

which is the propagation of Christian faith. Piccolomini mentions the important men and women of Antiquity for every city of Asia Minor: poets, philosophers, historiographers, naturalists. He then reports how a given city was won for Christianity and how Christian life subsequently blossomed there. Both classical and Christian cultures were extinguished by the Turks who forced Islam on its inhabitants and who, by cultural insouciance together with sexual licentiousness, destroyed once flourishing provinces. The reader of the *Asia* was supposed to feel shame and horror and to be induced to work to emend this regrettable course of history.

The vision of history in Piccolomini's *Asia* is of fascinating modernity. No hint of an imminent apocalypse, no interpretation of the Turks as forerunners of the Antichrist, no calculation of the years left till Doomsday nor of the future in general. The Turkish expansion is a secular event: one of the numerous forays of nomadic tribes known to world history. It is an advance which can and must be met with wordly means. Piccolomini decidedly refuses to press facts into a preconceived system of interpretation, and he can thus achieve an elegance of writing which effortlessly brings together knowledge of Antiquity, medieval travel books and contemporary news. In this way he also conveys to the reader the liberty of reaching a judgment of his own. Piccolomini concedes to human nature more value of its own, both individually and socially, than do medieval chroniclers, and he permits himself a greater distance to his sources than they do. There is no trace of the crude fables not uncommon in Schedel's *Weltchronik*, younger by half a century. The *Asia* is an impressive but not obtrusive piece of writing. Schedel made use of it as a quarry; but he did not allow himself to be inspired by it.

Certainly, after five centuries and a half, we cannot simply take over Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini's positions as a whole. Still, his concern with human rights and the dignity of man evident in the *Asia* show our kinship to this well-read, wise and humane spirit, who after a day's work as Pontifex Maximus, employed the nightly hours for meditating and writing on the history of men in east and west.

THE NEW *LANDESGESCHICHTE*:  
AENEAS SILVIUS PICCOLOMINI ON AUSTRIA AND  
BOHEMIA\*

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In June 1458, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini retired to the baths of Viterbo in search of relief from his gout. To while away the long summer hours, Aeneas – who within two months would be elected pope as Pius II – turned to his most beloved pastime, the writing of history. The fruit of his labors<sup>1</sup> was the *Historia*

\* This is an expanded version of a short paper presented at the second International Conference on the Medieval Chronicle, Utrecht, 16-21 July 1999.

<sup>1</sup> For an overview of Piccolomini's life and works, see Fr. J. Worstbrock, 'Piccolomini, Aeneas Silvius (Papst Pius II.)', in: eds. K. Ruh *et al.*, *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters: Verfasserlexikon* (Berlin, 1989<sup>2</sup>), vol. VII, pp. 634-669; G. Zippel, 'E. S. Piccolomini e il mondo germanico', *Cultura* 19 (1981), pp. 267-350; ed. D. Maffei, *Enea Silvio Piccolomini, papa Pio II. Atti del convegno per il quinto centenario della morte* (Siena, 1968); B. Widmer, *Enea Silvio Piccolomini, Papst Pius II* (Basel, 1960), which also contains translated excerpts from his writings; and G. Voigt, *Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini und sein Zeitalter*, 3 vols. (Berlin, 1856), which, though dated and opinionated, contains a wealth of biographical data found nowhere else. Discussions of Piccolomini's historiographic *oeuvre* and its influence on Germany include R. Rinaldi, 'Pio II e il soggetto nella storia', in: ed. G. Bàrberi Squarotti, *Storia della civiltà letteraria italiana* (Turin, 1990), pp. 276-293; A. Strnad, 'Die Rezeption von Humanismus und Renaissance in Wien', in: eds. W. Eberhard and A. Strnad, *Humanismus und Renaissance in Ostmitteleuropa vor der Reformation* (Cologne, 1996); A. Lhotsky, *Aeneas Silvius und Österreich* (Basel, 1965); R. Cl. Dales, *Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini: His Historical Works and His Influence on German Historiography*, M.A. thesis (University of Colorado, 1952); U. Paul, *Studien zur Geschichte des deutschen Nationalbewusstseins im Zeitalter des Humanismus und der Reformation* (Berlin, 1936); E. Fueter, *Geschichte der neueren Historiographie* (Munich, 1911); P. Joachimsen, *Geschichtsauffassung und Geschichtschreibung in Deutschland unter dem Einfluss des Humanismus* (Leipzig, 1910); A. Weiss, *Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini als Papst Pius II. Sein Leben und Einfluss auf die literarische Cultur Deutschlands* (Graz, 1897). Works of particular relevance to the *Historia Bohemica* include Fr. Palacky,

*Bohemica*, a stylish and concise account of that nation's history, from its founding by the legendary Zechius (Czech) to the present, culminating in the tragic death of the young King Ladislaus in 1457.

Aeneas was able to compose a polished literary product in the short span of a few weeks, because his musings on Bohemia were shaped by many years of reflection on the subject and a continual engagement with the political vicissitudes of Central Europe during a twenty-year diplomatic career. His interest in Bohemia may have been sparked as early as 1433.<sup>2</sup> As a young and ardent participant in the Council of Basel, he had witnessed the negotiations between the Council and the Bohemian delegation<sup>3</sup> which arrived in that year to uphold their Hussite beliefs – beliefs the Hussites had defended successfully in more than a decade of military confrontation. Aeneas treated the Bohemian problem extensively in his history of the council, *De rebus Basiliae gestis Commentarius*.<sup>4</sup> In later years, he frequently came into contact with Bohemian political life as a member of

*Würdigung der alten böhmischen Geschichtschreiber* (Osnabrück, 1896); H. Kaminsky, 'Pius Aeneas among the Taborites', *Church History* 28 (1959), pp. 281-309; and, most recently, H. Rothe, 'Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini über Böhmen', in: eds. H.-B. Harder and H. Rothe *Studien zum Humanismus in den böhmischen Ländern* (Cologne, 1988), pp. 141-156. There are also several commentaries in Czech, which were not accessible to me.

<sup>2</sup> Aeneas's first attempt at a literary rendition of Bohemia's history, in the form of a letter (now lost) to his first employer, Cardinal Capranica, dates back to this conciliar period; cf. *Opera quae extant omnia* (facsimile reprint Frankfurt a. M., 1967), p. 83.

<sup>3</sup> Although it is not clear whether Aeneas was present himself on this occasion, in both the *Historia Bohemica* and his *De rebus Basiliae gestis Commentarius* (see vol. 67, pp. 164ff. of *Der Briefwechsel des Eneas Silvius Piccolomini*, ed. R. Wolkan, *Fontes rerum Austriacarum: Österreichische Geschichtsquellen*. 2. Abt., *Diplomataria et Acta*, 61 / 62 / 67 / 68 (Vienna, 1909 / 1909 / 1912 / 1918)) he describes the arrival of the delegation in Basel vividly, and Cardinal Cesarini's exchange with them in detail.

<sup>4</sup> This text (see n. 3 above) was written in 1450, well after Aeneas had abandoned his youthful conciliar convictions. In 1440 he had written a very different version, *De gestis concilii Basiliensis Commentariorum libri II*, which, however, did not touch on the Bohemian problem. The latter text is available in a critical edition with English translation by D. Hay and W. K. Smith (Oxford, 1967).

the imperial chancery of Frederick III. In 1451, he traveled to Bohemia and attended the diet at Beneschau (Benešov) as imperial spokesperson. In a detailed account of his journey,<sup>5</sup> he described his stay at the Hussite stronghold of Tabor and his encounter with the regent,<sup>6</sup> George Podiebrad, in Beneschau. In 1452, Aeneas was named apostolic legate for Bohemia by Pope Nicholas V; during his cardinalate (1456-1458) he shaped the Curia's policy on the projected reconciliation with Hussite Bohemia.<sup>7</sup> Aided by his keen memory and by his extensive correspondence, from which he was wont to cull descriptions and discussions for his lengthier historical works, Aeneas was able to draft his *Historia Bohemica* swiftly, as if this text had been stowed in his mind for years, fully formed and ready for issue.

Printed for the first time at Rome in 1475, the *Historia Bohemica* was widely read by historians in both Germany and Bohemia, and it influenced the understanding of Bohemian history, especially of the Hussite movement, for many generations. It enjoyed numerous editions during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and was translated into German, Czech and Italian.<sup>8</sup> Today it is sometimes labeled a landmark in European historiography, the first humanist *Landesgeschichte* devoted to a region outside Italy.<sup>9</sup> This essay will address primarily the formal innovations that the *Historia Bohemica* represented for the genre of the *Landesgeschichte* or regional history – innovations that stemmed both from Aeneas's knowledge of contem-

<sup>5</sup> In the form of a lengthy letter to Cardinal Juan Carvajal, dated 21 August 1451; see Wolkan, *Briefwechsel* (Fontes, vol. 68), pp. 22-57.

<sup>6</sup> Podiebrad was only *de facto* regent of Bohemia in 1451. He was not officially granted this title by the Bohemian estates until April 1452.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Kaminsky, 'Pius Aeneas among the Taborites', p. 300.

<sup>8</sup> Scholars have identified at least 26 manuscript copies of the *Historia Bohemica*; three printed editions in the fifteenth century and 19 more between 1503 and 1766. For a catalogue of these, see H. Rothe, 'Über die kritische Ausgabe der *Historia Bohemica* des Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini', in: eds. H.-B. Harder and H. Rothe, *Studien zum Humanismus in den böhmischen Ländern. Ergänzungsheft* (Cologne, 1991), pp. 29-48. The text was translated into German by P. Eschenloer in 1464; into Czech by Johann Huska in 1487, by Nicolaus Konač in 1510, and by Daniel Adam von Weleslawin in 1585; and into Italian by S. Fausto in 1545.

<sup>9</sup> Thus, for example, Widmer, *Enea Silvio Piccolomini*, p. 90.

porary humanist literary forms in Italy and from his interpretation of local chronicle traditions. As Hans Rothe has remarked,<sup>10</sup> however, the *Historia Bohemica* cannot be understood in isolation, but rather ought to be interpreted with Aeneas's other literary works in mind, particularly his *Historia Friderici III imperatoris*, a complex unfinished text on which he labored between 1452 and 1458.<sup>11</sup> Charting the changes in both content and historical approach between the *Historia Friderici* and the *Historia Bohemica* will reveal the manner in which Aeneas arrived at the definitive historical form which I am labeling *Landesgeschichte*.

The *Historia Bohemica* consists of a preface, in which the work is dedicated to King Alfonso of Naples, and seventy-two chapters.<sup>12</sup> Chapter 1 provides a succinct geographical description of Bohemia. Chapter 2 discusses the origins of the Bohemian nation. Chapters 3-34 cover the early, medieval and recent history of Bohemia by following the successions of its rulers, down to the reign of Wenzel IV (1378-1419). The rise of the Hussite movement and the wars that followed occupy chapters 35-51. In this section, as in the remainder of the work, Aeneas is already narrating contemporary history, of which he had first-hand knowledge through his diplomatic activity. After a few pages on the death of Emperor Sigismund and the brief reign of Albrecht II, the story turns exclusively to the life and times of

<sup>10</sup> Rothe, 'Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini über Böhmen', p. 145.

<sup>11</sup> On the *Historia Friderici* see V. Bayer, *Die Historia Friderici III imperatoris des Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini* (Prague, 1872); the introduction in Th. Ilgen's translation, *Die Geschichte Kaiser Friedrichs III.*, in: *Die Geschichtschreiber der deutschen Vorzeit* 85 and 87 (Leipzig, 1889); and H. Kramer, 'Untersuchungen zur "Österreichischen Geschichte" des Aeneas Silvius', *Mitteilungen des Instituts für österreichische Geschichtsforschung* 45 (1931), pp. 23-69. The *Historia Friderici* was not included in the *Opera omnia* of 1551; it was not printed until 1685. The most dependable edition, which I use here, is edited by A. F. Kollar, *Analecta monumentorum omnis aevi vindobonensia* (Vienna, 1762), vol. II.

<sup>12</sup> In the earliest surviving manuscript copies and in the *editio princeps* of 1475, the *Historia Bohemica* is divided into five books rather than into chapters. The division into chapters seems to have been applied in the 1489 Basel imprint, and was adopted in all subsequent editions, including the *Opera omnia* (Basel, 1551), used here. See Rothe, 'Über die kritische Ausgabe', pp. 34f.

the young Ladislaus Posthumous (ch. 58-72), concentrating on the struggle between Austrian, Bohemian and Hungarian baronial factions for control of his person (ch. 60-72), after he was released from Emperor Frederick III's wardship in 1452.

The *Historia Bohemica* is a biased and tendentious work intended primarily to indict the evils of the Hussite heresy, as Aeneas stated plainly in his preface. The narrative is also plagued by numerous factual errors: František Palacky complained that a whole book would have to be written merely to correct Aeneas's mistakes and inventions.<sup>13</sup> Aeneas's distortions were in part deliberate, supporting either his condemnation of the Hussites or the narrative exigencies of the text. Other errors, however, can be imputed to the shortcomings of the sources he used to compose his history.

This brings us to the important issue of source criticism: for the bulk of the early history of Bohemia (chapters 3-26), Aeneas relied heavily on the fourteenth-century *Chronicon Bohemiae* of Pulkawa (in its Latin version), and he took additional information from the earlier rhyme chronicle of Dalmil.<sup>14</sup> These are most likely the same chroniclers to whom Aeneas referred in his treatise *De liberorum educatione*, which he composed for Ladislaus in 1450:

Beware of wasting time over such a subject as the history of Bohemia or the history of Hungary. For such would be but the productions of mere ignorant chroniclers, a farrago of nonsense and lies, destitute of attraction in form, in style, or in grave reflections.<sup>15</sup>

In the *Historia Bohemica*, he is no less critical of these sources.

<sup>13</sup> Palacky, *Würdigung*, p. 246.

<sup>14</sup> Aeneas obtained a copy of Pulkawa from Johann Tušek, head of the Prague chancery. Dalmil's chronicle, completed in 1314, was a passionately nationalist (i.e., anti-German) text in Czech, which Aeneas could not have read in its original version: Tušek must have translated a few excerpts; cf. Palacky, *Würdigung*, pp. 237 f. Pulkawa's chronicle is available in a critical edition by J. Emmler, in: *Fontes Rerum Bohemicarum* 5 (1893), pp. 1-207.

<sup>15</sup> This passage from W. H. Woodward's translation of *De liberorum educatione* in his *Vittorino da Feltre and Other Humanist Educators* (New York, 1970), p. 152.

In chapter 2, following some ironic remarks on the habit of Bohemian historians to trace their ancestry as far back as the tower of Babel, he complains that

they report neither who their princes were at that time, nor who their king was [...] nor under which leader and by which adventures they came to Europe, nor at which time. The Sclavones [ancestors of the Bohemians] were there, they say, when the language of the earth entire was confused. A vain and laughable claim.<sup>16</sup>

In the subsequent chapter, which recounts the arrival in Bohemia of the founder of the nation, Czech, Aeneas moves on to a more exhaustive critique of Pulkawa's text:

We do not agree with the chronicle of the Bohemians, according to which Czech and his whole family [...] survived entirely on chestnuts and wild fruit, because by then the use of nuts [for nourishment] had been abandoned; nor would I believe that such was the livelihood of men after the Great Flood. It seems more likely that Czech found a few farmers who subsisted on hunting and milk, and taught them to till the land, produce wheat, harvest crops and to eat bread; and thus subjected to himself these rough, wild men after having restored them to a more civilized life. Nor again do I lend credibility to the idea that all property was held in common then, and that both men and women walked about naked, for the climate in those regions is not such that a man could survive naked [...].<sup>17</sup>

In this passage Paul Joachimsen, the German historian of humanism, saw 'ein Blick in eine neue Welt.'<sup>18</sup> And indeed it is tempting to ascribe a flavor of 'modernity' to this excerpt, because textual criticism of this sort was practiced quite rarely north of the Alps in the 1450s.

We must be wary, however, of mistaking this passage for the painstaking source criticism that became characteristic of hu-

<sup>16</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 84. All quotations from the *Historia Bohemica* are taken from this edition; the translation is mine.

<sup>17</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 84.

<sup>18</sup> Joachimsen, *Geschichtsauffassung*, p. 29.

manist scholarship in the sixteenth century, and which was being practiced, in rudimentary form, by Aeneas's contemporary, Flavio Biondo, who went to some lengths to collate his sources and solicited historical records from several Italian princes as he was composing his *Ab inclinatione imperii Romanorum decades*.<sup>19</sup> Aeneas, although infected with an eagerness to uncover classical and medieval sources lying unused in monastic libraries that was typical of early humanism,<sup>20</sup> lacked the time, dedication and scholarly diligence to attempt a comprehensive study of source material. Moreover, when he had to cross-reference his sources with classical or medieval texts, he often relied on hastily written notes and on memory because he could not afford to purchase or commission copies of codices and rare manuscripts.<sup>21</sup> Aeneas's brand of historical criticism, then, arose less from careful scrutiny and compilation of sources than from an acute awareness of historical *decorum* or propriety, that is, an innate sense for historical verisimilitude, for what could reasonably be believed in the context of a particular age. The belief in verisimilitude as a route to verity in both historical narration and historical critique was of course a hallmark of the early Florentine humanism of Coluccio Salutati and Leonardo Bruni;<sup>22</sup> it was also the basis of Valla's common-sense approach in his celebrated attack on the so-called *Donation of Constantine*.<sup>23</sup> These humanists relied heavily on Roman rheto-

<sup>19</sup> D. Hay, 'Flavio Biondo and the Middle Ages', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 45 (1959), p. 118. The most valuable resource on Biondo remains B. Nogara, *Scritti inediti e rari di Biondo Flavio* (Rome, 1927).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Aeneas's letter to Johann Hinderbach, dated 1 June 1451, in which he reports that he had found a history in the library of St Paul cathedral in London, which he erroneously believed to be a Latin translation of Thucydides (Wolkan, *Briefwechsel* (Fontes, vol. 68), p. 11). Or, again, a letter to Cardinal Juan Carvajal a few years later, in which he informs him that he found a copy of Jordanes's *History of the Goths* in the Gottweih monastery library (Wolkan, *Briefwechsel* (Fontes, vol. 68), p. 115).

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Voigt, *Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini*, vol. II, pp. 253ff.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. N. Struever, *The Language of History in the Renaissance: Rhetoric and Historical Consciousness in Florentine Humanism* (Princeton, 1970), especially pp. 75ff.

<sup>23</sup> In *De falso credita et ementita Constantini donatione*, Valla used conjecture to estimate how Constantine's heirs, the Roman senate and Pope Syl-

ric in their practice of history, subordinating historical narration to the art of epideictic oratory. And no rhetorical precept was more closely observed than Quintilian's requirement that, for best effect, historical narration ought to be above all plausible, more readily believable than truth itself.<sup>24</sup> It was primarily on this assessment of plausibility that Aeneas's examination of medieval chronicles relied.

This suggests merely that Aeneas's approach to historical inquiry was in line with that of his Italian contemporaries. His execution, however, demonstrates the limitations of the verisimilar technique as a mode of historical analysis. The verisimilar approach was most useful when applied to the remote past and to the fabulous tales of origin: in this case, it showed that the ancient Bohemians could not have subsisted on nuts, and could not possibly have survived without garments. But it yielded no results for the later periods of Bohemian history. Indeed, after this promising beginning, the critical impetus disappears altogether from the *Historia Bohemica*. As Palacky noted,<sup>25</sup> in the remainder of the early history of Bohemia, Aeneas accepted and repeated all the fables and errors supplied by his sources, without questioning or correcting them. For example, he recited without comment the popular story of Libussa, who foretold and orchestrated her own marriage to the plowman Premysl, thus founding the dynasty of the Premyslide kings. Similarly, he retold in its entirety and with great narrative gusto the fable of Valasca and her followers, who ruled Bohemia for seven years *more Amazonum* – an episode that must have piqued his interest because of its precedents in classical literature.

It remains unclear why Aeneas did not pursue his criticism of

vester might have responded to such a donation, demonstrating how very unlikely such a transaction would have been. Only then did he turn to a systematic philological deconstruction of the text of the Donation. See also H. H. Gray, 'Renaissance Humanism: The Pursuit of Eloquence', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 24 (1963), pp. 511f.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Inst. orat.* IV, 2. On this issue see especially E. Kessler, 'Das rhetorische Modell der Historiographie', in: eds. R. Koselleck, H. Lutz and J. Rüsen, *Formen der Geschichtsschreibung* (Munich, 1982).

<sup>25</sup> Palacky, *Würdigung*, p. 239.

Bohemian accounts beyond pre-history. Perhaps this required too great an effort from him and would have hindered the rapid completion of his text, the focus of which was predominantly on contemporary events relating to the Hussite issue. For the most part, Aeneas seems to have been content to peruse and recycle one or two medieval sources, criticizing the inconsistencies and distortions in their treatment of the earliest times,<sup>26</sup> but ultimately perpetuating their fables. This is especially clear in the *Historia Friderici*, the immediate precursor to the *Historia Bohemica*. In the *Historia Friderici*, Aeneas began his history of the Austrian duchy by subjecting a popular local fourteenth-century chronicle – the so-called *Chronik von den 95 Herrschaften* by Leopold of Vienna<sup>27</sup> – to a relentless critique. Here Aeneas's invective against his source is more virulent and extensive, including pejorative remarks directed at its author, whom he calls a 'two-legged ass'.<sup>28</sup> Aeneas censures him for his lack of geographical accuracy in stating whence the first inhabitants of Austria came; for asserting that these first Austrians, pagans who had come from 'beyond the sea', had Jewish and Christian names like 'Abraham' and 'Susanna'; for giving them titles, such as 'count' and 'margrave', which were unknown in those distant times; and for labelling regions with modern names, such as 'Bohemia' and 'Hungary', which had not come into use until after the demise of the Roman empire. Despite this display of critical acumen, however, Aeneas admitted: 'I do not know who first cultivated Austrian soil: my

<sup>26</sup> The inability to carry out real research on the intermediate period between origins and contemporary events was characteristic of much Greek and Roman historiography, i.e. of Aeneas's stylistic paradigms; cf. A. Momigliano, *The Classical Foundations of Modern Historiography* (Berkeley, 1990), pp. 80-108.

<sup>27</sup> Authorship of this text, also known as *Chronica patriae* in the fifteenth century, is still disputed. Recent scholarship attributes it to the Augustinian monk Leopold of Vienna, who most likely wrote it in the early 1390s. For a concise but thorough discussion of this issue, see P. Uiblein, 'Die Quellen des Spätmittelalters', in: ed. E. Zöllner, *Die Quellen der Geschichte Österreichs* (Vienna, 1982), pp. 100ff. A critical edition of the *Chronik von den 95 Herrschaften* edited by J. Seemüller is available in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (Hannover, 1909), vol. VI.

<sup>28</sup> Kollar, *Historia Friderici*, p. 17.

inquiries into this matter have yielded no definitive results.<sup>29</sup> He had no other sources with which to correct Leopold's text. Forced by the chronological demands of his narrative, he ultimately reiterated Leopold's version of history, at least up to the events of the late eleventh century, for which he could turn to Otto von Freising's *Chronica sive historia de duabus civitatibus*.<sup>30</sup> His last comment on Leopold's text introduces as 'fabulous' the story of the eleventh-century feud between Leopold II of Austria and his brother Albrecht (Adalbert), but after reporting it almost word for word, Aeneas gives no indication why this story should be considered false.

Texts such as the *Historia Bohemica* and the *Historia Friderici* may have suggested the need for assessing the trustworthiness of medieval chronicles, but Aeneas's message was no doubt limited by the absence of a consistent *method* for such a text-critical undertaking. In both works, his critical methodology – his 'flüchtige Manier', as Ilgen put it<sup>31</sup> – consisted of a mixture of common sense reliant on verisimilarity, etymological probes, and the occasional reference to classical or medieval texts, when he felt them applicable. Thus, his critical remarks on the sources he consulted, while perspicacious and indicative of a sharp sense for historical *decorum*, remained inimitable.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Kollar, *Historia Friderici*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>30</sup> Aeneas's appreciation of Otto is well documented: he is credited with 'rediscovering' this author and bringing his works into the mainstream of German historical discourse; cf. Worstbrock, 'Piccolomini', p. 663, and, more exhaustively, the first chapter in B. Schürmann, *Die Rezeption der Werke Ottos von Freising im 15. und frühen 16. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 1986).

<sup>31</sup> Ilgen, *Die Geschichte Kaiser Friedrichs III.*, p. xxxviii.

<sup>32</sup> The closest Aeneas ever came to spelling out a method for source criticism was in his little-read *Dialogus* of 1453, in which one of the interlocutors (Bernardino da Siena) states that not all that is written ought to be believed: one must first consider who the author was; what his beliefs were; which other records agree with his version of events; and whether what he says is plausible within the context of the time and place he describes. The *Dialogus* was printed at Rome in 1475, but escaped the attention of future editors of Aeneas's works. It is printed with the title *Tractatus* in: ed. J. Cugnoni, *Aeneae Silvii Piccolomini Senensis [...] opera inedita*, Atti della reale Accademia dei Lincei, III, 8 (Rome, 1883), pp. 234-299, the relevant passage on page 255. About the *Dialogus* see also Voigt's comments: *Aenea Silvio de' Piccolomini*, vol. II, pp. 292ff. and 312.

Above all, Aeneas was primarily a rhetorician, to whom factual accuracy in historical narration mattered less than the meaning (political or ethical) with which history could be endowed. The Petrarchan dictum that 'it is better to will the good than to know the truth'<sup>33</sup> is certainly descriptive of Aeneas's historical *oeuvre*. The goal of the *Historia Bohemica* was to demonstrate the mischief of heresy and, to a lesser extent, to position Aeneas as the foremost expert on this crucial political and religious issue on the eve of the new conclave. His historical writing was thus primarily rhetorical in nature, revealing his indebtedness to Leonardo Bruni's school of thought,<sup>34</sup> i.e., to the belief that history's most fundamental quality was its exemplary *utilitas* as a vehicle for the inculcation of moral and spiritual values and the inspiration to right conduct.<sup>35</sup>

Surely, if Aeneas's work represents an original contribution to fifteenth-century history-writing, this must lie in the *form* of the *Historia Bohemica* rather than in its unfulfilled source criticism, namely, in his interpretation of the genre of the *Landesgeschichte* (or *Landeschronik*). The difficulty of translating this term into English – alternatives include national history, territorial history, regional history – points to the elusiveness of the very notion of a regional historiography. Peter Johaneck concluded that 'vorerst [...] muß man sich für den Begriff regionale Historiographie mit einer eher vagen Umschreibung

<sup>33</sup> From 'On His Own Ignorance and That of Many Others', in: eds. E. Cassirer, P. O. Kristeller and J. H. Randall, *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man* (Chicago, 1948), p. 105.

<sup>34</sup> To wit, Bruni was the only humanist included in Aeneas's unfinished *De viris illustribus*, written between 1440 and 1450. It has been printed recently in a critical edition by A. van Heck (Vatican City, 1991).

<sup>35</sup> This 'rhetorical' history was deplored by Burckhardt as 'insipid and conventional', so preoccupied with classical form as to be lacking in sincerity (*The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860<sup>1</sup>, New York, 1995), p. 178). More recently, however, it has been rehabilitated by several scholars as a valid form of historical writing capable of a compelling representation of the past. See especially D. J. Wilcox, *The Development of Florentine Humanist Historiography in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1969). For a review of the notion of *utilitas* in fifteenth-century theoretical discussions of history, see G. Cotroneo, *I trattatisti dell' 'ars historica'* (Naples, 1971).

begnügen.<sup>36</sup> Regional historiography in the later Middle Ages appears in too many different guises (city chronicles, histories of convents, genealogical tables, etc.) to warrant a concise definition. By any account, however, it is misleading to group together *Landesgeschichte* and city history under the generic rubric 'local history'<sup>37</sup> because of the fundamentally different political institutions which these genres represent. The history of the city was the principal historiographic model furnished by Antiquity; its dependence on a single institution – the *urbs* – provided history with a natural chronological framework (from the foundation of the city to the present) and a readily identifiable focus. Although city history could encompass events in the territories subject to the *urbs*, such events were mere extensions of the inner political dynamic of the city. This model was revived, with great success, by Leonardo Bruni in the fifteenth century. To the extent that they were available to them, historians of the late Middle Ages and the early Renaissance could also borrow other historiographic models from classical literature, such as biography (Suetonius, Plutarch), and the chronicles of campaigns and momentous events (Thucydides, Xenophon, Caesar, Sallust). What Antiquity did not provide, however, was a precedent for the *Landesgeschichte*: the history of a region and the ruling dynasties associated with it.

The origins of regional history-writing in Germany have been traced to the development of territorial sovereignty – and, consequently, localized dynastic interests – in the High Middle Ages.<sup>38</sup> The consolidation of dynastic territorial rule in the later Middle Ages brought about an ever closer identification of the

<sup>36</sup> P. Johanek, 'Weltchronistik und regionale Geschichtsschreibung im Spätmittelalter', in: ed. H. Patze, *Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsbewusstsein im späten Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen, 1987), p. 297.

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, H. Grundmann, *Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter. Gattungen-Epochen-Eigenart* (Göttingen, 1987), pp. 45-48; and Momigliano, *The Classical Foundation*, p. 85, who suggests that Renaissance historians were not cognizant of the distinction between the history of a city and that of a nation or territory.

<sup>38</sup> See H. Patze, 'Adel und Stifterchronik. Frühformen territorialer Geschichtsschreibung im hochmittelalterlichen Reich', *Blätter für deutsche Landesgeschichte* 100 (1964), pp. 8-81.

political elite with their territories – a feeling of regional or national identity that found expression in territorial historiography.<sup>39</sup> Regional chronicles thus became the most characteristic historiographic product of the time,<sup>40</sup> alongside the ever popular universal historical compendia, which were often organized along parallel papal and imperial genealogies.<sup>41</sup> But, as Johanek has shown, most regional histories of this period were written against the conceptual backdrop of universal history, i.e., they were conceived as inserts or appendices in universal chronicles that spanned all human activity, from creation to the present. Leopold's chronicle, for example, which Aeneas used for the *Historia Friderici*, adopted the traditional division of history into seven ages, five before and two after the birth of Christ. It began with Adam's and Eve's expulsion from the earthly paradise, and only midway through the first book did the author turn to 'das edel land ze Oesterreich.' From Book II onwards, the sequel of Austrian 'Herrschaften' ran roughly parallel to passages on papal and imperial succession.

Other regional chroniclers of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, such as Hans Ebran von Wildenberg and Ulrich Füetrer, also wrote their territorial chronicles in conjunction with Roman or Biblical history. Andreas von Regensburg is no exception: his *Chronica de principibus terrae Bavarorum* was intended as an addendum to his earlier *Chronica pontificum et imperatorum Romanorum*; Andreas himself underscored this connection in the prologue to the Bavarian chronicle.<sup>42</sup> Similarly, Aeneas's contemporary Thomas Ebendorfer wrote his *Chronica Austriae* to complement his *Chronica regum Roma-*

<sup>39</sup> J.-M. Moeglin, *Dynastisches Bewusstsein und Geschichtsschreibung: Zum Selbstverständnis der Wittelsbacher, Habsburger und Hohenzollern im Spätmittelalter* (Munich, 1993), p. 7.

<sup>40</sup> Grundmann, *Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter*, p. 46.

<sup>41</sup> The primary model for a universal history divided into seven ages of man and four universal monarchies, and patterned according to a theological world order, was the *Speculum historiale* by the Dominican monk Vincent of Beauvais (†1264). The corresponding prototype of imperial and papal chronology was furnished by another Dominican, Martin von Troppau (†1278); cf. Joachimsen, *Geschichtsauffassung*, pp. 3ff.; and Grundmann, *Geschichtsschreibung im Mittelalter*, pp. 18ff.

<sup>42</sup> Johanek, 'Weltchronistik und regionale Geschichtsschreibung', p. 292.

*norum*: the Austrian text was meant to be the seventh and final book of the imperial chronicle. But when his patron, Frederick III, complained about the excessive length of the *Chronica regum Romanorum*, Ebendorfer was forced to write a summary of it, which he appended to the lengthy original. This left no room for the *Chronica Austriae*, which thus became an independent text.<sup>43</sup>

When Aeneas Silvius set about writing his territorial history of Bohemia, he could not look to Antiquity for a template. The works of his humanist contemporaries in Italy (Bruni, Valla, Biondo) may have served as examples of new approaches to historiography: purposeful and eloquent in Bruni's case, detailed and scholarly in Biondo's, critical in Valla's. Above all, however, Aeneas turned to local sources, as he had done for the *Historia Friderici*, and tried to shape their crude form into a new historical mold, first and foremost by garnishing his writing with that *condimentum scripturarum* so dear to his humanist taste. In both the *Historia Bohemica* and the *Historia Friderici* he preserved the dynastic pattern of his sources, proceeding through time by way of each land's rulers. But he deviated from them significantly by rejecting the universal-historical framework as a basis for regional history. Indeed, the chronology of Bohemia begins when Czech arrives in the geographic space – carefully delineated in the initial chapter – that will become Bohemia. The history of the barbaric Germans who inhabited those regions prior to Czech's arrival is unimportant to Aeneas. This despite his earlier remark, in chapter 1, that '[this] region was once German, and was gradually taken over by the Bohemians', for which he had found confirmation in Strabo.<sup>44</sup>

The life of Czech and his clan prior to their migration to Bohemia is also given short shrift: following Dalmil and Pulkawa, Aeneas merely notes that Czech was 'fleeing both judgement and vengeance for having committed murder at home.'<sup>45</sup> However, whence Czech came is never discussed, whereas Dalmil

<sup>43</sup> Cf. A. Lhotsky's introduction to his critical edition of *Chronica Austriae*, in: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, Nova series 13 (Berlin, 1967).

<sup>44</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 83.

<sup>45</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 84.

and Pulkawa had given Croatia as his home and traced his ancestry back to the Slavones or Sclavones, who had inhabited the fields of Sennar when the tower of Babel was built.<sup>46</sup> Indeed, Aeneas wrote off altogether the question of the origins of peoples:

The Bohemians, desirous, like other mortals, of declaring as ancient an origin as possible, claim to be the descendants of the Slavii, who are believed to have been among those who built the famous tower of Babel after the Great Flood [...]. I have not yet read another author [...] who ascribed so remote an origin to his people. Many among the Germans consider themselves noble enough to have originated from the Romans, the Romans in turn pride themselves on having descended from the Greeks. The Franks, who were also Germans, said that they were of Trojan blood. Likewise it is the pride of the Britons to affirm that a certain Brutus, having set out in exile, engendered their lineage. But the Bohemians begin much earlier, and boast that they are descended from the very confusion of the tower of Babel [...] Those who wish to outdo the Bohemians by seeking the nobility of their origins in such ancient times, will easily trace their beginnings not just to the tower of Babel, but to Noah's ark, to the earthly paradise, to the first parents, to the very womb of Eve, whence we all came. We shall dismiss such old wives's tales [...].<sup>47</sup>

The very notion that the chronicles of old and the time-honored fables of origination that they perpetuated must be viewed with a skeptical eye and challenged in their every assertion had few precedents. Nevertheless, judging from the rich repertory of territorial histories written in Germany in the decades following Aeneas's mission there, his reproach of such fables found only unwilling listeners. Matthias von Kemnat and Veit Arnpeck,<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup> The tradition of tracing Bohemia's ancestry to the tower of Babel dated back to Cosmas, its earliest chronicler (see below). However, it was Dalmil who introduced Croatia as Czech's place of origin, and provided a reason for his departure from that region. Cf. Fr. Graus, *Lebendige Vergangenheit: Überlieferung im Mittelalter und in den Vorstellungen vom Mittelalter* (Cologne, 1975), p. 91.

<sup>47</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 84.

<sup>48</sup> On Matthias von Kemnat see K. A. Hofmann, *Quellen zur Geschichte Friedrichs I. des Siegreichen, Kurfürsten von der Pfalz* (Aalen, 1969 reprint);



to name but two historians who read and extensively used the *Historia Bohemica*, remained faithful to the Bavarian myth of Bavarus, who had come from Armenia (long before the birth of Christ or the war of Troy, according to Matthias), and of the second colonization of Bavaria by Norix, the son of Hercules.

However, with his contemptuous dismissal of the fables of origination from historical discourse, Aeneas did more than introduce skepticism into the evaluation of popular *origo gentis* myths; more importantly, he proposed a new configuration for the genre of regional history. As Leonardo Bruni had done for urban history, he stressed that a *Landesgeschichte* ought to begin not with Creation, nor with Biblical events, nor with the Trojan war or other myths of classical Antiquity, but rather with the point in time at which a geographic region was first occupied by the ethnic group that inhabited it in the author's present. The true beginning of Bohemia was the arrival of Czech and his kinfolk in that territory so accurately described at the outset. Thus the *Landesgeschichte* was rendered independent of the prevailing universal-historical model, which was replaced as the basis for historical narration by a new matrix: geography.<sup>49</sup>

Aeneas's geographical description of Bohemia was neither a vain display of erudition nor an indulgence in a personal scholarly interest, but rather a functional element in the history of a kingdom – indeed the defining parameter of this historical genre. The description of Austria in the *Historia Friderici* was unprecedented: the author of Aeneas's main source, the *Chronik von den 95 Herrschaften*, had made no attempt whatsoever to provide a physical definition of the duchy. Bohemian historiography, on the other hand, had been endowed with a geo-

and B. Studt, *Fürstenhof und Geschichte: Legitimation durch Überlieferung* (Cologne, 1992). On Arnpeck, see ed. G. Leidinger, *Veit Arnpeck: Sämtliche Chroniken* (Aalen, 1969 reprint).

<sup>49</sup> The archetype of humanist geography was, of course, Flavio Biondo's *Italia illustrata*, a work with which Aeneas was no doubt well acquainted. Aeneas was also a careful reader of Biondo's history of the Middle Ages, the *Decades*, of which he wrote an abbreviated version (*Supra decades Blondi epitome*, pp. 144-281 in Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*). As Rinaldi ('Pio II e il soggetto nella storia', p. 283) has suggested, Aeneas's own work represents a fusion of Biondo's historical and geographic interests.

graphical description by one of the earliest known Bohemian historians: Cosmas, deacon of St Veit cathedral in the early twelfth century.<sup>50</sup> At the beginning of his *Chronica boemorum*, Cosmas had offered a vague definition of Bohemia as an eastern portion of Germany, 'encircled all around by mountains', followed by a vision of the land in its most pristine state, untouched by man or plough, abounding in forests, fresh water, fauna, as it appeared to its first ruler Boemus (Czech), who took possession of it after a panegyric rich in Virgilian and Biblical overtones.<sup>51</sup>

Aeneas had only an indirect acquaintance with the chronicle of Cosmas, in that it formed the basis of Pulkawa's. The latter, however, lacked any attempt at a geographical description upon which Aeneas might have based his own. In any case, Aeneas went well beyond the simple delineation of boundaries offered by Cosmas. The geographical descriptions that open the *Historia Bohemica* and the *Historia Friderici* not only outline the respective territories in terms of their bordering nations, mountains and rivers; they also contain information on the agricultural and natural products of each region; and portrayals of the major cities (Prague and Vienna), followed by (mostly disparaging) remarks on the social mores of their inhabitants, both noble and common. Aeneas's particularly explicit depiction of Vienna<sup>52</sup> in the *Historia Friderici* became quite famous in his

<sup>50</sup> There are, however, partial traces of a much earlier geo-political identification of Bohemia; cf. J. Dobiaš, 'Seit wann bilden die natürlichen Grenzen von Böhmen auch seine politische Landesgrenze?', *Historica* 6 (1963), pp. 5-44. On Cosmas, see Palacky, *Würdigung*, pp. 1-35; and, more recently, N. Kersken, *Geschichtsschreibung im Europa der 'nationes': Nationalgeschichtliche Gesamtdarstellungen im Mittelalter* (Cologne, 1995), pp. 573ff.

<sup>51</sup> *Cosmae Pragensis Chronica Boemorum*, ed. Bertold Bretholz, in: *Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores rerum Germanicarum*, Series nova 2 (Berlin, 1923), pp. 5-7.

<sup>52</sup> Here, too, Aeneas brought to bear on German territorial historiography one of the most recognizable traits of Florentine humanism (which had in Bruni's *Laudatio florentinae urbis* a paragon of urban description), and of Biondo's *Italia illustrata*. Aeneas was also known for his description of Basel (the first version of this in a letter to Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini, dated July 1434; cf. Wolkan, *Briefwechsel* (Fontes, vol. 67), pp. 28-38). His earliest description of

own time, offering a vivid image of life, social customs and commerce in the Austrian capital. With a keen eye for detail, Aeneas described the streets, churches and houses of the city; the university; the composition of the city council; the tremendous influx of victuals, especially wine, into the city, including an estimate of the emperor's income deriving from taxation of wine sales; and the social and sexual habits of the citizens. In the more succinct *Historia Bohemica*, he limited his sketch of Prague to a few essential facts, but also highlighted in brief Kutna, Pilsen, Litomerice, Budweis, Broda, and other towns. Aeneas thus aspired not to a mere topography of his subject, but to a comprehensive cultural and ethnographic sketch – a sketch that would enable the physical contours of the land and the character of its people to contribute to the history of a nation, otherwise dominated by the deeds of its rulers.

In his ethnographic endeavor, Aeneas was no doubt inspired by the *Germania* of Tacitus. The only known codex of this text had arrived in Rome from the Benedictine abbey at Hersfeld near Fulda in 1455, and Aeneas was one of the first scholars to have access to it. In 1457, in response to the accusations of extortion and greed leveled at the Roman Curia by Martin Mayer, the secretary of the Archbishop of Mainz, Aeneas drafted his own *Germania*.<sup>53</sup> He praised the cities, bishoprics and principalities of Germany, and Germany's cultural and religious accomplishments, hospitality, and industriousness. His attempt at capturing the traits of its land and people mirrored that of Tacitus while underscoring the tremendous progress (effected by the influence of Christianity) made by the Germans since the savagery of the barbaric times about which Tacitus had written. Significantly, the social and cultural change undergone by Germany was accompanied by an equally dramatic shift in its geographic form: Germany was now a powerful nation that had by far exceeded the limits set on it by the geographers of Antiquity. The traditional boundaries formed by the Rhine, Da-

Vienna dates to his first visit to that city in April 1438 (cf. the letter to an unidentified friend in Wolkan, *Briefwechsel* (Fontes, vol. 67), pp. 80-84).

<sup>53</sup> In Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, pp. 1035-1086; also available in A. Schmidt's German translation, *Deutschland. Der Brieftraktat an Martin Mayer* (Cologne, 1962).

nube and Elbe rivers had been surpassed as Germany grew in might and wealth, forming a vast and homogeneous geographical unit. Thus Aeneas's *Germania* – which was to have a profound effect on German national consciousness,<sup>54</sup> second only to the that of Tacitus's text – stipulated a geographic and ethnographic basis for national identity, much as the *Historia Bohemica* did for national history.

That Aeneas viewed the history and the geography of nations as intimately connected is also confirmed by his *Europa*, a text completed shortly after the *Historia Bohemica*,<sup>55</sup> in which he undertook the task of describing all the nations of Christian Europe,<sup>56</sup> and narrating the memorable events that had taken place in each in recent memory. Here, too, he pursued his criticism of the ambitious tales of origination – albeit less adamantly. He refuted, for example, the claim that the Saxons were descended from the Greeks,<sup>57</sup> although he reproduced, without comment, the popular myth that the French were descended from the Trojans.<sup>58</sup> For the most part, however, the *Europa* suggests that Aeneas viewed the nations of Europe as defined

<sup>54</sup> Discussions of this topic abound. See for example Paul, *Studien zur Geschichte des deutschen Nationalbewusstseins*, pp. 24ff.; Widmer, *Enea Silvio Piccolomini*, pp. 90ff.

<sup>55</sup> In the *Europa*, Aeneas treats Bohemia only briefly, referring his readers to the *Historia Bohemica*, which he has written *his diebus*.

<sup>56</sup> The *Europa* was often grouped and printed together with the *Asia*, which Aeneas completed during his pontifical years, with the assumption that they were two parts of an intended cosmography of the world. N. Casella ('Pio II tra geografia e storia: la Cosmografia', *Archivio della società romana di storia patria* 95 (1972), pp. 35-112), demonstrated how different these texts really are and suggested that they were in fact separate literary enterprises. The *Asia* is an erudite text, extensively informed by classical scholarship, especially by the works of Herodotus, Strabo and Ptolemy, which were available to Aeneas (in Latin translations) once he had become pope. It is also carefully planned and moves systematically from the easternmost reaches of the continent to Asia Minor. Moreover, as the essay by B. K. Vollmann in the present volume suggests, the *Asia* is imprinted with a carefully articulated interpretation of historical change. The *Europa* seems to lack an organizational or rhetorical structure entirely, and relies mostly on Aeneas's own observations and knowledge of the continent's history.

<sup>57</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 422.

<sup>58</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 433.

by their geographical locus and their recent history and customs, rather than by their alleged origins. For example, in the case of Hungary (the first nation to be discussed in the *Europa*),<sup>59</sup> the narrator devotes only the briefest of remarks to the successive occupations of Pannonia by Huns, Goths, Lombards and, lastly, Hungarians, and he moves directly to a comprehensive treatment of the recent vicissitudes of its history.

If, as I have argued, the compositional structure of the *Historia Bohemica* is a novel aspect of the genre as Aeneas conceived it, then its traces may also be discernible in Aeneas's first attempt at a *Landesgeschichte*, the *Historia Friderici*. This motley work underwent three revisions over several years but remained unfinished.<sup>60</sup> It began with Aeneas's desire to record the events of the Austrian rebellion against Frederick III in the summer of 1452, but metamorphosed into a much more enterprising piece when Frederick commissioned him to write an official account of that unfortunate affair. The preface to this second and wholly separate redaction<sup>61</sup> reflects the change in purpose, and justifies the broader scope of the revised text: it will do justice to the emperor's image by showing his love of peace; and by widening the horizon of the narration to include other episodes from Frederick's life and his times, which – reading between the lines – will offset the blemish of his shameful surrender to the Austrians. The *Historia Friderici* is further complicated by Aeneas's personal protagonism, as he increasingly magnified his own role in the political events he described, and by his irrepressible flair for biographical and anecdotal insertions.

<sup>59</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, pp. 387-391.

<sup>60</sup> On the transformations undergone by the text see Kramer, 'Untersuchungen zur "Österreichischen Geschichte"', especially 41ff., where he discusses the modifications in the third redaction, which had been analyzed by neither Bayer (*Die Historia Friderici III*) nor Ilgen (*Die Geschichte Kaiser Friedrichs III.*). In this final version, the *Historia Friderici* is expressly entitled 'History of Austria.'

<sup>61</sup> Kollar, *Historia Friderici*, pp. 3-6. Kramer, 'Untersuchungen zur "Österreichischen Geschichte"', 30, noted that the second preface was in fact a dedicatory letter that accompanied the work.

Studies by Victor Bayer and Hans Kramer have established that Aeneas intended to write a history of Austria rather than a biographical tribute to his employer. And indeed the narrative sequence of the second redaction of the *Historia Friderici* presages the outline of the *Historia Bohemica*: it begins with a geographical description of Austria, then runs through the early history of the duchy, viewed with stern criticism through the lens of a local source (Leopold's chronicle), and, after a curious gap of about 180 years, which Aeneas probably intended to plug,<sup>62</sup> focuses on contemporary events in the 1450s. The episodes included here are all intimately linked to Aeneas's personal career, including Frederick's coronation and nuptials at Rome in 1452; and the rebellion of the Austrians upon his return. After the rebellion, the story shifts entirely to the fate of the young Ladislaus, and this last section is virtually identical to the final chapters of the *Historia Bohemica*.

Unlike the expanded preface to the second redaction, the preface of the first redaction<sup>63</sup> contains no indication that the *Historia Friderici* was a commissioned piece, but merely comments on the educational value of history. Aeneas enumerates those works that are essential to comprehend history and to learn from its examples: the books of Moses, Judges, Kings, the books of the prophets, Esther, Judith, the Maccabees. With the rhetorical question, 'what is the Gospel, if not history?' he includes the life of Christ, the Acts of the Apostles and the letters of St Paul as vital sources of historical *exempla*. He then touches on the salient contributions of profane history: the Trojan war, the deeds of Alexander the Great, the empires of the Assyrians and the Egyptians, the accomplishments of the Greeks, the Carthaginian wars, the triumphal days of the Romans.

All this amounts to a fairly conventional invitation to appre-

<sup>62</sup> However, Kramer, 'Untersuchungen zur "Österreichischen Geschichte"', p. 69, found an illuminated manuscript that had belonged to Pius II's condottiere, Federigo of Urbino, which he suspected to have been copied directly from the third redaction of the *Historia Friderici*. This suggests that Pius had allowed the third redaction to be transcribed; in other words, that he considered the text finished despite the chronological break.

<sup>63</sup> Printed in Bayer, *Die Historia Friderici III*, pp. 206-208.

ciate the lessons of history, *magistra vitae*, and seems appropriate for the preface to a historical work. But this passage may at the same time be interpreted as a polemic about the proper content of the *Landesgeschichte*. The succession of historical ages outlined by Aeneas in the preface corresponds schematically to the content of the late medieval universal chronicle, which remained extremely popular throughout the fifteenth century.<sup>64</sup> (Aeneas was well acquainted with this scheme through his careful reading of Otto von Freising's *Chronica*.) While he acknowledged the canon of universal history in the preface, Aeneas omitted it entirely from the narrative of his Austrian *Landesgeschichte*, suggesting to his readership that the events of Biblical and classical times could be gleaned directly from their respective sources, and that they had little bearing on the history of a German territory. And indeed, after a geographical description of Austria, Aeneas set about deconstructing the fabulous pre-history of Austria as told in the *Chronik von den 95 Herrschaften*, but did not comment on the extensive parts of that chronicle dedicated to universal historical events, nor those that reproduced imperial and papal annals. These parts of the late medieval historiographic tradition had no role to play in his regional history.

As in the *Historia Bohemica*, Aeneas did not speculate on the place of origin of the first settlers. As we have seen, he subjected Leopold's text to vigorous and derisive criticism, ridiculing the myth of Abraham of Theomanaria, a Jew who had come from fabulously-named regions 'beyond the sea', but offered no alternative version of Austria's earliest history. Possibly he believed that in the absence of reliable accounts about that remote age, the conscientious historian ought to refrain from conjecture. Perhaps, as I have already suggested, his historiographic approach was restricted to negative criticism: the verisimilar method could deconstruct the past, but rarely reconstruct it.

<sup>64</sup> Examples of widely read universal chronicles include, in Italy, the *Chronicon universale* (1459) by Archbishop Antonino of Florence; and the *Supplementum chronicarum* (1483) by the Augustinian friar Jacobus of Bergamo; in Germany, Hartmann Schedel's *Liber chronicarum* (1493). Cf. Joachimsen, *Geschichtsauffassung*, pp. 80ff.

A comparison between the *Historia Bohemica* and the earlier *Historia Friderici* reveals a continuity in our author's preoccupation with the form of territorial history. What renders the *Historia Bohemica* a more homogeneous (though perhaps less entertaining) piece of historical literature is the author's retreat from the narration, the absence of that preponderant personal protagonism that characterizes the *Historia Friderici* – and it is in this respect that we can recognize a genuine development from one work to the other. The events that Aeneas chose to highlight in the three redactions of the *Historia Friderici* were closely associated with his own political career. It has often been said that the *Historia Friderici* was first and foremost a program of personal aggrandizement for its author. Narrating the events surrounding the imperial bid for control of Milan after the death of Filippo Maria Visconti, for example, Aeneas greatly magnified his own role in the diplomatic proceedings. He would have us believe that largely due to his oratorical skills the citizens of Milan were ready, indeed eager, to recognize Frederick as their sovereign. Yet, Bayer concluded that 'eine "kaiserlich gesinnte Partei", [...] gab es überhaupt nicht in Mailand', and that Frederick himself was prepared to commit only minimal effort and resources to secure Milan.<sup>65</sup>

Aeneas also insisted on incorporating his own speeches into his account. For example, his lengthy oration, held before the pope and the emperor, advocating a crusade against the Turks, is given in full.<sup>66</sup> He also managed to insert his *Oratio adversus Austriales*<sup>67</sup> – which he had written to censure the Austrians for their insurrection, but was wisely persuaded to withhold – in a fictitious speech ostensibly delivered by Frederick as he stated his case against the Austrians before the pope.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Bayer, *Die Historia Friderici III*, p. 87. Bayer also notes (*Die Historia Friderici III*, p. 82) that other contemporary chroniclers of Milan's history make no mention of Frederick's three embassies to Milan (in two of which Aeneas was involved), possibly because they considered them insignificant.

<sup>66</sup> Kollar, *Historia Friderici*, pp. 307-318.

<sup>67</sup> This speech in: ed. J. D. Mansi, *Pii II orationes politicae et ecclesiasticae* (Lucca, 1755), Part I, pp. 184-262.

<sup>68</sup> Kollar, *Historia Friderici*, pp. 282-287.

In the *Historia Bohemica* Aeneas had ample opportunity to include himself in the narrative, but, unlike in the *Historia Friderici*, he mostly refrained. He mentions himself only on a few occasions. After depicting the Hussite citadel at Tabor, he assures the reader that 'we described the city as we saw it',<sup>69</sup> in a brief aside on Kaspar Schlick, his friend and superior in the imperial chancery, who was also his source on the events surrounding Emperor Sigismund's death,<sup>70</sup> and again in chapter 58, where he recounts his role in the imperial embassy to Beneschau, including the speech he delivered there. This speech resembles the *Oratio adversus Austriales* in at least one respect. Aeneas, who reproduced it from memory in the *Historia Bohemica*, embellished it greatly, giving it more vigor and defiance than it had had originally.<sup>71</sup> With this exception, Aeneas seems to have renounced his own role as 'subject of history', which had been so prominent in the *Historia Friderici* and would later be manifest in his *Commentarii rerum memorabilium*. The Austrian rebellion, which enters the narration here, too, because it effected the release of Ladislaus, is not treated as extensively as in the *Historia Friderici*. The narrator describes vividly the skirmishes between the imperial forces and the rebels, but conceals the lengthy deliberations in the emperor's privy council, in which he had taken active part, and he gives no reason for Frederick's surrender. Aeneas mentions that he traveled as one of the emperor's spokesmen to the congress of Vienna, which assembled after the siege to settle Frederick's differences with the Austrians. He notes that he and his colleagues were listened to by the Austrians 'as the vanquished are heard by the victors', but says nothing more about his own participation.<sup>72</sup>

Even more surprising is the fact that the author says nothing of his own involvement with the Hussites, of his disputations with the Taborites and with George Podiebrad, although he had abundant written material readily available for this.<sup>73</sup> Nor in his

<sup>69</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, pp. 109.

<sup>70</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 124.

<sup>71</sup> See Palacky's discussion of this passage in his *Würdigung*, pp. 240-246.

<sup>72</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 132.

<sup>73</sup> See n. 5, above.

account of the life of Ladislaus does he mention his own efforts to impart a classical education to the young prince. For the sake of narrative homogeneity and brevity, all these elements were forsaken.

In the *Historia Bohemica* Aeneas also resists the temptation to digress into biographical and anecdotal modes of writing, a temptation to which he had often succumbed in the *Historia Friderici*. In the latter text, for instance, the Milanese affair becomes an occasion for an extensive biographical digression on Francesco Sforza, who took the city by force in 1450. Aeneas also reports with novelistic flair the turbid story of the murder of Sforza's lover at the bidding of his estranged wife, Bianca. Frederick's sojourn in Naples after his wedding affords Aeneas the opportunity to present a portrait of King Alfonso's mistress and courtesan, Lucrezia d'Alagna; his reception by Borso d'Este in Ferrara is accompanied by a brief history of the Este family. The list of personalities who are represented in short biographies reads like a fifteenth-century Who's Who: the Franciscan preachers Bernardino da Siena and Giovanni Capistrano; the *condottiere* Braccio da Montone; the erstwhile Duke of Milan, Filippo Maria Visconti; the pontiff Nicholas V.<sup>74</sup> Other biographical cameos were motivated by Aeneas's ill-will toward his personal and political enemies: the learned lawyer Gregor Heimburg, the Viennese theologian Thomas Ebendorfer and Johann Ungnad, Aeneas's rival at the emperor's court: all suffer sardonic portrayals. The shady Count Ulrich von Cilli and his father are also easy targets for Aeneas's corrosive pen.

Anecdotes and newsworthy incidents unrelated to Austrian history are interspersed in the narrative as well, including the memorable events connected to the jubilee of 1450 and also Stefano Porcari's attempt in 1453 to rouse the Roman people against papal rule. In such instances, the *Historia Friderici* becomes no more than a jumbled memoir, which Voigt dismissed as 'Aeneas Denkwürdigkeiten vor seiner päpstlichen Periode.'<sup>75</sup>

All such extraneous particulars were omitted from the *Historia Bohemica*. In a very few instances, Aeneas indulged his

<sup>74</sup> Between 1440 and 1450, Aeneas had also written a series of biographies of prominent men (see n. 34), so much of this material was on the tip of his pen.

<sup>75</sup> Voigt, *Enea Silvio de' Piccolomini*, vol. II, p. 325.

penchant for story-telling – for example in the narration of the young nobleman Stiradus, who was tricked into capture by one of Valasca's followers, and tortured to death.<sup>76</sup> However, even this tale, which he inherited from his sources, is an integral element in the overall narratological design of the work and it remains pertinent to Bohemian history, because it encapsulates a unique moment, namely, the amazon-style reign of the Bohemian women. The *Historia Bohemica* also contains several colourful and poignant portraits of its protagonists. Yet here, too, Aeneas never digresses: only those directly involved in the fate of Bohemia are given biographical presence. Some of these portraits, for better or for worse, influenced the later reception of certain historical figures. Emperor Wenzel, for example, is presented as a drunk and an incompetent fool, and the blind Taborite leader John Ziška as a fearsome and invincible field general. Even Aeneas's insistence on repeating the folk myth that Ziška's skin was made into a drum after his death, at the sound of which the enemies of the Hussites fled in terror, must be understood as the purposeful development of Ziška into a Bohemian icon rather than evidence of the author's gullibility.

The preceding remarks suggest that in the *Historia Bohemica* Aeneas had recognized and set aside both his fondness of narrative digression and his tendency to place himself at the center of historical events. This may have had a lot to do with his changing personal circumstances. As a cardinal in Rome he wielded considerably more power than as a foreign consultant at the imperial court, and he probably no longer felt the need to draw attention to his political presence. It is, nevertheless, clear that the form of the *Historia Bohemica* owed much to the lessons Aeneas had learned in the unfinished *Historia Friderici*. The *Historia Friderici* failed as a *Landesgeschichte* because of (a) the excessive protagonism of the author, (b) his habit of incorporating and recycling his earlier writings into it, (c) his tendency to digress into other genres, such as biography and the novella, and perhaps (d) the difficulty of reconciling the text's agenda with the interests of its patron. Frederick's commission probably obliged Aeneas to portray his master somewhat fa-

vourably and to rescue him from historical opprobrium, although this concern must have become less pressing after he left Frederick's service in 1455.

In the *Historia Bohemica*, Aeneas succeeded in avoiding these pitfalls. In many ways, it represented his improvement on the shortcomings of the *Historia Friderici*, and an opportunity to express many of the political ideals latent in the *Historia Friderici* in a more worthy and readable textual product. Thus the *Historia Bohemica* can be regarded as the crowning historiographic achievement of Aeneas's pre-papal career; thereafter, he would return to his favorite literary mode – autobiography. In the *Commentarii*, he could finally write the text that he seemed to have been preparing all along: a history on a grand scale, with himself as the pivotal point.

The differences between the *Historia Friderici* and the *Historia Bohemica* indicate that there was a progression in Aeneas's use and interpretation of historical material. This in turn points to his ongoing preoccupation with the issue of form, especially as applied to territorial history. Aeneas arrived at a new form of historical writing, represented by the *Historia Bohemica*, by gradually identifying the proper subject matter of territorial history. Already in the *Historia Friderici*, he had rejected the traditional universal-historical framework that characterized the late medieval *Landeschronik*, and used instead geography and ethnography in order to determine the boundaries of his narrative. While he continued in this vein when he turned to Bohemian history, Aeneas in the *Historia Bohemica* also discarded other historical information that was not pertinent (personal, biographical and anecdotal narratives), thus finally achieving a unity and coherence of subject matter that characterizes the new form of territorial history exemplified by the *Historia Bohemica*.

The two works are not only closely related in form, they also have much in common at the ideological level. Access to the thematic similarities between the two histories is afforded by the final section, almost identical in both works: the story of Ladislaus's troubled reign after his liberation (1452-57). Powerful baronial factions in Austria, Hungary and Bohemia vied for control of his person, sought to influence his decisions and to

<sup>76</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, pp. 87-88.

determine his place of residence. Count Cilli, who was Ladislaus's kinsman, held the most sway over the young ruler, but Ulrich Eizinger, the upstart leader of the Austrian aristocracy, managed to engineer Cilli's fall from grace, only to see him return triumphantly and to suffer the same fate himself. Cilli was later murdered by the elder son of John Hunyady. Upon Ladislaus's tragic death in Prague – foul play on the part of George Podiebrad was suspected – Hunyady's younger son Mathias was elected King of Hungary, and Podiebrad became King of Bohemia. Aeneas comments on these events and brings both the *Historia Friderici* and the *Historia bohemica* to a close thus:

Two most powerful kingdoms were deprived of their ruler simultaneously, and from a most noble and ancient lineage went over to men of lower birth. [...] In both cases many complained that the elections had been determined by force and that what had been extorted with intimidation could not be considered lawful. For our part, we are convinced that kingdoms are acquired by the force of arms, not by lawful right.<sup>77</sup>

These few lines epitomize some of Aeneas's most pressing political concerns, which he voiced repeatedly in both the *Historia Friderici* and the *Historia Bohemica*. The first is his dismay at the fact that men of lowly birth and illegitimate children of rulers are increasingly able to secure territorial rule for themselves. Although in the beginning of the *Historia Bohemica* he had repeated the humanist cliché that 'virtue alone begets true nobility',<sup>78</sup> portions of that text as well as several passages in the *Historia Friderici* belie this assertion. For example, Aeneas was clearly disdainful of the fact that the leadership of the Bohemian nation during the early fifteenth century had fallen to men of low birth, such as Hus and Ziska. Similarly, in the *Historia Friderici* he frequently remarked on the illegitimacy or base pedigree of many Italian rulers, including Francesco Sforza of Milan, Borso d'Este of Ferrara, and Ferrante of Naples.

<sup>77</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 143.

<sup>78</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 84.

Aeneas's second, more prescient observation concerns the relationship between political credibility and territorial power. In the final sentence of both the *Historia Friderici* and the *Historia Bohemica*, Aeneas called attention to the vital importance of securing political and military control of a territorial state, by whatever means. In the unstable political constellation of fifteenth-century Europe, only a firm basis of territorial power could provide access to political assertion at the highest level – a lesson especially germane to the troubled state of imperial hegemony in Germany.<sup>79</sup> Aeneas's concluding statement had direct bearing on the recent history of Bohemia, of course. Through sheer military prowess the heretics had maintained control of their nation in the face of widespread European hostility. Their struggles were rewarded when a Hussite – albeit a moderate one – became king, and subsequently vied for the imperial crown.<sup>80</sup> In one of the more sententious passages of the *Historia Bohemica*, Aeneas blamed Emperor Sigismund for not having nipped the Hussite cancer in the bud:

Queen Sophia [...] summoned Sigismund with frequent letters and emissaries, and asked the neighboring princes for help [...]. But Sigismund was badly advised and willful to move his forces first against the Turks, who had already retreated, rather than to head for Bohemia [...]. Because had he led his army to Prague before the forces of the heretics had grown strong, never would those flames, which we later saw, have consumed Germany. But as he prepared to challenge the Turks, he lost Bohemia, and did not defend Hungary.<sup>81</sup>

Fending off the encroaching Turks was a task suitable for the

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Rinaldi, 'Pio II e il soggetto nella storia', p. 283, who sees the *Historia Friderici* as an overall assessment of the imperial institution.

<sup>80</sup> Increasing dissatisfaction with Frederick's passive imperial tenure led to a half-hearted plan to elect Podiebrad in his place. Among its supporters was none other than Aeneas Silvius, by then Pope Pius II, who would have liked to enlist the military support of the Bohemians against the Turks. Cf. J. K. Hoensch, *Geschichte Böhmens* (Munich, 1992<sup>2</sup>), p. 160.

<sup>81</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, pp. 107-108.



Holy Roman emperor,<sup>82</sup> defender of the Christian commonwealth. Yet Aeneas, who was himself a fervent supporter of such crusading efforts, deemed this a less urgent responsibility than the suppression of the Hussite revolt. He probably regarded the establishment of an independent kingdom in the east, a heretical dominion within the Christian community, as more threatening than the advance of the Turks.<sup>83</sup> But Aeneas also faulted Sigismund because his failure to assert control over Bohemia undermined his claim to universal leadership as emperor. He stressed this again when he reported (inaccurately) that, after years of strife, Sigismund was prepared to come to terms with Ziška, indeed bribe him in return for being recognized as king – ‘a truly great disgrace for royal majesty and imperial glory’,<sup>84</sup> averted only by the providential death of Ziška.

The same lesson – that imperial authority must be built upon territorial might – was all the more obvious for Frederick III in the *Historia Friderici*. Here the central segment of the story juxtaposed the emperor’s tasks and functions to his lack of control over his own territory, Austria. In 1452, Frederick decided to undertake his journey to Italy despite the growing turmoil in Austria and repeated demands that Ladislaus be released from his wardship. His coronation in Italy was an imperial necessity, and it was accompanied by other imperial duties, such as fostering peace in the war-torn peninsula and cementing a collaborative alliance with the pope. Undermining it was the untimely rebellion of the Austrian nobility, who were Frederick’s subjects due to his wardship over their prince, Ladislaus.<sup>85</sup> The interdependence of these two dimensions of the emperor’s role is

<sup>82</sup> Sigismund had been elected King of the Germans in 1410, but his imperial coronation at Rome did not take place until 31 May 1433.

<sup>83</sup> Rothe, ‘Enea Silvio de’ Piccolomini über Böhmen’, p. 148.

<sup>84</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, p. 114.

<sup>85</sup> The last scion of the Albertine line, Ladislaus was the heir to the Habsburgs’ Danubian territories. The Leopoldine lands were split between Frederick, who controlled inner Austria (Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, the Adriatic possessions), and Duke Sigismund of Tyrol, who ruled over Tyrol and the Vorlande. With the death of Ladislaus in 1457, the Danubian lands reverted to Frederick, although he temporarily lost them to his brother Albrecht during the wars of 1458-1463.

underscored in the *Historia Friderici* by the very structure of the narrative: Frederick’s activities in Italy are continually disturbed by the repercussions of political unrest in Austria, fomented by Eizinger’s inflammatory speeches, as if to demonstrate how Frederick’s uncertain hold over the duchy damaged his imperial stature in Italy.

It is in this interpretive vein that we ought also to read the short but powerful speech delivered by Ziška in Chapter 44 of the *Historia Bohemica*. There are few direct speeches in this text – a departure from both the *Historia Friderici* and from Roman models – perhaps again in observance of its crips *brevitas*. Thus Ziška’s speech (his only oration reported by Aeneas) appears particularly relevant within the economy of the text as a whole. It is a vehement speech, in which Ziška exhorts his men to persevere in the siege of Prague, even though those defending the city are Hussites themselves, and are regarded by many as a less pressing menace than Sigismund. But Ziška has no hesitation and no scruples in the matter:

Domestic wars must be feared more than external ones, and it is necessary to destroy all civil mutinies. We must conquer Prague and exterminate its seditious citizens before word of our divisions reaches Sigismund.<sup>86</sup>

Ziška’s forceful speech eloquently confirms one of the main lessons of Aeneas’s historiographic work: there can be no political or military assertion without firm local control of a territory, its capital and citizens. This lesson seems tailored to Frederick’s predicament in the 1460s and 1470s, when his imperial reputation suffered repeated blows as he failed to protect his own territories against the internal challenges from his brother Albrecht and the external encroachment of the ambitious Mathias Corvinus.

Thus both the *Historia Friderici* and the *Historia Bohemica* comment on the particularist makeup of European politics in the fifteenth century. It is not at all surprising that a keen political observer such as Aeneas would have remarked on this fundamental sign of his times. It is relevant, however, that he saw

<sup>86</sup> Piccolomini, *Opera omnia*, pp. 113-114.



it as fit to devise an elegant new form of historiography – based in part on local chronicle traditions – that would both describe the process by which territorial states had risen to the forefront of European affairs, and represent them independently from universal or imperial history, reflecting the political reality of the day.

AENEAS SILVIUS PICCOLOMINI'S  
*DE CURIALIUM MISERIIS* AND PETER OF BLOIS

*Keith Sidwell*

In 1978, Berthe Widmer drew attention to the use made by Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini of Peter of Blois in his *De curialium miseriis*.<sup>1</sup> Widmer began her investigation from the casual observation, also made by Claus Uhlig,<sup>2</sup> that chapters 34 and 35 of the *De curialium miseriis* were little more than 'a slight reworking', of the 14th letter of Peter of Blois, done without any explicit mention of Peter's name.

Peter of Blois, a twelfth-century Latin poet, worked for some years at the court of Henry II of England, before eventually returning to the clerical life as Archdeacon of Bath.<sup>3</sup> From here he wrote two letters about the life of the courtier.<sup>4</sup> Letter 14 is a grave indictment of the life of the courtier. But its central message is that clerics should not serve at secular courts, since their task is to concentrate on the riches which await the soul in Heaven. Letter 150 is briefer, and recants on the main theme:

<sup>1</sup> B. Widmer, 'Zur Arbeitsmethode Enea Silvios im Traktat über Elend der Hofleute', *Latomus, Revue d'études latines* 37 (1978), pp. 183-206. I am grateful to Zweder von Martels for bringing this to my attention, which I had not seen when I wrote 'Il *De curialium miseriis* di Enea Silvio Piccolomini e il *De mercede conductis* di Luciano', in: ed. L. Rotondi Secchi Tarugi, *Pio II e la cultura del suo tempo* (Milan, 1991), pp. 329-341, and 'Il *De infelicitate principum* di Poggio Bracciolini e il *De curialium miseriis* di Enea Silvio Piccolomini', *Studi Umanistici Piceni* 14 (1994), pp. 199-206.

<sup>2</sup> Cl. Uhlig, *Die Hofkritik im England des Mittelalters und der Renaissance: Studien zu einem Gemeinplatz der europäischen Moralistik*, Quellen und Forschungen zur Sprach- und Kulturgeschichte der Germanischen Völker, 56 (Berlin, 1973).

<sup>3</sup> See Peter Dronke, *The Medieval Poet and his World* (Rome, 1984), pp. 281-339.

<sup>4</sup> *Petri Blesensis Opera omnia*, ed. J. P. Migne, *Patrologiae Latinae Tomus* 207 (Turnhout, 1904), cols. 42-51 and 439-442.

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PIUS II  
'EL PIÙ EXPEDITIVO PONTIFICE'

*Selected Studies on Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini  
(1405–1464)*

EDITED BY

ZWEDER VON MARTELS AND ARJO VANDERJAGT



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The medal on the front of this book is by Andrea Guazzalotti of Prato (1460); a copy may be seen at the Schweizerisches Landmuseum, Zürich.

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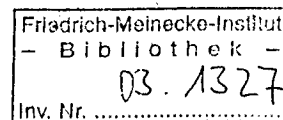
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## PREFACE

This volume finds its origin in a workshop which was held at the University of Groningen on December 12-13, 1997, entitled 'Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini as a Transitional Figure between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance'. The organizers were fully aware that a short workshop could not do full justice to Piccolomini (1405-1464), the humanist, author, courtier, inveterate traveller, conciliarist and then papalist, priest, bishop and finally pope under the name Pius II (1458-1464), urban architect of Pienza, grand patron of the arts, and would-be crusader. Piccolomini's scholarship, his literary and widely ranging humanist work, his political and ecclesiastical activities, but especially the personal, likeable style of his writings led Jacob Burckhardt to call him his 'Liebling' – his love –, a term he used only for one other person: the painter Raphael.<sup>1</sup>

Given this estimation and that of others down to our own century, the workshop sought to understand Piccolomini and his work as a way to approach the Latin literature and culture of the fifteenth-century Renaissance. Hence a title was chosen for this book that would demonstrate the importance of Piccolomini to his contemporaries. It was taken from the words of the Milanese ambassador Agostino Rossi († after 1476) a year after Piccolomini's death, which describe him as *el più expeditivo, el più libero pontifice che fusse may*.<sup>2</sup>

Tom Izbicki, Keith Sidwell, Zweder von Martels and Benedikt Vollmann were participants in the original workshop; their papers were rewritten and expanded to the form in which they are published here. Furthermore, Dr von Martels and Professor

<sup>1</sup> Ludwig von Pastor, *Tagebücher, Briefe, Erinnerungen*, ed. W. Wühr (Heidelberg) 1950), p. 273. For an evaluation of Burckhardt's utterances, see B. Widmer, *Enea Silvio Piccolomini in der sittlichen und politischen Entscheidung*, Basler Beiträge zur Geschichtswissenschaft 88 (Basel and Stuttgart, 1963), pp. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup> See Professor Märkl's article below, p. 145.