period the oldest cloister in Carinthia was built at Morzbichi near Spittal, and later turned into a parish church. In place of the ancient Teurnia, which had flourished during the time of the Roman Noricum at a site about 2.6 miles northwest of Spittal, but which was destroyed by the Slavs around 590, the Counts of Ortenburg, brothers Otto II and Hermann I, established a hospital (*hospitale*) with a chapel on the left bank of the Lieser River. The foundation document, executed by Archbishop Albert III of Salzburg (r. 1168-1177), was dated April 11, 1191. A settlement also began to develop around the same period on the right bank of the river. In 1236 the Counts of Ortenburg erected a tower in the midst of the

settlement. By 1242 mention was made in a document of a market that was situated on the right bank. A bridge was constructed across the river in 1263.

The market privilege of 1403 mentioned the cessation of public strife in the market, which showed a greater degree of civic control and community endeavor to maintain peace and order. After the extinction of the Counts of Ortenburg in 1418, Spittal was handed over to the Counts of Cilli, who controlled the town from 1420 to 1456. It is recorded that in 1450 there was a Peter Rassegger who served as magistrate for the Cilli in Spittal (*Amtmann des von Cilli zu Spittal*). In 1478 the Turks destroyed the town. After a period of strife, control of the town fell into the hands of strongmen, who ceded the governorship of Spittal on March 10, 1524 to Count Gabriel of Salamanca (d. 1539), who was treasurer to Archduke Ferdinand. The Castle (*Schloss*) Porcia, perhaps the best-known building in contemporary Spittal, with its beautiful arcaded courtyard and its graceful stairs and balustrades, was built for the archduke from 1527 to 1597. The *Haubtplatz* is now bounded by elegant sixteenth- and seventeenth-century houses. But visiting the town in 1451, Cusanus could not have foreseen these later developments.

While in Spittal, Cusanus sent letters to the Cistercian monasteries of the Salzburg Province, summoning their abbots to Wiener Neustadt for a meeting on February 22, 1451. He would lay out his plans to reform the Church at the beginning of his grand legatine journey.

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20. Magdeburg

After leaving Spittal an der Drau sometime after Monday, January 25, 1451, Nicholas of Cusa went on to Salzburg, Mattsee, Passau, Wiener Neustadt, Vienna, Melk, Lambach, Salzburg (again), Munich, Andechs, Freising, Landshut, Regensburg, Eichstätt, Nuremberg, Bamberg, Würzburg, Erfurt and Halle. Most of these places were located within the Salzburg church province. His activities at these places in the initial stages of his legation deserve, and have received, close attention. But we shall focus our attention here on Magdeburg, Cusanus' next stop after Halle.

As Cusanus and his party entered Magdeburg, "capital of a church province that encompassed most of northern Germany" (Sullivan, 401), and were welcomed with pomp and ceremony by Archbishop Friedrich III von Beichlingen (r. 1445-1464), the clergy and the townspeople on the morning of Sunday, June 13, 1451, a new phase of his legation began. Magdeburg, whose monastic reforms, as well as renovation of life among clergy and laity, were making the happiest progress under the auspices of the popular and respected Archbishop Friedrich, went out to receive the son of a bourgeois family from the Mosel region who was coming to the ancient town as cardinal-legate.

First mentioned as "Magadoburg" in 805 in one of Charlemagne's capitularies, Magdeburg was founded by the emperor in about the same year. Situated on the west bank of the Elbe River, eighty miles (128 km) west-southwest of Berlin, at a point where the river encircles several islands, Magdeburg lay in Magdeburg's fertile plain (*Börde*), one of the most fertile areas in all Germany. As the Germans thrust eastward from the Elbe from the tenth century onward, the city under Emperor Otto I (r. 936-973) became an outpost for the colonization of the eastern territories. This was the most important fortified site on the German side of the Elbe and Saale frontier with the Slavs. In the designs and dreams of Otto I, the city was to become a *Roma nova*.

In 937 Otto I founded the Abbey of Mauritius (Maurice), which was elevated to a cathedral in 968. Against the opposition of Archbishop Wilhelm of Mainz (r. 945-968) and Bishop Bernward of Halberstadt (r. 993-1022), Otto I established an archiepiscopal see at Magdeburg. The construction of the cathedral began in 1209 and continued until 1520. Among the many treasures of art in the interior of the cathedral, especially in the ambulatory, are the alabaster figures of St. Maurice and the Risen Christ, the Gothic choir stalls and the seated figures of the Emperor Otto I and his wife, Editha (Edith). In the Paradise Doorway can be seen figures of the Wise and Foolish Virgins (c. 1245-1250), based on Mathew: 25:1-13.

As the marketplace and the cathedral grew up on the west bank of the Elbe, the archbishops of Magdeburg, including such famous figures as Norbert von Xanten (r. 1126-1134), founder of the Premonstratensian Order, and Wichmann von Seeburg (r. 1152/54-1192), ruled a large territory as princes of the Holy Roman Empire. But as the relationship of the archiepiscopal see and the city became increasingly tense and adversarial, the city of Magdeburg obtained from them a charter which became the model for hundreds of medieval town charters in Germany, Austria, Bohemia

and Poland. Today, Magdeburg is an important inland port at the intersection of the Mittelland Canal and the Elbe-Havel Canal and lies on the Elbe at the eastern edge of the Magdeburg *Börde*. With a population of about 288,515 in 2005, it is the capital of the Land of Saxony-Anhalt. Famous people who once lived or worked there in medieval and recent times include Hroswitha von Gandersheim (d. c. 1002), Mechthild von Magdeburg (1207-1282) and Georg Philipp Telemann (1681-1767). The musician is especially well remembered by the people of Magdeburg, as a monument, a museum and other cultural institutions bearing his name testify.

How did Cusanus find Magdeburg when he arrived? On Friday, June 11, 1451, the cardinal reached the Benedictine cloister of Berge outside Magdeburg where negotiations with the mayor and magistrates of the city of Magdeburg took place, because the cardinal wished to enter the city with many outlawed persons in his company, against the wishes of the city authorities. When permission was not given, according to the *Magdeburger Schöppenchronik*, he became angry (*des wart de cardinal tornich*). The cloister of Berge had been reformed under the influence of the Bursfeld congregation and was under the rule of Abbot Hermann Müller at that time. It is not clear, as Erich Meuthen pointed out in his study of the legation, whether Cusanus stayed at the abbey during his sojourn in Magdeburg from June 13 to June 28 or if he used the abbey only at the beginning and the end of his Magdeburg days.

After a compromise was reached about Cusanus' unwanted followers, Cusanus and his party were finally able to make their entrance into the city and its cathedral on the morning of Pentecost, June 13. In the following two weeks Cusanus was active in Magdeburg, devoting the first week mostly to preaching and the visitation of religious houses and the second to holding a provincial synod. Extant records show that he delivered five sermons at the New Market on June 14, 15 and 16, drawing large numbers of people. On June 18, he convened a provincial synod in the choir of the cathedral, presiding jointly with Archbishop Friedrich and preaching at the synod. But only two of five suffragan bishops of the province, Bishop Stephan Bodecker of Brandenburg (r. 1421-1459) and Bishop Johannes Bose of Merseburg (r. 1431-1463), attended the synod in person. Two dioceses, Zeitz-Naumburg and Havelberg, sent only deputies, who were refused admission. There were, however, a substantial number of monastic officials present, including Abbot Johann Hagen of Bursfeld and Abbot Heinrich Barnthen of Marienrode near Hildesheim. It is not reported whether or not Cusanus paid any attention to the Wise and Foolish Virgins who were looking down from above in the cathedral.

All in all, as Josef Koch demonstrated, Cusanus released thirteen reform edicts during the whole legation, numbered 1 to 13 by Koch. At the synod of Magdeburg, he published eleven of them. Five of them (1, 3, 4, 8, 11) had been issued previously, but the other six (2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 12) were new. Edicts 1 and 5, which he issued on June 19, dealt with the prayers for the pope and for the bishop of the diocese to be said during Mass (*Quoniam dignum esse dinoscitur*) and the prohibition of repayment in connection with admission to a canonry. The legate issued Edicts 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 11 and 12 on June 25. They covered such diverse subjects as good conduct in church (*Decet demum Domini*), prohibition of establishing new brotherhoods (*Sanctorum patrum*

instituta), prohibition of financial abuses in the conferment of benefices (*Cum ex iniuncto*), prohibition of the use of interdicts to collect personal debts *(Humerus nostris*), introduction of the reform of the orders (*Quoniam sanctissimus dominus noster*), obliging the Jews to wear special marks *(Quoniam ex iniuncto officio*) and the naming of deputies to implement the provisions of the synod (*Plures hiis diebus*) (*Acta Cusana*, I, 3a, 947-957). On the final day of the synod, June 28, came Edict 6 (*Quamvis sancti patres*) condemning the widespread vice of concubinage among the clergy of Magdeburg (*Acta Cusana*, I, 3a, 962).

The cardinal, who had published his edicts very sparingly in Salzburg (1, 4, 8, 11) and Bamberg (1, 3, 4, 8, 11), must have felt, as some scholars point out, that at the synod of Magdeburg which he and his supporter-friend Archbishop Friedrich III ran, he was in a position to be more assertive. There was little doubt that he had to take into account the attitudes of both the spiritual and the secular authorities as he contemplated reform.

Cusanus left Magdeburg on Monday, June 28 for Halberstadt after naming Prior Johann Busch (1399-c. 1480) of the Augustinian abbey in Neuwerk near Halle and Paul Busse, Prior of St. Moritz, as visitors for the Augustinian religious houses in the church provinces of Magdeburg and Mainz. All in all, Cusanus' stay in Magdeburg marked an important milestone in his long journey across Germany and the Low Countries in his serious attempts to reform the Church.

[Dr. Hans Gerhard Senger of the Thomas Institute, University of Cologne, kindly provided the author with a detailed "Visiting Programme" in preparation for the latter's visit in the summer of 1994 to many cities, including Magdeburg, located in the northern part of the region Cusanus visited in his legation journey.]

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21. Wilsnack and Halberstadt

At the Provincial Synod of Magdeburg, which Cardinal-Legate Nicholas of Cusa convened on June 18, 1451, and presided over with Archbishop Friedrich III von Beichlingen (r. 1445-1464), Heinrich Tocke (1390-1453) delivered an address in which he attacked the pilgrimages to Wilsnack to venerate the “Bleeding Hosts.” Born in Bremen, Tocke entered the University of Erfurt in 1401, taught as professor of theology at the university from 1418 onwards and became, after some other appointments elsewhere, a canon of the cathedral chapter at Magdeburg in 1426. He attended the Council of Basel from 1432 to 1437 and may have met Cusanus there. In his speech, Tocke stated that when he personally examined the hosts at Wilsnack in 1443, there was nothing red in them and that the cult was a deception contrived by the clergy. He went on to criticize Cusanus for his sale of indulgences in Magdeburg as papal legate. It was, according to Tocke, “a clever way of extorting money from the foreigners” (*subtilis modus extorquendi pecunias a barbaris*). As is well known, this was a common outcry heard in Germany at that time and later,

with an increase in the number of the *gravamina* against the papacy. When Cusanus heard Tocke, what went through his mind and how did he react?

The veneration of the Bleeding Hosts of Wilsnack had begun in 1383 after priest Johannes Kabuz alleged that he had discovered three undestroyed hosts covered with blood in the altar of the burned village church of Wilsnack. The practice had reached its height of popularity by 1451, drawing large numbers of pilgrims not only from Germany, but also from Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, the Scandinavian countries and elsewhere. Despite criticisms from Jan Hus (1374-1415), Tocke and the theological faculties of the Universities of Prague, Erfurt and Leipzig, there was no sign of its decline. Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) approved it in 1447, and the next pope, Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455), also gave his official approval in 1453.

In view of the popularity of the cult and of the urgency of its criticisms, it is not surprising that Cusanus decided, as Erich Meuthen has shown, to go down the Elbe River about eighty-one miles (130 km) from Magdeburg to visit Wilsnack. At least two Dutch historians, Cornelius von Zandvliet (d. c.1461/62) and Adriaan von Oudenbosch, testified to Cusanus' presence at Wilsnack sometime between June 21 and 25. What did he think of the pilgrims flowing into Wilsnack from many parts of Europe? Although he returned to Magdeburg and issued seven reform decrees on June 25 and one each on June 26 and 28, none of these had anything to do with Wilsnack directly.

It is not known when Cusanus and his party reached Halberstadt after leaving Magdeburg on June 28, 1451. Since Halberstadt is only about twenty-eight miles (45 km) southwest of Magdeburg, the trip must have been fairly easy. They were certainly in Halberstadt by the beginning of July. A big fire of 1440 had destroyed a large part of the city, and many people had died. Whether the city had fully recovered from the disaster is not clear. On July 3, shortly after arriving at Halberstadt, Cusanus issued two reform decrees. The records also show that he preached on Sunday, July 4, probably at the Cathedral Square.

But it was on Monday, July 5, the last day of his stay in Halberstadt that he issued one of his most controversial decrees of his legation journey. The decree, *Hoc maxime ad nostrum*, charged all archbishops, bishops and priests in the whole of Germany not to allow the cult of Bleeding Hosts to continue in their provinces, although he did not mention Wilsnack specifically. This may indicate that he did not wish to contradict Pope Nicholas V's bull of 1447. Declaring that the people took the red spots of the bread for the blood of Christ and that the priests not only allowed but actively encouraged this belief for monetary gain, Cusanus insisted that every instance of deceiving simple folk must be stopped. The legate vowed that, if the practice continued after three warnings, those responsible would be excommunicated and their territories placed under interdict.

Halberstadt, the town in which Cusanus chose to issue this reform decree, was the seat of a bishopric as early as the ninth century. For hundreds of years it was one of northern Germany's most active commercial centers, trading mostly in linen and woolen goods. A bishopric was first established by Charlemagne (742-814) at Seligenstadt (now Osterwieck near Halberstadt) and was transferred in 818 to Halberstadt, located in the Harz foothills and on the Holtemme River.

Under the first Bishop Hildegrim I (d. 827), the bishopric obtained immunity from Louis the Pious (r. 814-840). The bishop is said to have laid the foundation stones of the cathedral of St. Stephen. Important bishops who ruled Halberstadt before the beginning of the eleventh century were Haymo (r. 840-853), Hildegrim II (r. 853-886), Sigmund I (r. 894-923), Bernhard (r. 923-968), Hildeward (r. 968-996) and Arnulf (r. 996-1023). The Carolingian cathedral was consecrated by Bishop Hildegrim II in 857, but was demolished in 965. The breakup of the Carolingian Empire and other political factors were responsible for the fall.

When Emperor Otto I (r. 962-973) decided in 968 to make Magdeburg, which he liked, an archbishopric, the hopes of the higher clergy in Halberstadt for making their own town the seat of an archbishopric were dashed. They had opposed the emperor's plans strongly, but in vain. Not everything was lost for Halberstadt, however. Emperor Otto III (r. 996-1002) granted to Bishop Hildeward the market, toll and coin rights for the region. Manifesting a strong desire to compete with Magdeburg, the Bishopric of Halberstadt built under Bishop Bernhard a new cathedral in merely twenty-seven years, consecrating it in 992 under Hildeward. In 998, under Bishop Arnulf, Halberstadt was elevated to the status of a city by charter.

Reflecting the city's growth and prosperity from the eleventh century, the construction of the Church of Our Lady (*Liebfrauenkirche*) began in 1005 to the west of the cathedral and at the end of the Cathedral Square. But the Ottonian cathedral and the city were destroyed by Henry the Lion (1129-1195) in 1179. Then the news reached Halberstadt that Magdeburg had begun building its new dome in 1209. Stirred by a strong sense of pride and competition, the rebuilding of the cathedral in Halberstadt began in 1240 with the bases of two towers. A second stage of the construction extended from 1354 to 1402. It was only completed in 1491 after two hundred and fifty-one years of construction.

One of the most notable bishops around this time was Albrecht von Rickmesdorf (r. 1366-1390), who was one of the founders of the University of Vienna and who served as first rector of the university in 1365. A native of the city, he was called to Halberstadt as bishop in 1366 by Pope Urban V (r. 1362-1370). During this period, at the southeastern margin of the ecclesiastical precinct, the town hall (*Rathhaus*) was erected and the marketplace grew up in the fourteenth century.

How much of the impact of these changes in one of the key commercial and religious centers of medieval Germany Cusanus could have observed is not clear. Nine of the towns in Lower Saxony—Brunswick, Goslar, Lüneburg, Hameln, Hildesheim, Göttingen, Magdeburg, Hannover and Bremen—had been members of the Hanseatic League since the middle of the fourteenth century. Halberstadt, like other towns in Lower Saxony, did not join the league until 1426. But it was, after all, convenient commercially to be a member of the league. Economic and commercial activities must have picked up once the city joined. But Cusanus' stay there was rather short. He and his party left for their next stop, Wolfenbüttel, on July 5 or 6, 1451.

In 1479 Archbishop Ernst of Magdeburg (r. 1475-1513) became administrator of the Bishopric of Halberstadt. The Reformation came to Halberstadt in 1541. Martin

Luther certainly knew the importance of Halberstadt when he wrote in *An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation* (1520): "Let us beware! Soon Mainz, Magdeburg and Halberstadt will gently pass into the hands of Rome." Halberstadt was secularized and placed under the control of the Elector of Brandenburg in 1648. It was part of Napoleon's Westphalian Kingdom, created for his brother Jerome, from 1807 to 1815. Then it was given to Prussia. A large part of the city, about eighty percent, was destroyed on April 8, 1945. After a tremendous amount of restoration, which began in 1952, the twin-towered cathedral, one of the most noteworthy examples of German Gothic, now dominates the town and remains the chief attraction, with its famous collection of medieval liturgical vestments, religious vessels and tapestries. Halberstadt celebrated the one thousandth anniversary of the Cathedral Square in 1996. The German government issued a special commemorative stamp to mark the occasion.

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22. Havelberg

When Nicholas of Cusa was in Magdeburg during his legation journey of 1451 to 1452, he probably visited Wilsnack. Did the cardinal also visit Havelberg, which was only twelve miles from Wilsnack and had been the site of the bishopric since the tenth century?

Located between the Elbe and Havel Rivers in the northwestern part of Brandenburg, Germany, the Prignitz region (*Landkreis Prignitz*) was particularly influenced by the movements of Germanic tribes in ancient times. The meeting point of the Elbe and the Havel played an especially important role as a linchpin in the development of the region. After the Germanic tribes left the area in the sixth century, the Slavs arrived and established their two holy places: one on the Harlung Mountain in Brandenburg, where Triglov was worshipped, and another in Havelberg, where Jarovit, a "spring god," was enshrined.

In 928 Heinrich I (r. 919-936) took the city of Brandenburg in the region of Heveller. After the battle of Lenzen on September 4, 929, Havelberg became important as a bridgehead for the expansion of the Germans into the east Elbe region where the Slavs had settled. Otto I (r. 936-973) established the Bishopric of Havelberg on October 1, 948 (or May 9, 946?), naming Dudo the first bishop. The mission district in the region was placed under the leadership of Gero and Hermann Billung, to Christianize the Slavs. Havelberg celebrated its one thousand and fiftieth year in 1998.

As a result of a great revolt of the Slavic tribes in 983, which began in Havelberg, the Germans were driven out of Havelberg and Brandenburg, and the mission district was destroyed by the Slavic army. Thietmar (Diethmer) von Merseburg (975-1085), author of perhaps the most important chronicle of his time, wrote: "The outrage began on July 29, with the murder of the garrison …" (Merseburg, 141).

Only in the twelfth century could the Germans return to the bishopric. Otto von Bamberg (1060/61-1139), missionary of Pommern, lived as a guest of Prince Wirikind in the Slavic settlement "Havelberg." In 1129 the Praemonstratensian monk Anselm was named Bishop of Havelberg. But it was only in 1147 that Bishop Anselm (r. 1129-1155) was able to set foot in his diocese as a papal legate. In 1150 King Konrad III (r. 1138-1152) officially authorized the Bishopric of Havelberg. The cathedral, the building of which began around 1150, was consecrated in 1170 in the presence of religious and secular dignitaries. After the destruction of the cathedral

by fire in 1279, a rebuilt structure was consecrated in 1330 by Bishop Dietrich I (r. 1325-1341). Havelberg thus reached a period of stability and prosperity.

No doubt the most important development around this time was the beginning of the veneration of the miracle-working blood in nearby Wilsnack. On August 16, 1383, after a Prignitz noble Heinrich von Bülow burned down ten villages, including Wilsnack, Johannes Kabuz (Cahlbuez, Calbuz), priest of the village church, claimed that he found three undamaged hosts with red blood drops on the altar of the burned village church. When informed about it, Bishop Dietrich II (r. 1370-1385) of Havelberg visited Wilsnack and confirmed the miracle. In the Prignitz region, where the natural religions of the Slavs still had strong roots, there had been pilgrimage places, such as Marienfliezz near Stepenit (since 1231), St. Annenkirch in All-Krüssow and Beelitz (1247). But Wilsnack was something new, and it quickly began to draw pilgrims not only from northern Germany, but also other European countries, including Scandinavia.

By 1384 Pope Urban VI (r. 1378-1389) had issued an indulgence for those who visited the shrine of Wilsnack as pilgrims. Other bishops followed suit. Between 1384 and 1401 the construction of the mighty *Wunderblutkirche*, St. Nikolai, was carried out by Bishops Dietrich II and Johannes II Wöpelitz (r. 1385-1401) of Havelberg. The enormous amount of money that was needed for the reconstruction of the church was raised through the sale of indulgences. By 1395 Bishop Wöpelitz had made the property and possessions of the church of Wilsnack so much part of the Bishopric of Havelberg that all incomes from indulgences flowed into the treasury of the bishopric. As a result, new episcopal residences could be built in Wittstock, Havelberg and Plattenburg.

Strong critics of the Bleeding Hosts of Wilsnack, such as Heinrich Tocke (1390-1453), the theological faculties of Prague, Erfurt and Leipzig, and eventually Martin Luther, appeared. Disputes over the veneration involved the Franciscans, who generally supported it, and the Dominicans, who criticized it. In addition, the controversy was rooted in political, territorial and religious contests involving the Archbishop of Magdeburg, Elector of Brandenburg and Bishop of Havelberg.

It is known that Wilsnack became one of the most famous and popular pilgrimage places in medieval Europe, coming only after Jerusalem, Rome and Santiago de Compostela. According to one source, in some years it drew the largest number of pilgrims. Many hotels and hostels, such as the Doppelter Adler, Goldener Adler, Löwe, Bär, Neuer Mann, Weisses Ross, Roter and Schwarzer Hahn, Weisse Gans, Ochsenkopf, Pflegel, Roter Ziegel, Windmühle and Hirsch, sprang up. Those pilgrims who came from Berlin and its environs took the "Heiligweg" and reached Wilsnack via Tegel, Flatow, Fehrbellin, Linum, Hakenberg, Garz, Wusterhusen (Dosse), Kytitz and Gross Leppin. Those who came from Scandinavia left their ships at Lübeck where, guided by a road sign that still stands at Roekstrasse, they headed for Wilsnack. A copy of the sign was erected near the Anna Chapel in Havelberg around 1930. Wearing the famous pilgrim badge, the pilgrims went home via various routes. If, as is said, the number of pilgrims reached one hundred thousand a month in spring, it is curious that only forty-five copies of the badge have thus far been found in Scandinavia, northern Germany, the Low Countries

and England. Perhaps its shape and fragility have something to do with the small number.

On St. Bartholomew's Day (August 24) the crowd was especially large. Matthaeus Ludecus, who in his youth witnessed the deluge of pilgrims, wrote:

> For the people, un-skeptical from the beginning due to the prompting and urging of the accursed Satan, flocked together in huge crowds from many regions and nations as if they had been put under a spell, robbed of their reason, and had lost their senses. In the middle of their work in the fields as well as at home they suddenly and unexpectedly got the idea to drop what they were doing and hurry as fast as they could to Wilsnack. They brought along in great numbers the tools with which they do their work—pitchforks, shovels, and similar instruments—and left them there. The huge influx of people on the Day of Saint Bartholomew the Apostle was larger than at any other time during the entire year.
>
> (*Denn die Leute im anfangen / ungezweiuelt aus eingeben vnd antreiben des vermaledeiten Satans / so heuffig vnd dicke aus vielen orten vnd Nationen zugelauffen sind / als wenn sie jrer vernunft beraubet bezeubert / vnd aller ding vunsinnig gewesen weren / Mitten in jrer arbeit auff dem Felde / oder aber in den Heusern / iste jnen plötzlich vnd vnuersehens ankomen / das sie die arbeit ligen lassen vun in grosser eil gen der Wilsnagk gelauffen vnd das fenige / damit sie die arbeit verrich: et / als Forckengabelon / Schauffeln vnd dergleichen instrumenta, in grosser anzal mit sic bracht und daselbst gelassen haben … Auff den tag S. Bartholomei Apostoli ist maximus concursus der grösseste zulauff wie sonsten durchs gantze Jar auff ein mal night geschehen dahin gewesen.*) (Fol. B[iiii], r-v)

Did Cusanus really visit Wilsnack between June 22 and June 24, 1451, and see numerous pilgrims arriving and leaving? What did he think of them? Did he have time to visit Havelberg as well?

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23. Hildesheim

Donald D. Sullivan

By early July 1451, Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa had reached close to the halfway point of his papal reform legation through the German Empire. By July 8 his small party was approaching the gates of the resplendent West Saxon town of Hildesheim. Located some twenty-nine miles southwest of Brunswick, which the cardinal had visited the previous day, Hildesheim had a long and distinguished history. Over the next several days (July 8-21), one of the longer sojourns of the legation, Cusanus would conduct an intense round of pastoral, reformist and diplomatic activities designed to renew and restore the spiritual vitality of the region.

Set beside a small river that flowed from the nearby Harz Mountains, Hildesheim had emerged as a significant urban community. It had originated in the eighth century as a modest commercial settlement straddling the trade route between Cologne and Magdeburg. During the Carolingian Frankish wars waged after 772 to subdue the pagan Saxons, Benedictine monks from Reims had built a small chapel on a hill to the south of the river. There Saxon converts were baptized and a permanent Roman church presence established. Sometime between 815 and 822 Charlemagne's son Louis the Pious (r. 814-840) made Hildesheim a bishopric and a suffragan see of Mainz.

As the Saxon populace was gradually Christianized, the Hildesheim diocese flourished under a succession of able leaders, above all the eleventh-century bishops Bernward, Godehard and Hezilo. Through their patronage major Romanesque basilicas arose, including the great Cathedral Church of St. Mary. Commissioned by Bishop Bernward (r. 993-1022) in the early eleventh century, the cathedral was placed at the elevated site of the original eighth-century chapel. The new church had three naves and at its entrance two massive bronze doors that depicted in relief scenes from Biblical accounts of Adam and Eve.

Further, against Viking and Slavic marauders, Bernward had walled and fortified the cathedral hill and the other areas of the *Altstadt* around the marketplace. In the later eleventh century, Bishop Hezilo (r. 1054-1079) rebuilt the cathedral-citadel after its destruction by fire. In the new central nave he added a wooden ceiling painted with scriptural scenes for the edification of the faithful. On another hill at the northern edge of town, Bishop Bernward had also begun a second Romanesque basilica, the Church of St. Michael, and a monastery specifically for the Benedictine monks he so greatly admired. As completed under Bernward's successor Godehard (r. 1022-1038), St. Michael's was unique, with its double nave and its own painted wooden ceiling showing sacred scenes relating to the biblical tree of Jesse. These and other ambitious projects, both architectural and sculptural, gave rise to Hildesheim's renown as the "Nuremberg of the north."

In the early thirteenth century the Hohenstaufen Emperor Frederick II (r. 1220-1250) acknowledged the growing political importance of the region by recognizing the diocesan leader as a prince-bishop with official secular as well as ecclesiastical

authority in the diocese. The prince-bishops of Hildesheim would be drawn henceforth from the highest levels of the German nobility. In 1367 Hildesheim joined the Hanseatic trading alliance, further enhancing its economic prosperity.

Yet the burgeoning wealth and power of the prince-bishops of Hildesheim contributed to sometimes violent internal disputes and open warfare with rival secular powers, including neighboring prince-bishops. The spiritual condition of the diocese suffered accordingly. Lax and otherwise unworthy officials in the cathedral chapters and in many of the monastic communities tolerated and even colluded in the slackening of institutional discipline, including the observance of clerical vows. For example, as a precondition for taking office it was sometimes necessary for abbots to pledge not to press serious reform upon their fellow monks. In any case, scandal had become more frequent, especially under the inept, corrupt administration of Prince-Bishop Johann III (r. 1398-1424). Although his successor Magnus von Sachsen-Lauenburg (r. 1424-1464) was much more capable and amenable to reform in the diocese, little had changed by the time Cardinal-Legate Cusanus and his small party approached Hildesheim in 1451.

Met at the territorial borders by Bishop Magnus, Cusanus professed himself amazed to see a prelate armed from head to foot and accompanied by military vassals and a large entourage. Magnus and his mounted warriors escorted Cusanus through narrow, winding streets strewn with fresh roses to the Cathedral of St. Mary, where Mass was celebrated jointly by the legate and the prince-bishop, who by now had exchanged his armor for soutane and surplus.

Magnus was the scion of a north German family of ducal rank. Since his accession in 1424 he had attended well to the territorial interests of the jurisdiction and, despite appearances, he had even cooperated to some extent in local reform endeavors such as those conducted by the Augustinian Provost Johann Busch (1399-c. 1480). But Magnus was now over seventy and had not been able to counter the many secularizing influences evident in the cathedral chapters and the monastic houses of his diocese.

By the mid-fifteenth century, Hildesheim had a population of about twelve thousand, which included several hundred clergy spread across the town in four monasteries, a convent and four chapters of cathedral priests. The major clerical orders were represented, including the friars, the Benedictines, the Cistercians and the Augustinians. The work of reforming the Augustinian establishment had since 1440 been effectively taken in hand by the zealous Augustinian Provost Johann Busch, who now accompanied the cardinal-legate. But much remained to be done elsewhere in the diocese.

During his stay in Hildesheim Cusanus preached on at least four occasions, granted a number of Jubilee indulgences and with the concurrence of his host the prince-bishop promulgated seven or possibly eight of the thirteen major reform decrees of his legation. Included was a renewed prohibition of the cult of the Bleeding Hosts, of priestly concubinage and a condemnation of lay brotherhoods, which had become quite popular in the Hildesheim parishes. Also targeted was the use of interdicts by high churchmen to collect personal debts, an abuse particularly

evident in northern Germany. Finally, Cusanus insisted on the continuing sequestration of the Hildesheim Jewish population in their ghettos.

Although unable to release his decree on monastic reform, Cusanus determined to confront some of the more blatant violations reported to him. At the Benedictine Abbey of St. Michael's, for instance, reform efforts had long foundered because of the inveterate opposition of successive abbots. The current superior Heinrich Waltorp had procured his position in 1448 through simony. In the three years since he had done nothing to change the state of affairs in an abbey in which the monks, including himself, reputedly lived like laymen, in particular disregard of the vow of poverty. Furthermore, Waltorp lacked even a rudimentary knowledge of Latin, the language of the liturgy. When he was unable to understand the simple colloquial Latin the legate addressed to him, Waltorp decided to resign at once. In Waltorp's place, Cusanus appointed a monk of the model Bursfeld Congregation of Benedictines. This reform tradition endured at St. Michael's through succeeding abbots to the onset of the Protestant Reformation.

Meanwhile, across town at the Benedictine monastery of St. Godehard, Cusanus was received with waving banners and ringing bells. But he was not deceived. A local abbot had done nothing to implement a reform vow made personally to Cusanus earlier in the legation. The legate concluded a forceful homily to the assembled monks of St. Godehard by proclaiming: "I command you, I order you, to live according to the Rule of St. Benedict." He then insisted that the abbot and each of his monks individually swear to this.

In addition, Cusanus gave special attention to the spiritual life of the Hildesheim laity. He was convinced that widespread ignorance of the doctrinal essentials of the faith was a significant factor in the prevalence of popular superstition and excessive emphasis on peripheral elements of the faith. To remedy this, the legate adopted an idea from the French conciliarist Jean Gerson (1363-1429). On a wall of the parish church of St. Lamberti in the *Neustadt* district of the city, Cusanus affixed a large wooden board. This "wall-catechism," measuring approximately five and one-half by two and one-third feet, contained the words, in the Low German dialect of the area, of the Our Father, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed and the Ten Commandments. There, in a readily accessible form, the faithful could find the core teachings of the Christian religion. Finally, before pressing on to Hannover, his next destination, Cusanus negotiated with some success in settling a territorial dispute between the Hildesheim Bishop Magnus and the Duke of Brunswick-Luneberg.

During his stay at Hildesheim Cusanus had engaged in as full a range of reforming activities as anywhere else on the legation. His efforts, especially in the areas of monastic reform and diplomacy, seem to have met with modest success.

Hildesheim would press on into the sixteenth century and the new world of the Protestant Reformation. The city became officially Lutheran in 1543, although the Catholic community retained the use of the Cathedral of St. Mary. Hildesheim would survive largely intact in its medieval monuments until the waning days of World War II, when Allied bombs destroyed the *Altstadt* district, including the cathedral, St. Michael's Basilica, and an estimated eighty-five percent of the half-timbered buildings that dated from the Middle Ages. After the war the cathedral

and St. Michael's were rebuilt according to the Romanesque plans of Bishop Bernward. But much had been lost beyond recovery in a remarkable town in whose history Cardinal-Legate Nicholas of Cusa had played a brief but noteworthy role.

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24. Minden

After leaving Hildesheim on July 21, 1451, Nicholas of Cusa came to Minden on July 30 by way of Hanover. The long legation tour and the series of reforms and visitations that he made on the way must have tired, perhaps exhausted, him by now. At Minden he was coming close to the end of his journey within Germany before going into the Low Countries. The last German town was Nordhorn. By the time Cusanus reached Minden, some modern commentators feel, the cardinal had become increasingly exasperated at the pace and failure of his reform efforts.

What kind of town was Minden? Located on the Weser River, Minden was first mentioned around A.D. 150 by Ptolemy in his description of the earth. One then hears of Minden in 798 as a settlement of fishermen and peasants. It is mentioned again as a see in the Treaty of Salz concluded with the Saxons in 803. The first bishop was named Erkanbert or Herkumbert (d. 813) of Fulda who was already in the position in 796. The bishopric itself was established in 800 by Charlemagne (r. 768-814), with Gorgonius, the Roman martyr at the time of Diocletian's persecution, as its patron saint. From the beginning the Bishops of Minden were suffragans of Cologne. Not much is known about the early bishops, but there were some notable ones, such as the third, Dietrich I (r. 853-880), who established the monastery of Wunstorf in 871, but who fell in battle against the Northmen in 880, and the fifth, Drogo (r. 887-902), who founded a convent at Möllenbeck in 891. Bishop Helmward (r. 950-958) consecrated the cathedral (*Dom*), which had been rebuilt in 952 after a fire.

The see suffered in the tenth century from the Hungarians, but began to flourish during the Saxon dynasty. Otto I (r. 962-972) granted immunity from all foreign jurisdictions to Bishop Landward (r. 952-968) and also the revenues derived from the administration of justice. Because of his loyalty to Otto II, Bishop Milo (r. 969-996) received in 977 important privileges, such as the right to elect the bailiff who represented the bishop in the imperial court and the right of coinage and of conducting a cattle market. He had become so powerful that he was almost an independent prince. With their continued support for the emperor, Bishops Dietrich II (r. 1002-1022), Sigebert (r. 1022-1036) and Bruno (r. 1037-1055) could increase their church property. The see of Minden seemed to have entered a period of prosperity. But the destruction of the cathedral and the town by fire in 1062 brought this short "golden age" (*Blütezeit*) to an end.

The Investiture Controversy (1076-1122) created conflict and fission in Minden. But after the Concordat of Worms in 1122, Bishops Sigeward (r. 1120-1140) and Heinrich I (r. 1140-1153) expanded the see, and in the struggle between Emperor Frederick I Barbarossa (r. 1152-1190) and the Saxon Duke Henry the Lion (Heinrich der Löwe) (1129-1195), Bishops Werner (r. 1153-1170) and Anno (r. 1170-1185) led the see safely. Perhaps it should be noted here that Henry the Lion was married in the Cathedral of Minden in 1168 to Mathilde of England. The overthrow of Henry the Lion ended episcopal dependence on the ducal power, making Minden subject

only to the emperor. The period of relative, if not continuous, prosperity from the eleventh century was coming to an end.

The succeeding period saw the rise of encroaching nobles who began to force many bishops to pledge or sell the diocesan estates. Taking advantage of their financial weakness, the town of Minden acquired more rights and freed itself from the overlordship of the bishops. Their authority was also restricted by the cathedral chapter which, as in other dioceses, obtained the right of choosing the provost and the dean, and which made all important matters of administration dependent on its consent. In order to evade the oppression of the burgesses, Bishop Gottfried von Waldeck (r. 1304-1346) had to move his residence to the castle of Petershagen in 1306. With the papal nomination of Louis of Brunswick as bishop a disastrous series of conflicts between pope and chapter began. The town also acquired the administration of justice, the right to levy customs duties and the right of coinage. Without some energetic bishops who emerged, such as Gerhard I (r. 1346-1353), Gerhard II (r. 1361-1366), Wedekind vom Berge (r. 1369-1383) and Otto III (r. 1384-1397), episcopal authority would have sunk even further.

The fifteenth century brought more than one double episcopal election to Minden. Wulbrand, Count of Hallermund (r. 1406-1436), tried to bring order out of confusion. Minden also became an active member of the Hanseatic League in the fifteenth century. But Albrecht II von Hoya (r. 1436-1473), Wulbrand's successor as bishop, was involved not only in a long dispute with Osnabrück and the Duke of Brunswick, but also in the disastrous Münster Feud (*Münsterfehde*). The power of the bishop was now so restricted by the chapter and the town that he was unable to take any important step without their consent. Almost all the castles were in the hands of the aristocratic canons, and the revenues of the bishop were extremely limited. What was perhaps more serious and lamentable was the condition of the clergy. "The lives of the clergy," wrote one historian, "did not in many cases conform to the canonical rules; concubinage was quite general; monastic disciplines had relaxed; and the faith of the laity had grown cold" (Lins, 324).

It was to this city that Cusanus came on July 30, 1451. On Sunday, August 1, two days after his arrival, Cusanus celebrated a High Mass in the Cathedral of St. Peter and preached a sermon, "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (*quodcumque solveris super terram, erit solutum et in cælis* [Matthew 16:19]). As he himself noted, he preached to a large congregation in the Cathedral of St. Peter. Then on Wednesday, August 4, he issued ten reform decrees (1, 2, 3, 5, 6a, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13) to the diocese of Minden. Supplementing decree 6a against concubinage, he issued on the same day or on August 5 another decree which ordered that the Minden clergy release their women within three days. Another decree, issued on August 6, warned the clergy that an interdict would be leveled on the town in the event of their non-compliance. Unable to go to Breslau (present-day Wroclaw in Poland), he also issued on August 5 ten similar reform decrees for that city.

After taking care of the affairs of Bielfeld, Möllenbeck, Paderborn and Würzburg, he preached again in Minden on Sunday, August 8, under the title "So they did eat, and were filled" (*Manducaverunt et saturati sunt* [Mark 8:8]). On the same day he issued for the dioceses of Haberstadt, Hildesheim, Minden and Verden an important

reform decree, *Humeris nostris*, which prohibited the use of interdicts in relation to financial debts. Throughout his stay in Minden, Cusanus had worked on the reform of the Dominican Convent of St. Mauritz and the Monastery of St. Simeon, which was probably in the least commendable condition among the monasteries in Minden. Ludwig Pastor (1854-1928) wrote: "The convents of the city of Minden were subjected to a searching visitation, especially the Benedictine Abbey of St. Simon, where discipline had become very relaxed" (II, 124). On August 8, Cusanus finally removed its abbot, Friedrich Beuse (or Iohannes Bennen), to show his resolution and anger. After eight days in Minden, Cusanus left for Nordhorn on August 9, 1451. It can fairly be said that Minden was one of the most important stops in Cusanus' long legation journey.

The Reformation was introduced to Minden in 1530 when on February 13 Nicholas Krage read the church orders of the city. Thereafter Protestantism spread rapidly. The Peace of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years' War in 1648, suppressed the diocese of Minden. In 1915-1916 the Mittelland Canal, which crosses the Weser at Minden, was constructed. Towards the end of World War II not only the city of Minden, but also the cathedral was destroyed in an air raid. But following the restoration of the city and the cathedral, Minden, with a population of 85,900 (2006), is now an important center of inland shipping traffic, located north of the Porta Westfalica in the state (*Land*) of North Rhine-Westphalia.

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25. Deventer

After leaving Minden in Germany on August 2, 1451, Nicholas of Cusa and his party arrived at Deventer, an important commercial center in the IJessel Valley in modern-day Netherlands, on August 13 via Lage and Nordhorn. They spent almost one week at Deventer before moving northward. In order to reach Windesheim, where the famous monastery was located, the party traveled by way of Diepenveen. After Windesheim, Cusanus and his followers arrived at Zwolle, another important center in the region. Then, after a five-day stay at Zwolle, they reached Kampen, the northernmost town on their journey. Kampen was located on the IJessel's west bank near the mouth of the river.

Thereafter, turning southward, the party reached Utrecht via Harderwijk and remained there from August 27 to September 8, 1451. In contrast to their twelve-day stay at Utrecht, their next stop at Amsterdam was only one day, clearly indicating the relative importance of the medieval and the modern town. It is also important to note that the party first headed northward as far as Egmond and then southward, first to visit the Cloister Maria-Visitatore near Haarlem and then the town of Rijsburg. Then Cusanus and his retinue moved "sideways" from the west to Leiden, then again to Utrecht and via Ter Horst and Arnhem (Arnheim), where the march began to Nijmegen (Nimwegen), Cujk, Horst, Kessel, Roermond, Heinsberg and Maastricht. As a whole, their travel plan was complicated—within the confines of the Netherlands, a simpler schedule could have been adopted.

Our focus here will be on Cusanus' visit to Deventer and its significance. The town stands on the east bank of the IJssel River in the south of the Province of Overijssel. The former Hanseatic town has a historic center which is a witness to a rich past. As early as the ninth century, Deventer became the residence of the Utrecht bishops, who had to flee from their city when threatened by the Vikings.

According to legend, St. Lebuin (also known as Lebuinus, Leafwine, Lebwin, Leaffame and Levineus) built the town's first church in 765. Born in England, Lebuin became a Benedictine monk at Repon before deciding to become a missionary to the Netherlands. He followed the path of St. Boniface in Utrecht, working with St. Marchelm and St. Gregory. He preached in the districts along the IJssel River, and used Deventer as a base for missionary work to the Saxons and Frisians. Hence he was called the Apostle of the Frisians.

The rumor spread that Lebuin's success was due to witchcraft, and hostile pagans burned his church in Deventer. He took his message to the Saxon national assembly, prophesying the destruction of their nation if they did not convert. Many wanted to kill him, but one asserted that the assembly should treat him as an ambassador from God and grant him protection. The Saxons agreed and decided to respect the rights of Christianity. Lebuin died at Deventer around 773. In 1040 Bishop Belnoldus, who had fled from Utrecht to escape the Normans, founded a new church.

The town soon played an important religious role. In 1376 the theologian Geert Grote (Gerard Grote, Gerardus Magnus, Gert Groote, 1340-1384), born in Deventer,

founded the *Devotio Moderna* (Modern Devotion). As discussed elsewhere in this book, the *Devotio Moderna* was the late-fourteenth-century movement of piety and spirituality that arose in the IJssel Valley and upper Rhineland. Its spread was linked to the appearance of the Brothers and Sisters of the Common Life, which attracted men and women of the middle strata instead of the upper class. The Devotion demanded spiritual renewal, discipline and contemplative effort. The movement later spread to Germany, Belgium, France, Switzerland and other European countries. The articles collected in the recent book by Mark Dervich and Martial Straub, *Die "Neue Frömmigkeit" in Europa im Spätmittelalter* (2004), also discuss the *Devotio Moderna* in Bohemia, Middle and Eastern Europe (Silesia, Hungary), Vienna and Italy.

Although there are fourteenth and fifteenth century biographies of Geert Grote—one rhymed text by an unknown author; *The Life of Geert* (*Vita Gerardi*) by Thomas à Kempis (Thomas Hemerken à Kempis, 1380-1471); *The Life of Master Geert the Great* (*Vita Magister Gerardi Magni* [c. 1450]) by Peter Horn (1424-1479); and *The Writing concerning Master Geert* (*Scriptum de Magistro Gerardo* [c. 1458]) by Rudolf Dier (1384-1459)—his early life is not well known. He was the orphaned son of a Deventer cloth merchant and councilman, and studied liberal arts, astronomy and canon law from 1355 onwards at the University of Paris. According to Peter Horn he also visited Prague. After Grote underwent a spiritual crisis between 1372 and 1374, he retired from 1374 to 1377 to the Carthusian monastery of Nomikhuizen near Arnhem and read widely in spiritual authors.

On September 20, 1374, he offered his house for the use of about sixteen religious women. Without entering a religious order, he obtained ordination as a deacon and a special license to preach. After 1380, campaigning as an itinerant preacher against heresy and clerical concubinage for four years, he carried the message of repentance and conversion to all parts of the diocese of Utrecht. His first sermon was delivered in the vernacular in Amsterdam. Men and women who were moved by his earnest and stirring preaching began voluntarily to gather in private houses where they lived the lives of devotion he had urged upon them. But members of the mendicant orders, some civic leaders and a portion of the secular clergy, whose morals he severely attacked, opposed him. His severest critic was the Dominican, Matthew Graber, who drew up his criticisms some time later, between 1406 and 1415.

The houses or "gatherings" of Grote's followers began to spread from their places of origin in Deventer to Zwolle, Diepenveen, Windesheim and other locations across the entire diocese of Utrecht, until the plague suddenly took him away on August 20, 1384. He was only in his forty-fifth year. Around this time the group of persons who were living in Grote's vicarage in Deventer started a community of common property. A similar gathering began to appear at Zwolle.

After Grote's death, the leadership of the Devotion was assumed by Florens (Florentius) Radewijns (c. 1350-1400), who could be called the real organizer of the movement. Unlike Grote, there is a clear historical source to show that Radewijns was educated in Prague. It was Radewijns who wrote the daily schedule

(*Consuetudines*) of the group around 1396. It emphasized charity, poverty and obedience.

Grote's second outstanding disciple was Geert (Gerard) Zerbolt of Zutphen (1367-1398). Little is known about his life but he was, after Grote, the most learned and intellectually influential among the first generation of the brothers. Of Zerbolt's main works, two were widely disseminated: *Powers of the Soul* (*De reformatione virium animae*) and *On Spiritual Ascensions* (*De spiritualibus ascensionibus*).

The followers of the *Devotio Moderna* took no binding or solemn vows, and made their own living, especially by copying manuscripts or by weaving. Members of the congregations followed monastic patterns in observing the canonical hours and emphasizing silence, obedience, fraternal correction and frequent meditation and examination of conscience.

Several writers on the *Devotio Moderna* and Grote, such as E. Persoons (1984), W. Lourdoux (1967), and R. R. Post (1968), paid attention to the Sisters of the Common Life, but, many more were interested in the relationship of the Devotion to humanism and the Reformation. One of the reasons often cited for the de-emphasis on the sisters is the scarcity of original sources. It was also said that the sisters were passive and did not go out to preach, but with the rise of interest in the role of women in history, greater attention has been paid by such writers as Leen Breure (1985), Gerhard Rehm (1985) and John Van Engen (1988, 2008). Rehm's impressive study of the Sisters of the Common Life in Germany is now essential reading.

Grote's pupils, following the wishes of their master, founded the first monastery of the Order of the Brethren of the Common Life in Deventer around 1384. It was a community devoted to the care and education of the poor, and had a great intellectual influence in Europe. Students included Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471) and Pope Adrian VI (r. 1522-1523). Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469-1536) came here in 1475-1476 and René Descartes (1596-1656) in 1632-1638.

Some books still state that when Nicholas of Cusa was a young boy, he was sent to study in Deventer, but this is now recognized as a legend. Neither Jakob Marx (1855-1924) nor Erich Meuthen supports the theory. In the *Acta Cusana* one finds no mention of Cusanus' schooling in Deventer or elsewhere in the Netherlands. Cusanus did visit Germany and the Low Countries during his legation journey in 1451-1452 (*Acta Cusana*, I, 3a, 1066-1077), and was in Deventer from August 13 to August 20, 1451. Meuthen (1993), Maarten J. F. M. Hoenen (2004) and Nikolaus Staubach (2004) discuss the Bursa Cusana in Deventer, which still exists today. It was designed by Cusanus to support poor students and was opened in 1469, five years after Cusanus' death, in accordance with two wills left by the cardinal himself. These and similar studies help us to know what exactly the *Devotio Moderna* was and what influence it had not only on the Netherlands and other countries in Europe, but also on Nicholas of Cusa.

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26. Windesheim and Diepenveen

While he was on his legation journey, Nicholas of Cusa stayed in Deventer, the Netherlands, until August 20, 1451. After visiting and preaching at Diepenveen the next day, he arrived at Windesheim in the evening, where he stayed until August 22. As Joseph Koch (130) and Erich Meuthen (*Acta Cusana*, 1078-1097) showed, Cusanus received the representatives of the city of Zwolle and bestowed the 1450 Jubilee Indulgence on all members of the chapter of Windesheim. Of all the Church officials and leaders who exercised great influence in Diepenveen and Windesheim, we shall discuss some notable ones and evaluate their significance.

Johannes Brinckerinck (d. 1419), born in Zutphen of well-to-do parents, devoted his entire life to the pastoral care of women. One of the first disciples of Geert Grote (1340-1384), the founder of the *Devotio Moderna* (Modern Devotion), he was also a notable pioneer. He did his utmost to teach the numerous female followers of the Devotion how they could give expression to the communal life his movement advocated. He was indeed the very first person to introduce the communal life amongst the Sisters of the Common Life. The "Sisterbooks" which were kept by the sisters and have survived from a number of institutions under his leadership show how this spirituality of humility—*ootmoed* was the term preferred by the Modern Devout—was to be put into practice. Almost from the beginning Brinckerinck was Grote's constant companion on the latter's preaching journeys throughout the Netherlands.

The thirteenth century is considered the golden age of a movement carried on by religious women, and the Maas-Rhine region was a cradle of medieval women's religiosity. These women formed small religious communities without taking solemn monastic vows. The Church had continual difficulties with these women. The success of the Beguines in large numbers in northwestern Europe led finally to their persecution by the Inquisition. The rise of the Modern Devotion in the last decade of the fourteenth century was based on dissatisfaction with the miserable state of the Church after the Great Schism (1378-1417), in which two popes, and after 1414 three popes, fought for control over the Church. The Modern Devotion was fueled to an important degree by the idealism and enthusiasm of devout women. According to recent historians such as Gerhard Rehm (16), Wybren Scheepsma (2004, 10-11) and John van Engen (55-69), women in the movement outnumbered their male counterparts at least three to one. But the female Devout have received for the most part, and especially in English, little attention thus far. In recent years, the scholarly discussions have increased considerably in Dutch and German.

One of the most important steps taken by Geert Grote was to open his parental home on September 20, 1374 to poor, unmarried women who wished to live the spiritual life. In 1379 the charter was drawn up for Master Geert's House (*Meester-Geertshuis*) by the magistrate of Deventer, who exercised judicial authority over the sisters. After Grote's death in 1384, the spiritual leadership of the sisters devolved to Jan van den Bronde, who was a brilliant preacher but a poor rector of Master Geert's House. After his death in 1392, he was succeeded by Johannes Brinckerinck

of Zutphen. Under his direction the Sisters of the Common Life in Master Geert's House began to take shape. There was a great demand for the semi-religious lifestyle he advocated. Originally, there were fifteen or sixteen sisters in Master Geert's House, but by the time Brinckerinck died in 1419 their number had grown to one hundred and fifty. Moreover, by around 1400, four new houses had been established in Deventer and all of them were brought under the spiritual authority of Johannes Brinckerinck.

Thus Deventer developed into one of the most important centers of the Sisters of the Common Life. Upon Brinckerinck's death, the spiritual care of the sisters was assumed by Brinckerinck's brothers in the Heer-Florenshuis, who became members of the Brothers of the Common Life.

Since the statute of Master Geert's House restricted the occupancy to poor and unmarried women, Brinckerinck founded in 1400 a new sister house with more liberal rules of admission on a plot of land in a marsh carrying the name of Diepenveen ("deep peat bog"), three miles north of Deventer. The house served originally as a branch establishment of Master Geert's House. In 1407 Brinckerinck severed the ties between Diepenveen and Master Geert's House. Later in the same year, he received permission from the Bishop of Utrecht to change Diepenveen to a convent that would follow the rule of the Augustinian Canonesses Regular. On St. Agnes' Day, January 21, 1408, enclosure (*clausura*) was established in the new convent, and twelve sisters were given their habits. In 1412 Diepenveen was the first convent to be admitted to the Congregation of Windesheim. After some decades Diepenveen counted one hundred canonesses. Unlike those at Master Geert's House, many of the canonesses at Diepenveen were the daughters of prominent families.

From about 1383 plans had been made for the establishment of a monastery on the land of Berthold ten Hove, called Windesheim, near Zwolle. One of the driving forces behind its effort was again Johannes Brinckerinck, and the Windesheim monastery followed the rule of St. Augustine. It became very prosperous, both materially and spiritually. In 1395 the Congregation of Windesheim was established, a monastic union of male and female canons regular, with Windesheim as its headquarters. The congregation grew quickly, especially when in 1413 the chapter of Groenendaal, with its seven monasteries, and, in 1430, the chapter of Neuss, with thirteen foundations, were absorbed into the Windesheim Congregation. It continued to grow until, at the end of the fifteenth century, it reached one hundred member monasteries in present-day Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands.

It must be remembered that in 1436 Pope Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) issued a decree forbidding the Congregation of Windesheim to admit any more convents. Since the condemnation of the Beguines at the Council of Vienne (1311-1312) by the decree *Cum de quibusdam mulieribus*, suspicion had fallen upon the Beguines and probably upon religious or mystical women in general. On the basis of their "perverted view" (*opinione sinistra*), the decree had formally condemned the way of life of the Beguines. The second reason for the issuance of the decree was fear of the heavy burden of the material administration of the new convents. After all, the

admission of convents to the congregation would mean that the responsibility for their economic and judicial well-being would lie with the congregation.

According to Karl Grube (Anlage I), and Scheepsma (2004, 13), four convents in Belgium, one in Germany and eight in the Netherlands belonged to the Windesheim Congregation in 1436.

Belgium: Barbarendaal at Tienen
Bethanië at Mechelen
Facons or Mariendaal at Antwerp
Galilea at Ghent
Germany: Englendaal at Bonn
The Netherlands: St. Agnes at Dordrecht
Bethanië at Arnhem
Brunnepe near Kampen
St. Maria and St. Agnes in Diepenveen
Jeruzalem in Utrecht
Mariënburg in Nijmegen
Mariënveld or Oude Nonnen in Amsterdam
Onze Lieve Vrouw in Renkum

By contrast, there were altogether forty-one male monasteries that were members of the congregation in 1436.

The convent of the Augustinian Canonesses Regular at Diepenveen was the most important and was considered the "mother house" of the Windesheim convents. Johannes Brinckerinck possessed organizational and leadership talents, and was an effective rector, spiritual advisor and confessor of the women under his care, not only at Master Geert's House in Deventer, but also as rector and confessor at Diepenveen.

One of the most important sisters of Diepenveen was Salome Sticken (1369-1449), the first prioress from 1412 to 1447. She ruled the convent with great severity and brought the spiritual life of the convent to great heights. It was clear that Sticken admired Brinckerinck's authority and leadership.

It was in about 1435 that the famous prioress was asked to compose a religious handbook for women who wanted to live according to the precepts of the Modern Devotion. The result was the *Rule for Living* (*Vivendi formula*), which deals with the inner life of the women devout. In her narratives she referred to the physical weakness that prevented her from participating in manual labor. From her *vite* we learn that she suffered a mild stroke some ten or eleven years before stepping down as prioress in 1447.

In her *Rule*, Sticken invoked both founders of the movement of the devout female religious, Geert Grote and Johannes Brinckerinck. She demanded absolute obedience from the sisters. She discusses both the necessary humility of the rank and file and the need for good behavior on the part of those who are called to an office of authority. The second theme emphasizes that the sisters must achieve a

state of inner detachment and internal submission. She showed that she tried to fulfill these requirements:

> Dearest sisters, I write these simple and crude things to you as if you did not know them. I hope, however, that you know many more and greater things than I am able to write. (Scheepsma, 2004, 119)

Salome Sticken worked hard to find material for her exhortations. It is stated in her *vite*:

> It happened once at the time when the sisters were informed of their shortcomings that she was so gloriously chastised by the others that she surpassed them all. She became then so calm and inwardly drawn to our Lord that she lost control of her limbs, so that she had to be carried there. (Scheepsma, 2004, 6)

Scheepsma (2004, 61), comments: "Salome Sticken exulted in that moment because for a brief time she was one with the mocked and taunted Christ. In her deep realization of this she lost control over body and spirit."

As another important member of the sister house of Diepenveen, the noblewoman Katharina van Naaldwijk (d. 1443) must be mentioned. Her father, Lord Hendrik van Naaldwijk, was marshal to the Count of Holland, Albrecht of Bavaria (r. 1389-1404). Naaldwijk received an education commensurate with her status from her grandmother Sofia van Teilingen. When Katharina reached a proper age for schooling, Lady Sofia made Katharina study at the Priory of Rijnsburg near Leiden to read the Psalter. To learn to read with the aid of the Book of the Psalms in Latin was for many years an important method of education for medieval ladies.

In 1412 Joost Claesz, procurator of the Windesheim monastery of Rugge and later Johannes Brinckerinck's successor as Prior of Diepenveen, came to the monastery of Windesheim with a message that Katharina van Naaldwijk had converted and now sought a suitable convent. Johan Vos van Heusden (1391-1424), the first Prior Superior of the Chapter of Windesheim, recommended the recently founded Diepenveen. Together with Joost Claesz and other Windesheim priors, he traveled to Diepenveen to obtain a place for Katharina, which clearly indicated the importance that the Prior Superior of Windesheim attached to the investiture of this lady of standing.

On September 4, 1412, an eminent group from the county of Holland reached the new convent in Diepenveen, made up of Lady van Heenvliet, her niece Katharina van Naaldwijk, Joost Claesz and others. As an exceptionally attractive marriage prospect, the eighteen-year-old Katharina had to travel incognito because of the real threat of abduction. Katharina had passed up a splendid position in the world for a life of poverty, obedience and loneliness. The Diepenveen *Sisterbook* gives an impressive description of the investiture of Katharina by Johannes Brinckerinck on September 6, 1412. Many of those present were moved to tears.

At Diepenveen in 1420 Salome Sticken appointed the twenty-six-year-old Katharina van Naaldwijk as her second-in-command, the subprioress. It is said that during her long tenure as prioress from 1412 to 1447, Sticken made repeated attempts to be relieved of her office because she preferred to live in humility and obedience than to exercise authority.

Katharina van Naaldwijk was one of the best-read sisters at Diepenveen. She loved reading so much that she had two or three books with her at all times. When it became too much for her to carry these books, her fellow nuns persuaded the prioress to allow her use of a special book basket. She possessed a blank manuscript, which was referred to in her *vite* as a *rapiarium* ("personal notebook"), in which she kept copied texts and excerpts on a regular basis. The purpose was to keep the "many good points" in these books close to the heart. Scheepsma says:

> What is striking is how the sisterbook, in the cases of both Jutte van Ahaus and Katharina van Naaldwijk, explicitly draws an immediate connection between a *rapiarium* and the inner life … It was of the utmost importance to keep many good points close to the heart, in order to deny the devil any opportunity of settling there. A full *rapiarium* meant that the writer had taken great pains to commit to memory many valuable and edifying words. (2004, 94)

Because of her love of books, it is not surprising that Katharina held the office of librarian at Diepenveen. The *Sisterbook* praises Katharina because she tailored her assignment of books to the individual: "There she served each individual in a friendly and kind fashion according to her estimation of the individual's needs." Katharina had a marked preference for the works of the Church Fathers. It is known that Augustine was her favorite author, although it is not known precisely which works she was familiar with.

In studying the Sisters of the Common Life, there are other notable nuns to whom we should pay attention. One example is Alijt Bake (1415-1455) of the Convent of Galilea near Ghent, who after a period of conflicts and doubts served as Prioress of Galilea from 1445 and wrote several mystical books, but also, some ten years later, was dismissed and driven into exile by the leaders of the Windesheim Congregation. Another is Jacomijne Costers (d. 1503) of the Convent of Facons in Antwerp, who led a small group of women seeking the profound spiritual life, bequeathed a devotional exercise dedicated to her patron saint, John the Evangelist, and paid a great deal of attention to order and systematization in her many writings.

On the side of the Brothers of the Common Life, Johannes Busch (d. c. 1480), the best-known chronicler of the monastery and the chapter of Windesheim, has been widely studied. In recent years, Gerard Zerbolt of Zutphen (1367-1398), who was born as the scion of a well-situated family and whose oldest biography was written by none other than Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471), his friend, has often been discussed.

The study of the Modern Devotion has come a long way since the days of the controversy between Albert Hyma's *The Brethren of the Common Life* (1950) and *The*

Christian Renaissance (2nd ed., 1965), on the one hand, and R. R. Post's *The Modern Devotion: Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism* (1968) on the other. Both authors notably emphasized the importance of the Brothers of the Common Life, but the recent research on the Sisters of the Common Life in Dutch and German is equally remarkable. It must be included in any serious, up-to-date study of the Modern Devotion. Under these circumstances, students of Nicholas of Cusa are called upon to understand, as accurately as possible, what the real situation was in fifteenth-century Europe and how Cusanus perceived and understood it when he went through the IJssel region of the present-day Netherlands in 1451.

It is disappointing that not much remains in Windesheim of its monastery or chapter. An old church, which is a product of the Windesheim Congregation, exists in Windesheim. Zwolle has the Christian High School of Windesheim (Chr. Hogeschool Windesheim) and Thomas à Kempis College. But it is not easy to appreciate from them how much influence what Post (296) called the "later great and famous congregation of Windesheim" exercised in the fifteenth century. In Diepenveen a Protestant church stands now where the Convent of St. Maria and St. Agnes stood in the fifteenth century. Its building still retains parts of the convent built in 1408-1416. The stone plaque on the wall near the entrance clearly mentions Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa's visit to the convent "around 1452" (*rond 1452*).

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27. Castle Andraz

In his last years Nicholas of Cusa stayed at Castle Andraz in Buchenstein many times. The extant records show that he was there in 1454, 1457, 1458 and 1460. Between 1454 and 1460 he spent some four hundred days in the castle. One of his seminal works, *On the Beryl* (*De beryllo*), was completed on August 18, 1458 at Castle Andraz, which by 1457/58 he called St. Raphaelsburg (Castle St. Raphael). The explicit in Cod. Cus. 219 states: "In 1458, on August 18 at Castle St. Raphael, also called Buchenstein" (*1458, decima octava Augusti in castro sancti Raphaelis alio vocabulo dicto Boechenstein*).

Buchenstein (Livinallongo) is one of the most spectacularly beautiful regions in South Tyrol. As a document of 1004 shows, in the eleventh century it already belonged to the Earldom of Norital (Nurichtal, Eisacktal). It is not correct to say, however, that this region began to be inhabited intensively only in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as some have asserted since the discovery in 1866 of a tombstone near the summit of Monte Porè. Already many Venetians had come to the region to settle.

On June 7, 1027, Emperor Konrad II (r. 1027-1039), who was also Duke of Bavaria, bestowed the Earldom of Eisack and Inntal on the Bishopric of Brixen. The Prince-Bishop of Brixen could now exercise jurisdiction over the entire area, although he normally entrusted the task to a noble family of the region. Emperor Henry IV (r. 1084-1105) gave the region of Buchenstein to the Bishopric of Brixen in 1091.

The iron mines of Fursil near Colle S. Lucia (1,459 meters), which is about 1.8 miles west of Selva di Cadore in Buchenstein, were well known in those days. According to recent research, the word *Fursil* meant "iron" in the old Venetian language. Monte Porè near Colle S. Lucia was in the popular tongue called Monte Frisolet. In 1177 Emperor Frederick I (r. 1152-1190) gave the Augustinian Canons of Neustift (Novacella) near Brixen the mines in "Frysail," which the Abbey of Neustift leased soon thereafter to Jakob Guadagnini of Avoscano, Lord of Buchenstein. Frederick II (r. 1220-1250) granted the lucrative mining rights in Buchenstein to the Bishop of Brixen in 1217.

But in a letter to the chapter of Brixen on December 26, 1457, Cusanus cited documents which he had found in the diocesan archives in Brixen, and asserted that, well before 1177, the German emperor had conferred on the Bishop of Brixen prerogative to the mines within the entire area of the bishopric, including the mines

in Fursil, regardless of what the jurisdictional and legal relations were between the Bishopric of Brixen and Buchenstein.

The ruined castle of Andraz, which is located some 1.8 miles north of the village of Andraz (1,428 meters) and stands about 1,740 meters above sea level at the meeting place of two brooks near Col di Lana in Buchenstein, is by common consent one of the notable fortresses in the region. It is situated higher than any other castle in the whole of the Tyrol. The origins of the castle are to a great extent shrouded in mystery. Among the numerous stories about its beginnings, one even says that the builder was Theodoric the Ostrogoth (c. 454-526). Although Henry IV gave Buchenstein to the Bishopric of Brixen in 1091, the castle actually came into the possession of the diocese only at the beginning of the thirteenth century.

The Buchenstein family is said to have been the first owner of the castle, but where the family came from is completely unknown. Around the year 1200 the castle seems to have been sold to the Bishop of Brixen. When the Bishopric of Brixen later enfeoffed almost the entire landed property in Buchenstein to the Lords of Rodeneck and Schöneck, they became the owners of Castle Andraz. But through cessions and sales the Lords of Schöneck became the sole owners of Andraz, and thereafter Paul von Schöneck acquired its ownership and administration. But his rule was so oppressive that Abbess Dietmut of the nearby Abbey of Sonnenburg appealed to Emperor Charles IV (r. 1355-1378), who imposed a penalty of some sixteen thousand pfund on Paul. As a result, Paul was obliged to sell Buchenstein to Jacob Guadagnini of Avoscano, whose fortress was situated at Concenighe in Cordevole and who had extensive lands in northern Italy.

The sale posed a threat to the Bishopric of Brixen because a noble, who was influential beyond the Italian border, now owned the sovereign rights over Andraz. Subsequently, the Lord of Avoscano acquired the administration and criminal jurisdiction over the Sonnenburg possessions in Enneberg in the Gardertal. As the oppressive administration of the Avoscano family worsened, Charles IV ordered his captain (*Hauptmann*) in Belluno, Konrad Göbel, to take Castle Andraz. After a siege that lasted from July 1 to August 10, 1350, the castle was stormed and taken. Its owner fled to Padua. The emperor then enfeoffed the castle and the administration of Buchenstein to Konrad Stuck, a rich citizen of Bruneck, from whom the administration was handed down through inheritance to Ezelin von Wolkenstein and later to Joachim von Villanders.

In 1426 Berthold II of Bückelsburg, Bishop of Brixen (r. 1418-1427), finally recovered the jurisdiction of Buchenstein and Thurn at a price of one thousand five hundred marks and subsequently empowered captains and guardians to administer Castle Andraz. Because of the importance of the castle within the bishopric, noble families were entrusted with its administration and care. It is known that Ludwig von Sparrnberg was *Hauptmann* (*capitaneus Andrachii*) in 1453 and was succeeded by Kasper von Oberweinper in 1456.

As a result of the so-called Wilten Affair, which occurred on the night of June 24-25, 1457 and which frightened Cusanus because of Duke Sigmund's alleged attempt on his life, Cusanus left the episcopal city of Brixen on July 4, 1457, never to return. After a six-day stay at the cloister in Säben he arrived at the remote, almost

impregnable castle of Andraz near the Italian border on July 10 or 11 by way of the Grödner Tal, Sella Joch and Pordoi Joch. If necessary, he could now easily flee to Venice via Belluno. He was to stay at Castle Andraz, with some short absences, until September 14, 1458, when he left for Rome. On December 27, 1456, Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini, a good friend of Cusanus and the future Pope Pius II, had sent Cusanus a letter asking him to come to Rome as soon as possible: "For a cardinal, Rome alone is (his) fatherland … Nor should your excellency languish enclosed in clouds and dark valleys" (*nam cardinali sola Rome patria est … Neque enim tua virtus est, que inter nives et umbrosas clausa valles languescere debeat*). From Andraz Cusanus sent a request to the Doge of Venice, Francesco Foscari (r. 1423-1459), to obtain mercenary soldiers for protection.

How did Cusanus feel during these long months at Andraz, under threat from Duke Sigmund and living in a remote, cold castle on the periphery of his diocese? He said in notes that he wrote in February 1458 that he had arrived at Castle Andraz with the help of Archangel Raphael (*doch so half vns sant Raphael her zu komen*) and had been in the wilderness of the Dolomites for thirty-two weeks (*war umb wir also hie xxxij wochen in disser w stinien gelegen haben* [Koch, 75]). In his letters from Andraz to Pope Calixtus III (r. 1455-1458) and others concerning the incident at Wilten he complained of the way Duke Sigmund and his followers had treated him. The duke in turn sent many representatives, such as Oswald Sebner von Reifenstein, Martin von Neideck, Lorenz Blumenau and Hans von Kripp, to Andraz to negotiate with the bishop, but the latter remained defiant, stubborn and irreconcilable. The Bishops of Trent and Chur also sent their representatives in March 1458 to mediate between the two parties, but in vain. After the battle at Enneberg on April 5, 1458, in which Cusanus' soldiers, under the command of Gabriel Prack, surrounded and slaughtered some fifty mercenaries and their leader, Jobst von Hornstein, who had been hired by the convent of Sonnenburg, the relationship between the bishop and the duke worsened.

Cusanus has been described, especially by some Tyrolese historians, as an intruder into the region who was not familiar with the local ways and who did great harm to the land. There is no doubt that his contest with Duke Sigmund was one of the most difficult experiences in his life. It is remarkable, under these circumstances, that he was able to produce so many philosophical and mathematical works during his episcopacy in the Tyrol from 1450 to 1464 (although he was actually in the diocese much of the time from 1452 to 1460). On the philosophical side, he wrote *On the Vision of God* (*De visione Dei*, 1453), *On the Peace of Faith* (*De pace fidei*, 1453), *On the Beryl* (*De beryllo*, 1458), *On the Beginning* (*De principio*, 1459) and *On Actualized Possibility* (*De possest*, 1460). His mathematical works during this period are *On Complementary Mathematical Considerations* (*De mathematicis complementis*, 1453), *On Squaring the Caesarean Circle* (*De caesarea circuli quadratura*, 1457), *On Mathematical Perfection* (*De mathematica perfectione*, 1458) and *The Golden Proposition in Mathematics* (*Aurea propositio in mathematicis*, 1459). Since 1454 he had been urged repeatedly by the monks of Tegernsee and their prior, Bernhard von Waging, to write an expository work on his basic ideas, especially the concepts of learned ignorance (*docta ignorantia*) and the coincidence of opposites (*coincidentia*

oppositorum). His efforts to reform monasteries and convents in the Tyrol, which he began in 1452, made it difficult to complete the requested task. It is only when he was at the isolated, distant castle of Andraz away from his episcopal city that he was able to complete his work *On the Beryl* (*De beryllo*).

Karl Jaspers (1883-1969), a strong critic of Cusanus as Bishop of Brixen, wrote in his study of the cardinal's life and thought:

> Some writers have described Cusanus in his last years as tired and resigned. I cannot agree. His last writings show the keenest intellectual energy and concentration. They bear witness to an undiminished preoccupation with fundamentals. (118)

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28. Rome under Pius II

Thomas M. Izbicki

When Nicholas of Cusa returned to Rome from Brixen in 1460, he found Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini reigning as Pope Pius II (1458-1464). Cusanus served Pius as vicar for temporal affairs while the pope was at the Congress of Mantua. He found himself governing a city that combined the ruins of ancient Rome with the medieval city, geared to support the papacy and pilgrimages to the holy sites of Christianity.

Piccolomini wrote of the ruins of Rome and threats to their survival in an epigram:

> The Ruins of Rome
> Rome, to look at your ruins pleases me.
> Your past glory is apparent from their fallen state.
> But your people here and now,
> Having dug up the ancient walls,
> Cook the hard marble into the useful form of lime.
> If an impious people treats you thus for three hundred years,
> There will be no evidence of greatness here.

(Translated by the author from *Renaissance Latin Verse: an Anthology*, ed. Alessandro Perosa and John Sparrow [London: Duckworth, 1979.])

One reason the ruins were under threat was the increased prosperity of the city under a restored line of popes. Martin V (r. 1417-1431) had begun the restoration. It was interrupted when Eugenius IV (r. 1431-1447) was driven into exile by a Roman mob. Eugenius celebrated his return to the Eternal City by commissioning Antonio di Pietro Averlino, called Filarete (c. 1400-1469), to cast new bronze doors for St. Peter’s basilica in the Vatican. The restoration resumed under his successor, Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455). Nicholas, assisted by men like Leon Battista Alberti (1404-1472), tried to rebuild the city. The new pope displayed his rule by putting

matching façades onto the civic government structures at the Capitol. Another project was the church of San Teodoro, near the Capitoline Hill, a small church designed according to classical principles, possibly by Alberti himself. Another is the Tower of Nicholas V at the Vatican Palace. These building projects were contemporary with the pope's efforts to collect precious manuscripts and start a library at the Vatican.

The Vatican had become the focal point of the papacy after the Great Schism. Not only was the papal palace there in better condition than that at the Lateran, it was next to Saint Peter's, one of the focal points of pilgrimage traffic. Pilgrims, especially in the Jubilee year of 1450, had made the route to the Ponte Sant' Angelo, across the Tiber and up to the church of St. Peter, one of the most significant in the city. Moreover, it passed through the lowlands of the Campo Marzio, which were more heavily inhabited than were the hills of Rome with their ruins and fortresses of noble families, monasteries and vineyards. The city was under-populated for its size, and even the historic churches were in bad repair. Nicholas V and his successors had to deal with Constantine's ancient and tottering Vatican basilica. Pius himself restored the staircase in front, adding statues of Saints Peter and Paul, when he received the relic of Saint Andrew's head, brought from Greece by Thomas Palaeologus, an exiled member of the Byzantine imperial family, in 1461. Pius also repaired the roofs of the Pantheon, the Lateran basilica and St. Peter's. He even forbade tearing down ancient monuments, a decree that was ignored more often than not thereafter.

Rome was anything but quiet and salubrious. The city's lowlands were prone to flooding by the Tiber and to malaria. When summer was hottest, those who could, left Rome. Pius removed to places like Viterbo for cool air and healing waters to improve his gout. Cusanus went to places like Orvieto to escape the stifling conditions in Rome. Moreover, the populace was restive under papal rule, with some longing for a republican regime. Under Nicholas V, the humanist and rebel Stefano Porcari (?-1453) had been executed in 1453 on charges of plotting to assassinate the Roman pontiff. While Pius II was away, Tiburzio and Valeriano di Maso, Porcari's nephews, agitated against the papacy. Cusanus, if we are to believe Pius, was unable to contain these agitators. Only when the pope returned from Mantua was their leader, Tiburzio, arrested, suffering execution in 1460. These disturbances in Rome may have been fueled by the threat of famine. Mercenaries passed through the Papal States regularly on their way to Italy's internal wars, disrupting agriculture and trade. (A different sort of conspiracy was suspected by Paul II [1464-1471], Pius' successor. In 1468, Paul had members of the Roman Academy imprisoned in the Castel Sant' Angelo, built on Hadrian's tomb as the Vatican's place of refuge and secure jail, on charges of criticizing the pope and advocating his being called before a church council.)

The clergy of Rome were not notoriously learned or zealous, and so Cusanus held a reform synod and visitations of major churches while he was vicar for the city. The Roman Curia too had a reputation less for zeal than for luxury and avarice, although it also included some men of learning and integrity, Cusanus among them. Thus Nicholas' *General Reformation* (*Reformatio generalis*) aimed at

starting reform of the Church with reform of the Curia. The pope himself was to set the example; others would follow by accepting correction. This proposal was set aside while Pius focused on a crusade against the Ottoman Turks. Little more was done about reform until the end of the century, when Alexander VI (Borgia) (r. 1492-1503), upset by the murder of one of his illegitimate sons, established a short-lived reform commission. In between times, cardinals continued building or buying palaces, establishing family funeral chapels and maintaining large households. These households were maintained, as was the papal bureaucracy, by holding benefices in absentia, collecting fees from supplicants at the papal court and spending the revenues the papacy received from the recently discovered alum mines at Tolfa.

Faced with a turbulent city, Piccolomini described the Romans of his day as unworthy of their illustrious ancestors. He was not, however, ruling only over Romans. The city attracted people from all over Italy and other parts of Europe. Some came as pilgrims or litigants, but others remained. A large number were clerics or the servants of prelates, but others were artisans. A new pontiff usually attracted residents of home cities or regions, as Catalans came under Callixtus III (Borgia) and Sienese under Pius II. Among these long-term residents were English makers of *Pater nosters* or strings of prayer beads. The German residents included some of Italy's earliest printers, who received patronage from cardinals like Cusanus and Juan de Torquemada. These communities had their own enclaves with churches for their attendance and confraternities to see to both spiritual and temporal needs, including burial. For example, the Germans congregated at Santa Maria dell' Anima.

The College of Cardinals was international in composition. Among them were Greeks, Castilians, Catalans, Frenchmen and one German, Nicholas of Cusa. All cardinals, of whatever origin, had their titular churches in or near Rome, and they were expected to keep these structures repaired and in good order. The most senior cardinals, like Torquemada, became cardinal bishops of nearby sees like Palestrina and Ostia. Others became cardinal priests of ancient Roman churches or cardinal deacons of churches which once were stations for the relief of the poor. Cusanus was cardinal priest of St. Peter in Chains (San Pietro in Vincoli), not far from the Coliseum. The church we have now is not the one Cusanus knew, although some timbers he used to repair the roof survive. It was renovated later, in 1475, and became the site of the tomb of Pope Julius II (1503-1513), dominated by Michelangelo's statue of Moses. When Cusanus died at Todi in 1464, the body was returned to Rome. The heart was sent back to Kues, but the remainder was buried near the back of the church to the left of the doors as one enters. There are three monuments to him. The oldest, a tombstone showing Nicholas in a bishop's robe and miter is now affixed to the wall. To the viewer's left is a somewhat later relief of Saint Peter with Cusanus praying at his right and an angel at his left. This work is attributed to Andrea Bregno (d. 1506). A third marker, a tombstone set into the floor, presumably over the cardinal's remains, is of a much later date.

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29. Kues: The Hospital

Kues is not only Cusanus' birthplace, but also a site where one of his most important spiritual legacies, the Hospital of St. Nicholas, has been in existence since its foundation in 1458. Having survived all the disturbances and disestablishments of monasteries in the Reformation, the Thirty Years' War, the French Revolution, the secularization of the eighteenth century and World Wars I and II, the hospital stands today as a most important testament to Cusanus' life and ideas. It is therefore worth examining how the hospital came about, what it is like and what it has meant over the years.

Even before the death of their father, Johan or Henne Cryfftz or Krebs, sometime after October 1450, Cusanus, his brother, Johann (d. 1456), and his sister, Klara (d. 1473), seem to have begun to consider the founding of a hospital in Kues. Their father, a fairly well-to-do businessman and influential member of the community, left a considerable amount of property and possessions which could be given to the hospital. Although known for his unpretentiousness and lack of interest in material possessions, Cusanus himself was not entirely without economic acumen and accumulated a considerable number of benefices and had a large income from them even before his elevation to the cardinalate in 1449.

The actual building of the hospital began in 1450 or 1451 after the death of Cusanus' father. The name of its architect is not known. The beginning of

construction was delayed, probably because of Cusanus' promotion to cardinal and his legation journey to Germany and the Low Countries in 1451-1452. The hospital was to be established on the left bank of the Moselle River at the site of an old chapel of St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra in Lycia in the fourth century and the patron saint of sailors, children, merchants and others.

When Cusanus visited Bernkastel and no doubt Kues on October 9, 1451, during his famous legation tour, the hospital was not completed. It is conceivable that he, his brother and his sister had a chance to discuss the future of the hospital. On May 1, 1453, the hospital, with the exception of its chapel, was completed. Cusanus spoke of the completed building on March 30, 1457, but it was not until May 5, 1457 that the construction of the entire hospital was finished. Although he was very anxious to see it, Cusanus could not be there to witness the birth of the new institution, which represented many of his innermost desires, spiritual ideas and intellectual aspirations. According to Cusanus' own testimony, the construction of the hospital cost ten thousand Rhenish gold florins. He could say rightly: "We have built an exquisite building" (*Wir haben einen kostlichen baw getan*) (Jakob Marx, 1907, 42-44; 247-48).

What was the purpose of the hospital? Who was to be admitted? How was it to be administered? On December 3, 1458, at Rome, Cusanus the canon lawyer drew up a foundation charter (*Stiftungsurkunde*) giving, in fifteen articles, detailed instructions as to the administration of the hospital. The hospital was to shelter thirty-three men who were above fifty years of age. It was essentially a place of refuge and a *hospitale pauperum*. But Cusanus added that six priests and six nobles, if it were easy to have them (*si commode haberi poterunt*), should be included, making the number of laymen twenty-one (Marx, 1907, 70). The total number of inhabitants represents the lifespan of Jesus Christ. All the inhabitants, without any class distinction, were to wear a gray habit and to live according to the customary ways of the region and, as far as possible, like the lay brothers of the Augustinian Congregation at Windesheim in the Netherlands (*fratribus Canonicorum regularium de Capitulo de Windeshem*). The hospital was to be directed and managed by a rector. Jakob Marx gives a list of these rectors from 1464 to 1898 in his important work *Geschichte des Armen-Hospitals zum h. Nikolaus zu Cues* (1-2).

Cusanus, the son of a bourgeois businessman, was no doubt concerned about the future maintenance of the hospital. On July 15, 1461, when he was ill in Rome, he wrote his first will with the assistance of Henrich Pomert, his secretary. Shortly before dying in Todi, Umbria, he executed the final testimony afresh on August 6, 1464, in the presence of Giovanni Andrea Bussi (1417-1473), Bishop of Aleria, Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli (1397-1482), his friend from the Paduan days, Fernan (Ferdinand) Martinez, his physician, and Peter Wymar von Erkelenz (c. 1430-1494), a close friend and former secretary who acted as apostolic and imperial notary. It was noted in the will that the cardinal had in the Medici Bank "sex millia et septingentos florenos Rhenenses," of which five thousand were given to the hospital. (He endowed the hospital with twenty thousand Rhenish gold florins to produce a yearly revenue of eight hundred florins.) Sister Klara's donation to the hospital also contributed to the financial stability and safety of the hospital over

the years. Some of the vineyards that are found on the property produce wines that still contribute to the economic health of the hospital.

Cusanus was anxious to consecrate the hospital himself, but because of his busy schedule as Bishop of Brixen and cardinal, he simply did not have a chance to do so. It was only on July 22, 1465, the day of St. Mary Magdalena and one year after his death, that the ceremony took place.

In addition to the hospital at Kues, Cusanus founded in 1461 the Bursa Cusana for twenty clerical students at Deventer, the Netherlands. It is often said that Cusanus' generous action was motivated by the experience of his youthful years as a student of the school of *Devotio Moderna* at Deventer. But, as Erich Meuthen often pointed out, there is no clear evidence that Cusanus was a student at Deventer. The founding of the Hospital of St. Nicholas and the Bursa Cusana are not directly related to each other.

How was the Hospital of St. Nicholas related to other hospitals being developed in Germany and other European countries in the late Middle Ages? What were its features and characteristics? What is its significance today? These are important and complicated questions that need a close study, but can be discussed only briefly here.

In 1965 Paul Bonenfant, a pioneer in the study of charitable institutions, stated: "Despite its multiple interests the study of medieval hospitals has not yet given rise to works of general synthesis" (5). Some serious and valiant attempts, like those of Marx, had been made to record hospital histories, but historians or those who wrote about the history of medieval hospitals tended to assume that hospitals were established by philanthropic laymen or churchmen attempting to meet the needs of the sick poor. But more recently historians have begun to examine medieval hospitals more critically. "Hospitals over time have been much more varied than a casual glance at their present-day namesakes might indicate," wrote Lindsay Granshaw in 1989 (1). In fact, Richard Goldhahn had warned in 1940 that the contemporary notion of the hospital should not simply be transferred to the study of medieval hospitals.

Martha Carlin wrote in 1989:

> The medieval term "hospital," *hospitale* in Latin, embraced four main types of institutions: leper houses, almshouses, hospices for poor wayfarers and pilgrims, and institutions that cared for the sick poor. (21)

According to Carlin and many others, of the four classes mentioned above, the first and easiest to distinguish was the leper hospital. Almshouses formed the second and most numerous of the hospitals. Neither leper hospitals nor almshouses provided medical care as such. No medical care was normally given at the third category of medieval hospitals either. The fourth category of medieval hospitals, those intended wholly or partially for the care of the non-leprous sick poor, seems to have been the least numerous.

As the complexity of medieval hospitals became clear, Granshaw wrote that "after long neglect … hospitals are at last receiving serious historical attention" (1). David Knowles and Neville Hadcock's *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* contains an impressive description of some 1,103 hospitals, with a brief history of each. But nowadays "historians are looking beyond the mere act of lay philanthropy and asking who gave, why they gave, and what the relationship to the hospital was" (Granshaw, 2).

In this connection, we must pay attention not only to the Parish Church of St. Wendel in Germany, but also to Santa Maria dell'Anima Theutonicorum in Rome, of which Nicholas of Cusa was a member and supporter. It is certainly worthwhile to examine the case of St. Wendel from the point of view of Cusanus (see Watanabe). As Clifford W. Maas pointed out, the number of Germans in the papacy increased considerably in Renaissance Rome not only as ecclesiastical officials, but also as important prelates like Cusanus. Their support to the "National Church of the Germans" was significant. The whole development, including St. Andreas Hospice of Santa Maria dell'Anima hospital, was studied in 1991 by Hermann J. Hallauer on the basis of old studies of the institution by Pietro Egidi (1914), Alois Lang (1899), Josef Lohninger (1909) and Joseph Schmidlin (1906). In her recently published book, "*… uns Schätze im Himmel zu sammeln*" (2008), Sylvie Tritz discussed the development of many hospitals in Europe, including St. Nicholas Hospital in Kues and Santa Maria dell'Anima in Rome, making use of recent studies by Elisja Schulte (1995), Holger Stunz (2005) and others. After this brief overview, we may now return to Kues and its hospital.

When we enter the two-storied hospital through its Baroque portal with the statue of St. Nicholas and the coat of arms of the Krebs family, an inner yard surrounded by the late Gothic cloisters (*Kreuzgang*) opens up on the right. The immediate impression is that we are in a monastic building. It seems that Cusanus, in designing the hospital, clearly wanted to avoid the style of typically north European hospitals like those in Gent, Bruges (Brugge), Lübeck, Mainz and Nuremberg, which are buildings with a large hall. As we go around the cloisters, thirteen of the small rooms for the inmates on the southern and western wings of the ground floor can be seen. On the northern wing of the cloisters is the refectory for the inmates.

The late Gothic chapel of the hospital, consisting of a chancel with an apse and a rectangular nave (*Laienraum*), is in the southeastern part of the hospital and is unique. It is one of the most beautiful sacral buildings in the region of Trier. Before the Gothic high altar in the chancel is located the tomb of Cusanus, where his heart found its eternal rest. His body had been taken from Todi to Rome and buried in his titular church, St. Peter in Chains (San Pietro in Vincoli), but the heart was brought to Kues according to his instructions. The place is marked by a copper plaque with a portrait of the cardinal and the inscription, which was made by Peter Wymar von Erkelenz in 1488, when he was the fourth rector:

> To Nicholas of Cusa, cardinal priest of St. Peter in Chains [San Pietro in Vincoli] and bishop of Brixen, the founder of this hospital, who

died at Todi on the 11th day of August 1464, and who on account of devotion, wished to be buried before the chains of Saint Peter. He loved God. He feared [God] and venerated [Him], and he served Him alone. The threat of retribution did not deceive him. He lived sixty-three years and was dear to all.

(*Nicolao de Cusa tit. s. Petri ad vincula presbytero Cardinali et Episcopo Brixin[ensi], qui obiit Tuderti huius hospitalis fundator, MCCCCLXIIII die XI. Augusti et ob devocionem Romae ante cathenas s. Petri sepeliri voluit. Dilexit Deum, Timuli ac veneratus est ac illi sol servivit, promissio retributionis non fefellit eum. Vixit annis LXIII, Deo et hominibus charus.*)
(Marx, *Geschichte*, 39; cf. Part II: 8, p. 3)

The square nave of the chapel is especially notable for the fact that the only central pillar, which with its twelve vault ribs sustains the roof, develops into a distinct turret on the roof that can be seen from many sides. Seen from the point of view of architectural history, this one-pillar construction was something new, and is unique in the region. In the choir of the chapel is also found the tomb of Cusanus' sister, Klara. It is said that, looking at her portrait, the former President of Germany, Dr. Theodor Heuss, called her one of the most beautiful of German women.

The famous library is located on the second floor of the hospital and can be reached nowadays through the rector's room. It is particularly important to note that by design the inner core of the chapel can be seen through a small window in the library. Undoubtedly, Cusanus wanted to place his precious collection of manuscripts near and not separate from the spiritual center of the hospital. One is able to grasp the spirit and the ideas of the man from Kues as we approach him here and examine his place of birth and his legacies.

Cusanus did not neglect to lay a solid economic foundation for the hospital. He made sure that the vineyards of Lieser, Bernkastel, Graach and Zeltingen, which his father owned, would for many years yet to come provide the hospital with the necessary economic resources for its survival and maintenance.

Upon entering the yard of the Hospital of St. Nicholas, visitors will find on the left a handsome building (formerly a stable!) which houses the Mosel-Wein Museum. Opened on November 14, 1981, the museum introduces visitors to the development of wine making in the Moselle region and is a showcase of the flourishing but somewhat threatened wine culture and way of life.

Present-day visitors to the hospital may not only sample wines from the vineyards owned by the hospital, but also purchase them at its taproom. These wines include:

Bernkasteler Badstube
Bernkasteler Kratenhöfchen
Bernkasteler-Kueser Kardinalsberg
Bernkasteler-Kueser Weissenstein
Bernkasteler Lay
Brauneberger Juffer
Graacher Himmelreich
Lieser Süssenberg
Trester-Branntwein
Wehlener Sonnenuhr

The famous Bernkasteler Doktor wine grows on an exclusive site at the bottom of the Doktorberg, located north of Castle Landshut in Bernkastel. It is not from the hospital's vineyards. The health-giving quality of the "Doctor's wine" became famous when the Archbishop-Elector Boemund II (r. 1354-1362) of Trier, on one of his frequent visits to the castle, was miraculously restored to health by a mighty drought of the Doctor's wine.

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30. Kues: The Library

St. Nicholas Hospital in Bernkastel-Kues is famous not only for its hospital built by Nicholas of Cusa for thirty-three old men, but also for its library which contains Nicholas' manuscripts.

Why did Cusanus add a library to his hospital? More than a few reasons can be considered. First, it was convenient to keep all of his collected manuscripts in one place, and no place was better suited for this purpose than the hospital which he established at his birthplace. Some scholars are of the opinion that in his later years, he wanted to live there himself in contemplation of God. Although he had thought of securing a cell at the Benedictine monastery in Tegernsee, St. Nicholas Hospital could have been a candidate for his *vita contemplativa* after a long period of *vita activa*.

Second, while the chapel of the hospital constituted a spiritual center for the residents of the hospital, the library symbolized Cusanus' intellectual aspirations towards the truth. The chapel was the heart of the hospital; the library represented its head. In fact, the two are interconnected through a small window, symbolizing the unity and interdependence of religious and intellectual pursuits. Besides, both rooms have a single pillar that supports the roof. Third, as Jakob Marx suggested, Cusanus probably thought that not only the rector, the six resident clergymen and the six noble residents, as well as the common lay residents, but also scholars and specialists from the outside might wish to use or consult the manuscripts in the collection. Finally, it was possible that Cusanus was influenced by the *studiolo* movement which affected the design of many Italian palaces and residences of the fifteenth century. Some notable examples of the *scrittoio* or *studiolo*, whose most famous early example can be found in Petrarch's house in Arquà, can be seen in the Palazo Davanzati in Florence, Lionello d'Este's *studiolo* in the Palazzo Belfiore near Ferrara, the Palazzo Medici in Florence, Pope Pius II's Palazzo Piccolomini at Pienza and Duke Federico da Montefeltro's palace at Urbino. Many *studioli* were located near a chapel and a spiral staircase, as in the hospital in Kues.

How did Cusanus' collection of manuscripts come to be housed in St. Nicholas Hospital? According to a notarized inventory of Cusanus' books, silverware, clothes and other personal possessions which Giovanni Mantese found in 1960 in the Archivio di Stato in Vincenza, there were one hundred and sixty-seven manuscripts that belonged to Cusanus. Pietro Barbo, Cardinal of the titular Church of San Marco in Rome and Bishop of Vincenza (r. 1451-1464), was one of the three executors designated by Cusanus in his last will of August 6, 1464. Although Barbo was elected pope on August 31, 1464, only twenty days after Cusanus' death in the episcopal palace at Todi, and crowned as Paul II (r. 1464-1471) on September 16, 1464, the busy new pope did not neglect to carry out his duties as Cusanus' executor. With the help of his friends Francesco Mauroceno or Morosini, Marco Marini de Spalatro and Heinrich Valpot or Walpod (cf. Part III: 23, p. 3), Paul II made sure that the first will of June 15, 1461, which instructed that Cusanus'

manuscripts be given to St. Nicholas Hospital at Kues, be carried out. It was in all likelihood Heinrich Valpot who brought the manuscripts to Cusanus' birthplace.

When we think of the impact of significant events that have occurred since the establishment of the hospital, such as the Protestant and Catholic Reformations, the French Revolution, the secularization of monasteries in the eighteenth century and World Wars I and II, it is remarkable that Cusanus' collection survived them all without much damage and loss. As an important attempt to preserve it, we should remember, for example, that during World War II the late Raymond Klibansky (1905-2005), one of the most important initiators of modern Cusanus research, appealed in 1943 to the British government and Air Marshal Arthur Harris ("Bomber Harris") not to destroy the hospital during the attacks on the Moselle bridges.

To take some of the important writers on the library, Jakob Marx (*Geschichte des Armen-Hospitals zum h. Nikolaus zu Cues*, 1907), Hans Vogts (1958), Gerd Heinz-Mohr and Willehad Paul Eckert (1981), Peter Kremer (1971) and Helmut Gestrich (1992) all indicated that the hospital library contained three hundred and fourteen manuscripts dating from the period of the ninth to the fifteenth century. Hubert Schiel (1964) referred to two hundred and eighty-nine manuscripts. As for the number of incunabula in the library, Marx, Heinz-Mohr and Eckert, Kremer and Gestrich mentioned one hundred and thirty-two, while Vogts counted two hundred and nineteen. According to Marx, of three hundred and fourteen manuscripts, about two hundred and seventeen were Cusanus' own. As for the incunabula, Heinz-Mohr and Eckert pointed out that only two in the library were printed before Cusanus' death, referring probably to the *Clementines* of 1460 and the Constitution *Execrabilis* of Pope John XXII (r. 1316-1334).

It is well known that a good many of Cusanus' manuscripts were sold to outsiders and can be found at present in London, Brussels and other places. How did this state of affairs come about? Let us pay special attention here to the so-called Harley Collection of the British Museum in which Jakob Marx thought there were seventeen Cusanus manuscripts in 1907 and B. L. Ullman found thirty-five in 1938. After the accidental discovery of a Cusanus manuscript on display in the British Museum by Alois Krchňák in 1963, intensive studies of Cusanus manuscripts in the Harley Collection began, and, according to recent research, there are at least forty-eight Cusanus manuscripts in the collection. All of them have been described in detail by specialists in the *Mitteilungen und Forschungsbeiträge der Cusanus-Gesellschaft* (MFCG) under the heading *Kritisches Verzeichnis der Londoner Handschriften aus dem Besitz des Nikolaus von Kues* (see Bibliography below).

It was especially during the rectorship of Johann Hugo Schaanen (r. 1711-1721) and Heinrich Brechels (r. 1721-1726; 1737-1747) that many manuscripts were sold and dispersed from the hospital. Especially notable is the purchase made by George Suttie who, as a foreign agent of the book dealer Nathaniel Noel (fl. 1681-c. 1753), bought some Cusanus manuscripts for Edward Harley, second Earl of Oxford (1689-1741) and a fabulous collector of manuscripts and books. Humphrey Wanley (1672-1726) was an excellent paleographer and bibliographer and also library-keeper in the service of Robert Harley (1661-1724), first Earl of Oxford,

and Edward Harley, who negotiated with many book dealers like Noel for the Lords Harley. His famous *Diary* or *Journal* was edited and published by C. E. and R. Wright. In it the editors wrote:

> Probably the most important event of 1717 or perhaps early 1718 … was the acquisition of a large group of MSS. from the Continent through Noel (presumably from Noel's agent Suttie) which included a considerable number of MSS. from Cues on the Mosel. The only reference to this in Harley's letters is in one of the 17th November in which he says: "Are the Books come from Holland? Among which you make mention will come Cardinal Cusanus' MSS. Fusts Bible in 1462 and other Books of Antient Dates and all extreme valuable, what is become of this mighty Cargo? I am afraid the 500 Gallons of Rhenish wine has drunk them all up." (xxxix)

In his detailed and illuminating study (*Habent sua fata libelli*) of the purchases made by Suttie at Kues, Hermann J. Hallauer showed that Suttie was in Kues probably four times—July 3, 1717; August 8, 1717; after November 17, 1718; and perhaps March-April, 1722—to purchase Cusanus' manuscripts from the hospital, and that the cases of manuscripts sent by him from Germany took a long time to reach London, probably because of his inexplicable wanderings in Paris and other places or his difficulties with the French authorities.

During his first stay at Kues on July 3, 1717, Suttie made a purchase of some manuscripts from Rector Shaanen at very low prices. Quickly returning to Kues on August 8, 1717, the enthusiastic buyer Suttie obtained additional manuscripts from the same rector, who in the two summer months sold at least thirteen precious manuscripts to Suttie not so much for financial reasons as his lack of appreciation of their value. On his way from Trier to Cologne, Suttie stopped at Kues for the third time in November 1718, but the details about this stay are not known. He bought probably seven manuscripts, about which he wrote in Cologne later: "All these MSS. were of Cusanus." On April 22, 1717, Wanley wrote about the Constitution *Execrabilis*, which had been received shortly before:

> It may be likewise remembered, that my Lords Book is Noted by the Hand of the Learned Cardinal Nicolaus Cus [*sic*] or Cusanus; who first introduced the then wonderful Art of Printing into Italy, from Germany. (Wright, *The Diary*, vol. 1, 138)

After the death of Rector Shaanen on December 4, 1721, the most fruitful transaction from Suttie's point of view, which amounted to the purchase of at least twenty-one manuscripts, took place in March or April 1722 under Rector Heinrich Brechels. But since Brechels was not installed officially as rector until the end of 1723 or the beginning of 1724, no financial or other records about 1722 are extant. We must note that the controversial rector was later accused of having sold a large number of manuscripts cheaply to an Englishman ("er habe Manuskripte des

Hospitals um ein Geringes an Engländer verkauft," wrote Marx [*Geschichte*, 142]), and that he fled to Luxemburg, where he died on May 22, 1747. In 1822 a managing commission of the hospital proposed the idea, although it was not carried out, that over three hundred manuscripts be sold at a very low price of one thousand eight hundred marks.

It can be said that a collection of manuscripts or books reflects the interest, character and personality of the collector. Viewed in this light, how does Cusanus' collection as a whole look? In his list of Cusanus' manuscripts in Kues, *Verzeichnis der Handschriften-Sammlung des Hospitals zu Cues bei Bernkastel a./Mosel*, Marx described and discussed Cusanus' manuscripts (Cod. Cus.) in thirteen sections:

I. Bibel: Text und Erklärung (pp. 1-20): Cod. Cus. 1-27
II. Kirchenväter (pp. 21-63): 28-57
III. Scholastische Theologie (pp. 64-114): 58-117
IV. Predigten (pp. 115-128): 118-130
V. Liturgie (pp. 128-142): 131-155
VI. Geographie und Geschichte (pp. 143-159): 156-170
VII: Freie Künste, Philosophie (pp. 160-193): 171-206
VIII: Astronomie (pp. 193-218): 207-216
IX: Werke des Nikolaus von Cues (pp. 212-220): 217-222
X: Kirchenrecht (pp. 220-268): 223-278
XI: Civil-Recht (pp. 269-281): 279-292
XII: Medizin (pp. 281-303): 293-310
XIII: Verschiedenes (pp. 304-307): 311-314

In listing the forty-eight Cusanus manuscripts that are clearly known to be in the Harley and other collections of the British Museum, Hallauer, after pointing to certain methodological difficulties involved, classified them, somewhat like Marx in his *Verzeichnis*, as follows:

I. Antike Dichter und Historiographen, Grammatiker, Rhetoriker
II. Philosophie und Geschichte der Philosophie
III. Theologie und Astrologie
IV. Astronomie und Astrologie
V. Medizin und Phamazie
VI. Chemie, Alchemie
VII. Handschriften in griechischer Sprache
VIII. Handschriften in hebräischer Sprache
IX. Varia: Hss. in französischer Sprache; Geographie und Länderkunde

Regrettably, a closer examination of the sections in the Marx and Hallauer studies cannot be presented in the limited space available here. But anyone who looks at the lists of manuscripts in Kues, London, Brussels and other places will be impressed by the wide range of interests Cusanus had in many religious and intellectual subjects. The further study of the dispersal of Cusanus manuscripts and of the nature of

these manuscripts is essential for a clear understanding of Cusanus the man and the thinker. As Hallauer pointed out ("Das St. Andreas-Hospiz der Anima in Rom …"), careful studies of the marginal notes in the Cusanus manuscripts would be an important area of investigation for Cusanus research. Taken together, Cusanus' collection of manuscripts can undoubtedly be characterized as a library built by someone who was keenly interested in medieval religious, cultural, legal and scientific ideas. It is said that Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494), himself a collector of manuscripts, wished to, but could not, visit Cusanus' library in 1488 on his way back from France.

St. Nicholas Hospital is an important legacy with a precious library which Nicholas of Cusa left in Kues. During its construction from about 1450 to 1457, he was very much concerned about it, although his busy schedule prevented him from visiting the site frequently. On May 30, 1457, shortly after the end of the construction (on May 5), he wrote with pride from Brixen to the mayor and jurors of Bernkastel and Kues (*den Ersamen Schulthess und Scheffen zu Bernkastel und Cusa*) about the completion of "a precious building" (*einen kostlichen baw getan*). But a more important letter that revealed his intentions in establishing the hospital had been sent to Provost Philip on December 14, 1453, in which he stated that what God had given him should belong to the poor (*was Gott mir schenkt, soll den Armen gehören*). It is in a similar spirit that he revised his second will, of August 6, 1464, to support in association with the German Brotherhood of Santa Maria de Anima (Teutonicorum de Urbe), St. Andreas Hospice for sick German officials working in the Papal Curia in Rome. St. Andreas Hospice no longer exists, but St. Nicholas Hospital still stands as a monument after the sixth centenary of Cusanus' birth.

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31. Orvieto and Monte Oliveto

Before Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464) left Rome to attend the Congress of Mantua (1459-1460), he had asked Nicholas of Cusa to come to Rome from the Tyrol and serve as vicar general in temporal affairs (*vicarius generalis in temporalibus*). According to Erich Meuthen's study of Cusanus' itinerary from 1458 to 1464, it was from July 12 or 16 to September 15, 1461 that Cusanus spent his first summer vacation at Orvieto in the southern part of Umbria. Thereafter, in 1462 and 1463, he spent his summers in the same high Umbrian town with its refreshing air.

Situated in the valley of the Paglia River, Orvieto was an important Etruscan center under the name of Volsinii Veteres. In Roman times it was a prosperous center for the production of ceramics. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries it was a free commune with wonderful buildings, such as towers, palaces and noble houses. In 1354 it became a city of the Papal States, a situation that continued until

1798. Modern travelers on the Rome-Florence highway or railway see this Umbrian hill town seventy-six miles northwest of Rome when it suddenly comes into view. A grand Gothic cathedral (*duomo*), whose construction began in 1290 and was completed in the fourteenth century, and a celebrated white wine called *Orvieto Classico* (which doesn't travel well and is best drunk on the spot) are two special attractions of the town.

"On the plateau where over 20,000 people live today," wrote a well-traveled New York Times reporter, "the prevailing colors are the dark grays and browns of the buildings constructed with blocks of the local tufa." The polychrome façade of the cathedral, which was designed by an artist from Siena, Lorenzo Maitani (1312-1330?), provides a happy contrast to the pervasive somberness with its red, green, blue, ivory and gold mosaics.

There are at least two factors we should note when we think of Cusanus' summer sojourns at Orvieto in 1461, 1462 and 1463. First of all, after arriving in Rome in 1458 from the Tyrol, he gathered around him friends such as Gasparus Blondus, son of the famous Flavius, his later secretary Giovanni Andrea Bussi, the famous humanists Francesco Filelfo (1398-1481) and Pietro Balbo and the Portuguese physician Fernan Martinez de Roriz.

Another factor is that Cusanus' health deteriorated when he was in Rome in June and July 1461. His eye disease worsened, and he suffered from gout (*podgra* or *chiagra*). In addition he suffered from frequent severe intestinal attacks. As a result, he had his first will executed by Heinrich Powert in Rome on June 15, 1461. In a letter of July 23, 1462 to the Bishop of Feltre, he said that he was so much in pain that he could not accomplish anything. It was Balbo who recommended a visit to the resort of Orvieto to the ailing Cusanus. Not only did Balbo himself vacation in Orvieto in 1461, but he and Cardinal Juan de Carvajal (d. 1469) came to Orvieto in 1462. Luckily, Cusanus' health improved in the favorable climate of Orvieto.

A summer vacation was not the only purpose of Cusanus' stays in Orvieto. Shortly after his arrival in the town in 1461, the Conservators of Orvieto received from Pope Pius II a short papal letter to the effect that Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa of St. Peter in Chains (S. Pietro in Vincoli) would work for the peace and order of the town in cooperation with the Governor of Orvieto, Bindo de Bindis. The letter was dated July 26, 1461.

Like many communities in Italy, Orvieto was suffering from internal conflicts and confusions. The two most powerful families in previous centuries, the Monaldeschi, the leading Guelf family, and the Filippeschi, the leading Ghibelline family, and in the fifteenth century the Monaldeschi faction and the Cerva faction, which was pro-Ghibelline, were in continual conflict. Cusanus tried to intervene and reconcile the opposing factions as much as possible. As a result, he was at first able to gain the support of the townspeople. But as he tried to reform the cathedral and to coordinate and financially reorganize smaller hospitals in the town with the town hospital, the forces of resistance began to rise. Critics said that these small hospitals were dependent on the support of various rich families and that their goodwill and generosity should not be ignored or rejected in the name of better management.

As was the case with many of his reform attempts in the Tyrol, Cusanus' last reform attempts in Orvieto appeared doomed rather quickly. As his day for departure to Rome neared, criticism of and opposition to his reform plans intensified. No doubt irritated, he abandoned Orvieto suddenly, leaving a young, incompetent Carmelite, Gaspar de Sicilia, as his successor. Meuthen has asked if Cusanus had any serious intention to help the citizens of Orvieto.

After the end of his second stay at Orvieto from May 26 to August 17, 1462, Cusanus returned to Rome on January 6, 1463, by way of Pienza, Pope Pius II's home village of Corsignano, which Pius had converted into a model Renaissance town; Chianciano Terme, one of Tuscany's most famous spas; and Todi, where he was to travel in less than a year to spend his last days.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to establish why Cusanus went to Monte Oliveto on July 3, 1463, with two bishops and his servants, to meet a young man (*unum juvenum*) from Bologna, to deliver a sermon on his behalf at the Abbey of Monte Oliveto on July 5, 1463, to encourage him to start out as a novice and to clothe him with a monastic habit. Was the young man, as Gerda von Bredow stated, a relative of Cardinal Nicholas Albergati (1357-1443), whom Cusanus knew well? Cusanus said that he gave the name "Nicholas," which was his own, and Albergati's to the young man because of his love for him. Did Cusanus cite in his sermon many canonistic sources because the young novice was a student of the famous law school at Bologna? He even kissed the novice, which was not required in the rite, perhaps because Cardinal Albergati and the novice were relatives. We really don't know much about the novice except that he was, like Cardinal Albergati, from Bologna.

The Abbey of Monte Oliveto, where the novice wished to become a monk, had a long history and was well known at that time. Standing at two hundred and seventy meters above sea level, not far from Asciano in the province of Siena, the abbey was founded in 1319 by three Sienese noblemen, Barnard (born Giovanni) Tolomei (1272-1348), Patrizio Patrizi (d. 1347) and Ambrogio Piccolomini (d. 1348), who decided to give up their wealth and privileges in favor of living according to the Rule of St. Benedict. At first, the three lived as hermits at the *desert di Accona*. As the number of followers increased gradually, the group was approved by Guido Tailati, the Bishop of Arezzo, by the *charta fundationis*, dated March 26, 1319. Pope Clement VI (r. 1342-1352) sanctioned it in 1344. We note that these founders of the monastery died as a result of the Black Death of 1347-1348.

Construction began on the monastery in 1393 and was not completed until 1526. The correct name for the monks of the Abbey of Monte Oliveto, who are part of a number of congregations that make up the Benedictine Order, is the *Monaci Benedettini di Santa Maria di Monte Oliveto*. Their special devotion to the Virgin Mary is shown in their habit, which is white to symbolize purity.

Works of art can be seen everywhere in this monastery, but the abbey boasts especially three fifteenth-century cloisters. The most magnificent is the *Chiostro Grande*, where the walls are frescoed with thirty-six scenes from the life of St. Benedict of Nursia. Nine of these frescoes were painted by Luca Signorelli (c. 1450-1523) from 1497 to 1498, the rest by Il Sodoma, a nickname for Antonio Bazzi (1477-1549), from 1505 to 1508.

Before clothing the novice with a habit, Cusanus delivered his sermon, which was stern and strict, if not tragic, in tone. He wanted to impress upon the novice what a monk should be like and how he should behave. Addressing him gently as "my son" many times, Cusanus nevertheless sounded restrained. Toward the end of the sermon Cusanus said:

> You will be called by my name, Nicholas, that is Brother Nicholas, which is interpreted as "Victorious." And so be victorious over Satan and his contrivances.
>
> (*Tu vocaberis nomen meum, videlicet Nicolaus, id est frater Nicolaus qui interpretatur victoriosus. Et sic esto victoriosus contra Satan et eius machinations.*) (von Bredow, 33, 36; *Opera omnia*, XIX, *Sermones IV*, 36, 691)

Understandably, he was no doubt concerned about the reaction of the listening abbot and other members of the monastery. The sermon, however, must have been well received by at least one monk, since he left an account not just of the sermon but of the ceremony itself.

By the fifteenth century, the Olivetan Order had expanded and owned many monasteries and its organization considerably developed. The Abbey of Monte Oliveto, which was the monastery where Cusanus preached, was the motherhouse of the *Congregazione Benedettine di S. Maria di Monte Oliveto*. It was called the Abbey of Monte Oliveto Maggiore ("greater") in order to distinguish it from other big abbeys of the Olivetan Order. But it is perhaps good to remember that in its early period the Olivetan Order was eremitical in nature and that it became cenobitic only in later years. We must also note that not only because of his frustrating reform efforts in the Tyrol, but also due to his days of discomfort, pain and disappointment in Orvieto, Cusanus no doubt began to have a sense of resignation and perhaps pessimism. He had said to the people of Orvieto after the rise of opposition to his reform plan: "It takes a strong leader to carry out a real reform. When things don't go well, we must remain calm and unperturbed."

After a short stay in Monte Oliveto, Cusanus moved to Montepulciano, a traditional resort town about twenty-two miles southwest of Monte Oliveto and famous for its wine *Vino Nobile de Montepulciano*. There he wrote a letter to the novice. According to the letter itself, it was written because:

> It pleased God and the religious brothers that I clothed you, Nicholas of Bologna, a zealous youth … and [that] I said some words for the increase of your fervor. I now have put them together in writing at the insistence of some devout men so that you may retain them with you as a memento. (*Letter to Nicholas Albergati*)

The general tone of the letter is not entirely different from that of the sermon. It is true that he sometimes sounded rather optimistic:

> Hold in your memory, my son, when you asked devoutly to be clothed by me with the monastic habit and I placed before your eyes the difficulty of your request from the etymology of the noun. You, nevertheless, did not desist; but you asserted that you had been confirmed by God in your holy purpose after long deliberation, that you would rather be beheaded than not to become a monk, and confessed that divine mercy, which had prompted you to this, would grant success. (*Letter to Nicholas Albergati*)

But the letter as a whole, especially its ending, is certainly not cheerful or easygoing.

> Christ, however, only overcame the prince of death by death. Nor should you be confident of being stronger than Christ. What is in this world where the prince of this world rules? Certainly nothing but pride and the concupiscence of the flesh and the eyes. (*Letter to Nicholas Albergati*)

Regardless of whether Cusanus could or did anticipate the novice Nicholas' death a few months later and whether he was concerned about his own weakened health since 1461, his days in Orvieto, Monte Oliveto and Montepulciano were difficult, perhaps agonizing for one who was contemplating a trip to Ancona to join Pope Pius II and launch a crusade against the Turks. We must note that during this period he was also planning to produce his new book, *On the Summit of Contemplation* (*De apice theoriae*, 1464), which reflects the joy he found in the Easter season of 1464 as a result of his new knowledge that, rather than in darkness, *in obscuro*, as taught in the negative theology of *On Learned Ignorance* (*De docta ignorantia*, 1440), God can be found everywhere and is best designated as Possibility Itself (*Posse Ipsum*).

In 1949, during his systematic search for new manuscripts in Italy, Paul Oskar Kristeller found two manuscripts in Siena that contained the sermon and the letter which were discussed above. In his letter of November 7, 1949, he reported his discovery to Ernst Hoffmann, his former Gymnasium teacher in Berlin and chair of the Cusanus-Kommission, Heidelberg University. Thanks to support from Josef Koch of the University of Cologne, Gerda von Bredow completed her dissertation at the University of Münster in 1953, entitled "Nicholas of Cusa's Legacy [*Vermächtnis*]" and published in 1955 by the Cusanus-Komission. At present, there are German translations of the sermon and the letter by von Bredow and by Harald Schwaetzer and Kirstin Zeyer; in Japanese by Kazuhiko Yamaki; and an unpublished English translation by Thomas M. Izbicki, used in this essay.

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32. Todi and Ancona

When Cardinal Nicholas of Cusa died at Todi, Umbria, on August 11, 1464, he was on his way to Ancona, the Marches, where Pope Pius II was preparing for a crusade against the Turks, who had taken Constantinople in 1453. Todi is the town where Jacopone da Todi (1230/36-1306), "the Fool of God" (*il Guillare di Dio*), was born. Jacopone is the author of devotional poems, *Laude*, which probably included the famous Marian hymn *Stabat Mater*. In 1982 Paul Hofmann, the *New York Times* bureau chief in Rome who traveled extensively in Italy, wrote of the city:

> Todi is full of quaint and noble sights, and from an altitude of 1,348 feet it looks out on green fields in the valleys and on hills with soft contours. The air is clean and the light strong, the food wholesome and the wine cheap.

It is no exaggeration to say that the capture of Constantinople by the Turks on May 29, 1453 was a bitter shock to Latin Christendom. Neither Pope Nicholas V (r. 1447-1455) nor Pope Calixtus III (r. 1455-1458) could strongly push a crusade movement. Although the former declared a crusade against the advancing Turks, he could not accomplish much in the few remaining years of his pontificate. Calixtus III was perhaps more anxious than Nicholas V about the crusade but also limited by his short pontificate. However, as Johannes Helmrath showed in his study of "Pius II and the Turks," the humanist Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405-1464), a secretary at the Imperial Chancery of Emperor Frederick III (r. 1440-1493) since 1444 and Bishop of Siena since 1450, organized three anti-Turkish imperial diets between 1454 and 1455. At the Diet of Regensburg, he delivered his oration *Quamvis omnibus* against the Turks on May 16, 1454. At the Diet of Frankfurt, he gave a stirring opening address on October 15, 1454.

> O kings, o dukes, o powerful men, arise now at last and defend the religion and honor of Christ your God!
>
> (*O reges, o duces, o viri potentes, surgite iam tandem et Christi dei vestri religionem ac honorem defendite*.) (cf. Boulting, 263; Mitchell, 293)

He was joined by three famous men of the time, Giovanni da Castiglione, Bishop of Pavia and papal legate, János Vitéz (1405/08-1472), Bishop of Várad (Nagyvárad, Grosswardein) and representative of King Ladislas Posthumous of Bohemia (r. 1444-1453), and the fiery Franciscan preacher, Giovanni Capistrano (1386-1456). The two main speeches Aeneas gave at the Diet of Wiener Neustadt were *In this Most Frequently Convened* [*Assembly*] (*In hoc frequentissimo conventu*) of February 1455 and *If unto Me* (*Si mihi*) of March 25, 1455.

Then, at the Congress of Mantua (1459-1460), which Aeneas officially opened on June 1, 1459, as Pope Pius II (r. 1458-1464), he proclaimed a three-year crusade against the Turks on January 14, 1460. The reaction to the papal call for military action was hardly favorable. European princes were very reluctant to accept the plan. With the exception of Cardinals Bessarion (1403-1472), the Greek, and Juan de Torquemada (1388-1468), the Spaniard, most cardinals were also unwilling to follow the pope's lead. In October/November 1461 the pope even wrote a letter to Sultan Muhammad II (1429-1481), telling him how great and strong Europe was. It has been pointed out that many humanists actively participated in crusading activities. In the case of the humanist Pope Pius II, he was perhaps acting in accordance with the proud crusading spirit that ran through his family. It is said that his family crest, with a cross and five golden half-moons, was granted to his ancestors for their participation in the Fifth Crusade of 1218.

Pope Pius had been ill in Rome in 1460, but he gallantly took the Cross himself to shame the princes of Christendom and to realize his almost lifelong desire. Stirring himself, he left Rome for Ancona in the Marches on July 18, 1464. He was hopelessly ill when he reached Ancona, one of the best ports in Italy, one hundred and thirty-two miles northeast of Rome. His procession in a litter to the cathedral of San Ciriaco on top of the hill town has been immortalized by Bernardino Pinturicchio (1454-1513) in his painting now in the Piccolomini Library (*Libreria Piccolomini*) of the Cathedral (*Duomo*) in Siena. Not only was the pope ill and tired, he was also unable to walk normally because of his damaged feet, which had been frostbitten during his visit to Scotland in the winter of 1435. The Romanesque and Byzantine cathedral of San Ciriaco and the neighboring Bishop's Palace, dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries, were all the more difficult for the pope to reach.

Nicholas of Cusa had himself been gravely ill in Rome in June and July 1461 (*gravissima infirmitate valde debilitatus*). But his stay in Orvieto in the summers of 1462 and 1463 made it possible for him to recover health and strength. He was then asked by the pope to recruit five thousand troops in the area between Rome and Ancona and to join the pope in Ancona. Cusanus left Rome sometime before July 3, 1464, and must have reached Todi in Umbria in a matter of days.

Why Cusanus went to Todi, which was off the *Via Flaminia*, the ancient and main artery and lifeline between Rome and northeastern Italy, including Ancona, is not easy to answer. One commentator holds that, like many other cardinals and important travelers, Cusanus wanted to avoid the heavy traffic on the *Via Flaminia* in the heat of July. It has also been pointed out that Cusanus was still concerned about the results of his failed reform attempts at Orvieto in 1462 and 1463 and that a delegation from that city, which is close to Todi, arrived there after the cardinal's arrival. Or perhaps he went there to heal his health problems; he had been complaining of unbearable heat since his departure from Rome. No matter what the reasons, Cusanus was soon at Todi, one of the most enchanting hill towns in Italy.

Located on the promontory between the valleys of the Tiber and the Naia, Todi, which had been a settlement as early as the fifth century B.C., had strategic importance. Umbrians lived there before the Etruscans conquered the settlement on the hill, but little is known about these early inhabitants. In the pre-Roman period, the Tiber formed the boundary between Etruscan territory to the west and Umbrian territory to the east. The Etruscan place-name, Tutere, meaning border, which under the Romans became Tuder, was borrowed from the Umbrian language. The people of the town had a reputation for defending their liberty with great ferocity. They turned Hannibal (247-182?) away and gained as a result the honorary name for the town, Marzia, for Mars, the Roman god of war. They also refused to bow to the might of Totila the Goth (d. 552). It is not surprising, then, that three sets of walls exist at Todi—Etruscan, Roman and medieval.

Cusanus had visited Todi between November 16 and December 14, 1462. His second visit to the beautiful hill town could potentially have been good for his health. On July 16, however, shortly after his arrival in the town, he fell ill. We note that the same day he sent a letter to the Conservators of Orvieto about the still-simmering issue of unrest in the town.

On July 28, 1464, Archbishop Stefano Nardini of Milan (r. 1461-1484) reported from Ancona to Duke Francesco Sforza of Milan (r. 1450-1466) that Cusanus was gravely ill. With him on August 6 were Paolo del Pozzo Toscanelli (1397-1482), the famous mathematician and his friend since their student days in Padua; Fernan Martinez de Roriz, his Portuguese physician; Giovanni Andrea Bussi (1417-1473), his secretary and later Bishop of Accia; Johann Römer, his relative, a canon of St. Florin at Koblenz and later Rector of the St. Nicholas Hospital at Kues; and Peter Wymar von Erkelenz (c. 1430-1494), his secretary and apostolic and imperial notary. In their presence Cusanus executed his will afresh, taking into account some change in his financial status since the first will had been drawn up in Rome in 1461. Then, after almost four weeks in the Bishop's Palace at Todi, Cusanus died on August 11, 1464. Pope Pius II himself died three days later at Ancona.

Exactly in which part of the Bishop's Palace Cusanus passed away is difficult to establish. But, citing the testimony of a local historian, Anton Lübke argued that Cusanus died in the rectory of the palace which, after its removal in 1593 by Bishop Angelo Cesi, is now a part of the episcopal garden.

On August 14, Giacomo d'Arezzo, like some others, sent a letter from Ancona to Marquis Lodovico Gonzaga (r. 1444-1476) of Mantua and his wife, Barbara of Brandenburg, telling them with regret of Cusanus' death (*Incresceme de la morte del R^{mo} Mon S. de S. Pietro in vincula*). It is not known exactly what caused Cusanus' death.

It is, however, well known that *On the Peace of Faith* (*De pace fidei*), which Cusanus wrote shortly after the fall of Constantinople in May 1453, was irenic in tone towards other religions, including Islam, and emphasized dialogue and persuasion rather than force and combat. R. W. Southern (1912-2001) writes: "Nicholas was in philosophy a Platonist, in temperament pacific and moderate, in purpose deeply committed to the search for unity" (92). The formula "one religion in many rites" (*una religio in rituum varietate*) has been quoted and discussed by many scholars. (What would Cusanus have said about Buddhism had he known about it?) After publishing his treatise *Sifting the Koran* (*Cribratio Alkorani*) in 1461, was Cusanus more sympathetic to and supportive of a crusade against the Turks? Does the *Cribratio Alkorani*, which speaks of the Koran's inconsistencies, contradictions and conflicts with the Gospel, and criticizes Muhammad's polygamy, blasphemy, self-glorification and hypocrisy, reveal less irenic and more critical views of Islam? Was it his intention to give in the *Cribratio Alkorani* a "devout interpretation" (*pia interpretatio*) of the Koran? Or was his journey to Ancona essentially based on his friendship with the pope? We shall never know what he would or could have done had he reached Ancona after Todi and joined Pope Pius II, "the greatest crusader pope of the fifteenth century."

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