



CLARISS. ATQVE
 AMPLISS. VIRO CHRISTOFORO
 THVANO CELIO, EQVITI, REGNI
 Curiaæ Præsidi primario, &
 sacri consistorii Senatori,
 P. Pithœus S.



VR has ad te veterum iuris auctorum reliquias vltro deferam, non vna causa est, Præsides amplissime, sed ea maxime iusta, quod quæ nonnullis fortasse contra Iustini principis interdictum in lucem prolata videbuntur, eas oportuit sanctiore aliquo nomine defendi aduersus ingratiſſimorum hominum aut calumnias, aut ineptias, qui vel dissimulant, vel nesciunt, ab illo quidem comparationem modo & in iudiciis recitationem apud suos prohibitam, nos vero Romanarum legum maiestatem sic comiter conseruare, vt tamen illis nihil in nos licere patiamur, nisi quod earum rationi & equitati non auctoritati & sanctioni concedimus. Cuius vero ad hanc defensionem augustius nomen eligi potuit quam tuum? quo demum Præsides purior hæc Iurisprudencia vsu fori recepta est, quique iuris nostri in summo isto Gallie tribunali

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ita clauum tenes, ita regis, vt quod ille olim vir maximus, tu ^{σομα} Senatus & quodammodo ^{εμφορος νόμος} non immerito dici possis. Sed est quod tu iure quodam tuo virilem tibi protionem vindicare queas in nostris omnium operis quarum patronus es summus, aut potius pater, quando tibi pietatis quam potestatis nomen gratius esse summa tua humanitas non obscure suadet. Accessit & illa paternæ quondam erga te obseruantia recordatio, qua te nuper non leuiter affectum sensi, cum patriæ nostræ Historiæ particulam ea fronte exciperes, vt familiaris atque etiam amici quondam tui os, oculos, vultum, illam denique naturæ similitudinem in filio non inlubenter recognoscere videreris. Quæ res, vt verum fatear, animum sic accendit meum, vt ab eo tempore optarim semper illum mihi diem dari quo & benignitati tuæ aliqua saltem ex parte respondere, & genere quodam officij testari possem illam me paternæ in te reuerentiæ hereditatem non tam creuisse, quam continuatione quadam animi retinuisse. Accipies igitur hoc ab homine tibi tuisque virtutibus addictissimo munus, non magnum illud quidem, sed tale tamen quale tibi & per te publica vtilitati hoc tempore præstare potuit, maiora fortasse aliquando præstaturus si quem illi Deus boni ciuis animum erga Remp. dedit, eum ipse pro sua singulari clementia quibus potest modis confirmet, augeat, instruat, adiuuet, tueatur. Bene vale, vir amplissime. Lutetiæ Parisiorum Kalend. Octobr. M. D. LXXII.

**A. PIERRE PITHOU, DEDICATORY EPISTLE TO THE
MOSAYCARUM ET ROMANORUM LEGUM COLLATIO (1572)**

in Pierre Pithou, *Opera ... miscellanea* (Paris 1609) 75–6 [Trans. CD¹]

To the most famous and most generous man, Christofle de Thou,² knight, first president of the court of the kingdom,³ and senator of the sacred consistory,⁴ Pierre Pithou⁵ greeting!

There is no single reason why I offer these remains of old authors of the law to you, most generous president, but this one seems particularly just: that it was fitting that these [remains] (which to some may perhaps seem to be brought forth against the interdict of the prince Justinian) be defended by some more holy⁶ name against the calumnies and foolishness of most ungracious men, who either pretend [not to know] or in fact do not know that whereas he prohibited comparison and reading aloud in court among his people, we in truth keep the majesty of the Roman laws so courteously that we nonetheless allow them to have no license⁷ among us except what we concede to their reason and equity, not to their authority and sanction. Whose name, in truth, could be chosen that would be more noble for this defense than yours? Since, finally, under your presidency this purer jurisprudence has been received for the court's use, and since you so hold and so guide the rudder of our law in that highest tribunal of Gaul, that like that very great man of old, you can not unworthily be called the *soma*⁸ of the Senate⁹ and, indeed, in some sense, the *empsychos nomos*.¹⁰ And also that you can claim by a certain right that is yours a share¹¹ in our works, of all of which you are the chief patron, or rather father, when your highest humanity clearly persuades you that the name of goodness¹² is more pleasing to you than the name of power. A further reason is the recollection that of the respect my father once felt toward you, by which I have recently sensed you are deeply affected, when you would take up a piece of the history of our country¹³ with such an expression as if you seemed to recognize, not unwillingly¹⁴ in the child the mouth, eyes, face, and finally that similitude of nature of an acquaintance or even a friend once dear to you.¹⁵ All these things, to confess the truth, so enkindled my spirit, that from that time I always hoped to be given an occasion on which I could respond in at least some way to your benignity and testify by some sort of service that that inheritance of reverence for you that came to me from my father had not so much increased, as that I myself had retained it¹⁶ by a certain continuance of spirit. May you therefore receive this gift from a man most dedicated to your virtues, not any great thing, but one nonetheless that may at this time benefit you and through you the public utility, you who will perhaps some time in the future be even more distinguished as a man to whom God has given the spirit of a good citizen, and whom He confirms, increases, instructs, aids, protects out of His singular clemency in every way he can. Fare you well, most generous man. Paris, the Kalends of October, MDLXXII.¹⁷

¹ With considerable help from Prof. E.A.R. Brown.

² *Christopherus Thuanus Celius*. Neither Professor Brown nor I can figure out what the 'Celius' is all about.

³ De Thou was *premier président* of the parlement of Paris, 1562–1582.

⁴ Perhaps a reference to de Thou's position as *conseiller* of the Conseil privé.

⁵ *Petrus Pithoeus*.

⁶ I.e., respected.

⁷ I.e., authority.

⁸ Body.

⁹ I.e., parlement.

¹⁰ The law in spirit.

¹¹ *Virilis portio*.

¹² *Pietatis*.

¹³ Pithou must be referring here to some edition he published of work of French history. E.A.R.B.

¹⁴ Perhaps the meaning is "not without pleasure."

¹⁵ Pithou's father is unknown to us; must be checked.

¹⁶ I.e., the reverence.

¹⁷ 1 October, 1572. The St. Bartholomew's Day Massacre took place on the preceding 24 August.