

# Session 3: Documents

- Please read the documents in this PowerPoint in preparation for the third session. To understand humanism it's important to read at some length the humanists in their own (translated) words or those of their contemporaries.
- The selection from Pico della Mirandola (five slides) is only the first two pages of a 21 page document. For those who would like to read the whole work there is an additional PowerPoint with the rest of the oration. For the philosophically minded, it's worth the effort in that it demonstrates Pico's Neo-Platonic ideals as well as his vast knowledge of Christian, Jewish, Muslim, and Classical texts (all of which he could read in the original).
- There is one secondary document in this group. It's a brief essay on Ficino and Neo-Platonism—a concept more easily understood in an essay than in a lecture.
- On some documents, brackets in the margins indicate particularly relevant passages.
- A reminder: on a PowerPoint you can enlarge using the symbols at the bottom of the slide.

### ◆ Poggio Bracciolini

Poggio Bracciolini was born in 1380 and entered the humanist circle of Coluccio Salutati while the great scholar was Chancellor of Florence. Poggio developed into a fine Latinist who was employed in Rome at the papal court as a secretary, and as a result, he had the opportunity to travel to the Council of Constance (1414–1418), where he sought for lost classical manuscripts in the rich but underused monastic libraries of northern Europe. There he found previously lost works by Cicero and the complete text of Quintilian, as well as *The Golden Ass* of Apuleius. These discoveries not only added greatly to the literary and intellectual heritage of the ancient world, but also made Poggio famous.

Poggio wrote many works himself in Latin and developed a significant reputation as a writer. This growing fame led to his being chosen Chancellor of Florence some years before his death in 1459, an office he used to write his own history of the city.

### FROM VESPASIANO'S LIVES

#### Poggio Fiorentino (1380–1459)

Messer Poggio was born at Terranuova, a Florentine village. His father sent him to the University, where he remained as a teacher, being very learned in the Latin tongue and well conversant with Greek. He was an excellent scribe in ancient characters, and in his youth he was wont to write for a living, providing himself thus with money for the purchase of books and for his other needs. It is well known that the court of Rome is a place where distinguished men may find a position and reward for their activity, and thither he accordingly went, and when his quickness of wit had become known, he was appointed apostolic secretary. Afterward he opened a scrivener's [notary's] office, and in these two vocations was known as a man of integrity and good repute. He had no mind to enter the priesthood, or to accept ecclesiastical preferment, but he took as wife a lady of the noblest blood of Florence, one of the Buondelmonti, and by her had four sons and one daughter. He was sent by Pope Martin with letters into England, and he found much to censure in the way of life of that country, how the people were fain to spend all their time in eating and drinking; indeed, by way of joke, he would tell how, when he had been invited by some bishop or nobleman to dine or sup, he had been forced, after sitting four hours at table, to rise and bathe his eyes with

Source: Vespasiano da Bisticci, *The Vespasiano Memoirs* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1926), pp. 351–357. Reprinted in W. L. Gundersheimer, ed., *The Italian Renaissance* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp. 40–45.

cold water to prevent him[self] from falling asleep. He had many marvelous tales to tell about the wealth of the land. . . .

It was said that his [patron's] gold and silver plate was of enormous value, and that all the kitchen utensils were of silver, as were also the andirons and all the smaller articles. Another fellow citizen of ours, Antonio dei Pazzi, went thither also, and one morning, on a solemn feast, the cardinal assembled a great company for which two rooms were prepared, hung with the richest cloth and arranged all round to hold silver ornaments, one of them being full of cups of silver, and the other with cups gilded or golden. Afterward Pazzi was taken into a very sumptuous chamber, and seven strong boxes full of English articles of price were exhibited to him. . . .

When the Council of Constance was assembled, Poggio went thither, and was besought by Nicolò [Nicolì] and other learned men not to spare himself trouble in searching through the religious houses in these parts for some of the many Latin books which had been lost. He found six Orations of Cicero, and, as I understood him to say, found them in a heap of waste paper among the rubbish. He found the complete works of Quintilian, which had hitherto been only known in fragments, and as he could not obtain the volume he spent thirty-two days in copying it with his own hand: this I saw in the fairest manuscript. Every day he filled a copybook with the text. He found Tully's [Cicero's] *De Oratore*, which had been long lost and was known only in parts, Silius Italicus, *De secundo bello punico* [*The Second Punic War*], in heroic verse, Marcus Manilius on Astronomy, written in verse, and the poem of Lucretius, *De rerum Natura* [*Concerning the Nature of Things*], all works of the highest importance. . . .

Next at Constance he found Tully's letters to Atticus, but of these I have no information, and Messer Leonardo [Bruni] and Messer Poggio together discovered the last twelve comedies of Plautus, which, Gregorio Corero, Poggio, and certain others amended and set in the order which they still follow. The Verrine orations of Cicero also came from Constance and were brought to Italy by Leonardo and Poggio. Thus it may be seen how many noble works we possess through the efforts of these scholars, and how much we are indebted to them; and how greatly the students of our own time have been enlightened by their discoveries. There was no copy of Pliny in Italy; but, news having been brought to Nicolò that there was a fine and perfect one at Lübeck in Germany, he worked so effectively through Cosimo de' Medici that he, by the agency of a kinsman of his living there, bargained with friars who owned it, giving them a hundred Rhenish ducats in exchange for the book. But great trouble followed, both to the friar and to the purchasers.

After his return from Constance Poggio commenced [to be an] author, and to show his quality as a speaker. He had a great gift of words, as the study of his writings and translations will show. His letters are most

delightful from their easy style, written without effort. He was given to strong invective, and all stood in dread of him. He was a very cultured and pleasant man, sincere and liberal, and the foe of all deceit and pretense. He had many witty stories to tell of adventures he had encountered in England and Germany when he went thither. As he was very free of speech he incurred the ill will of some of their learned men, and was prompt to take up his pen in vituperation of certain men of letters. He wrote a very abusive letter to Pope Felix, the Duke of Savoy, and took up the cudgels in defense of Nicolò Nicoli, on the score of his many virtues, against a learned man who is now dead. Nicolò was devoted to Carlo d'Arezzo [a humanist and academician] on account of his learning and of his excellent character, and procured advancement for him in many ways. By his influence Carlo was appointed to teach in the University in competition with the learned man before named, against whom Poggio, from his love of Nicolò Nicoli, had written his invective. The gathering at Messer Carlo's lectures was marvelous; thither came all the court of Rome, which was then at Florence, and all the learned Florentines, and from this cause arose the differences between Nicolò Nicoli and Filelfo [poet and humanist], through the great reputation which Messer Carlo had thereby gained. Poggio defended Nicolò Nicoli against an attack made by Filelfo, and on this account ill-feeling arose between Nicolò and Filelfo. As much abuse passed from one to the other, and as Cosimo de' Medici was well disposed to Nicolò and Messer Carlo, Filelfo began to trouble the state, and for his misdemeanor was banished as a rebel; so high did feeling run. To return to Messer Poggio. His fame increased all over the world wherever his works were known, and he spent in original writing or in translating all the time he had to spare after attending to his secretarial and his scrivener's office. . . .

While he tarried at Rome, enjoying the highest favor of the Pope, Messer Carlo d' Arezzo, the Chancellor of the Signoria, died at Florence and Poggio was elected to the office forthwith on account of his fame, and his appointment met with general approval. When this news was brought to him, although from his high position at the court of Rome, and the profit he made, he could not hope to better his condition, he felt a desire to return to his country, so he accepted the office and made Florence his fatherland, as it was just to do. Coming from the court of Rome, and being of a disposition open and frank, and without any leaning toward falsity or dissimulation, Poggio by his character was unacceptable to many of those who ruled their conduct by opposite maxims, saying one thing and meaning another.

It happened that an election was held and that he was put forward as a candidate, wherefore he sent word through one of his friends to the electors, who gave him favorable promises as to what they would do. Messer Poggio, who knew little of the Florentine character, took all this for truth, having yet much to learn; and after he had come to an understanding with his friend, and after the ballot boxes had been emptied, he

found that he had received nothing but white beans [blackballs]. Deceit was foreign to Poggio, and up to this time he had believed that what so many citizens had said must have been near the truth; but when he saw that he had been tricked, he lost patience at the duplicity of the Florentines, and broke the peace with them, saying that he could never have believed that men would have transgressed into such evil ways, and lamenting that he had come to live in Florence. He believed that this false trick had been played on himself, and not on his friend.

After he had lived some time in Florence he was chosen into the Signoria in order to honor him with [a position of] civic dignity. When he ceased to attend the Signoria—still retaining the chancellorship and discharging his duties—he went to the Roman court, having won approval from the papal authorities by his letters from all parts of the world. Then it was that certain Florentines, of the sort which is always ready to find fault with everything, began to censure him, scheming how, by the agency of Cosimo de' Medici, who was well disposed toward him, they might drive him out of the chancellorship and put another in his place. Let everyone mark what great danger a man incurs who, with many competitors, submits to the popular vote. Messer Poggio, who was growing old, perceived he could not satisfy this demand because it was mixed up with various parties and policies, [and] decided to retire, in order to have more rest and leisure for study, and let them put another in his office.

Life in the city was uncongenial to his habits and pursuits. Cosimo was much attached to him, and would never have wished to see anyone else in the chancellorship, but when he saw that Messer Poggio cared naught in the matter, he let things take their course, otherwise he would not have allowed the change. Messer Poggio was at this time very rich through long residence at the court of Rome. He had much ready money, property, many houses in Florence, fine household goods, and a noble library: wherefore there was no reason why he should save. Having done with the Palazzo, and with time on his hands, he began upon the history of Florence, taking up the work where Messer Leonardo [Bruni] had left it, and bringing it down to his own day. In Florence it was considered a work of great merit. It had been agreed that he should pay to the state a certain annual sum so that neither he nor his children in the future should be subject to the public burdens of Florence. It came to pass that this privilege was abrogated by an additional tax which laid upon him the insupportable levy of two hundred florins. Hearing the same, Messer Poggio lost patience that the exemption granted to him should be broken in his own lifetime, and if it had not been that Cosimo, who had great influence with him, was able to moderate his anger, he might have taken some imprudent action, for he could not see that a return like this was the meet reward for all his labor. The city itself, and all those who had the Latin tongue, were under great obligations to him, to Messer Leonardo, and Fra Ambrogio [Traversari (1380–1431), humanist and theologian], the first exponents of Latin, which had lain obscure and neglected for so many

centuries. Thus Florence found itself, in this golden age, full of learned men.

Among the other exceptional debts which the city of Florence owed to Messer Leonardo and to Messer Poggio may be reckoned the following: From the times of the Roman republic onward there was not to be found any republic or popular state in Italy so famous as was the city of Florence, which had its history written by two authors so illustrious as were Messer Leonardo and Messer Poggio; indeed, before they wrote all knowledge of the same lay in the deepest obscurity. If the chronicles of the Venetian republic, with its numerous men of learning, which has wrought such great deeds both by land and sea, had been written down and not left unrecorded, the renown of Venice would stand higher than it stands today. . . . Every republic ought to set high value upon its writers who may record what is done therein; as we may see from what has been done in Florence, in a narrative from the very beginning of the state, to the times of Messer Leonardo and Messer Poggio; every deed done by the Florentines being set down in Latin in a narrative appropriate to the same. Poggio let his history follow that of Leonardo, writing also in Latin, and Giovanni Villani wrote a general history in the vulgar tongue, telling of what happened in every place, mixing with it the history of Florence, and following him Filippo Villani did the same. These two [the Villanis, early Florentine chroniclers] are the only historians who exhibit these times to us in their writings.

Anyone who may have to write the Life of Messer Poggio will find many things to tell, but having had to make something by way of a commentary, this, which is written here of him, is enough for the present. . . . Before he died, having left to his children a good income as it has been already noticed, he made plans for a marble tomb in S. Croce and stated his wishes as to the erection of the same, writing the epitaph with his own hand, but afterward, while the affair was in progress, the money was put to bad use and the tomb was never built. . . .

## **From Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man***

Most esteemed Fathers, I have read in the ancient writings of the Arabians that Abdala the Saracen on being asked what, on this stage, so to say, of the world, seemed to him most evocative of wonder, replied that there was nothing to be seen more marvelous than man. And that celebrated exclamation of Hermes Trismegistus, "What a great miracle is man, Asclepius" confirms this opinion.

And still, as I reflected upon the basis assigned for these estimations, I was not fully persuaded by the diverse reasons advanced for the pre-eminence of human nature; that man is the intermediary between creatures, that he is the familiar of the gods above him as he is the lord of the beings beneath him; that, by the acuteness of his senses, the inquiry of his reason and the light of his intelligence, he is the interpreter of nature, set midway between the timeless unchanging and the flux of time; the living union (as the Persians say), the very marriage hymn of the world, and, by David's testimony but little lower than the angels. These reasons are all, without question, of great weight; nevertheless, they do not touch the principal reasons, those, that is to say, which justify man's unique right for such unbounded admiration. Why, I asked, should we not admire the angels themselves and the beatific choirs more? At long last, however, I feel that I have come to some understanding of why man is the most fortunate of living things and, consequently, deserving of all admiration; of what may be the condition in the hierarchy of beings assigned to him, which draws upon him the envy, not of the brutes alone, but of the astral beings and of the very intelligences which dwell beyond the confines of the world. A thing surpassing belief and smiting the soul with wonder. Still, how could it be otherwise? For it is on this ground that man is, with complete justice, considered and called a great miracle and a being worthy of all admiration.

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Hear then, oh Fathers, precisely what this condition of man is; and in the name of your humanity, grant me your benign audition as I pursue this theme.

God the Father, the Mightiest Architect, had already raised, according to the precepts of His hidden wisdom, this world we see, the cosmic dwelling of divinity, a temple most august. He had already adorned the supercelestial region with Intelligences, infused the heavenly globes with the life of immortal souls and set the fermenting dung-heap of the inferior world teeming with every form of animal life. But when this work was done, the Divine Artificer still longed for some creature which might comprehend the meaning of so vast an achievement, which might be moved with love at its beauty and smitten with awe at its grandeur. When, consequently, all else had been completed (as both Moses and Timaeus testify), in the very last place, He bethought Himself of bringing forth man. Truth was, however, that there remained no archetype according to which He might fashion a new offspring, nor in His treasure-houses the wherewithal to endow a new son with a fitting inheritance, nor any place, among the seats of the universe, where this new creature might dispose himself to contemplate the world. All space was already filled; all things had been distributed in the highest, the middle and the lowest orders. Still, it was not in the nature of the power of the Father to fail in this last creative élan; nor was it in the nature of that supreme Wisdom to hesitate through lack of counsel in so crucial a matter; nor, finally, in the nature of His beneficent love to compel the creature destined to praise the divine generosity in all other things to find it wanting in himself.

At last, the Supreme Maker decreed that this creature, to whom He could give nothing wholly his own, should have a share in the particular endowment of every other creature. Taking man, therefore, this creature of indeterminate image, He set him in the middle of the world and thus spoke to him:

“We have given you, O Adam, no visage proper to yourself, nor endowment properly your own, in order that whatever place, whatever form, whatever gifts you may, with premeditation, select, these same you may have and possess through your own judgement and decision. The nature of all other creatures is defined and restricted within laws which We have laid down; you, by contrast, impeded by no such restrictions, may, by your own free will, to whose custody We have assigned you, trace for yourself the lineaments of your own nature. I have placed you at the very center of the world, so that from that vantage point you may with greater ease glance round about you on all that the world contains. We have made you a creature neither of heaven nor of earth, neither mortal nor immortal, in order that you may, as the free and proud shaper of your own being, fashion yourself in the form you may prefer. It will be in your power to descend to the lower, brutish forms of life; you will be able, through your own decision, to rise again to the superior orders whose life is divine.”



Oh unsurpassed generosity of God the Father, Oh wondrous and unsurpassable felicity of man, to whom it is granted to have what he chooses, to be what he wills to be! The brutes, from the moment of their birth, bring with them, as Lucilius says, ``from their mother's womb" all that they will ever possess. The highest spiritual beings were, from the very moment of creation, or soon thereafter, fixed in the mode of being which would be theirs through measureless eternities. But upon man, at the moment of his creation, God bestowed seeds pregnant with all possibilities, the germs of every form of life. Whichever of these a man shall cultivate, the same will mature and bear fruit in him. If vegetative, he will become a plant; if sensual, he will become brutish; if rational, he will reveal himself a heavenly being; if intellectual, he will be an angel and the son of God. And if, dissatisfied with the lot of all creatures, he should recollect himself into the center of his own unity, he will there become one spirit with God, in the solitary darkness of the Father, Who is set above all things, himself transcend all creatures.

## **Essay on Marsilio Ficino and Neo-Platonism (3 slides)**

The most important of the Renaissance Neo-Platonists was Marsilio Ficino, who developed original and highly influential ideas from Plato and Neoplatonism. Ficino was an active and dynamic mind; as the founder of the Academy in Firenze under the auspices of Cosimo de' Medici, he, more than any other person in the Renaissance, was responsible for its widespread diffusion. The Academy resembled no academic organization that you might think of; it was part discussion group and part literary club. Discussions were wide ranging and activities included poetry and games. The overall character of the Academy, however, was syncretic and synthetic. The members of the Academy believed at some level that all human thought and arts could be discussed in a common language based on Neoplatonic ideas.

Ficino translated all of Plato's dialogues into Latin and produced a number of commentaries, but his most important and systematic work was *Platonic Theology*, in which he outlines Neoplatonism and synthesizes it with other philosophical systems, in particular, Christianity.

Ficino's philosophy is based on one central doctrine: the human soul is immortal and the center of the universe. It is the only thing that sits midway between the abstract realm of ideas and the physical world—as such, it is the mediator between these two worlds: All things beneath God are but single things, but the soul can truly be said to be all things . . . For this reason, the soul is called the center of creation and the middle term of all things in the universe, the entirety of the universe, the face of all things, and the binding and joining center of the universe. This special, central position in the universe made humanity the most dignified of all objects in creation; Ficino's emphasis on the dignity of humanity was derived from humanistic currents.

From the standpoint of religion, Ficino was a **syncretic** in that he believed that all the world's religions could be related to one another. At the heart of every religion was a belief in the one God and the variety of religions was not a bad thing but rather an expression of the complexity and beauty of God worshipped in all his infinite aspects. Of course, Christianity was a more complete religion.

Ficino believed that the purpose of human life was **contemplation**. The ultimate goal of human life was to be reunited with God, at least in an intellectual sense. This goal, according to Ficino, was realized through contemplation. At first, the human mind removes itself from the outside, physical world, and thinks about abstract ideas concerning knowledge and the soul. As it rises in knowledge it eventually reaches a point where it can arrive at an unmediated vision of God itself—this last stage would occur only after death and the immortality that the soul would enjoy would be an eternity of this vision of God.

From this program, Ficino developed a concept he called **Platonic love**, which had far-reaching consequences in the history of love and social reality in the European tradition. While Ficino believed that the human soul pursued contemplation more or less in isolation, he acknowledged that human beings were fundamentally social. When the spiritual relationship between God and the individual, sought through contemplation, is reproduced in a friendship or love with another person, that constitutes for Ficino spiritual or Platonic love. In other words, when the love and spiritual activity in a friendship mirrors the love for God, then the two individuals have attained the highest type of friendship that they can. Ficino did not condemn sexuality or erotics nor deny that Platonic love was only possible outside sexual relations; his only concern was the nature of the spiritual bond between two people.

Lorenzo Valla (1407–1457) was born in Rome and received a humanist education. As a young man he moved to Pavia to teach rhetoric, but in 1435 he traveled to Naples, where he entered the court of Alfonso I. It was there, in the midst of a strongly antipapal environment, that Valla wrote his *On the False Donation of Constantine* (1440), which proved, using the techniques of textual criticism, that the first Christian emperor could not have been the author of the document that supposedly transferred the Western Empire to the papacy.

Also, Valla's deep understanding of Latin style produced books that were to influence the study of Latin and ancient literature for centuries. His *On the Elegance of the Latin Language* became a standard textbook throughout Europe, and his biblical studies, *Annotations on the New Testament*, began the great period of Renaissance biblical textual scholarship, which led ultimately to Erasmus' 1516 *New Testament*, a work heavily influenced by Valla.

These works led to charges of heresy against him, but nevertheless he was called to Rome by the humanist pope Nicholas V in 1448 to assist in the establishment of the papal library and the collection of Greek editions. Valla died in Rome in 1457.

#### THE PRINCIPAL ARGUMENTS FROM THE FALSELY-BELIEVED AND FORGED DONATION OF CONSTANTINE

I, 1—There are those who are offended because in the numerous books I have made public, in almost every field of learning, I disagree with some great authors who have been acclaimed for a long time. They accuse me of being sacrilegiously bold. Well, I wonder, what will they do, how enraged will they be against me, and how eagerly and hastily would they drag me off to torture, if they only could, now that I am writing not just against the dead but against the living too, not just against this or that individual but against a multitude of men, not merely private citizens but even public officials? And which officials? Why, even the Supreme Pontiff who is armed not only with a temporal sword, like kings and rulers, but with a spiritual one too, so that you can not defend yourself from being visited with excommunication, anathema, or curse, not even by seeking refuge beneath the shield of princes, so to speak. . . .

2— . . . Many have run the risk of dying in order to defend their country on earth; shall I be afraid to risk death in order to reach the celestial fatherland? Indeed it is those who please God, not men, who reach Heaven. So, away with trepidation, anxiety begone, fears disappear! One must defend the cause of truth, the cause of justice, the cause of God, with steadfast courage, great confidence, and undying hope. For he who has the ability to speak well should not be considered a true orator unless he also has the courage to speak. Let us, then, venture to accuse whomever it is that carries out actions deserving of accusation. And let him who sins against everyone be reproached by the voice of one individual on behalf of all. . . .

4—My purpose is not to speak ill of any person and write Philippics against him; far be this misdeed from me. Rather, I seek to eradicate error from men's minds, to remove them from vice and evil, either through warnings or reproach. I hardly dare say it, but my aim is to instruct those who, with an iron blade, will prune the Papal See, that is, Christ's vineyard, which is rife with over-abundant undergrowth, and force it to bear plentiful grapes rather than meager wild vines. As I do this, is there perhaps someone who will want to shut my mouth or his own ears and threaten me with the death penalty, so that I shall be silent? What should I call one who would do this, even if he is the Pope? A "good shepherd" (John 10:11), perhaps? Or a "deaf adder that stoppeth her ear: Which will not hearken to the voice of charmers" (Psalm 58:4–5 [57:5–6]) and wants to strike the enchanter's limbs with her poisonous sting?

II, 5—I understand that the ears of men have been waiting for a long time to hear with what crime I am about to charge the Roman Pontiffs. Surely it is a most serious crime, of either lackadaisical ignorance or enormous greed, which is a form of idolatry, or the vain will to power, which is always accompanied by cruelty. In fact, for several centuries now either the Popes have not understood that the donation of Constantine is a forgery and a fabrication, or they have invented it themselves, or else, as followers treading in the footsteps of their predecessors' deceit, they have defended it as being true, even while knowing it was false. Thus they have disgraced the dignity of the Pontificate and the memory of the early Popes, dishonored the Christian religion and caused general confusion with their massacres, destruction, and shameful actions.

44—As for the text of the document, it is still more absurd and unnatural that Constantinople should be referred to as one of the patriarchal sees, when it was not yet either patriarchal or a see or a Christian city; it was not yet called Constantinople; it had not yet been founded or even planned. In fact, the privilege was supposedly granted three days after Constantine was converted to Christianity, when Byzantium still existed and not Constantinople. . . . Who fails to see, therefore, that he who drew up the privilege lived a long time after the age of Constantine? . . .

49—Oh holy Jesus, will you not answer with storm and with thunder this man who twists phrases in his uncouth speeches? Will you not hurl avenging thunderbolts against such blasphemy? Will you endure such disgrace in your servants? Can you listen to and watch all this and yet close your eyes to it for so long? But "thou . . . art . . . longsuffering, and plenteous in mercy" (Psalm 86 [85]: 15). . . .

50— . . . Now, let us speak to this deceiver about his crude language. Through his babbling, he reveals his most impudent forgery himself. . . . Where he deals with the gifts, he says "a diadem . . . made of pure gold and precious jewels." The ignoramus did not know that the diadem was made of cloth, probably silk. . . . He thinks it had to be made of gold, since nowadays kings usually wear a circle of gold set with jewels. But Constantine was not a king and he would never have dared to call himself a king or to adorn himself in regal fashion. He was Emperor of the Romans, not a king. . . .

XVIII, 58— . . . Is the barbarousness of his style not sufficient proof that such a piece of nonsense was forged not in Constantine's day but much later? . . .

XX, 65— . . . Therefore this text is not by Constantine but by some foolish petty cleric who does not know what to say or how to say it. Fat and full, he belches out ideas and words enveloped in fumes of intoxicating wine. But these sentences do not touch others, rather, they turn against the originator himself. . . .

XXII, 69—The text ends with the words "Dated at Rome, the third day before the Kalends of April, in the fourth consulate of Constantine Augustus . . ." The word "dated" [Latin *datum* "given"] is used only in letters and nowhere else, except by the ignorant. For letters are given to the addressees or to the courier who brings them to the addressees. But since the so-called privilege of Constantine was not to be delivered to anyone, one should not have said it was "dated." Thus it is plain to see that the person who wrote this was lying and was unable to feign what, according to verisimilitude, Constantine would have said and done. . . .

98—Besides, can we believe that God would have allowed Sylvester to accept opportunities for sin? I will not allow this insult to be brought against a most holy man, or this offense to be made against an excellent Pontiff, by saying that he accepted empires, kingdoms, and provinces, things which are renounced even by those who want to become mere priests. Sylvester possessed little, as did the other holy Popes. . . . But the Supreme Pontiffs of our time, who abound in wealth and pleasure, strive, it appears, to be wicked and foolish just as much as the early Popes strove to be wise and holy; they try to outdo with every kind of infamy the brilliant glory of their predecessors. Can anyone who deserves to be called a Christian tolerate this calmly?

99—Even so, in this first discourse of mine, I do not wish to exhort rulers and peoples to stop the Pope as he hastens on his unbridled course and force him to remain within his own territory. I simply want them to warn him. Once he has been apprised of the truth, perhaps he will leave others' lands and make his way home of his own will, abandoning the furious waves and violent storms, he will return into port. If he refuses to do so, then I shall set about writing another discourse and a much harsher one. Oh, how I hope (and there is nothing that I desire more, especially if it comes about through my advice) that one day the Pope will be the vicar of Christ only and not that of Caesar. No longer will one hear those terrible words: "supporters of the Church" or "opponents of the Church." . . . It is the Pope, not the Church, who is warring against Christians. The Church, instead, fights only "against spiritual wickedness in high places" [Paul, Ephesians 6: 12]. Then the Pope will be deemed (and will truly be) a holy father, the father of all, the father of the Church. He will not stir up wars among Christians; on the contrary, if they are initiated by others, he will terminate them with his apostolic censure and his papal majesty.