

factum after the appearance of Tacitus, assumingly from Niccoli, in order to confirm the reputation of the "first" ... *Medicean ms.*, which went in use in many nobles' libraries, and pave the way for the second ..." (*ibid.*).

However, it is assumed that both copies were discovered in reverse order. A. Amfiteatrov wrote:

"Studying the story of the *Codex Mediceus P's* origin (discovered later—A. F.) ... we cannot help stressing the fact that the legend surrounding Niccolo de' Niccoli's list 80 years ago repeated again ... Again a Northern monastery is on stage, again some mysterious, unnamed monks. Some German friar brings pope Leo X the first five chapters of the *Annals*. The pope was delighted, and allegedly detailed the friar to publish the works. The man refuses, saying that he was illiterate. In a word, the legend about the supplier of the "second" *Medicean ms.* (found first—A.F.), a Hersfeld monk, is revived from the dead ... Legend names ... Arcimboldi ... the intermediary in the deal ... However, Arcimboldi did not mention a word about this circumstance, though Leo X, allegedly through him, paid 500 sequins for the manuscript, i.e., 6,000 francs, a whole fortune for that time. These eternal mysterious monks, incognito, without known origin or place of living, were for P. Hochart the successors of the falsification system launched by Poggio Bracciolini. Nobody has ever seen or known them, but today one of them will carry from Sweden or Denmark a lost decade of Livy, tomorrow another, from ... Fulda, will fetch a copy of Tacitus, etc., always for some reason from the faraway, unattainable North, and always with the same merchandise lusted for by the market of books of the century" ([247], pp. 375–382).

The study of the correspondence of Poggio's friends does not make all of these problems clear. Their authors either keep mum regarding the "find" or supply mutually exclusive versions (*ibid.*).

"Beyle said (in the 18th c.—A. F.) that pope Leo X wanted to find the missing chapters of Tacitus so much that he had not only promised money and fame, but also absolution. Is it surprising that they were speedily found? Thus, both of Tacitus' *Medicean mss.* are equally enigmatic as far as their origin goes. P. Hochart believes, proceeding from the similarity of the obscurity and the legends surrounding, them that they both are of the same origin and belong to the same family: They originated from the Roman workshop of the Florentine Poggio Bracciolini ([247], pp. 374–382).

P. Hochart and J. Ross supply numerous data demonstrating Poggio's capability of playing different roles (according to his own books) (*ibid.*). For Poggio, the Latin language is his mother tongue.

"He writes in Latin, and how well he writes! Judging by the suppleness of imitation, it was the Prosper Mérimée of the 15th c. ... Playing up to the reader's taste, Poggio is Seneca, Petronius or Livy; a chameleon of word and spirit, he can write after anyone's manner ..." ([247], p. 385).

The analysis of Tacitus' text shows that this allegedly "ancient Roman" knows the history and geography of the ancient Roman state badly (*ibid.*).

"Gaston Boissier also lists a very large number of contradictions ... Specifying a great many of errors which no Roman belonging to the first century could have made, P. Hochart notes those which reveal in the author a man with 15th-c. outlook and traditions ([247], pp. 387–390). We omit the list of these "faux pas".