
[The Emergence of a Secular Duchy in Prussia] the Treaty of Krakow, 1525

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In the name of the Holy and inseparable Trinity. We, George [Georg], by the Grace of God the Margrave of Brandenburg¹, the Duke of Silesia for Racibórz [Ratibor] and Karniów [Jägerndorf; today, Krnov]; in Prussia, of Szczecin [Stettin], Pomerania, Kashubia, Vendia, etc.; Burgrave of Nuremberg and Duke of Rügen; and, Frederick [Friedrich], by the said Grace Duke of Legnica [Liegnitz]² and Brzeg [Brieg] and Starost for the Lower Silesia, hereby testify and announce to all and everyone separately, whoever may ever see, hear or read this present arrangement and agreement, that out of the considerations herein-below quoted, which had inclined us as Christian dukes, we have devised, discussed and arranged this present arrangement and agreement between the Most Gracious and Most Distinguished Duke and Lord, Lord Sigismund, Kind of Poland, and the heirs and successors of His Royal Majesty, the kings of the Kingdom of Poland, on the one hand, and the Right Honourable Duke and Lord, Lord Albrecht³, Margrave of Brandenburg, the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order of Prussia, and his knightly order, lands and inhabitants of the towns, on the other hand.

The first and primary consideration for us was that all the misunderstandings, wars, disputes and conflicts between His Royal Majesty and Lord the Master and the

¹ George (Georg), the Margrave of Brandenburg, was a natural brother of Albrecht, the last Grand Master of the Teutonic Knights and the first Prince of Prussia.

² Frederick (Friedrich) II, Duke of Legnica, was first married to Elisabeth (Elżbieta), daughter of Polish King Casimir IV Jagiellon (Kazimierz Jagiellończyk), and subsequently entered a marriage with Sophie (Zofia), Prince Albrecht's sister. Hence, the Treaty of Krakow describes them, respectively, as (the) 'brother' (Margrave George), (the) 'uncle' and (the) 'brother-in-law' (Frederick, Duke of Legnica).

³ Albrecht – of the Hohenzollern-Anspach line of descent, son of Frederick (Friedrich), Duke of Anspach, and Sophie Jagiellon (Zofia Jagiellonka), sister of King Sigismund I the Old. Born 1490, Albrecht assumed the office of the Grand Master in 1510; died in 1568.

inhabitants of his lands have been conceived and emerged as until hitherto, there has not existed a single hereditary duke as a ruler of all the Prussian lands; the said Prussia has instead been ruled by the heads of various dignitaries⁴, and this is why the dwellers of those lands fought against one another to the death in the wars proving pernicious to them, and instigated battles in which lots of Christian blood was spilled and really much harm was done to the dwellers, orphans and widows.

Similarly have we taken into consideration the following circumstance: The aforesaid Lord the Master, our brother, nephew and brother-in-law, exercising the office of Master in the past period, solicited and endeavoured in various a way with all the estates or orders of Christian rulers, namely, with the popes and with the Imperial Majesty, with the Holy Roman Empire and with the Empire's electors, as well as with the German nobility. He would address them quite frequently and with considerable amount of endeavour, entertaining a hope that they should see to that any of those discords, disputes and misunderstandings be alleviated and brought to a concord⁵; and this in line with the content of the written-down perpetual peace-treaty⁶, drawn-up sometime by the Most Gracious King, John-Casimir⁷ of the holy memory, as well as in conformance to the four-year truce⁸ as established in Toruń [Thorn] by the envoys of His Imperial Majesty⁹ and His Royal Majesty the King of Hungary¹⁰, in the presence of a legate of His Holiness¹¹ Pope Leo X. The matter has until hitherto remained unsettled, though, owing to the wars being fought and certain other very serious affairs that His Imperial Majesty and the Most Gracious Lord, the King of Hungary have by this far been preoccupied with.

We have at last taken into account that an established armistice of this sort comes within the matter of a few days to its limit and its ultimate final date¹². Given the aforesaid, should the matters have remained unsettled, it ought to be feared that His Royal Majesty and the Kingdom of Poland, and, the Master and the Prussian lands will resume anew their even greater struggle and fighting and shed of human blood, to a great detriment of the entire Christian community. Therefore, in order to prevent any misfortunes and disasters of this sort, we have strenuously sought

⁴ Alluding to the Order's organisational structure, with the General Chapter, i.e. an assembly of Komturs and outstanding knights, as its top executive authority.

⁵ In reality, Grand Master Albrecht solicited for establishment of a great coalition targeted against Poland.

⁶ I.e. the Peace Treaty of Toruń [Thorn] of 1466.

⁷ I.e. Casimir IV Jagiellon.

⁸ Entered into between Poland and the Teutonic Order, the truce was concluded in Thorn on April 4, 1521.

⁹ I.e. Emperor Charles V.

¹⁰ Louis II Jagiellon; reigned 1516–1526.

¹¹ The papal legate was Zaccaria Ferreri, Bishop of Garda.

¹² The truce in question expired as of April 10, 1525.

for peace, so that for the future, perennial Christian peace might arrive and mutually last between His Royal Majesty and the heirs and successors thereof, the kings of Poland, and the Master of Prussia and his lands. We have moreover taken into consideration the following circumstance: it is right now that the reverend lord Statilius, the parson of Veszprém [Vesprím], has come over as a peace envoy and legate of the Most Gracious King of Hungary, the arbiter of the said armistice, to His Royal Majesty the King of Poland and to the Master of Prussia, our brother, nephew and brother-in-law, requesting that they render themselves subjected willingly, benevolently and kindly to the arrangement we have prepared and to the agreement.

Therefore, we, as the reconcilers and re-establishers of peace, for the reasons and considerations enumerated above, have upon mutual agreement made and resolved between His Royal Majesty and Lord the Master as to the following articles, which we have considered to be heading along the salutary road for peace, as being worthy of Christians and appropriate, and – as is contained herein-below – have compiled and prepared the same.

1. All the disputes having emerged in the course of those wars between His Royal Majesty, Lord the Master, Dukes of Mazovia¹³, the Bishops of Varmia¹⁴ and of Chełmno¹⁵, as well as all the others and their subjects, are meant to be removed, by virtue of this present arrangement, and not to be reminded to any of the partiers with an adverse intent whatsoever.

2. Any localities, castles and towns having been reciprocally seized during these wars, together with all the belongings, appurtenances and dependencies thereof, and this inclusive of the canons in the condition they were found upon the first seizure of the castle or town; similarly, the rifles called *Hokenbuchs*¹⁶, are to be returned, and this in the condition they are of at the present-day officials'. In the event that there is any canon lacking, the officials ought to be queried under oath and those, once sworn, ought to testify how many of such canons they had found there. As for the rifles remaining at the destroyed fortified settlement of Pasłęk, these ought to be returned, without being diminished, to the hands of the Most Distinguished Lord, Margrave Albrecht.

3. Everyone and each of the nobility, burghers and peasants ought to be released from any pledge or oath, by virtue whereof they might have, in the course of the present wars or ever since then, withdrawn from their own people and instead subjected themselves to alien masters, and rendered themselves bound and liable toward them, and shall henceforth be considered as such.

¹³ I.e. Stanislaus (Stanisław; d. 1524) and Janusz (d. 1526), sons of Conrad III the Red-haired (Konrad III Rudy).

¹⁴ I.e. Maurycy Ferber.

¹⁵ I.e. Jan Konopacki.

¹⁶ The German name *Hokenbuch* [Polish, *hakownica*] refers to a large-calibre rifle equipped with a hook used to lean the rifle against a fixed support.

4. As for the neglected obligations, then His Royal Majesty and the Prince of Prussia ought in their condescendence to pardon those whoever might have neglected them, and to return their estates or properties. Moreover, both of the parties are supposed to return any immovable goods of those whoever, pursuant to a verdict, might have suffered a punishment for their crimes committed; a father's crime is not meant to be at all detrimental to his offspring's honour or to adversely prejudice as to anything in anyone whatsoever.

5. His Royal Majesty ought to forgive the inhabitants of Nowe-Miasto [Neumark]¹⁷ their cowardly defection; similarly, Margrave Albrecht should do with respect to the dwellers of Dąbrówno [Gilgenburg]¹⁸ and Olsztynek [Hohenstein]¹⁹, and the same with respect to any other town.

6. As regards the properties and jurisdictions of the ecclesiastics, the Duke of Prussia ought to administer justice to everyone concerned, upon demand of the clergymen, as required by the Christian obligation, integrity and righteousness. Next, any properties, proceeds and rents belonging to the Bishopric of Varmia or belonging to those Varmian clergymen whoever is under the rule of the Duke of Prussia, are due, in turn, to be reimbursed in their entirety. Should, however, the Duke or his noblemen be willing to bestow ecclesiastical benefices²⁰ to their parsons or to any other ones whereto the ministry is to belong, the bishop ought to grant the investiture²¹ to such ones – as the old custom has it.

7. Should Lords the Bishops be capable of proving with certainty that the clerics staying in the lands of Lord the Duke have behaved not in a Christian manner, contrary to the order and regulations of the universal holy Christian Church, Lord the Duke ought together with Lords the Bishops yield assistance in order that any such offences be rectified with the due punishment imposed.

8. Should it have occurred that anyone of the burghers or peasants had eluded his master and escaped without the latter's will within the period of between two years prior to the last-fought war and this very day, he ought to be returned on demand directly to his masters, and no party may retain the other party's subjects ever since whatsoever. Instead, those whoever has been raped par force by either party, ought to be directed and released to their masters by way of public mandate²².

¹⁷ The burghers of Neumark-in-Westpreussen (Polish, Nowe-Miasto-Lubawskie), surrendered without fight to Grand Master Albrecht; it was said that they went as far as requesting Albrecht for their town to be seized by the Teutonic army.

¹⁸ This town surrendered to the Polish army, commanded by Hetman Mikołaj Firlej, at the very outset of the war between Poland and the Teutonic Order, in early January 1520.

¹⁹ Hohenstein (today, Olsztynek in Poland) was seized by the Polish army on January 10, 1520.

²⁰ An ecclesiastical office combined on a durable basis with a stipend.

²¹ I.e. a formal act of establishing someone on the office.

²² I.e. official writ.

9. Lord the Margrave, Albrecht, ought to take an oath before His Royal Majesty and the Kingdom of Poland, as his natural and hereditary lord, and appear in future to be obedient to His Royal Majesty in anything, as is due under the law with a vassal duke against his hereditary lord. Margrave George should also touch the banner's pennant, in the name of his own and his brothers²³. Similarly, within a year should Margraves Casimir and Johann²⁴ recognise and accept this present agreement by means of their sealed letters.

10. In exchange, His Royal Majesty is due to enfeoff Margrave Albrecht as the Duke in Prussia, on a rightful and hereditary basis, with the lands²⁵, towns, castles and villages below enumerated, and that is: three Königsberg towns together with the castle, Lochste[d]t [Lochstädt], Wargi, Girmo [Germau], Pupki, Rudawy, Szaki [Šakiai], Kaimy, Kremity [Cremitten/Kremitten; today, Losovoe], Wałdowo, Tapiawa [Tapiaw; t., Gvardeysk], Tapelawki, Norkity [Gut Norkitten; t., Mezhduretche], Wystruć [Insterburg; t., Chernyakovsk], Alembork [Allenburg; t., Druzhba], Wąstrów, Gierdawy [Gerdaunen; t., Zheleznodorozhnyi], Węgorzewo [Angerburg], Nordenbork [Nordenburg; t., Krilovo], Labiawa [Labiaw; t., Polessk], Łaukiszki [Laukischken], Tylża [Tilsit; t., Sovetsk], Ragneta [Ragnit; t., Neman], Rosity [Rositten; t., Ribachy], Windenburg, Kłajpeda [Memel], Pokarmin [Brandenburg; t., Ushakovo], Krzyżbork [Kreuzburg; t., Slavskoe], Frydłąd [Frydland; Friedland in Ostpreußen; t., Pravdinsk], Domnowo [Domnau; t., Domnovo], Barciany [Barten], Giżycko [Lötzten], Bałga [Balga], Świętomiejsc[e] [Heiligenbeil; t., Mamonovo], Cynty [Zinten; t., Kornevo], Górowo[-Haweckie] [Landsberg], Hławka [Hawapruska; Preußisch Eylau; t., Bagrationovsk], Bartoszyce [Bartenstein], Szestno [Seehesten], Mrągowo [Sensburg], Ryn [Rhein], Kętrzyn [Rastenburg], Elk [Lyck], Pisz [Johannisburg], Pasłek [Preußisch Holland], Miłakowo [Liebstadt], Młynary [Mühlhausen in Ostpreußen], Morąg [Mohrungen], Pasym [Passenheim], Szczytno [Ortelsburg], Ostród[a] [Osterode], Olsztynek [Hohenstein], Nidzice [Neidenburg, t., Nidzica], Działdowo [Soldau], Dąbrówno [Gilgenburg], Hława [Deutsch Eylau], Szępopel [Schippenbeil; t., Sępopol], Przesmark [Preußisch Mark; t., Przezmark], Liwski-Młyn [Liwemühl/Liebemühl; t., Miłomłyn], Zalewo [Saalfeld in Ostpreußen], Prabuty [Riesenburg], Kwidzyn [Marienwerder], Tyrbark [Thierberg], Lubiátów, Szymbark [Schönberg], Bewindy, Jurgowo, Susz [Rosenberg in Westpreußen], Gardeja [Garnsee], Nowy-Dwór[-Gdański; Tiegenhof], Kisielice [Freystadt in West-

²³ This being a symbolic act of admittance for taking the power of liege prince.

²⁴ Casimir (Kasimir) and Joann were natural brothers of Prince Albrecht and Margrave George. Casimir died in 1527 and Johann, in 1526.

²⁵ As for the 'lands' mentioned: all the localities herein enumerated were situated within the limits of former Teutonic state, and subsequently, the Duchy of Prussia (until WWI), up to Zalewo (inclusive), the enumeration sequence follows that of the Thorn Treaty. The names quoted outside of square brackets are those used as of the Polish edition date (first stated above).

preußen], Salawa, Rybaki [Fischhausen; t., Primorsk], Biskupiec [Bischofsburg], Medenowo [Medenau], and should issue a document for this enfeoffment in terms of indivisible liege²⁶, inherited by one brother from the other and [subsequently] by their heirs, as worded in the arrangement.

11. And, in the event that the aforesaid four dukes and margraves: Albrecht, George, Casimir, Johann and their rightful liege heirs have all died without their rightful heirs of the liege, then, yet not prior thereto, should the above-described lands of Prussia be returned on a hereditary basis and assigned to His Royal Majesty and the Kingdom of Poland. Should there have survived any daughters, they shall be equipped by His Royal Majesty and receive a ducal dowry.

12. His Royal Majesty ought to hold retained all the privileges of Margrave Albrecht, his heirs and all inhabitants of the above-enumerated lands of Prussia, which ever do not contradict this present arrangement and royal authority, and moreover defend and shield the same against unjust violence.

13. The envoys authorised therefor, those of the [Teutonic] Order and of the nobility as well as of the burghers of the enumerated Prussian lands, ought to agree and state in writing on behalf of themselves, the heirs and their successors, that after the death of the above-enumerated four dukes and their rightful liege heirs, they themselves, the heirs and their successors ought to and are willing to stand with due loyalty and serfdom by no-one else than His Royal Majesty and his heirs and the Kingdom of Poland, as their natural hereditary lord, and this howbeit in the manner that His Royal Majesty should establish over the above-enumerated lands of Prussia someone with a good command of the German language and well-settled in the Duchy, to whom the administration of all the offices would belong. And should His Royal Majesty have appointed his council-gentlemen relative to the oath that the nobility and burghers, clerics and laymen of all the estates of Prussian lands ought to take before the Duke of Prussia, then from each county two of the nobility and burghers each, in the name of all the others, shall be obligated, similarly as those present here have bound themselves in writing, to recognise this arrangement through their letters and seals. And when they are taking the oath to the Duke of Prussia, then while taking the oath, shall they vow that they will also be observing this arrangement.

14. The Duke of Prussia ought to take the first seat, the closest to His Royal Majesty, in any landed-interest [*resp.* district; Polish, *ziemski*] deliberations, diets [*sejms*; assemblies of deputies] and public conventions.

15. The Duke of Prussia, his ducal heirs and successors are supposed not to vend anything of the Duchy or of the above-enumerated lands of Prussia. If so coerced by any urgent need, they ought to notify His Royal Majesty, as their hereditary lord, a year ahead thereof. Should His Royal Majesty not be willing to purchase,

²⁶ In case the Prince was to have issued several sons, the liege was meant to indivisibly be transferred to the oldest son.

then such a duke will have the right to vend, with the proviso that any royal rights to the liege and liege-related obligations shall remain unaffected. And moreover, should the Duke in Prussia be pressed by urgent need, he may put-on-lease or pledge the castles and his towns to his vassals, so that these lands remain merged and non-cleaved, as they are at present.

16. With regards to the obligations, since the Prussian land has suffered great losses, His Royal Majesty has sworn to offer Margrave Albrecht, out of his grace, six years of release²⁷. Should, however, His Royal Majesty and the Kingdom of Poland be ever attacked owing to this agreement and a liege bestowed by anyone, of the dignity or estate of any sort whatsoever, then – also within these six years of release – the Duke in Prussia and his successors shall be obligated to support His Royal Majesty in person, together with all his subjects, by all his powers, and offer his advice to him. His Royal Majesty ought to act in a similar manner toward the Duke in Prussia and his lands alike. Should it nonetheless have happened that His Royal Majesty or the Kingdom of Poland be, not for because of this present agreement, put under threat by the infidel or otherwise, with His Royal Majesty taking in person his way to the battlefield together with all his subjects, then the Duke in Prussia and his successors shall be obligated to accompany His Royal Majesty with a hundred well-equipped horses until they reach the frontiers of the Prussian lands. Should in turn the Duke in Prussia have been summoned by His Royal Majesty to go beyond the frontiers, then those hundred mounted men, and also the other cavalry soldiers of His Royal Majesty, shall serve upon the royal pay. In case, though, that His Royal Majesty desired in his urgent need that there be more than a hundred mounted soldiers put-in-the-field by the Duke in Prussia, then everyone, however many of them there could be in excess of the hundred, shall serve – as was indicated above – upon the royal pay, ever since they have set forth from their homesteads. If, however, the Duke in Prussia has proved incapable of putting in the field any more than a hundred mounted men, His Royal Majesty ought to refrain from insisting upon him about this any more.

17. As regards the litigations between His Royal Majesty and the Duke of Prussia, the procedure to follow should be the following: in case it has occurred that His Royal Majesty would be willing to sue the Prince, or conversely, the Prince would be willing to sue His Royal Majesty in any matter regarding both of the parties, then His Royal Majesty should compose a bench of his council-gentlemen in Malborg [Marienburg; t., Malbork] or Elbląg [Elbing], have them released from the oath whereunder they are subject to His Royal Majesty, and bound instead that they judge in a just and fair manner. Whatever those aforesaid council-gentlemen might announce and adjudicate, shall be legally binding and valid and is meant to be observed without objection.

²⁷ Release [the Polish historic term: *wolnizna*] refers to granting, for the specified period of time, freedom of obligations (here, the military obligation is meant).

18. In the event that anyone of a ducal rank of the clerical or secular order in Prussia would be willing to institute a dispute against the said Duke of Prussia, then His Royal Majesty shall be bound to render obligated six of his council-gentlemen, whilst the Duke in Prussia, the same number of his own people, in the manner as aforementioned, to hold a trial and render them sworn, and whatever they might pronounce and announce to be proper, both of the parties ought to consent to the same and deem it legally binding and valid, without any shiftiness whatsoever.

19. In the event that anyone not being of a ducal rank should be willing to institute a complaint of any sort whatsoever against the Duke in Prussia, he ought to do it before the Duke's vassals whom the Duke shall be bound to appoint and render obligated to judge. Should however there be anyone considering, due to those litigations in matters concerning the Duke, that an injustice has been caused to him or that he has been aggrieved, he shall thereafter be allowed to make an appeal with the council-gentlemen who ought to be furnished with the authority for examining the case; His Royal Majesty and the Duke in Prussia shall dispatch them, if need be, every year to Malborg on St. Francis's Day²⁸. Should it be decided, once thereat, that the appeal being made by the appealing party proves precipitous and inadmissible, then the said party ought to pay to the court ten Prussian *grzywnas*²⁹, and reimburse the dispute-related expense to the opposing party, as well as it shall be bound to abide by the preceding verdict.

20. Should there have emerged any complaints bilaterally pertinent to the inhabitants of Prussia and their properties, each such individual ought to be sued before the court where his landed property is situated, or where the defendant has his place of abode, whilst he ought not to be drawn before any foreign court.

21. No subject of either of the parties, nor any of their properties whatsoever, ought to be seized or retained before alien courts as justice can successfully be sought at the locations such properties belong to.

22. Ever since, all the dwellers of Prussian lands may bilaterally, whether on the land or on the sea, maintain without any obstacle their mutual commercial relations, march along their old paths and go by their carts and they are meant to retain their privileges in this case. Beside this, fairs carried out in village areas, as launched contrary to righteousness and the old custom, ought to be abolished henceforth everywhere, and transferred to towns whereto they otherwise belong.

23. The Balgian Depth³⁰ in the Fresh Bay³¹ (Haeb) or anywhere else the depths, that is, sea bays, the mouth of the Vistula and all the rivers are to be free for sailing and crossing by all the inhabitants of Prussia. Also, no merchants from foreign

²⁸ I.e. 4th October.

²⁹ *Grzywna* being a monetary unit.

³⁰ Name of a once-existing strait on the Vistula Spit.

³¹ A bay that branches out of the Baltic Sea and stretches as far as from Elbląg up to Königsberg/Królewiec.

lands ought to be forced to go whether to Königsberg or to Braniewo [Braunsberg], Elbląg, Gdansk or any other town, but they have the right to sail and float unrestrictedly, without coercion, at their own choice, without however a prejudice to the old customs duties, privileges or charters.

24. Neither party may establish in the Prussian lands, contrary to the old usage and to privileges or charters, any customs-duties, repositories³² and any other burdens, yet the old customs-duties ought to be retained. Had, however, either party established customs-duties past the time of King Casimir's peace treaty³³, those should also henceforth be cancelled. Should it however have occurred with time that His Royal Majesty and, similarly, the Duke in Prussia would intend to establish somewhere new customs-duties upon demand of their subjects, or construct repositories to the benefit of their lands, then His Royal Majesty ought to summon the Duke in Prussia to a convenient locality, and both of the parties should have an opportunity to reconcile and settle the matter. In the event that any carters or sailors have omitted custom-houses of this sort, their properties ought not to be taken off from them, but instead, the vessels, carts and horses exclusively.

25. As concerns the property of marine survivors, they ought to continually be dealt with in accordance with the custom introduced long ago, as customary in Zealand, Holland and Brabant³⁴, with nothing else to be squeezed out of the sailors.

26. Each of the two parties owes with regard to the other to refrain, at present and in the future, from accepting and supporting any robbers on the public roads, thieves and other land-operating mischief-makers. Yet whoever is an overt enemy of either of the parties, he should also be regarded by the other party as its wicked enemy and wrecker.

27. Each party should have a possibility to pursue its enemies and mischief-makers on the waters of the other party and they are due to be put [before the court(s)] and judged according to their malice in the courts wherein they would be intercepted.

28. The Duke in Prussia, as well as the dwellers of Elbląg, Gdansk and Toruń ought to refrain from any coin being minted, this however under the condition that the His Royal Majesty – between today and the Whitsunday of the following year³⁵ – has fixed the day for an unambiguous arrangement with regard to the coin.

29. The Duke of Prussia is to abjure, now and for ever, any of the privileges, powers of authorities contradicting this present agreement, regardless of wheth-

³² Reference is made to charters (privileges) granted to certain towns or cities, whereby merchants are supposed to offer in a town so chartered to display their commodities for sale for a certain defined time.

³³ I.e. after 1466.

³⁴ Reference is made to a collection of maritime regulations, known as the *Waterrecht*, drawn up in the Netherlands in the latter half of 14th century. This law was certainly known to Gdansk in as early as 15th c.

³⁵ I.e. May 20, 1526.

er they have originated from popes, emperors, princes, dukes, or Polish kings, and should depose them in the hands of His Royal Majesty. Should any such privileges contain any such thing that would not be contrary to this arrangement, whilst being needed to the Duke from Prussia and the lands, for the reason of the frontiers and other rights and privileges, then His Royal Majesty ought to grant the same, worded identically in the document and under the seal of his majesty.

30. The Kingdom of Poland and the lands of Prussia ought, in the name of their own and their successors, to duly undertake that this ordination hereby concluded will be observed by them loyally, perpetually and irrevocably across its parts, items and sections, and they shall not, and are not willing to, oppose or counteract it. In particular shall they add an item whereby, in case that an event of extinction of dukes has occurred, whom may God preserve in accord with His will, the lands of Prussia are due to belong to His Royal Majesty and to the Kingdom of Poland, and not to anyone else whosoever.

31. Lastly, should anyone, of whatever dignity, estate or order he would be, be willing to lay hands upon this arrangement, then the three margraves³⁶ who are also concerned by this arrangement, together with the Duke from Prussia and whoever they might incline thereto, ought to support His Royal Majesty and be responsible for this present arrangement.

His Royal Majesty and the Duke of Prussia hereby attach, for ever and faithfully, their royal and ducal majesty and Christian reliability to this concordant agreement as written-down above, across its sections, clauses, terms-and-conditions and items hereinabove comprised; they hereby undertake and promise for themselves and for the heirs within the chain of their offspring, that the kings of Poland and Prussian dukes to follow shall consider it, unaffected, to be legally valid and binding, and observe it.

In order to imbue the above with an even greater credibility and certainty, His Royal Majesty and the Duke of Prussia have signed in their own hands this present arrangement of concord and unity, and ordered to have their seals attached along with ours. And, each party hereto has been handed in two documents [i.e. copies] of this arrangement of concord and unity, drawn-up in identical wording.

Done and acted in Krakow on Saturday, on the eve of the Palm Sunday, which was on the eight of April, the year of our Lord one-thousand five-hundred and twenty-five.

Signed by *Sigismund, the King*.

Signed, as above, by *George, Margrave of Brandenburg*, in his own hand.

Frederick, Duke of Legnica, in his own hand.

Signed by *Albrecht, Margrave of Brandenburg and Duke in Prussia, etc.*, in his own hand.

³⁶ I.e. Albrecht's three brothers: George, Casimir and Johann.

LETTER FROM ANDRZEJ KRZYCKI, BISHOP OF PRZEMYŚL, TO PULLEON³⁷, THE PAPAL LEGATE IN HUNGARY

[Based on a translation by A. Wolff of the text published in *Acta Tomiciana*, vol. VII, Poznań 1874, p. 249ff.]

As I have heard, you are surprised, my Baron, that the Master of the order called the German Order of Our Lady has become a Duke in Prussia, and that you disapprove of this transformation since it seems to you somewhat distant from the religion and godly endeavours of His Majesty the King. So that you may recognise that nothing has been made or done imprudently or recklessly by this highly religious ruler, or by our Senate, I have resolved to explain to you the reasons and causes that have incited our people to enter into this peace treaty.

In the first place, my Baron, it is known to almost the entire world that the Prussian dispute and so many battles, so many arguments, so many riots that have shaken the whole Christian community, have occurred for no reason other than the kings of Poland having namely deemed the Prussian lands to be their hereditary lands, whereas the Masters and the Order opposed any subjection to Polish kings as hereditary lords and to being obedient thereto. Up until it ended up in that – our rightful cause having been supported by the gods – the said Order, whose powerfulness had grown to a degree that it was considered equal to any king, be it the greatest one, eventually surrendered and, with the whole of its possession, came into subjection of the kings and the Kingdom of Poland, by virtue of a solemn arrangement and perpetual treaty³⁸.

The latter was thereafter preserved for a long time, until the said Order became breaking it again, having regained its forces, and the flame that had been disguised for some time, getting intensified little-by-little, finally exploded into that most recent fire. The late Pope Leo X³⁹, subsequently, Adrian VI⁴⁰, and lastly, our holy Clement⁴¹, and moreover, His Imperial Majesty⁴², the most gracious King of Hungary and Bohemia⁴³, and many a German duke, bringing about a four-years' ceasefire in a

³⁷ Pulleon – Antonio Puglioni, Baron of Brugio, was a nuncio (i.e. diplomatic representative) of Pope Clement VII at the Hungarian court.

³⁸ I.e. the Treaty of Toruń (Thorn) of 1466.

³⁹ Leo X was Pope in 1513 to 1521.

⁴⁰ Pope Hadrian VI died very shortly after he assumed papacy (elected 1522, died 1523).

⁴¹ I.e. Pope Clement VII, in office from 1523 to 1534.

⁴² I.e. Emperor Charles V, 1519-1556.

⁴³ Louis II Jagiellon; nephew of Polish King Sigismund I the Old, reigned 1516-1526.

hope that the dispute is resolvable through amicable consideration. This has failed, though it could probably not have succeeded.

At seeing this, the most gracious Dukes, George, Margrave of Brandenburg, [and] Frederick, Duke of Legnica and Starost for the Lower Silesia⁴⁴, fearing that the war not get exacerbated any more fiercely, and having learned that the matter was being considered at the crown diet in Piotrków⁴⁵, resolved that the things had to be tackled using their own forces and announced that they should arrive there to present His Grace the King with certain terms and methods of how to conclude a peace. Since the diet session was coming to its end, it was seen appropriate to refer the matter back to Krakow, whereto numerous council-gentlemen had shortly-before-then followed the King, the clergy and the secular alike, and [thus] the capability of the general convention to act with regards to this matter was extended. Hence, having arrived thereat, those Dukes instantly presented, in a sincere fashion and without prevarication, what they had brought with them there. There cannot namely be established any durable and certain peace with the Order, and whatever is deemed to be an order is no order, in fact. Might, therefore, the Master have certain estates in Prussia, under – as it was then said – a feudatory law, and pay homage thereupon to His Royal Majesty as his hereditary lord, and become a duke in Prussia and a duke of the Polish Kingdom. This is the will and desire of the Master himself as well as of all the members and subjects of the Order, which Order has with time retrogressed anyhow.

The matter, as proposed to the Senate, initially rendered everyone considerably astonished, and subsequently inferred various thoughts and opinions. Those who did not approve of the design would bring forth the following reasons, in particular: the Order in question, as it is maintained, is subject to the Apostolic See, so it ought not to be abolished without advice of the same. The Emperor and the German nation are convinced that the said Order belongs to them, based whereupon even greater wars might be emerging in a future, rather than a peace. The Master and the komturs, having waived their vows, would wed to their wives, and it shall be unfavourably heard of by all the Christians had it followed our consent therefor; those who have withdrawn from unity with our Holy Mother the Church ought not to be trusted, and those whoever do not deliver the vows and the oath submitted to God will all the less deliver it to humans. And other reasoning of this sort did they quote, which, drawn into words, exerted a varied impact upon the senators' minds.

Those whose thinking was different confuted the above-described reasons in the following manner: would this be an order or an assembly of those who vow a military service, or not; or, whom would they be subordinated to order-wise, that is none of our business. Some time ago, the Prussians, once the Polish dukes became converted, refused to lay their ordinary and receivable tributes, and were accustomed to

⁴⁴ Cf. footnotes 1, 2 hereinabove.

⁴⁵ In 1524.

cause various detriments to the Kingdom of Poland. Those knights were then called in, and were settled there in Prussia for the purpose that they be of assistance to the Polish dukes against the infidel, and share with them the lands acquired from the unfaithful Prussians. The knights, in turn, as soon as they started getting deeper rooted in those lands, have impetrated for themselves illicitly letters from the Apostolic See as well as from the Emperor that [= whereby] they shall wield the lands they have acquired from the infidel. As the time went on, once the Polish Kingdom monarchy was divided into several parts, these same knights, instead of doing so to the unfaithful, started oppressing and assailing Poles, whilst securing the seized lands – this rightful heritage of the Kingdom of Poland – with towns and burg-cities; never have they ceased to embark on a variety of animosities, either. In their own land, they also flayed the subjects, abused their wives, raped virgins, drank all the day and night long and imitated the Greek customs and generally were careless about anything divine or human whatsoever.

Thence, great wars with Poles were occurring and, in consequence – the most right falling-off of the subjects. And although the Teutonic Order knights would often perish and lose, their entire country having been submitted to the might of the Poles, yet the ancestors of our Most Gracious King could successfully be inclined to peace and concord more frequently than those knights were wont to infringe them.

Owing to the Apostolic See legate, a perpetual peace-treaty was subsequently concluded⁴⁶, and numerous ministers and all the subjects were for a long time wont to submit to the Polish Kings a declaration of vassalage, that is, so-called homage. This historic tragedy could not still be put to an end, though, the best opportunity for which was offered by the Apostolic See, by incessantly refusing to approve the peace treaty, which had after all been compiled by its legate. This triggered numerous perjuries and wars, one following the other in closest times [= time intervals], which have hindered to His Royal Majesty defence against the infidel and support to his dearest nephew, the most gracious king of Hungary and Bohemia⁴⁷, which was to a greatest loss and detriment to the entire Christian community.

Therefore, since the Order is located in a place that is surrounded from all sides by Christian states, where it cannot be of any possible service to Christianity in accord with its plight, whereas it annoys others who are well-merited with regard to Christianity; has entered into alliances and associations with the schismatic and unfaithful against Christians and its own hereditary lords, and there is nothing that it does which would be worthy of its order's rule, and hence there cannot be anything more conscionable, or beneficial, to the Kingdom of Poland and Christianity as a whole, than repressing, as soon as practicable, the doom of religion, which in many a Christian kingdom or state has been delivered without any authorisation from the

⁴⁶ I.e. the Peace Treaty of Toruń [Thorn] of 1466.

⁴⁷ I.e. Louis II Jagiellon.

Apostolic See. Now it is so that the Order itself does not acknowledge it any more, and this to the extent that nothing else inside it is held in a greater ignominy and scorn than the papal name.

It was resolved at the recent general diet that no peace treaty or armistice be entered into with the Order, the latter to instead be thrown away from those lands, for as long as it persists therein, never has any peace or concord been durable and – as is known from the experience – shall not be durable in a future. The overall perilous location in the kingdom of Hungary advises one to enter into a concord of any sort, and to direct the arms against the Turks. Nothing more demanding and useful could have therefore occurred than for the Order itself – proving no less detrimental than the Templars of yore⁴⁸ – to have been overthrown by itself, without warfare turmoil, so that a peace may be eventuated, so indispensable as it is for Christianity, through the removal of this only embers of turbulence. Neither the Pope nor the Emperor or the German nation will have any just reason for undertaking anything against the Poles, as it was an Order which – offering the papal, imperial, or the German nation’s dignity and law as an excuse whilst meanwhile seizing the Polish Kingdom’s lands – was wont to commove all that Camarian quagmire⁴⁹. If however anyone should be allowed to besiege Poles owing to this reason, they shall – as they have hitherto been doing – persistently and fearlessly defend justice and their heritage.

As regards the religion, the Pope was notified at the previous opportunity that Lutheranism was inviolable amongst that Order, the Roman Church being cursed. Many of the so-called clerics and komturs get married, altars and paintings are destroyed, ecclesial ceremonies and rites abolished, all the sacrosanctities desecrated. And not only has this not drawn the attention of, nor has been put in order by the prestige of, His Holiness or the Emperor, but both of them have hitherto been supporting this Order and favouring it against us, the faithful and submissive to the Apostolic See, and incessantly fighting with the infidel. Neither His Grace the King nor any of the Poles has not offered, and indeed still is not offering the Order any opportunity for rejecting their monastic vows, it is only that they are soliciting respect for their rights.

It suffices that the Kingdom of Poland defend itself and beware of that heretic epidemic⁵⁰, which is already getting disseminated everywhere in the neighbourhood. Let the others be tended by those who are more concerned. They let the epidemic in-

⁴⁸ The Knights Templar order was abolished in 1312.

⁴⁹ Camaria was a Syracusean colony on the south coast of Sicily. Founded in 598 BC, it was meant to be guarded against inimical invasions by its great marshes and swamps, which were to remain untouched, as instructed by the Delphic oracle. Once Camaria dwellers dried the swamps up, the city was destroyed. Hence, the phrase ‘Camarian quagmire’ was used in Antiquity to describe things dangerous; a humanities vocabulary has taken it over.

⁵⁰ It is Lutheranism that is being referred to.

tensify day by day, and while heading for internal fighting, they tend to look through the slots, not caring about the ruin and defeat of the Catholic Church. When moreover, the Order abolished through that heresy, its country ought to righteously be assigned to His Royal Majesty and the Kingdom as a hereditary lord [*sic*], and it cannot possibly be taken away from the proprietors otherwise than through a military action, thus instigating a dangerous commotion, it should be better for the country to be enfeoffed to those who already occupy it and are related to His Royal Majesty, rather than – instead of offering assistance to the Kingdom of Hungary and of our own, being plagued by a pagan power – to inspire confusion through uncertainty of war. Should these relatives have even erred, it may still be hoped then that, once under a devout ruler, connected with a nation that is unstained with any thing, shall they once resume a reason, sooner than in another occasion. And even though this might not happen, there is no reason whatsoever to charge the King or the Polish Kingdom on account of this, for it is not since the arrangement's conclusion but long before then that, through some fatalities of destiny or rather, through the Furies⁵¹, people have been erring in this way not only in Prussia but also in almost the entire Germany. If this has been unsuccessfully restrained by those highest-tier rulers to whom this is all the more pertinent, all the less can be done by the Poles to prevent it.

Wherever the oath is the only universally accepted knot that links the subjects, one that has tied the Ruthenians and the Armenians, the Jews and the Tartars, all subordinate to His Grace the King, there is nothing holier or deeper that might possibly be expected from those ones indeed.

Having carefully considered and discussed, over almost the entire Lent⁵², such bilateral reasons in a rather numerous circle of our Senate, it was thence consented that there has never been any permanent peace or truce with the Order whatsoever, nor there possibly can be any. Hence, once the times had brought that about, it withdrew from its monastic vows, its properties – unrightfully seized by it, after all – falling upon His Grace the King as a hereditary lord, pursuant to the law, of which properties it would be so prejudicial to ignite a war, given so perilous situation of the Christian community, what the Master and all his subjects were requesting was eventually consented to.

Reinstatement of the religion as it previously stood in the entire Germany was also debated upon. The great defeat [taking place] has for a long time now been requiring that a willing care be taken also of that smaller Prussian part and for it to be led down to the appropriate path, in particular by reaffirming the royal authority in those lands.

⁵¹ In the Greek mythology, Furies were goddesses of revenge.

⁵² Margrave George and Duke Frederick, Albrecht's plenipotentiaries arrived in Krakow on March 5. The Lent of 1525 commenced on March 1.

These are, my Baron, the actual causes and reasons for the composing of all this peace and concord treaty. In case they might seem inappropriate to you, do consider it please that such are the demands of our time, so that numerous misfortunes could be borne at a cheaper expense, rather than having them cruelly eradicated. This all the more so that we have not created an error or some desertion but have merely used the opportunity to our benefit, and even to the advantage of Christianity. Let me neglect now what could have otherwise been proved, namely that this Order has never merited anything good toward Christianity, but has always [and] everywhere been pernicious and insidious. The people verily consider it rightly that the Order's cross was the cross of that thief who was hung to the left of our Saviour, and so, being abhorrent, was deserted by the good duke and the knights themselves. In order to say a joke as our custom has it, let me add a piece that I had written long ago of that Order, for I know you may like our epigrams of the like sort:

Of the crosses, there are three, as is known. They differ in their three colours.

Of the people bearing these crosses, there is a threefold order and rank.

One is red. That one can justly be named the cross of Our Lord Jesus,
Whose purple blood has given it this bloody tint.

There is a white one too. Suitable shall it be for the thief at the right,
Whose bunch of words has effaced the improbities and crimes.

And there' a black one, the last of the three. It signifies a thief – at the left.

This is verily reaffirmed by the Order that has a black cross as its emblem.

But let us have it behind us for now. Now, please learn along the lines of what a sequence and amidst what solemnities that transformation, as I have said, of a master into a duke followed and the act of surrender, that it, the payment of homage.

As we are considering this new subject of debate, the chapters and terms for that whole arrangement getting compiled and written down, the entire Lent period has meanwhile gone. Hence, the holding of a ceremony that usually accompanies such acts of homage had to be fixed at the Monday of the Holy Week⁵³. On that same day then, at the very daybreak, an extensive-sized platform was erected right by the town-hall, covered with satin and gold-brocaded blankets, and particularly that elevated site where the King was to get seated, with his most gracious son⁵⁴. An immeasurable crowd of people is flocking together into the market, all the ways lead-

⁵³ I.e. April 10, 1525.

⁵⁴ I.e. Sigismund, later to be King Sigismund II Augustus

ing thereto getting filled with entourages of armed men. It is evident that everyone around there is strongly apprehensive, whether wearing a stylish garment or furnished with weapons.

At that time, His Grace the King remains surrounded by an enormous and magnificent garland of senators and the most illustrious men. The envoy of His Grace Lord Louis, King of Hungary and Bohemia, Statillus, the parson in Wesprym [i.e. Veszprém]⁵⁵, comes up called first; a nice man, as you know, and of real aptitudes; then go the two dukes, Margrave George and Duke Frederick. All those accompany His Majesty the King; he is preceded by princes, dukes and council-gentlemen of all the estates, courtiers, and the most beautiful new banner with a coat-of-arms that, as the custom requires, is to be handed in to the Duke⁵⁶. They are followed by Her Majesty the Queen⁵⁷, with His Grace the Prince⁵⁸ and the Princesses⁵⁹ as well as with a grand retinue of distinguished fairs in beautiful carriages and crafts.

His Majesty the King has arrived at the town-hall, whilst Her Majesty the Queen with her retinue made her way to a house opposite the hill, so she could more conveniently watch the course of the ceremony. As the king is putting his coronation attire on, and that is: the sandals, the tunica, the alb, the dalmatic, the coat – that is, cope, and the crown, the two dukes go to the Master's inn.

There were such who, in conformance to the time's habits, held it against the ruler that he had apparelled himself in such attire, preposterously conceived, as it were, by the priests. They did not take notice that the king of all the kings, Jesus Christ, was dressed exactly like that for derision, and the apparel was passed on, as a commemoration, to Christian kings. They did not understand, either, that a king's power is conditional upon the support of religion and these have a mutual relation and connection even amongst heathens. Hence, the first glorious Roman emperors were the highest priests at the same time. Hence, kings, similarly to priests, have till our day been now and then anointed, in line with the ancient custom and law, and called they are the *Sacrae Maiestates*, the holy Majesty. These same critics would prefer having an illustrious ruler show off armoured like a Thraso⁶⁰ of sorts amidst theatrical audiences. Yet, the innumerable most notable Christian kings and emper-

⁵⁵ A town in Hungary.

⁵⁶ The banner served then as the symbol through which the sovereign bestowed ducal authority unto his vassal. In the earlier times, the spear had the same function.

⁵⁷ I.e. Bona Sforza (1494-1557). Bona arrived in Poland in 1518 and left this country in 1556. Back in her native Italy, she eventually fell victim to her advisor G.L. Pappacoda who ordered to have her poisoned.

⁵⁸ This description would suggest that Sigismund Augustus, then aged five (born August 1, 1520) initially marched in Queen Bona's retinue.

⁵⁹ Probably, the eldest daughter Isabella (born January 18, 1519) and three-year-old Sophie [Zofia] (b. July 13, 1522). The other daughter, Anna, was less than 18 months of age then.

⁶⁰ Referring to the figure of boastful soldier in Terence's comedy *Eunuchus* (1st c. BC).

ors would always at such and similar occasions use the attire established in the most sacred manner, and they after all have bestowed to posterity the glorious deeds of their arms. Presently, however, those who are rattling their arms and showing themselves in weaponry when not needed, usually deal with the arms to a lesser extent when really needed.

But let me resume the story I have commenced. Having got dressed in his coronation gown, His Grace the King passed from the town-hall to the elevation, walking between the Primate – the reverend Archbishop of Gniezno⁶¹, and the Bishop of Krakow⁶². He was directly preceded by the highest-ranked council-gentlemen, carrying the sceptre, the mound and the sword, and the uncountable other dignitaries. The remaining bishops and secretaries were following the King.

As His Royal Majesty got seated on the throne, the first to approach him was the Bishop of Pomesania⁶³ and the numerous counsellors and subjects of the Most Gracious Duke Albrecht, the margrave, who in their beautiful oration thanked God the Lord for having removed and finally reconciled all the contradictions and wars so detrimental to the Christian community, which were fought for so many years in Prussia and could not have thitherto been assuaged. They humbly requested His Royal Majesty that he, under a pious ministry and Christian strenuousness of the most gracious dukes George and Frederick, deign to accept into his grace his relative, the Most Gracious Duke Albrecht, offering and enfeoffing him with the agreed-upon lands and estates, and render him a tributary duke of his kingdom.

Then came on the Most Gracious Duke Albrecht himself, marching in the middle, between those aforesaid dukes. He uttered an oration of almost identical content, more ornamented however, as he is quite eloquent in his native language, assuring of a special loyalty, humility and humbleness. First, the counsellors and then, the Duke himself were answered with a Latin oration uttered by the most reverend Piotr Tomicki, Bishop of Krakow, with that ease of eloquence and gracefulness that are known to you. He said that the war that had been on between His Grace the King and the Duke was conducted on the part of the King with utmost aversion, since the said Duke was associated with him through so close a relation, whilst the threat to the Christian cause called by all means for peace and mutual concord of all the Christian rulers. Once, then, so many difficulties and antagonisms have been reconciled, owing to God's grace, and the Duke is presently assuring of so great a loyalty and inclination towards His Royal Majesty and his Kingdom, the King is ready to effortlessly consign to oblivion all that which offended his sentiments, and is willing to ex-

⁶¹ I.e. Jan Łaski, a great statesman and outstanding lawyer.

⁶² I.e. Piotr Tomicki, an illustrious humanist and politician.

⁶³ I.e. Erhard Queis, an outstanding theologian, appointed *Bishop of Pomesania* arbitrarily by Albrecht – then still the Grand Master – was among the main propagators of the Reformation movement in the Teutonic Prussia and then, Ducal Prussia.

tend his entire favour and grace to the Duke himself as well as to all his subjects and potentates. This peace and agreed-upon concord shall be respected and strictly observed, and this mainly owing to the interest of the Christian cause and to so numerous requests made by our Most Holy Lord the Pope, His Imperial and Catholic Majesty and the Most Gracious King of Hungary and Bohemia, whose situation requires this quite particularly; and, to other Christian rulers. His Grace the King consents to everything that he is requested for by the Duke himself as well as his subjects, hoping that they ever since shall behave with respect to His Royal Majesty and the Kingdom as befits any honest and loyal subjects against their hereditary lord.

The screed over, the Duke approached the throne and, having kneeled at the King's feet, accepted from the hands of His Royal Majesty a banner with a coat-of-arms, and that is, with a black eagle crowned on its breast with the letter 'S'⁶⁴, and from the King's mouth, an introduction into the Duchy and into the assigned lands in Prussia. The Duke took the banner, whose edge was being touched by Margrave George as the closest heir, and placed an oath to the Book of Gospel, phrased thus:

"I, Albrecht, the Margrave of Brandenburg, Duke in Prussia, Szczecin, [Stettin], Pomerania, Slavdom and Kashubia, ruler of Rügen and Burgrave of Nuremberg, hereby promise and swear that I shall be loyal and yielding to the Most Gracious Ruler and Lord, lord Sigismund, the King of Poland, Grand Duke of Lithuania, Lord and heir of Ruthenia and all the Prussian lands, as my connatural hereditary lord, and to the heirs and successors of His Royal Majesty, kings and the Kingdom of Poland; I shall solicit the good of His Royal Majesty, the good of his heirs and of the Kingdom of Poland, and evil shall I prevent, doing anything that is part of the duty of a loyal vassal. So help me God and His holy Gospel."

After the oath was received, His Royal Majesty, having taken off the sword, dubbed the new Duke, as they say, a knight, putting on him a belt worthy of being a royal present. Then, the accolade extended to the guests and then on, persons of various estates or orders, whoever vied for this knightly honour.

All this being completed, His Royal Majesty, having put off his coronation attire, returned with that whole retinue to the castle where a thanksgiving was made to God in the church with solemn singing and a solemn benediction was received, with His Grace the King and the dukes kissing the relics of the saints. Subsequently, the King received all the attendees, the guests and his most excellent dignitaries, at his royal seat with a splendid feast.

⁶⁴ This description refers to the then-new coat-of-arms of the Duchy in Prussia. The description lacks accuracy, though, in that Bishop Krzycki does not mention the golden crown featured on the eagle's neck, signifying the Duchy's incorporation in the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland. The letter 'S' referred to the initial character in King Sigismund's name [Latin, *Sigismundus*; Polish, *Zygmunt*].

The following two days were consumed upon preparation of the documents which were to be reciprocally exchanged. At last, all the dukes and princes, generously bestowed with gifts, and their counsellors, left on the Maundy Thursday.

Do accept, my dear Baron, in exchange for my remaining silent for so long, about which you have complained at many occasions, this letter, overabundant with words as it is. It is sincere and accurate to the extent that nothing has been omitted [herein], at least based upon what was touched-upon and debated on a more secret and unrestrained basis at our Council. Yet, this has not been done because of opprobriousness toward the Order, or anyone else, but for the sole purpose of explaining that form both of the parties has this peace treaty and this concord arrangement compiled not without the rightful and decent reasons indeed.

Now, then, my dearest Baron, fare thee well for ever and love me, and write me your opinion on this or that thing from time to time.

Done in Krakow.

LETTER BY KING SIGISMUND I THE OLD TO POPE CLEMENT VII

[*Acta Tomiciana*, vol. VII, Poznań 1874, pp. 257-258]

Most Holy,

It has already earlier on been a wish of Your Holiness, of your predecessors and of almost all the Christian princes or dukes that an end be put to the war so detrimental and perilous to the entire Christian cause, the one that was being waged between me and the Duke of Prussia. As it is already known to Your Holiness, this has eventually happened, owing to God's grace.

As the armistice period was namely coming to its end, there being no hope whatsoever that so great disputes could possibly be settled with assistance of the arbitrators, the Prussian Master himself arrived to see me. Before then, via the intermediation of the Right Honourable Dukes George, Margrave of Brandenburg, and Frederick, Duke of Legnica, our common kinsmen and connections, the terms-and-conditions for a peace and concord arrangement had been determined, such as proved feasible at that time and as were required by our mutual needs. The Master – as my ancestors and myself had most rightfully demanded – has paid homage to me, and as for myself, I promised to him whatever I could make out of my law. In particular, now that his Order has waived their vows, he and all the Prussian lands, being the most rightful heritage of the Kingdom, have been rendered subject to our rule.

I should thence entertain the hope that not only have the combats and disputes so grand been placated and settled but removed with their roots and extinguished. Otherwise, this tragedy would have never come to an end, in particular, once all my subjects demanded upon me at the recent diet, by all means possible, and by no means whatsoever could they be inclined to withdraw from their opinions, and that is, that the Master of Prussia ought finally to be forced to pay the due homage to me and to my Kingdom, or that the Order should be chased away from these lands. And I, seeing how great a danger might be implied by resuming a war, not only to those lands but to the entire Christianity, against which Your Holiness as well as almost all the Christian dukes or princes have warned me, have chosen the sort of peace whose conclusion proved feasible under the present conditions. And it seems to me that this is more advantageous than to destroy and wreak havoc upon everything by retrieving the lands and the heritage of mine and of my Kingdom with use of warlike gore and fierceness, taking into consideration, after all, that there in Prussia it has for a long time now been not the Order as such that was put at stake, but the religion as a whole indeed.

I have never in generality offered the error in question any advantageous opportunity whatsoever, similarly as when it came to entering into this peace treaty, I endeavoured that everything be occurring in line with the regulations of the sacred Catholic religion, as may be testified to by all of our deeds and treaties. Together with my counsellors have I brought about much advantage to the ecclesiastical judiciary and retrieval of ecclesial properties in those lands, which otherwise seemed lost, the loss whereof being put up with. I should also expect that I shall soon be able to reinstate the remainder, with the assistance of God and support from Your Holiness, as being normal and in due condition. My desire namely is, and I always remain ready, in the interest of the Christian cause and of the holiest Apostolic See, not only to commit my earnestness, endeavour and all my capabilities, but, should such a need ever occur, to shed [my] blood and sacrifice my own life. Never should Your Holiness be made predisposed in any other manner whatsoever with respect to myself or my subjects. For I do strive, sparing no effort or care, to extinguish and repulse from my Kingdom that Lutheran plague, a perilous conflagration that has set fire on the contiguous and grand wall of my state. My ordinances and missions, along with the envoys and legates of Your Holiness, may serve as satisfactory testimony therefor.

I have namely decided to notify Your Holiness of this successful outcome of the Prussian cause because I do know that Your Holiness most earnestly takes care of a general peace amongst the Christians as well as because I do know how great the carefulness is that you extend to me and any of my matters, and I do entertain the hope that this shall furnish Your Holiness with quite a gladness and relish, to whom I once again hereby humbly commend myself, wishing you long years in good health and happiness.