

« As if Flemings were more foreign than Italians... »
Philippe de Monte, a foreigner at the imperial court

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Philippe de Monte served two successive emperors, Maximilian II and Rudolf II, from 1568 until his death in 1603. The imperial court provided him with a hospitable environment, both in music and in his life. In music, he published as many as fourteen volumes of new works, within the first ten years of his service. In his life, he won the emperors' favour, and enjoyed lucrative benefices. Accordingly, the first years of his imperial service is regarded as a « golden age » of his life (Lindell 2001: 17).

However, a « golden age » does not automatically mean that he had no difficulty at all. I am going to talk about an unknown aspect of Monte's life at the imperial court, based on his own words, i.e., a newly found document in Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan. It occupies folios 128-130 of a manuscript volume « codice Q.115 sup ». It is Monte's petition dated 6 September 1585, in which he requested the payment of the money which then remained unpaid. The entire document is transcribed and translated into English at the end of the handout. The Milanese document is a copy made by a scribe. It is possible that the original autograph document is preserved in the Viennese archives.

The archivist entitled this document, « Philippe de Monte's writing presented to Rudolf II in which he speaks of his life ». Yet, Monte did not present it directly to the emperor. Monte mentioned the emperor always in the third person, « His Majesty ». Monte must have presented it to someone else, presumably a minister or a high official, in the hope that this person would report it to the emperor.

The main target of this petition is to make a request of payment. As we often see in this type of documents, Monte emphasised how faithful his service was, and how small the reward was, in order to excite the emperor's pity. In the course of this argument, Monte revealed his life at the imperial court in detail.

Monte spoke of three topics before he finally made a request of payment: (1) how he entered the imperial service in 1568, (2) the education of choirboys, and (3) ecclesiastical benefices. I cannot cover all these topics in this short presentation. I am going to focus on the last one, i.e. the ecclesiastical benefices which Monte enjoyed and tried to enjoy.

First of all, I have to justify the reliability of this document. With regard to the first two topics, i.e. how Monte entered the imperial service and the education of choirboys, I compared Monte's words with the official documents of the court (Smijers 1922, Pass 1980, Lindell 1985), for example, on the salary negotiation between Monte and the court, and on the expense to take care of choirboys. I found that Monte's words agree with the official documents. Thus, I can say that Monte's petition is generally reliable.

Ecclesiastical benefices played an important role in Monte's life. Monte was keenly interested in benefices. Monte began his petition with the description of how he entered the imperial service in 1568. He revealed that he was then in Naples and involved in a lawsuit over an ecclesiastical benefice of 300 *scudi* a year. He emphasised that he chose to give up this lawsuit in order to enter the imperial service. His emphasis of this episode suggests that he expected a good treatment, worthy of giving up this 300-*scudi* benefice, and that he expected to be given some other benefices in compensation of this one.

His ambition came true. He obtained two lucrative benefices from the Cambrai Cathedral, one as a treasurer and the other as a canon. He won these benefices by the imperial *preces primariae*, the emperor's supreme right to request ecclesiastical benefices (Lindell 1994: 345-347). However, he was not able to collect the money because he was involved in a lawsuit over these benefices. Monte said, « Soon I was involved in a lawsuit, which cost more than 1,200 gold *scudi* in five years as the lawsuit lasted, in order to have a favourable sentence » (f.128r) It was an enormous sum of money. Monte's annual salary was then 240 gold *scudi*. This means that Monte spent all his salary and even more to continue the lawsuit. After all, he won the lawsuit, and fixed all the related problems. (Lindell 1993: 261-262, 268). However, even after the lawsuit had ended, he was not free from difficulties. He continued, « When I obtained a favourable judgement, I wanted to enjoy some profit from it. Since a war broke out there, which is still dragging on, I have not collected from the said benefice a half of the money which I had spent in the lawsuit ». (f. 128r).

In order to fill his loss, Monte requested new benefices in the Habsburg domain in Central Europe. He requested deaneries of Litoměřice (Bohemia) and of Zwettl (Austria) and some benefices in Győr (Hungary). Monte also requested a benefice related to the chapel of « the Viennese Palace », presumably the *Hofburg*. His requests were all refused on the ground that he was a foreigner in each place.

Monte's request for the deanery of Litoměřice was refused, because he was a foreigner in Bohemia. However, he found this decision unreasonable, because another Fleming, Mathias Zitaldus, a preacher to Emperor Maximilian II (Pass 1980: 35-36) had held this position. Moreover, Monte claimed that many Polish and Italian canons were, for example, in Wracefau and in Olomouc. After all, the emperor promised Monte to give a pension of 400 *taler* per year from that deanery, which was then reduced to 200.

Then, Monte requested the deanery of Zwettl. The council of religious affairs in Austria refused his request, on the ground that he was a foreigner in Austria. He found this decision unreasonable again, because the last three deans were Italians. He said, '...as if Flemings were more foreign than Italians,' and 'being a foreigner is harmful only to me' (f. 128v).

Around 1582, an unnamed almoner to Archduke Ernst was going to be appointed to the dean of Sankt Andrä (Austria). He then held benefices in Győr. At this occasion, the emperor promised that this almoner was to give away his benefices in Győr to Monte, in exchange to his new benefice in Sankt Andrä. At first this almoner accepted this proposal. However, he changed his mind, and refused it. Moreover, The bishop of Győr refused this arrangement, too, and insisted that a foreigner could not have benefices in Hungary. Monte said, « Every person of sound judgement can recognise that the almoner is an Italian and a foreigner, just as I am. The servants to the King [=Jesus Christ] cannot be called foreigners. I am a servant to the King. The bishop should acknowledge the resignation of the

almoner ».

At the Imperial Diet in Augsburg in 1582, Rudolf II promised Monte to give a benefice as soon as it was available. However, when a post became vacant in the chapel of the « Viennese Palace, » it was given to the above-said almoner to Archduke Ernst. From Monte's point of view, the promise between the emperor and him was ignored, and the benefice was passed away to the almoner. Monte was envious of this almoner. They were both foreigners, an Italian and a Fleming, but only the almoner successfully enjoyed benefices, while Monte's requests were repeatedly refused.

In reality, Monte's misfortune did not come from his Flemish origin. At least, it was not a major reason. Instead, Rudolf II's incompetence in administration was responsible for Monte's failure. As the emperor, Rudolf II had, and practised, his supreme power to request benefices in the Low Countries. Thus, Monte won benefices at the Cambrai Cathedral by the imperial *preces primariae*. However, Rudolf's power was limited as the head of the House of Habsburg. His grandfather Ferdinand I divided the Habsburg domain in Central Europe into three parts, and distributed them to his sons: Lower Austria, Bohemia and Hungary to Maximilian, Tyrol and Upper Austria to Ferdinand and Inner Austria to Karl. In 1570s and 80s, Rudolf's uncles, Ferdinand and Karl, were still ruling their domains. Moreover, his brothers, Ernst, Maximilian, Albrecht and Mathias, occupied important positions in the domestic-imperial ruling system. All these princes held their own courts. They were Rudolf's rivals, rather than his subjects. Monte repeatedly failed in obtaining new benefices in Central Europe, because his patron Rudolf II repeatedly failed in practising his leadership over his brothers and uncles.

Rudolf's difficult personality — this phrase is almost a magic spell, as if it could explain all the problems at his court. It is indeed true that his incompetence as a ruler caused tremendous problems, for which he finally lost his crowns. However, it is too simple, and probably misleading, to attribute everything to his personality. Rudolf's inefficient administration can explain why Monte failed in obtaining new benefices in Central Europe. However, in my opinion, Monte's misfortune is one thing and his unconcealed anger is quite another. His sharp envy towards other successful foreigners is notable, especially when I consider that Monte was said to be « a quiet, shy and modest man like a young girl » (Doorslaer 1921: 6, 217).

The problem was not just obtaining or losing the benefices. I speculate that it was a matter of Monte's self-consciousness. Let us be reminded of his impressive phrase, « as if Flemings were more foreign than Italians.. ». It suggests that he felt discriminated, and even humiliated, for his Flemish origin. What did it mean to him « to be a Fleming »?

Monte was a Fleming, born in Mechelen. He is said to have worked as a *petit vicaire* at the Cambrai Cathedral, too. Then, he was active in Italy. He was a music tutor for the Pinelli family in Naples. Moreover, he spent nearly a half of his life in Vienna and in Prague. Thus, he was not simply a Fleming. Nor was he a naturalised Italian. He was a cosmopolitan man, who would go anywhere as long as he would be treated well. He wanted to be acknowledged for his talent, rather than his origin. Similarly, he did not want to be discriminated for his origin. It was especially intolerable for him to be seen lower than Italians. He was a great master of Italian madrigals, and even taught some Italian musicians in Italy. Italian was almost his mother tongue, and he preferred to write in Italian. He found in himself nothing inferior to Italians.

However, Monte's case was a typical example of Flemish musicians of his days. They sought their posts in Italy, rather than in their homeland. Musicians were often clerics, and they tried to obtain ecclesiastical benefices in or near their homeland to enjoy their comfortable retired life. After the Council of Trent, Flemish musicians found Spain and Austria to be attractive places to work, because benefices would be more available there than in Italy (Reynolds 1990: 160). This pattern is exactly what we see in Monte's life. He spent a major part of the 1560s in Italy, and then move to Austria. Soon after he obtained lucrative benefices in Cambrai, he wanted to retire (Lindell 1993: 261-262). In this sense, Monte was a typical Flemish musician of his days. « Being a cosmopolitan man » was not conflicting to « being a Fleming ».

'Being a Fleming' was an important part of Monte's identity. While in Naples, Vienna and Prague, I suppose, he was dreaming of going back home to spend a peaceful retired life there. His dream almost came true. He won two big benefices in Cambrai. His life was successful up to this point. Yet, what was lacking to him was Rudolf II's permission to retire. Monte was forced to stay in Prague. He had to make a decision to live as a foreigner there. His life was difficult, because Flemings were a minority at Rudolf II's court. We have only fragmentary information on the personnel of the court. For example, a comprehensive list of the court officials in 1576 specifies only one Flemish court official, i.e. a court physician Rempert Dodoens, apart from Monte (Goehlert 1869: 113). Flemings, or in a broader sense, Netherlanders were active, mainly in artistic sections, such as painters, sculptors and musicians, and in scientific sections, such as the physician Rempert Dodoens and the botanist Charles de l'Écluse. Flemings/Netherlanders were small in number, and weak in administrative affairs. Rudolf's court was truly international, consisting of people from various parts of Europe, both those who held permanent positions and temporary visitors. Yet, Rudolf's court was, in a strict sense, not cosmopolitan. Factional disputes among « nationalities » was fierce, and favouritism was boldly practised there.

Since Rudolf II chose to keep Monte at his court, he had to spend another twenty-five years as a foreigner at the imperial court after he was made a canon of the Cambrai Cathedral: not just a foreigner, but also a foreigner of a minor faction.

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The document

Scrittura di Filippo di Monte p[re]sentata à Rudolfo 2.o dove parla della sua vita. Biblioteca Ambrosiana (Milan) « codice Q 115 sup ». ff. 128-130.

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L'anno 1568 ritrovandomi io Filippo di Monte M[aest]ro di Capella di S[ua] M[aes]tà Ces[are]a in Napoli con'una lite d'un beneficio di 300 scudi l'anno, li 12 di Gennaio fui mandato chiamare dal s[igno]r Hilfrich Guet, che all' hora vi si trovava per negotii de la gloriosiss[im]a memoria de l'Imp[erato]re Massimiliano, et domandatomi, se io voleva servire S[ua] M[aes]tà per M[aest]ro di Capella, feci qualche difficoltà prima per causa de la lite sodetta, desiderando sommam[en]te haverne la sentenza innanzi la mia partita, et poi perche m'era stato detto, che S[ua] M[aes]tà haveva offerto à Giannetto da Palestrina cinq[ue] cento scudi di salario; et se ciò era vero, non ne voleva manco io per l'honor mio, il che fù rescritto à S[ua] M[aes]tà da detto sig[no]r Guet, la quale rispose, che quando io trovassi con verità, che ella avesse offerto 500 scudi al Palestrina, che sarebbero dati à me ancora; mà che in vero non si era mai venuto à tal particolare, et che io venissi allegram[en]te che sarei trattato di maniera, che non havrei havuto di che lamentarmi, siche non havendo in questo mezo potuto haver la sentenza (come io sperava) rinonciai le mie ragioni à uno amico confidentem[en]te con patto, che

In 1568, I, Philippe de Monte, the chapel master of His Imperial Majesty, found myself in Naples, involved in a lawsuit over a benefice of 300 scudi per year. On 12 January, I was called to signor Hilfreich Guet, who was doing something there for Emperor Maximilian of most glorious memory. He asked me if I wanted to serve His Majesty as his chapel master. I found some difficulties [to do so]. The first was the lawsuit. Above all, I wanted to have the judgement before my departure. Second, I was informed that His Majesty had offered a salary of 500 *scudi* per year to Giannetto da Palestrina. If this was true, I did not hope to fail to have the same for my honour. This [opinion] was written back to His Majesty by the said signor Guet. He [the emperor] answered that if I truly found that he had offered 500 *scudi* to Palestrina, then the same would be also given to me. In reality, however, such a notice did not come to me. Then, I gladly came [to the service], in the hope that I would be treated properly, and that I would not have something to lament. Therefore, I was not able to have the judgement (as I had wished) in this way, and gave away my claim to a friend of mine, firmly with a promise that he would

egli mi darebbe una pensione di 100 scudi l'an[n]o dal quale non hò mai havuto nuova alcuna: et hò perso il benefitio, et la pensione; Et mi partetti da Napoli li 9 di Maggio.

Dopò haver servito alcuni anni, mi lamentai à Sua M[ae]tà di gloriosiss[im]a memoria, che non era possibile poter mantenere i putti de la Capella co'l poco che si pagava per le loro spese, letti, lenzuola, tovaglie di tavola, Sciuatori, Barbiere, sarto in che non sono più di circa nove Carantani il dì per ciascuno; supplicandola mi havesse fatta gratia di ridurlo à sei fiorini al mese, come alcuni anni à dietro si era usato di pagare per ciascun putto; S[ua] M[ae]tà non volse in ciò metter novo ord[i]ne mà in ricompensa d'essi mi ordinò 200 Talleri l'anno dala sua Camera.

Primieram[en]te supplicai à S[ua] M[ae]tà mi havessi fatta gratia de la Prepositura di Leitmeritz già possed[ut]a altre volte dal Citaldo nato ne paesi bassi; et nel suo tempo Predicat[ore] di S[ua] M[ae]tà di gloriosiss[im]a memoria, mà mi fù risposto, che per esser forestiere io non poteva possedere benefitii in questo Regno di Boemia, come si detto Citardo non fosse forestiere; et non fosser in Wratislavia, et Olmutz tanti Canonici Polacchi, et Italiani,

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mà che dico io? Il med[esi]mo s[igno]re Pernstein, che pretendeva in mio pregiuditio, che i forestieri non potessero havere benefitii in questo Regno, et fù causa di farmi perder questa Prepositura, non hà egli provisto un Rucheno pedante di suo figliuolo de la Prepositura di Brena, et del Canonico di Olmutz? il quale hò io visto pedante dei figliuoli di Baldassar Kyros Mulatiere maggiore di S[ua] M[ae]tà et hora hà più di mille tall[e]ri d'entrata; costui è pur forestiere, et à me servitore di Sua M[ae]tà nel grado che io sono, non Russia, mà fiamengo Vasallo de la gloriosiss[im]a Casa d'Austria fù negata la Prepositura di Leitmeritz come à forestiere, cosa veramente strana, et ingiusta, la quale à mio giuditio non si doveva lasciar passare à quel modo; Pur

give me a pension of 100 *scudi* per year [out of the 300-*scudi* benefice]. I have never had any notice from him. Thus, I lost both the benefice and the pension. I left Naples on 9 May.

After serving several years, I regrettably reported to His Majesty of most glorious memory that it was impossible to take care of boys of the chapel with a small expense because money should be paid for their beds, sheets, tablecloths, towels, haircuts and clothes. Yet, the expense was not more than about 9 *Kreuzer* per day for each. I requested him to grant a favour of changing the expense to 6 *gulden* per month, as it had been paid to each boy some years before. His Majesty did not like to give a new order in this matter, but commanded to pay to me 200 *Taler* per year from his *Hofkammer*.

First, I requested His Majesty to grant me a favour of appointing me to the deanery of Litoměřice, which had been held by Zitaldus, a man born in the Low Countries. When he was active, he was a preacher of His Majesty of most glorious memory. Yet, I was answered that I could not have benefices in this kingdom of Bohemia because I was a foreigner. It seems as if Zitaldus had not been a foreigner and as if there had been no Polish and Italian canons in Wrocław and Olomouc.

Then what shall I say? *Signor* Pernstein, who, I think, seems to have believed that foreigners could not have benefices in this kingdom. He insisted that this was why I failed to have this deanery. Did he not make a certain Rucheno, a teacher of his sons, the dean of Brno [?] and a canon of Olomouc? I know that Rucheno teaches sons of Baldassar Kyros, the grand muleteer of His Majesty, and that he now has 1000 *Taler* of income. This man is also a foreigner. From my viewpoint, he is a servant to His Majesty, to the same extent that I am. I am not a Russian but a Fleming. A vassal of the most glorious House of Austria was refused the deanery of Litoměřice on the ground that he was a foreigner. It is truly strange and unjust. In my opinion, this should not be left in this

S[ua] M[ae]t[us] v[ol]e, che io havessi quattro cento tall[e]ri di pensione sopra detta Prepositura; la qual pensione fui poi costretto di ridurre à 200 allegando il Preposito molte ragioni, per le quali mostrava non esserli possibile potere pagare li quattro cento et questo è quant'io hò al mondo in ricompensa di 18 anni di così fidele et amorevole servitio.

Poco dipoi vacò la Prepositura di Swettel in Austria, la quale io dimandai à S[ua] M[ae]t[us] mà per consiglio deli commissarii spirituali d'Austria hebbe medissimam[en]te repulsa, come à forestiere, non considerando, che gli ultimi tre Prepositi erano stati Italiani, come se i Fiamenghi fossero più forestieri, che gl'Italiani, di maniera che solo à me nuoce essere forestiere, non obstante, che io sia servitore di S[ua] M[ae]t[us] et no[n] à tant'altri.

Circa tre anni sono vacando in Austria la Prepositura di Sant'Andrea, fù dimandata à S[ua] M[ae]t[us] dal limosinario del Ser[niss]imo Arciduca Ernesto, la quale S[ua] M[ae]t[us] li promise, con patto, che egli dovesse resignare à me i suoi benefici di Giavrino in Ungheria, onde detto limosinario mi sollecitava continuoam[en]te di dover procurare di avere i suoi benefitii acciò fosse spedito lui de la dimandata, et promessa Prepositura, et per più spingermi à questo mi diceva, che ormai lo rimordimento de la coscienza li dava grandiss[im]o travaglio che per esser religioso come egli è, desiderava tornarne la Religione, essendo la detta Prepositura regolare gliene fece gratia S[ua] M[ae]t[us] la quale poi pentito del suo primo proponimento, non v[ol]e accettare; et lasciò burlato S[ua] M[ae]t[us] et me, senza che ella ne habbi fatto mai risentimento alcuno in gratia mia, ritrovandomi defraudato così stacciatam[en]te de la mia giusta speranza d'esser ricompensato in qualche parte dei miei lunghi, et fedeli servitii, et non solo fu costretto di soffrir questa ingiuria, mà quando fece parlar S[ua] M[ae]t[us] al R[everendiss]imo Vescovo di Giavrino, come collatore dei benefitii per conto de la resignatione dela persona del limosinario à me non v[ol]e consentirvi mai, dicendo, che se'l limosinario lasciava i benefitii, li

way. Although His Majesty decided that I would have 400 *Taler* of pension from the said deanery. I was then forced to agree to reduce it to 200 for many reasons. His Majesty demonstrated me why it was impossible to pay 400. This is all that I have in the world in compensation of eighteen years of such faithful and hearty service.

A little later the deanery of Spittel in Austria became vacant. I requested it to His Majesty. Yet, the council of religious affairs of Austria refused it, again on the ground that I was a foreigner. The council did not consider that the last three deans had been Italians. It seems as if Flemings were more foreign than Italians. Thus, being a foreigner is harmful only to me, although I am a servant to His Majesty just as many others are.

About three years ago, the deanery of Sankt Andrä in Austria became vacant. It was requested to His Majesty by the almoner of most serene Archduke Ernst. His Majesty promised them that he should give away his benefices of Giavrino in Hungary to me. The said almoner continuously encouraged me to try to have his benefices, so that he would be appointed to the requested and promised deanery. To motivate me further into this, he said to me that remorse of conscience gave him great pain; that he wanted to go back to a religious life as a religious man; that His Majesty granted grace to him by giving this regular benefice; that His Majesty regretted his first proposal and chose not to agree with it; and that His Majesty left it aside. Since I did not find that His Majesty ever felt angry with something about me, I found myself deceived thus badly concerning my just hope of being rewarded in any part of my long and faithful service. I was forced to suffer not only from this injustice but yet another: when His Majesty spoke to most reverend Bishop of Giavrino, who was in the position to approve the benefices, over the transfer of the benefices from the almoner to me. The bishop did not want to agree with it. He said that if the almoner left the benefices, he would keep them vacant. He insisted that foreigners could

teneva per vacati, pretendendo, che non dovessero godere benefitii i forestieri in Ungheria, nel che quanto torto habbia fatto à S[ua] M[ae]s[tà] lo può considerare ogni persona di giuditio, che il limosinario è Italiano, et forestiere come sono io, benche i servitori del Rè non si possono chiamar forestieri; et io essendo servitore del Rè tanto più doveva consentire a la resignatione, et tanto più hò da dolermi, che colui, che disegnava il Vescovo di procedere di questi benefitii, già haveva cominciato à prendere possess[io]ne de la casa

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et cantina d'essi, con tanto poco rispetto di Sua M[ae]s[tà] che scandalizò il mondo grandem[en]te, mà il limosinario ne è restato possessore così forestiere, come egli è, non curandosi più di rimordimenti di coscienza purchè egli stia bene.

In Augusta l'anno 1582 S[ua] M[ae]s[tà] mi fece molte promesse di bocca sua d'havermi à provvedere con la p[ri]ma occasione in modo, che io havrei potuto vivere honoratam[en]te et il medesimo mi scrisse l'Ill[ustri]ssimo s[igno]r Cameriere maggiore con una polizza, ritrovandomi am[m]alato, con tutto ciò è di poi vacato il beneficio de la capella di Palazzo in Vienna di circa 700 tall[e]ri d'entrata; del quale è stato provisto il med[esi]mo limosinario del ser[eniss]imo Arcid[uc]a Erneste, non obstante, che egli avesse prima 1300 tall[e]ri d'entrata. Il Strommer capellano del med[esi]mo ser[eniss]imo Erneste è stato anco di poi provisto di quattro millia tall[e]ri d'entrata, bench[e] egli habbia à far tanta spesa ne la Chiesa, che solamente li ne resteranno duo millia, non havendo servito questo capellano più di due, o tre anni. Il M[ae]stro de Paggi del Ser[eniss]imo Arciduca Massimiliano è stato provisto d'una prepositura, ò altro beneficio, che sia di circa mille tall[e]ri d'entrata; le quali provisioni sono stati fatte doppo la sodetta promessa di S[ua] M[ae]s[tà] in Augusta. Ond'io non sò più in che sperare, essendo passate tante belle occasioni, tutte impetrate dai ser[eniss]imi Arciduchi per li loro servit[o]ri i quali non

not enjoy the benefices in Hungary. It must be noted how serious was the deception which was made to His Majesty. Every person of sound judgment can recognise that the almoner is an Italian, and a foreigner, just as I am. The servants to the King cannot be called foreigners. I am a servant to the King. Thus, the bishop should have agreed with the almoner's resignation of the benefices. It is further deplorable to me that the bishop, who is in the position to execute the transfer of the benefices, have already begun to take it in his possession

and to hide it in the cellar of his house. He showed so little respect to His Majesty that he caused a great scandal to the world. Yet, the almoner remains the possessor of the benefices as he is now. He did not care about it more than his remorse of conscience, as long as he is well.

In 1582, His Majesty promised me a lot in Augsburg from his mouth to give me a benefice as soon as a suitable one was available, so that I could live honourably. Most illustrious signor Great Chamberlain wrote a document about this arrangement for me. I was sick [? surprised ? in ecstasy]. Nevertheless, when a benefice became vacant in the chapel of the Viennese Place, which was to bring an income of about 700 taler, it was given to the above-said almoner of most serene Archduke Ernst, although he had already had 1300 taler of income. Strommer, chaplain of most serene Archduke Ernst, was then given 4000 taler of income, although he had already had such a great income from the Church that amounted 2000 taler by itself. This chaplain served only for two or three years. The master of pages to most serene Archduke Maximilian was given a deanery or some other benefice which was to bring about 1,000 taler of income. These instances of rewards were given after the above-said promise of His Majesty in Augsburg. Now, I do not know on what I can lay my hope any more, because such good occasions are gone out, and taken away by most serene Archdukes for their servants, who cannot be rivalling me in their merits, names or

possono già competere di merito, nome et reputatione meco. Vedendomi donq[ue] fuor d'ogni speranza di rimunerazione, et in procinto d'haver à stentare in povertà li pochi anni, che mi restono di vita, hò meco deliberato fermam[en]te di farli in riposo con la mia povera pensione de la Prep[ositu]ra di Leitmeritz di 200 tall[e]ri l'anno, perciò che in questa età di 64 non potrei più soffrir le miserie, che hò sofferto fin al presente in questo servitio, che oltre à quel, che fin qui hò detto, racconterò qua sotto il trattamento, che m'è stato fatto circa il mio salario, et altre occorrenze ordinarie.

Lascierò da parte molte cose, che si potrebbero dire circa questo particolare del salario, dirò solamente che quando lo dimandiamo, par che dimandiamo la limosina, et spesso in cambio di danari ne riportiamo parole ingiuriose, mà oltre à ciò sono astretto d'aiutar hor uno, hora un'altro dei Cantori con tutta la mia miseria, non potendo soffrir di veder' la loro, et quanto in ciò perdo, Dio lo sà, che molte volte ancora non havendo con che aiutarli, hò impegnato hor una, hora un'altra cosa, anzi sempre hò pegni à Giudei, et veggio altri provisti, come ho detto di sopra con tanto poco merito, et io con tanta famiglia sono abandonato, come servo inutile.

Quando S[ua] M[ae]stà ultimam[en]te si parti da Vienna, et che ci lasciò quivi, per mia disgratia mi sopragionse il male contagioso in casa, onde fui costretto di restar rinchiuso à causa di detto male, pur'un mio amico fece sapere la mia calamità al s[ign]or Presidente, pregandolo di volermi soccorrere un tal stato, no[n] solo non ne fece nulla, anzi andò via senza pagarmi ne anco le spese de putti di due mesi, che mi doveva, ne il fitto di casa, il tutto pagato del mio, che montava à circa 225 k. onde io fui costretto di

f.129v

cercar danari in prestito per venirmene qui in Praga, et da uno amico mi furono prestati cento Fiorini, co'i qualil mi misi in viaggio con tutta la mia famiglia, et vi stette un mese, et più sequestrato in casa senza ricever un Carantano.

reputation. Thus, I am taken away from all the hope of reward, and will have to live miserably in poverty for several years which are left in my life. I decided to live peacefully on the small pension from the deanery of Leitmeritz, 200 taler per year. At this age of sixty-four, I can no longer stand suffering from misery which I have put up with in this service. In addition to what I have said above, I will give an account below of the treatment which was given to me concerning my salary and other daily necessities.

I will omit many things which could be said in detail about my salary. I will just say that when we request it, it seems as if we had begged alms. We often receive false words instead of money. However, in addition to this, I am forced to help now one and then another of the singers in spite of my own misery, because I cannot stand seeing others'. When I need my money for this reason, God knows, I do not often have enough to help them. Then I put now one and then another thing of mine in pawn. I almost always put something in pawn to Jews. I find that other rewarded men whom I mentioned above have only little merit, and that I am abandoned with such a big family as a useless servant.

When His Majesty moved from Vienna recently, he left us there. Unfortunately, I became badly sick then, and was forced to rest at home because of the disease. Then a friend of mine reported my disaster to signor lieutenant, and requested him to plan to help me in such a state. The lieutenant not only failed to do anything, but also decided not to pay me my salary, the expense for the two boys whom I took care of and the house rent. They amounted about 225 *Kronen* [?] in total. Therefore, I was forced to

try to get a loan to come here to Prague. A friend of mine lent me 100 gulden, with which I set out on the travel with all my family. The travel lasted for a month, and stayed at home [?] more without receiving a *Kreuzer*.

Hora che qui è questo sospetto di mal contagioso, hò mandato ogni di dal pagatore per haver alc[un]a cosa à buon conto di tre mesi di spese di putti, che devo havaere, et corre il quarto, et del fitto di casa del'anno passato, che monterà in tutto 285 f[lorini] danari pur usati da la mia borsa, ne hò mai potuto recoverar un soldo, et mi ritrovo senza un Carantano in casa; Onde se mi venisse qualche disgratia fra i putti de la Capella (tanto facili à prender male) considerisi, come io mi troverei, non havendo ancora fin qui havuto la mia pensione dela Camera del'anno passato, ordinatomi per'aiuto dele spese de i putti, come hò detto di sopra.

Con tutte le mie miserie, quanto io habbia vivuto sempre honoratam[en]te in questa Corte, si sà, non manca[n]do d'accarezzare quanti virtuosi ci sono capitati non solamente, mà anco sig[no]ri di qualche importanza; anzi per ordine di S[ua] M[ajestà] vi hò tenuto de le persone à mie spese di molti mesi in casa senza cercarne ricompensa alcuna. Presentai non molto fà il mio quinto libro di Madrigali à sei voci à S[ua] M[ajestà] stampati, et intitolati à lei, nel qual caso i Prencipi sogliono usar qualche liberalità, ma à me nulla con tutto il mio fedel servire senza dar molestia mai: le quale cose tutte m'hanno fatto fare la sodetta deliberatione di retirarmi à vita solitaria, che egli è pur di troppo dura digestione vivere in tanta miseria, come hò passata la mia vita fin qui, et vedere altri di si poco merito provisti di migliaia di Talleri d'entrata, et sono soli; ov'io son carico di tanta famiglia quanto sono i putti de la Capella, le spese de quali mi sono pagati, come si può comprendere da questo discorso.

Certamente io mi piglierti maggiore affano assai del trattamento, che mi si fà, se io non fussi conosciuto dal Mondo per quel, ch'io sono, non parlo de la Musica, ne la quale hò quel credito, che si sà mà d'esser da bene (dico quanto al mondo) che altrimente si potria credere, che per mia colpa io fussi posposto à tanti, che non sanno altro, che dir la lor messa; Mà Dio gratia il proceder mio, le cortesie usate, con simili altre cose m'hanno dato tal credito, che io non hò da dubitare di cader

Since here is a suspicion of bad disease, I sent messengers to the financial office to have something of the expense for the boys for three months which I must receive; that of the fourth month; and the house rent for the last year, which will amount 285 *Gulden* in total. Money further went away from my purse, of which I have recovered nothing. Now I do not have even a soldo at home. It is possible that something bad happens among the choirboys (they easily become sick). I have not received the annual subsidy from the *Hofkammer* for the last year, which had been created to augment the expense for the boys, as I mentioned above.

In spite of my misery, I have lived honourably at this court, as it is known. I have not failed to show respect not only to virtuous people whom I met, but also to men of some importance: By the order of His Majesty, I offered lodging to persons for many months at my expense, without expecting any compensation. Not very long ago, I put my fourth book of madrigals in six parts with the name of His Majesty in its title and dedicated it to him. In such a case, princes usually show some generosity. Yet, nothing was done to me in spite of my faithful service without in which I have caused no troubles. These things led me to decide what I said above, i.e. retire to a solitary life. It is too hard to live in such misery as I have had in my life until today, and to see others of very little merit given thousands of taler of income. Only they are rewarded. I have a big family to maintain, and choirboys, too, whose expense is paid to me, as it can be understood from this discourse.

Certainly I had great troubles in the treatment which was given to me. If I was not recognised by the world for what I am — I do not speak of music because I have good reputation in it — it could be believed (I am speaking from the world's point of view) that I am regarded for my fault as inferior to many others who cannot do anything but reading Masses. Yet, thanks to God, my behaviour, courtesy and other things have given me such reputation that I do not have to doubt if I

in simil concetto presso gli huomini del Mondo. Ben mi duol fin ne l'anima d'haver servito 18 anni in parte, ove non è stata conosciuta la mia integrità, il mio merito, et l'animo co'l quale hò servito tanti anni, per far gli ultimi in miseria.

Et quando si vorrà considerare, come io son venuto à q[ues]to serv[i]tio et come ci sono venuti alcuni di quei che vi hanno havuto cosi buona sorte, si conoscerà quanto sia stata la loro rimunerazione à caso, et non per merito, onde chi spera per merito essere remunerato, s'inganna grandem[en]te che solo la fortuna vi hà luogo.

f.130r

Io fui chiamato fin da Napoli nel modo raccontato, nel principio con molte promesse, et molta riputatione perdendo per' vnire à questo servitio un beneficio di 300 scudi d'entrata l'anno.

Il limosinario del ser[enissi]mo Arcid[uc]a Erneste, che hora hà 2000 Tall[e]ri d'entrata, vi venne non già chiamato, havendo servito prima in Ferrara per Cantore, mà Dio sà perche, in habito di soldato, cercando di essere Alabardiere di Sua M[ae]s[tà di gloriosiss[i]ma mem[ori]a il che non' ottenne per esser forestiere, dipoi vi si scoperse Cantore, dipoi Prete, et fù fatto Capellano, et in ultimo frate di S. Agostino, il quale hà viuto tanti anni scomunicato per havere tenuto benefitii contra l'expressa prohhibitione di tutti le Concilii et specialm[en]te del ultimo Indentino.

Il limosinario del Ser[enissi]mo Arcid[uc]a Massimiliano venne da Fiandra per esserli stato abbruggiato il Monasterio, ove lui haveva fatto professione dal Heretici, lontan d'Anversa circa cinq[ue] leghe, et fù accettato doppò alcun tempo per Capellano dal detto Ser[emissi]mo mà vedendosi collocato in parte, ove poteva facilm[en]te essere provisto di benefitii procurò d'haverne, mà per esser frate dubitò, non havere ripulsa dali Commissarii Spirituali d'Austria, Onde per havere io all' hora in Roma il Card[ina]le Orsino molto mio sig[nore] et infiniti amici, mi pregò, che per mezzo loro li facessi havere licenza da Sua S[anti]tà di

would fall in similar ideas as men do in this world. Indeed, it is lamentable to me that I have served for eighteen years while my honesty has not been recognised. My virtue and sincerity with which I have served for many years. These last ones are finally left in misery.

When one considers how I entered this service and how those who have enjoyed very good fortune have come, then it will be recognised how great their reward was. They won it not for their virtue. One who wants to be rewarded for his virtue is badly deceived. Only fortune has to do.

I was called from Naples as explained above. At first, a lot of promises were made and great reputation was heard. I gave up a benefice which was to bring an income of 300 scudi per year to enter this service.

The almoner of most serene Archduke Ernst, who now has an income of 2000 *Taler*, was never called. He served first in Ferrara as a singer. Yet, God knows why, he was in the costume of a soldier. He wanted to be a halberd soldier of His Majesty of most glorious memory. He failed in it, because he was a foreigner. Then, he revealed himself as a singer and next as a priest. He was made a chaplain, and finally a monk of the Augustine order. He has been excommunicated for many years because he had benefices against the express prohibition of the Council, especially the last article.

The almoner of most serene Archduke Maximilian came from the Flanders, because the monastery, where he was practising heresy, about five leghe away from Antwerp, was burnt. He was accepted after a little while as a chaplain of the said Serenissimo. He expected that reward could be given to him easily. However, since he was a monk, he was afraid that his request would be rejected by the council of religious affairs in Austria. Since I am acquainted with Cardinal Orsini, my great lord, and many friends in Rome, he asked me an arrangement with them so that their good offices might bring him permission of the

poter servire Sua Alte[zz]a et tenere benefitii, io feci l'estremo mio potere, mà non si pote ottenere altro, che di poter servire Sua Alt[ezz]a per Capellano, non volendo à patto niuno, che egli godesse benefitii, et anco con ord[i]ne che quando si riedificasse il suo Monastero, che vi ci tornasse à far la vita religiosa, come haveva fatto professione. Con tutto ciò hà accettato contro l'ordine di Sua S[anti]tà una Prepositura di mille tall[e]ri l'anno, come lui med[esi]mo m'hà detto; Onde vive scomunicato, no[n]dimeno il suo Prencipe vede le sue Messe, et se ne serve per limosinario: Ecco le persone, che si proveggono di tante entrate. Et se si essaminasse la vita loro, si troverebbe forsi cose non solo disconvenevoli à Religiosi, mà etiamdio ad'ogni persona laica; Però di questo ne lascerò il giuditio à S[ua] D. M[ae]tà se à me fossero stati dati benefitii, non hò da molto tempo in quà desiderato altro, che di farmi Prete; Mà di farlo senza havere prima honoratamente da vivere, non credo, me lo consiglierà niuno di sano giuditio.

Et acciò si conosca il mio zelo nel servire S[ua] M[ae]tà dirò questo, che vedendo io far male il suo debito il Precettore dei putti de la Capella, ne havendo bastato quante preghiere io gliene habbia saputo fare, che ne havesse quella cura, che conviene, per non vederli andare in perdizione, hò preso un giovane in casa, che ne hà buoniss[im]a cura; et li dò tre fiorini al mese, la tavola, de la quale si potria contentare qual si voglia persona honorata col suo vino ordinariam[en]te di maniera che mi costa

Et per ultimo dico, che mai è stato usato à la povera Capella quel, che se le usa hora, che da poco in quà vengono pagati di quel poco, che con tanto stento si paga loro, di cattivissima monetta, et che peggio è di scudi leggeri ale volte, i quali bisogna vendere per quel che pesono, come à avvenuto à me, che sopra cinquanta scudi ne ho perso quattro è mezzo, veramente cosa ingiusta à perdere in quello, che si riceve per il salario servito, et stentato tanto tempo; oltre che ancora, che Sua M[ae]tà habbia comandato

His Holiness to serve His Highness and to have benefices. I made as much effort as I could. Yet, nothing was won but just permission to serve His Highness as a chaplain. No promise was expected for him to enjoy benefices. He was even obliged to go back to the Monastery when it was rebuilt to live a religious life as he had done his profession. In spite of this, he accepted a deanery which was to bring an income of 1000 taler per year against the order of His Holiness. He himself told me so. Therefore, he is excommunicated. Yet, his lord attended his Masses. The monk served him as the almoner. Thus, these persons were given great incomes. If their life is examined, not only things unsuitable to religious men but also secular elements to each person are found. Therefore, I will leave the judgement on this matter to His Majesty. If I had been given benefices, I would not have request a lot here, but just to make me a monk. However, nobody with sound judgement will expect, in my opinion, that I would do it without preparing something necessary to live honourably in advance.

In order to show my enthusiasm to serve His Majesty, I will say this: that I saw that the preceptor of the choirboys got into serious trouble for his debt. I have presented every petition that I could do for him. In addition, I took care of the boys in order not to see that they fell into corruption. I have taken a young man to my house. He enjoyed very good care. I give him 3 *Gulden* per month. I provide him with food, which can satisfy the quality expected to an honourable person, and with wine, good enough according to the regulation. These cost

Finally, I say that I have never used very low quality *moneta* coins and, even worse, light-weighed *scudo* coins for the payment for the chapel. These bad coins have been going around these days. I have to buy those which weigh properly. This often happens to me. Then, I lose 4 *scudi* and a half out of 50. It is truly an unjust thing to lose money which was received in reward for serving and of working hard for a long time. Furthermore, His Majesty expressly commanded to use these bad coins for nine years, and to leave this situation.

espressam[en]te che ci siano dati li nove anni di tanto tempo, non se ne fà nulla: E con che animo posso io servire Sua M[ae]tà vedendomi levar quello, che per farmi venir al servitio, mi fù trà l'altre cose promesso fin à Napoli ove io mi trovava come hò detto quando ci fui chiamato in luogo di ricompensa, et veder provvedere tali così largamente, come hò detto di sopra.

Et acciò si sappia in che termine io mi ritrovi hoggi 6 di sett[emb]re 85 lo metterò qui sotto.

Devo havere le spese dei putti di Giugno, Luglio, Agosto, che montano à F. 215

Hò pagato il fitto di casa fin per tutto Maggio del mio, dovendo havere ancora tutto l'anno passato che monta in tutto a F. 99-10.

Ancora mi se deve la mia pensione de la Camera di S[ua] M[ae]tà del anno pass[a]to ordinatomi per' aiuto de le spese dei putti, che sono Tall[er]i 200 che fan[n]o 233-20.

Somma 547-30.

Questi sono tutti danari usciti da la mia borsa; Consideri, essendo io povero, come sono con quanto travaglio io viva: Del salario, nove anni, et vestimenti non ne parlo, ancorche sia maggior somma, però di non potere havere quel, che hò pag[a]to dei miei danari, è cosa molto dura, specialmente à me, che hò così poco il modo.

Then, in what mood I can serve His Majesty, while I see that, among other things, what was promised to me to make me enter this service in Naples is lost? As I said before, I was called to the place of reward, and I saw that reward would be given to me so generously as I said before.

In order to make it clear in what term I find myself today on 6 September 1585, I will write down as follows.

I have to receive the expense for the boys for June, July and August, which amounts 215 *Gulden*.

I paid the house rent myself up to May. I also have to receive that of the last year throughout, which amounts in total 99 *Gulden* 10 *Kreuzer*.

The subsidy from the chamber of His Majesty should also be paid to me for the last year. This subsidy is ordered to be given to me to supplement the expense for the boys, which amounts 200 *Taler*, i.e. 233 *Gulden* 20 *Kreuzer*.

Total sum: 547 *Gulden* 30 *Kreuzer*.

These are all the money paid from my purse. Please consider that I am poor, and how heavy burden I live with. I do not speak of the problems of salary and clothes which took place in these nine years, although they amount greatly. Therefore, if I should fail in having the money which I paid from my purse, it would be very hard especially to me, because I have only small means.

Notes on place names

<i>As Monte wrote</i>	<i>Current place names</i>	
Brina	? Brno	(Austria)
Giavrino	Győr	(Hungary)
Leitmeritz	Litoměřice	(Czech)
Olmütz	Olomouc	(Czech)
Sant'Andrea	Sankt Andrä	(Austria)
Swittel	Zwettl	(Austria)
Wratislavia	Wrocław	(Poland)

Notes on currencies

	Itaian	German	=	Italian	German
1	<i>scudo</i>	<i>Krone</i>	=	90 <i>carantani</i>	<i>Kreuzer</i>
1	<i>tallero</i>	<i>Taler</i>	=	70 <i>carantani</i>	<i>Kreuzer</i>
1	<i>fiorino</i>	<i>Gulden</i>	=	60 <i>carantani</i>	<i>Kreuzer</i>