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Introduction to Epistolarum libri VIII

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Introduction

Italian humanists of the fifteenth century were convinced—in marked contrast to most recent scholarship on humanism—that the early years of the Quattrocento were decisive for the Renaissance of classical literary culture, and especially for the revival of eloquent Latin prose and verse. While Petrarch was respected as a pioneer, a Moses who had led his people to the borders of the Holy Land, it was only with the generation of Leonardo Bruni, Niccolò Niccoli, Pier Paolo Vergerio, Guarino da Verona, Vittorino da Feltre and Gasparino Barzizza, contemporaries believed, that the Italians had crossed over into the Land of Promise and recovered their birthright as the heirs of Roman civilization. We find this view expressed over and over in contemporary sources, including Bruni and Guarino themselves, Biondo Flavio, Giannozzo Manetti, Pius II and Paolo Cortese. So while modern scholars now trace the origins of Renaissance humanism back to late thirteenth century grammatical culture, Renaissance Italians believed that the foundations of modern Latin literature were laid during the first decades of the fifteenth century.[1]

In those decades, according to contemporary accounts, three key changes took place. First, enterprising bookhunters like Poggio Bracciolini, Gerardo Landriano and others had rediscovered lost works of ancient rhetoricians such as Cicero's *Rhetorica* and the complete text of Quintilian's *Institutes*. Second, these works had become the basis of a new education in eloquence at great humanistic schools like those of Guarino in

Ferrara, Vittorino in Mantua and Barzizza in Milan. Finally, the arrival of Manuel Chrysoloras in Italy to teach Greek meant that an entire generation of Italian scholars, for the first time since antiquity, had the rich resources of the Hellenic tradition available to mold their thought and expression. As Biondo Flavio wrote in his account of the classical revival:

> The arrival of Greek letters was no small help in the acquisition of eloquence: and it was actually a stimulus to doing so, because, quite apart from the sheer knowledge and the huge supply of historical and moral material they gained from it, those who knew Greek attempted a good many translations into Latin, and so by constant practice in composition, their skill in writing improved, if they had any to begin with; or if they hadn't, they acquired some. And so academies all over Italy have long been hives of activity, and they are more and more active now with each passing day. The schools are generally in the cities, where it is a fine and pleasant spectacle to see pupils surpassing their teachers in the polish of their speech or writing, and not just when the class is dismissed but while they are actually declaiming and composing under the teacher's very rod.[2]

The letters of Leonardo Bruni of Arezzo (1370-1444) are arguably the most vivid and revealing sources for this extraordinary moment in the history of Western civilization. Bruni came to Florence in the early 1390s to study law, but was soon converted to the study of literature and became a disciple of Coluccio Salutati

(1331-1406), the learned chancellor of Florence who was the leader of the humanist movement in the generation after Petrarch. It was thanks to Salutati and his allies among the Florentine patriciate that Chrysoloras came to Florence in 1397-99 and the young Bruni was able to learn literary Greek.[3]

> At this time I was devoting a great deal of attention to civil law, though I was not ignorant of other subjects of study as well. For I had an innate and lively passion for learning and I had worked hard on the study of dialectic and rhetoric. So when Chrysoloras arrived I was in two minds: whether it would be shameful to abandon the study of law or whether it would be a crime to neglect the opportunity of learning Greek. With the enthusiasm of youth, I often said to myself, "When you could come face to face with Homer, Plato and Demosthenes and the other poets, philosophers and orators, of whom such great and wonderful things are reported, and converse with them and become steeped in their marvellous teaching, ought you to stand aside and neglect this heaven-sent opportunity? For seven centuries now no one in Italy has cultivated the literature of Greece and yet we recognise that all learning comes from there. Think how much useful knowledge, enhanced repute and abundant pleasure you could derive from a knowledge of the Greek language. Everywhere you go there are plenty of professors of civil law and you will never be without the means of learning about it. But there is only this one teacher of Greek literature; if he should go away, no one would then be found from whom you could learn about it." Convinced by these arguments, I put

> myself into the hands of Chrysoloras, with such zeal for learning that at nights in my sleep my mind went on working on the things I had learned in my waking hours.[4]

After Chrysoloras' departure, Bruni began to publish his first Latin translations from the Greek, beginning with the phenomenally successful *Epistola ad adolescentes* of St. Basil of Caesarea (ca. 1401), the most popular translation from the Greek of the entire Renaissance.[5] He also began to compose his first independent literary works, the *Dialogi ad Petrum Histrum* (1404/5) and the famous *Laudatio Florentinae urbis* (1404), which were the first expressions of what has become known in modern Renaissance historiography as "civic humanism."[6]

There are some signs that Bruni in this period hoped to succeed the elderly Salutati as chancellor of Florence, but in 1405 another, more attractive opportunity arose. A new pope, Innocent VII, had been elected the previous October and needed an apostolic secretary to compose his official correspondence. Bruni's friend Poggio Bracciolini, who had already found a position in the curia as a papal abbreviator, proposed him for the office. Bruni set off for Rome in March of 1405 and won the post after a literary contest with his rival, Jacopo Angeli da Scarperia, another disciple of Salutati and Chrysoloras, later the translator of Ptolemy's *Cosmographia*.

When Bruni edited his correspondence around 1440 for publication in eight books, he chose to begin the first book with this incident, which occurred when he was already 35 years old. The first four books of the *Epistularum libri VIII*, as Lucia Gualdo

Rosa has pointed out, form indeed a kind of curial diary, documenting his ten-year career as papal secretary to four popes, Innocent VII, Gregory XII, Alexander V and John XXIII, as well as further incidents related to the Council of Constance (1414-1418).[7] Material from these books was later incorporated, often verbatim, into his *Memoirs*, written around 1440/41. In these letters we find vivid descriptions of life in the papal curia; an account of Bruni's narrow escape from a Roman mob that attacked the Vatican in 1405; a record of Bruni's friendships with Niccolò Niccoli and Poggio and the avid search for books in humanist circles; the announcement of his marriage to the daughter of a Florentine patrician; a depressing chronicle of ecclesiastical politics in the last days of the Great Schism; and Bruni's excited responses to Poggio's first manuscript discoveries in Germany. To give some sense of their flavor, one particularly charming letter to Roberto Rossi tells how, in the midst of the worst tensions of the schism, the archbishop Alamanno Adimari spirited Bruni and two close friends away to a villa near Lucca. Bruni describes with relish a golden day fishing in the river when they took off their gowns and shoes and "played like boys, shouted like drunkards, and scrapped together like madmen"; the day ended with a feast of roasted fish and birds, a ride on horseback, and a wrestling match staged by local peasants.[8] Another letter to Poggio about his marriage complains about the enormous costs of Florentine weddings ("I've not so much consummated matrimony as consumed my patrimony"), then goes on to describe his wedding night:

> Since you've asked how you're to style me in this new military service of mine, I'll describe briefly my deeds; you can then decide on the proper appellation. To speak after the military fashion – and it was you who spoke of knighthood – the forts I'd come to conquer were invested and captured the first night; it was a bloody victory. I've now taken up position in those forts; although by day I make long sorties, I return to camp at night and keep up my vigil. So decide whether you'll call me general, tribune or centurion. But if you take my advice, you'll call me a "booted soldier" [*caligatus miles*], not from *caliga* [boots] – I take them off before I go to bed – but from *caligo oculorum* [blurred vision]. For I've been awake so long I'm starting to see double.[9]

We are also given frequent glimpses of Bruni working at his translation projects of the period: Latin versions of Plato's dialogues, speeches by Demosthenes and Aeschines, and the *Lives* of Plutarch. We witness the birth of that great humanistic enterprise, intensely pursued by Western humanists over the next two centuries, to appropriate the literary and scientific patrimony of Greek civilization for the Latin world.

After Bruni's last papal employer, John XXIII, had been deposed by the Council of Constance in 1415, Bruni returned to Florence and, having been enriched by the pope (as Poggio informs us), began to live the retired life of a literary gentleman. But Bruni did not see his learned *otium* as retirement in the modern sense; he conceived of his withdrawal from the active life of papal administration as just another way of serving the public good, modelling himself in this respect on his hero Cicero in exile. It was in these

years, chronicled in Books IV-VIII of his letters, that Bruni began the two projects that would absorb the greater part of his literary energies for the rest of his life. These were his *History of the Florentine People* (1416-42), an official history in twelve books that is often considered the first work of modern history, and his retranslations of Aristotle's works of moral philosophy into a more elegant humanistic Latin. The latter project eventually included the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1416/17), the pseudo-Aristotelian *Economics* (1420), and the *Politics* (1436/38). In the early 1420s he also produced several extremely influential treatises: the *De militia* (1421 or 1422), a treatise on civic knighthood that attempts to classicize the medieval chivalric tradition; the *Isagogicon moralis disciplinae* (1424/25), a popular compendium of Aristotle's *Ethics*; the *De studiis et literis* (c. 1424), a major statement of humanist educational ideals; and the *De recta interpretatione* (1424/26), the first treatise on translation in the Western tradition. In addition he composed a number of historical works, essentially compendia from Greek sources, to fill the gaps in Latin historical literature: the *De primo bello punico* (1422), based on Polybius, which filled a gap in Livy's *Roman History*; the *Commentarium rerum graecarum* (1439), based on the *Hellenica* of Xenophon, the first history of classical Greece written in Latin; and the *De bello italico adversus Gothos* (1441), based on Procopius, the first account in Latin of the wars of the Emperor Justinian in the sixth century. Finally, modelling himself on Suetonius and Plutarch, he produced biographies of the two ancients he most admired, Cicero (ca. 1413) and Aristotle (1429), and in the vernacular composed parallel lives of Dante and Petrarch (1436), both landmarks in Italian literary biography.[10]

This extraordinary outpouring of major works is only partially documented in the later books of Bruni's letters. For the sad fact is that the character of the letters changes gradually after Bruni's return to Florence in 1415. Whereas in the first four books the letters were often chatty and personal in the manner of Cicero's *Familiares,* the later epistles (which sometimes amount almost to epistolary treatises) are much weightier in character, recalling Pliny's or Seneca's letters far more than Cicero's.[11] They are also many fewer in number, for while there are 84 letters from the ten curial years, only 101 survive from the last three decades of Bruni's literary activity. This disparity is partly explained by Bruni's increasing alienation from the great friend of his early years, Niccolò Niccoli, to whom 34 of his earlier letters are written and by whom they were probably collected.[12] We are afforded many fewer glimpses than we would like of Bruni at work on his literary projects, many fewer vignettes of his daily life. We gain valuable insight into the stormy reception of his translation of Aristotle's *Ethics*, but very little into his historical writings, his major treatises, and his growing commitment to vernacular literature.[13] And once Bruni returned to the active life, first as chancellor of Florence (1427-44), then as a city magistrate (1435-44), his letters reveal ever less about his life.

But by way of compensation, the letters that do survive from his later years often reveal sides of Bruni's thought that are but sparsely documented in his other literary works. In the last four books we find, for instance, the fullest treatment of his ideas about the accumulation of wealth (V.2), about Plato's theory of the divine frenzy of the poet (VI.1), and about the nature and history of the Latin language (M VI.10 = L VI.15), the latter a major contribution to the *questione della lingua*. These books include as well a

translation of the speech of Alcibiades from Plato's *Symposium* (VII.1); a defense of the status of papal secretaries vis à vis curial lawyers, an early contribution to the *paragone* literature of the Renaissance (MV.5 = L IV.31); letters describing his quarrel with Niccoli (M V.4 = L IV.22); a letter of consolation for the death of a mother of a close friend (M VI.8 = L VI.12); an attack on the vanity of splendid funeral monuments (M VI.5 = L VI. 6); letters explaining his decision to take up the office of Florentine chancellor (M V.8 = L V.5); a letter giving his critical reaction to Lorenzo Valla's *De summo bono* (L VI.8); an exchange of views with the famous traveller Cyriac of Ancona on antiquarian matters (M VI.9 = L VI.13).

By the year 1440 Bruni had reached the fine old age of 70, his Biblical allotment of three score and ten. He was wealthy, highly honored by his adopted city, and the most famous literary man in Europe. It was about this time, after the death of his former friend Niccoli (1439), that Bruni set about shaping the image of himself that he wished to transmit to posterity. As already noted, he collected his letters into eight books, covering the years 1405-1440, and he composed his *Memoirs*, describing the major events of his times and his own role in them. The eight books of letters were arranged broadly – but not strictly – into chronological sequence.[14] Books I-IV covered his curial career and his first years of literary retirement in Florence. After the Council of Constance closed in 1418, Pope Martin V spent nearly two years in Florence, where Bruni became one of his confidants (even if he he held no official post); so it seems likely that Bruni saw Books I-IV as embracing, broadly speaking, his years in the ambit of to the papal curia.[15] Book V covers his years of literary retirement, roughly 1420 to 1427; Book VI the early years of

his chancellorship (1427-35), Books VII and VIII the years when he combined the chancellorship with holding high public offices in the city of Florence. After Bruni's death in March of 1444, his disciple Giannozzo Manetti – who also pronounced the eulogy at his funeral – prepared a new edition of his letters containing a ninth book, which included letters written between late 1440 and 1443-44. Manuscripts of both the eight- and nine-book editions of the letters continued to circulate in large numbers until the advent of printing. The eight-book version was printed in 1472 and 1495 in an edition prepared by Antonius Moretus and Hieronymus Squarciaficus, while the nine-book redaction appeared in 1487 from the Louvain publisher Rudolf Loeffs and in 1499 from the publisher Jakob Thanner of Leipzig. After that date there appeared two more editions of the eight-book version, those of the Basel publisher Henricus Petrus (1538) and of the famous Danish scholar Johann Albrecht Fabricius (1724). None of these editions show any signs of serious philological work, any attempt to improve the *textus receptus*, any attempt to fix the date or context of the letters, any attempt to identify non-canonical letters. That task was reserved for the greatest eighteenth-century authority on Renaissance humanism, Lorenzo Mehus.

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Students of the Renaissance have long been aware that the great *epistolari*, the collections of letters to and from the actual participants in the humanist movement, constitute the richest sources for the revival of Greco-Roman literature in the fourteenth

and fifteenth centuries. Among the finest achievements of Risorgimento scholarship may be numbered Francesco Novati's *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati* (4 vols., 1891-1911), and Remigio Sabbadini's *Epistolario di Guarino Veronese* (3 vols., 1915-1919). Their achievements were followed in the next generation by Vittorio Rossi's great edition of Petrarch's letters (4 vols., 1933-42) and the *Epistolario di Pier Paolo Vergerio* edited by Leonardo Smith (1 vol., 1934). Renaissance scholars have continued to place high value on collecting and editing the epistolatory documents of the Quattrocento, as is shown by the ongoing series "Carteggi umanistici" published by the Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento in Florence, which has in recent decades published the letters of Poggio Bracciolini (ed. Helene Harth, 1984-87), Marsilio Ficino (vol. 1, ed. Sebastiano Gentile, 1990) and Francesco Barbaro (vols. 1-2, ed. Claudio Griggio, 1991-99).[16]

It is something of a paradox that Bruni, the most famous and successful of the early Quattrocento humanists, has proven much less fortunate than his contemporaries in this respect. In his own century, no writer's works were as frequently copied and printed as those of the great Florentine chancellor. But by the end of the sixteenth century and for much of the seventeenth, his name was all but forgotten. Rescued from neglect for a brief moment in the mid-eighteenth century by Lorenzo Mehus, whose work will be described in more detail below, the waters of Lethe closed again over Bruni's head virtually until the middle of the twentieth century, when Hans Baron made him the ideal type of Florentine civic humanism in the early Renaissance. Baron's highly successful book assured Bruni's modern fame, but critical editions of the Aretine's works remain few.[17] Bruni's *epistolario* has mirrored the fortune of his other works. Copied hundreds of times

in the fifteenth century and printed five times during the first century of printing, they fell thereafter out of print for nearly two hundred years, despite at least two attempts to edit them anew.[18] Then, in the space of two decades, they were published twice by two of the eighteenth century's greatest scholars, Johann Albrecht Fabricius (1724) and Mehus (1741). There followed another century and a half of neglect. Finally, in the burst of enthusiasm for Renaissance studies that accompanied the Risorgimento, it appeared that Francesco Paolo Luiso, a disciple of Sabbadini, would at last give the world a true critical edition of the letters, together with an ample body of learned commentary and documentation. The unhappy fate which befell both Luiso's studies and the subsequent efforts of Ludwig Bertalot to bring them to fruition is well known. It was only in 1980, thanks to the efforts of Lucia Gualdo Rosa, that Luiso's preliminary researches, partly printed (but never published) in 1903/4 were made available to the republic of letters.[19]

But Fortune's wheel then turned again. The publication of Luiso's *Studi su l'epistolario di Leonardo Bruni* was a signal for renewed study of Bruni's letters and of his life and works generally. In addition to the large number of individual studies that have appeared in the last quarter century, Lucia Gualdo Rosa and Paolo Viti organized an équipe to produce a census of manuscripts of the *Epistulae familiares,* the second and final volume of which has recently been published.[20] A conference organized by Viti in 1987 gave further impetus to Bruni studies, and extended the field of study to include also Bruni's public correspondence as papal secretary and chancellor of Florence.[21] A third category of "quasi-public" letters, written by Bruni *in propria persona* but on matters of public interest, has been identified and several examples published.[22] The

present writer produced in 1997 a census of manuscripts of all Bruni's works, which has provided a further context for understanding the textual tradition of the letters. Thanks to the activities of the Bruni équipe and other scholars, some fourteen new familiar letters have been uncovered, in addition to nineteen more familiar letters to Bruni from his correspondents.[23] Over 1800 chancery letters written by Bruni or under his direction for the Florentine Signoria have been identified, including 150 that are not preserved in the registers of the Florentine State Archive (or in copies thereof). Seventeen spurious letters have been rejected and a further seven classed as doubtful.[24] We have learned much more about the innumerable capillaries through which Bruni's literary works spread through the tissue of European culture in the fifteenth century, and much about the uses to which Bruni's letters were put by his readers.

Yet the results of all this research, while immensely valuable, have not brought much comfort to any would-be editors of Bruni's *epistolario*. Indeed they are now faced with a formidable task, one whose full dimensions were only dimly perceived a quarter century ago. They will have to master, to begin with, a textual tradition of enormous size. The two volumes of the *Censimento dei codici dell'Epistolario di Leonardo Bruni*, edited by Lucia Gualdo Rosa, have disclosed over 533 manuscripts of the letters, scattered among hundreds of libraries around the world. Furthermore, it is now evident that Bruni, like Petrarch before him, produced multiple redactions of his letters over the course of his life, and suppressed the earlier versions when compiling the definitive edition of his private correspondence in 1440. In the case of at least one letter (M X.5 = L I.12), ultimately suppressed from the 1440 edition, there were no fewer than five different

versions in circulation.[25] At least seven letters were used as prefaces or illustrative pieces to accompany Bruni's literary compositions, and these too display significant differences from the 1440 edition. Again, a number of letters were used as rhetorical models and were modified for this purpose by hands other than Bruni's; these will have to be carefully distinguished from authorial redactions. So the eventual editor of Bruni's letters will have to produce a genetic edition that identifies the various strata in the textual tradition of each letter, and which further distinguishes authorial from non-authorial redactions. He or she will then have to construct a recension for each stratum. Many problems of dating still remain intractable, and these problems cannot be solved in isolation from the evidence of Bruni's other works, few of which have been critically edited; contemporary testimony, much of which is to be found only in manuscripts and archival documents, must also be brought to bear. While the publication of Luiso's *Studi* and the complete *Censimento* represents a huge step forward, a truly critical edition of the letters doubtless lies many years in the future.

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In the absence of a critical edition, the best and most complete text of Bruni's letters now available to scholars remains that of the Florentine *érudit* Lorenzo Mehus (1716-1802), whom no less an authority than Augusto Campana regarded as "the founder of the study of humanism."[26] Mehus' edition of Bruni's *epistolario* was intended to be the first in a series of forty-three humanist *epistolari* to be edited by Mehus and published by

the printer Giuseppe Rigacci. But this impossibly ambitious project quickly foundered amid learned squabbling. The second epistolary edited by Mehus, the letters of Salutati, was sharply criticized by Giovanni Lami (1697-1770), the most authoritative Florentine scholar of the time, after which Rigacci and Mehus parted company. Mehus continued to publish humanistic texts of various kinds until 1759, including works by Cyriac of Ancona, Leonardo Dati, Bartolomeo Facio, Benedetto Colucci, Giannozzo Manetti, Niccolò Valori, and Lapo da Castiglionchio the Elder. His last work, indeed his *magnum opus*, was an "introduction" (of 464 pages!) to Pietro Canneti's edition of the letters of Ambrogio Traversari.[27] Though formally a life of Traversari, it contains, in effect, a detailed history of Florentine literature from 1192 to 1439, from Henry of Settimello to the death of Traversari. Other projects, planned but never published, included selected works of Leon Battista Alberti and Zanobi da Strada (still unpublished), the *Fons rerum memorabilium* of Domenico d'Arezzo (still unpublished), Filippo Villani's *De origine civitatis Florentinae et eiusdem famosis civibus*, the *De illustribus longaevis* of Giannozzo Manetti (still unpublished), the *Hodoeporicon* of Traversari, as well as the *epistolari* of Poggio, Pier Candido Decembrio (still unpublished), Francesco Filelfo (still partly unpublished), and the *Familiares* of Petrarch. Behind this impressive list of publications and planned publications was an enormous mass of erudition that included notes on more than 17,000 manuscripts in Florentine libraries. Campana's judgement on Mehus' phenomenal learning seems by no means exaggerated: "resta che il Mehus, se non fu un grande e neppure un buon filologo, fu d'altra parte, né altro forse si propose, un dotto che vide molto chiaramente la necessità di esplorare e di rendere nota e accessibile

la vasta *terra incognita*, e neppure oggi a pieno esplorata, della letteratura umanistica; e di quella letteratura fu, accanto al Bandini, il miglior conoscitore del suo tempo; fu, se mi è permeso di dirlo, il Sabbadini, il Bertalot e il Kristeller del suo tempo."[28]

There is certainly no doubt that Mehus' edition of Bruni's letters was vastly superior to the six earlier editions printed before his time both in terms of completeness and of method. The eight- and nine-book printings from the incunabular period contained 111 and 130 letters respectively, whilst the 1535 Basel edition of the eight-book version included only 80 letters.[29] Fabricius's 1724 edition merely reproduced the text of the Basel edition and inserted among the front matter, as documentation for Bruni's life, Poggio's funeral oration and an excerpt from Giulio Negri's *Istoria degli scrittori fiorentini* (1722), listing works of Bruni and testimonia regarding his life and reputation. In this context Mehus' edition constituted a major advance. In addition to the 130 letters then in print, he added a further 26 letters, gathered into a "Book X", added after the nine books of the Manetti canon. Mehus, indeed, believed that his bag of *inedita* was even greater, for he was quite unaware of the existence of the two nine-book incunabular editions – unsurprising in a period where the only bibliographical aid for incunabula was Maittaire's *Annales typographici*.[30] Subsequent scholarship has not greatly increased the total number of letters known. In Luiso's *Studi* another eleven letters, previously printed but unknown to Mehus, were identified, to which Luiso added 16 new letters he and his teacher Sabbadini had discovered. Since 1903/04, when Luiso's *Studi* were completed, another 14 letters have been added to the list. So Mehus was by far the most successful *scopritore* of inedited Bruni letters before or since his day, having

published for the first time some 13% of the surviving corpus. He was also the first to print some of the public correspondence, adding at the end of his edition five *missive* sent to the Council of Basel by Bruni in his capacity as Florentine chancellor.[31]

Mehus' work was also greatly superior to his predecessors' in its method. Following the most advanced Dutch and German philology, he was the first of Bruni's editors to understand that the *textus receptus* could not be relied upon but needed to be corrected from early and authoritative manuscripts, preferably autographs or manuscripts copied from the author's archetype.[32] In all, he consulted eleven fifteenth-century manuscripts, of which at least six were from the first half of the century. One of these codices, whose importance Mehus fully appreciated, had a colophon stating it to be copied *ex suis* [i.e. Bruni's] *originalibus*.[33] Mehus tells us, moreover, the precise location of the manuscripts, a practice far from common in the eighteenth century. Nine of these codices can still be easily identified with manuscripts in modern collections, though two others have yet to be located.[34] Mehus also defends the use of Renaissance Latin spelling, showing that he understood humanist Latin to be a distinct variety of Latin whose literary monuments should be preserved in their original form. This too was a remarkable insight in a period when it was the regular practice in editing Renaissance texts to modernize their spelling and even to revise them stylistically. Mehus is also the first editor to understand that the book divisions and the order of letters within books were arranged by Bruni himself and therefore should be preserved as part of the author's intentions.[35] It was on this principle that he gathered all the *inedita* into his "Book X" rather than dispersing them among the existing books as was done, for example, by Luiso.[36] Indeed,

Mehus' editorial practice in this respect anticipates the one recommended by Paolo Viti as recently as 1992.[37] Finally, Mehus included in his volume the first critical study of Bruni's works. Mehus established the canon on the basis of both printed and manuscript sources and, most importantly, on the evidence of the letters themselves and coeval testimony—hence the decision to include the funeral orations of Poggio and Manetti, which constitute the most important such testimony after the letters. Mehus's study remained fundamental until the appearance in 1928 of Hans Baron's bio-bibliographical work and the reviews and articles of Ludwig Bertalot from the 1930s.[38] All in all, Mehus' edition of Bruni's letters was a remarkably innovative work of scholarship, making him the first Italian scholar to apply the methods of early modern classical philology to the editing of humanistic texts. This alone makes Mehus' volumes worth reprinting, quite apart from their continuing value to humanistic studies. Though it must be used together with the *Studi su l'Epistolario di Leonardo Bruni* of Luiso and the products of more recent scholarship, it remains our best and most complete text of the letters of the most important humanist of the early fifteenth century.

James Hankins

Harvard University

APPENDIX A

MEHUS' MANUSCRIPTS

Manuscripts of the eight-book redaction

1. Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, Plut. 52.6, Medici arms, s. XV 4/4. *Censimento* II, no. 39.
2. -----, Plut. 52.7, s. XV ½ . *Censimento* II, no. 40.
3. -----, Plut. 52.23, s. XV ½ . *Censimento* II, no. 41.
4. Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 899 (*olim* Paperinius), with the colophon "Epistole divi et laureati Leonari Aretini. Ex suis originalibus per Hyeronimum Bartoli de Pensauro transumpte; anni (*sic*) domini MCCCCXLIIII die X Ianuarii. Florentie." *Censimento* II, no. 100

Manuscripts of the nine-book redaction

5. Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, C.S. E 6 2655, s. XV ½ (*olim* Badia 43). *Censimento* II, no. 66.
6. Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, Ricc. 900, s. XV ex. (*olim* N.I.XXI). *Censimento* II, no. 101.
7. -----, Ricc. 982, s. XV 2/2 (*olim* N.II.XVII). *Censimento* II, no. 103.
8. A manuscript from the collection of Ludovico Gualtieri.[39] This manuscript was made available to Mehus by his patron Baron Philip von Stosch but was not part of the Stosch collection.

Miscellaneous manuscripts

9. A manuscript owned by the Aretine antiquary Mario Flori, containing most of the letters printed in Mehus' Book X.[40] Mehus worked from a copy provided by Francesco Redi. Gualdo Rosa's *Censimento* II, nos. 1 and 201, identifies two manuscripts containing Bruni letters owned by Mario Flori: Siena, Biblioteca Comunale C IV 25, s. XVIII (201) contains the seven canonical letters missing from the Venetian printings of 1472 and 1495 (see notes 29-30 above) and was perhaps used by Mehus, while Arezzo, Biblioteca della Città MS 72 (1) contains only X.1. So neither of these can be identified with the manuscript used by Mehus for Book X.
10. Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, Plut. 52.3, s. XV ½ , used for M X.25 only. *Censimento* II, no. 38.
11. -----, Plut. 52.5, possibly with corrections in Bruni's hand, used for M X.25 only. HANKINS, *Repertorium*, no. 498.

Manuscripts of Bruni's missive

The *missive* printed by Mehus in vol. II, pp. 235-243, can be identified with M B 848, 869, 870, 905, and 911 in the list compiled for the present writer's *Repertorium Brunianum* (vol. II, forthcoming). They can be found in Florence, Archivio di Stato, Signori, Missive, Ia Cancelleria, vol. 35 and Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Panciatichi 148, though it is possible Mehus used copies preserved in other manuscripts.

APPENDIX B

BRUNI LETTERS NOT IN MEHUS OR LUISO

This appendix lists all known letters of Bruni whose texts were not included either in Mehus's 1741 edition or in Luiso's *Studi* (finished, as noted above, in 1903/4 but not printed until 1980).

1. To Niccolò Niccoli, *inc*. Oro te atque obsecro per immortalem. A note, datable to 1404. Published by L. GUALDO ROSA, *Due nuove lettere*, p. 121.

2. To Niccolò Niccoli, *inc*. Nisi iamdudum a quodam tabellario. Datable to 1405-15. Published by L. GUALDO ROSA, in GUALDO ROSA and VITI, eds., *Per il censimento*, pp. 46-47, 52. An adaptation for pedagogical purposes of a lost Bruni letter.

3. To Niccolò Niccoli, *inc*. Ego quoque una tecum doleo. Before 1 January 1405. Published by F. R. HAUSMANN, in GUALDO ROSA and VITI, eds., *Per il Censimento*, pp. 95-97.

4. To Coluccio Salutati, *inc*. Viginti continuos diebus. Dated 13 September 1405. Published by BERTALOT, *Studien*, II, pp. 417419. See LUISO, *Studi*, p. XVIn.

5. To Coluccio Salutati, *inc*. Reddite sunt michi nudius tertius. Datable to February 1406. Published by C. GRIGGIO «Rinascimento», ser. II, XXVI, 1986, pp. 47-48.

6. To Niccolò Niccoli, *inc*. Non potui facere quin. Datable to shortly before *Ep.* L II.6 (15 March 1407). Published by BERTALOT, *Studien* II, p. 415. See LUISO, *Studi*, p. XVIn.

7. To Marcus de Canetulo, *inc*. Ni mihi persuaderem, Marce mi peroptime. After 1409. Published by P. O. KRISTELLER in his *Zusätze* to BERTALOT, *Studien*, II, p. 469; see *Censimento* II, pp. 212-214. Bruni met Marcus de Canetulo, a Bolognese jurist, at the Council of Pisa in 1409; the latter gave a speech there quoting admiringly from Bruni's *Laudatio Florentine urbis*: see J. HANKINS, *Rhetoric, history, and ideology: the civic panegyrics of Leonardo Bruni*, in *Renaissance Civic Humanism: Reappraisals and Reflections*, ed. J. Hankins, Cambridge 2000, p. 148.

8. To Giovanni Campiano, *inc.* Luculentissimam et insignem orationem tuam. Undated, but after 1414. Published by BERTALOT, *Studien*, II, pp. 414415. See Gualdo Rosa in LUISO, *Studi*, p. XVI; GUALDO ROSA, *Due nuove lettere*, pp. 122-123; HANKINS in *Censimento* II, pp. 358-359 (with text).

9. To Sicco Polenton, *inc*. Amenissimas litteras tuas. Dated 31 March 1419. Published by BERTALOT, *Studien*, II, pp. 419-420. See LUISO, *Studi*, p. XVIn. New edition by HANKINS in *Censimento* II, pp. 362-363; see also ibid., pp. 364-370.

10. To Gian Nicola Salerno, *inc*. Quam voluissem mi suavissime. Dated 29 December 1420. Published by M. C. DAVIES, *The Senator and the Schoolmaster: Friends of Leonardo Bruni in a New Letter*, «Humanistica Lovaniensia», XXXIII, 1984, p. 1.

11. To Ambrogio Traversari, *inc*. Illarianus iste qui has tibi litteras. Shortly after 26 October 1431. Discovered by Martin Davies and published in HANKINS*, Humanism and Platonism*, pp. 44-46.

12. To Luca di Maso degli Albizzi, *inc*. Tu mi richiedi per tua lettera. Dated 5 February 1437. Published by P. VITI, *Una nuova lettera di Leonardo Bruni*, «Archivio Storico Italiano», CXLIV, ii, 1986, p. 167.

13. To Mattia Mattioli da Perugia, *inc*. Nil opus fuit Brandaliam. Dated Arezzo,

December 1437. Published by L. GUALDO ROSA, *Una nuova lettera del Bruni sulla sua traduzione della "Politica" di Aristotele,* «Rinascimento», ser. II, XXIII, 1983, p. 124.

14. To Francesco Barbaro, *inc*. Particulam litterarum tuarum. Dated 1 September 1443. Published by C. GRIGGIO, «Rinascimento», ser. II, XXVI, 1986, pp. 48-50.

Dubia

1. To Marrasio Siculo, *inc.* Vix dici potest. Published by G. Resta, *Per una edizione critica dei carmi di Giovanni Marrasio*, «Rinascimento», V, 1954, p. 273, reprinted in *Johannis Marrasii Angelinetum et carmina varia*, ed. G. Resta, Palermo 1976, pp. 256-257. The attribution to Bruni is doubted by L. Gualdo Rosa in LUISO, *Studi*, p. XVIn.

Spuria

1. Leonardus Matheo amico suo, *inc.* Periocundum mihi erit rem ad te scribere – vicem redde. See M. C. DAVIES, *Niccolò Perotti and Lorenzo Valla: Four New Letters*, in «Rinascimento», ser. II, XXIV, 1984, p. 130, n. 34; *Censimento* I, p. 158.

2. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canon. patr. lat. 223, f. 316v, has the following text:

> Leonardus Aretinus Nicolao Stroge.
>
> Hystrionum quoque impudicissimi motus qui<d> aliud nisi libidinem docent et instigant? Quorum eneruata corpora, <et> in muliebrem incessum habitumque molita, impudicas feminas inhonestis gestibus [in honesti gestilius *MS*] inclinunt [mentiuntur *Lact*].

This is not a letter to Niccolò Strozzi but an excerpt from Lactantius, *Institutiones divinae* 6.20 (*PL* 6: 710-711). For the manuscript, see *Censimento* I, pp. 162-163.

3. To Felice, *inc*. Cum superiorem epistolam exarassem. Published as a new letter, or rather as a postscript to *Ep.* M IV.7 = L IV.7, addressed to a certain Felice by GUALDO ROSA, *Due nuove lettere,* p. 126; see also *Censimento* I, p. 17. As was pointed out by P. Viti, this is actually an excerpt from the end of *Ep.* M VIII.3 = L VIII.10, addressed to Giacomo Foscari. See P. VITI, *Frammenti bruniani*, «Rinascimento», XXXV, 1995, pp. 234-235.

4. To a member of the Guidi family (?), *inc.* Extantque adhuc reliquiae quaedam.

Reported as a possible new letter by VITI, *Frammenti*, p. 238. Actually part of *Ep.* M III. 9 = L III.12; see HANKINS, *Humanism and Platonism*, p. 46.

[NOTES TO HANKINS INTRODUCTION]

[1] W. K. FERGUSON, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought: Five Centuries of Interpretation*, Boston 1948; L. D'ASCIA, *Coscienza della Rinascita e coscienza antibarbara. Appunti sulla visione storica del Rinascimento nei secoli XV e XVI*, in *Rinascimento: Mito e concetto*, ed. R. Ragghianti and A. Savorelli, Pisa 2005, pp. 1-37.

[2] BIONDO FLAVIO, *Italy Illustrated*, tr. J. A. White, Cambridge (Massachusetts) 2005, I, p. 330 (6.30).

[3] J. HANKINS, *Manuel Chrysoloras and the Greek Studies of Leonardo Bruni*, in ID., *Humanism and Platonism in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols., Rome 2003, I, pp. 243-272. For Bruni's life, see G. GRIFFITHS, J. HANKINS, and D. THOMPSON, eds., *The Humanism of Leonardo Bruni*, Binghamton (New York) 1987, pp. 3-50; J. HANKINS, *Leonardo Bruni: Life and Works,* in *Humanism and Platonism*, I, pp. 9-18; L. GUALDO ROSA, *Bruni, Leonardo (1370-1444)*, in *Centuriae Latinae. Cent une figures humanistes de la Renaissance aux Lumières offertes à Jacques Chomarat*, ed. C. Nativel, Geneva 1997, pp. 1057-62.

[4] LEONARDO BRUNI, *Memoirs*, tr. D. J. W. Bradley, in *Leonardo Bruni: History of the Florentine People*, vol. 3, ed. and tr. J. Hankins, Cambridge (Massachusetts), forthcoming.

[5] J. HANKINS, *Repertorium Brunianum. A Critical Guide to the Writings of Leonardo Bruni*, 1: *Handlist of Manuscripts*, Rome 1997, ad indices.

[6] For the dates of the *Dialogi* and the *Laudatio*, see J. HANKINS, *Plato in the Italian Renaissance*, 2 vols., Leiden 1990, II, pp. 367-378; L. GUALDO ROSA, *Due nuove lettere del Bruni e il ritrovamento del 'materiale Bertalot',* «Rinascimento», ser. II, XXXIV, 1994, p. 122.

[7] For the structure of Bruni's epistolary see L. GUALDO ROSA, *La struttura dell'epistolario bruniano e il suo significato politico*, in *Leonardo Bruni, cancelliere della Repubblica di Firenze*, ed. P. Viti, Florence 1990, pp. 371-389; and P. VITI, *Leonardo Bruni e Firenze: Studi sulle lettere pubbliche e private*, Rome 1992, pp. 311-338.

[8] *Ep*. M II.27 = L II.20. Throughout this introduction I cite Bruni's letters according to the book and letter numbers of the Mehus edition, marked "M", followed by the book and letter numbers in F. P. Luiso's ordering (see below at note 14), marked "L".

[9] *Ep*. M III.27 = L III.17.

[10] On Bruni's historical work see G. IANZITI, *Storiografia e contemporaneità. A proposito del "Rerum suo tempore gestarum commentarius" di Leonardo Bruni*, «Rinascimento», ser. II, XXX, 1990, pp. 3-28; L. GUALDO ROSA, *Leonardo Bruni e le sue 'Vite parallele' di Dante e del Petrarca*, «Lettere italiane», III, 1995, pp. 386-401; G. IANZITI, *Writing from Procopius: Leonardo Bruni's "De bello italico"*, «Rinascimento», ser. II, XXXVII, 1997, pp. 3-27; ID., *Leonardo Bruni: first modern historian?* «Parergon», XIV, 1997, pp. 85-99; P. VITI, *Storia e storiografia in Leonardo Bruni*, «Archivio storico italiano», CLV, 1997, 49-98; G. IANZITI, *The Plutarchan Option. Leonardo Bruni's Early Career in History, 1405-1414*, «I Tatti Studies», VIII, 1999, pp. 11-35; ID., *A Life in Politics: Leonardo Bruni's "Cicero"*, «Journal of the History of Ideas», LXI, 2000, pp. 39-58; ID., *Bruni on Writing History*, «Renaissance Quarterly», LI, 1998, pp. 367-391; ID., *Leonardo Bruni and Biography: The "Vita Aristotelis",* «Renaissance Quarterly», LV, 2002, pp. 805-832; J. HANKINS, *Teaching Civil Prudence in Leonardo Bruni's "History of the Florentine People'*, forthcoming in the proceedings of the conference *Ethics – Science or Art of Living? Models of Moral Philosophy from Antiquity to the Early Modern Era*, sponsored by the Seminar für Geistesgeschichte und Philosophie der Renaissance, Ludwigs-Maximilians-Universität, Munich.

[11] See *Ep.* M VII.10 = L VII.7. Bruni remarks that he has included only *res non quotidiana.*

[12] J. HANKINS, *Notes on the Textual Tradition of Leonardo Bruni's "Epistulae familiares"*, in *Humanism and Platonism*, I, pp. 63-98.

[13] ID., *Humanism in the Vernacular: The Case of Leonardo Bruni*, in *Humanism and Creativity in the Renaissance: Essays in Honor of Ronald G. Witt*, ed. C. S. Celenza and K. Gouwens, Leiden 2006, pp. 11-29.

[14] The numerous violations of strict chronology are documented in F. P. LUISO, *Studi su l'epistolario di Leonardo Bruni*, ed. L. Gualdo Rosa, Rome 1980.

[15] For Bruni's service in the papal curia under Martin V, see GRIFFITHS, HANKINS and THOMPSON, eds., *The Humanism*, pp. 35 and 349, note 109.

[16] In general see A. PEROSA, *Sulla pubblicazione degli epistolari degli umanisti*, in *Studi di filologia umanistica. III. Umanesimo italiano*, ed. P. Viti, Rome 2000, pp. 9-21.

[17] J. HANKINS, *Unknown and Little-known Texts of Leonardo Bruni*, «Rinascimento», ser. II, XXXVIII, 1998, pp. 125-161, reprinted in expanded form in *Humanism and Platonism*, I, pp.19-62.

[18] For the edition of Bruni's works projected by Philibert de la Mare and Gabriel Naudé in the mid-seventeenth century, see P. O. KRISTELLER, *Between the Italian Renaissance and the French Enlightenment: Gabriel Naudé as an Editor,* «Renaissance Quarterly», XXXII, 1979, pp. 41-72 and *Censimento* I, pp. 75-77 (note 20 below); see Mehus' account (p. I, below) of the project of the Dalmatian Benedictine Anselmo Bandurio, announced in 1703, to edit the letters of Petrarch, Salutati and Bruni. See note 29 below for a project to publish a supplement to Fabricius' 1724 edition of the letters. Jacopo Morelli, prefect of San Marco in Venice (1745-1819), collected material for a supplement to Mehus' edition of Bruni's letters, now preserved in Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, Marc. lat. XIV 22l (4632); this material too was never published.

[19] See L. GUALDO ROSA's introduction to LUISO, *Studi*, pp. IX-XX, and EAD., *Due nuove lettere*, pp. 115-141.

[20] *Censimento dei codici dell'Epistolario di Leonardo Bruni*, 2 vols., ed. L. Gualdo Rosa, Rome 1993-2004.

[21] See L. GUALDO ROSA and P. VITI, eds., *Per il censimento dei codici dell' Epistolario di Leonardo Bruni: Seminario internazionale di studi*, *Firenze, 30 ottobre 1987*, Rome 1991, and P. VITI, ed., *Leonardo Bruni Cancelliere della Repubblica di Firenze*, *Convegno di studi*, *Firenze, 27-29 ottobre 1987*, Florence 1990. On the public letters see VITI, *Leonardo Bruni e Firenze*, passim, and G. GRIFFITHS, *The Justification of Florentine Foreign Policy offered by Leonardo Bruni in his Public Letters (1428-1444) Based on Documents from the Florentine and Venetian Archives*, Rome 1999.

[22] HANKINS, *Humanism and Platonism*, pp. 22-23. To the list of writings in this category should be added *Ep.* M X.8 = L VI.7.

[23] For the new letters, see Appendix B to this Introduction. For 19 new letters to Bruni from his correspondents, see J. HANKINS, *Addenda to Book X of Luiso's "Studi su l'epistolario di Leonardo Bruni"*, included as Appendix II in *Censimento* II, pp. 352-424.

[24] HANKINS, *Humanism and Platonism*, pp. 94-98.

[25] Ibid., pp. 78-80, 87-91.

[26] A. CAMPANA, *Intorno a Lorenzo Mehus*, «Studi medievali e umanistici», II, 2004, p. 22. The most important work on Mehus is that of M. ROSA, *Per la storia dell'erudizione toscana del '700: Profilo di Lorenzo Mehus*, in «Annali della Scuola Speciale per Archivisti e Bibliotecari dell'Università di Roma», II, 1, 1962, pp. 41-96. See also E. KESSLER's introduction to [Lorenzo Mehus], *Historia litteraria florentina ab anno MCXCII usque ad annum MCDXXXIX. Nachdruck der Ausgabe 1769 [i.e. 1759] mit einer Einleitung, analytischer Inhaltsübersicht und Bibliographie*, Munich 1968; and *Carteggio (1753-1786): Ferdinando Galiani, Lorenzo Mehus*, ed. G. Niccoletti, Naples 2002.

[27] *Ambrogii Traversarii generalis Camaldulensium aliorumque ad ipsum ... Latinae epistolae*, Florence 1759, repr. Bologna 1968. Mehus continued to collect notes for this "introduction" long after it was published: ROSA, *Per la storia*, p. 72, reports that Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS Ricc. 3892 contains 'giunte e correzioni' to the Traversari introduction amounting to another 549 pages.

[28] CAMPANA, *Intorno*, p. 14.

[29] The Basel printing is missing 33 of the letters published in the 1472 and 1495 eight-book editions, but contains two other letters, M VII.4 and M VII.6, that were omitted in those incunabula (but were included in the 1487 and 1499 printings of the nine-book redaction). With the exception of the 1472 edition, for which see *Censimento* II, pp. 150-151, the manuscript sources of these printings have yet to be identified. According to L. Gualdo Rosa in *Censimento* I, pp. VIII-IX, the 1495 and the 1499 are copies of the 1472 and 1487 editions, respectively. After the publication of the 1724 edition, Fabricius became aware of another 52 letters not included in his edition; these were sent to him by the numismatist Joachim Negelein, copied from a manuscript belonging to Pierre Dupuy, and "ready for the press." Their imminent publication was announced in the 1734 edition of Fabricius' *Bibliotheca latina mediae et infimae aetatis*, p. 802, as Mehus notes below, p. VIII, but they were never published. Negelein's unpublished supplement is preserved in Copenhagen, Kongelige Bibliothek, MS Fabr. 59 4to; see *Censimento* I, pp. 44-45. See also MS Fabr. 143 8vo. which contains MS notes of Fabricius to his 1724 edition.

[30] Mehus also identifies as *inedita* five letters, M V.6-7, M VIII.4, M VIII.6-7, which had in fact already been printed in the 1487 and 1495 nine-book editions, though they were missing from what he calls the "editio Bresciana", i.e., the eight-book Venetian editions of 1472 and 1495, which Maittaire had identified as Brescian printings. Mehus in the preface to vol. I also mentions his intention to publish in vol. II a letter from Bruni to Marrasio Siculo, *inc.* Nuper suavissime Marrasi, but by the time vol. II was ready for the press, he realized this item was actually a letter of Carlo Marsuppini rather than of Bruni. The primitive state of bibliography also explains Mehus' error (p. V) in identifying as an edition of Bruni's letters a certain "editio Augustana" "apud Knoblochium, 1521." This is a confusion for *Leonardi Aretini ... De bonis studiis epistola ...* Argentinae: Ioannes Knoblochius, 1521, i.e., an imprint containing Bruni's educational tract *De studiis et literis*. In the preface to vol. II Mehus explains his grounds for excluding this letter-tractate from his edition.

[31] See Appendix A to this Introduction. Philibert de la Mare also planned to include some of the chancery *missive* in his projected edition of Bruni's works (see note 18 above).

[32] See his critique of Fabricius on pp. III-V, below. For his debt to contemporary Dutch and German philology see ROSA, *Per la storia*, pp. 145-47. Mehus himself, though a native Florentine, was of Dutch extraction, and this may have contributed to his openness to transalpine methods. His most important model was probably Friedrich Otto Mencke.

[33] Riccardianus 899 (see Appendix A to this Introduction). This is one of four known codices *ex originalibus*: see *Censimento* I, p. VIII, n. 13.

[34] See Appendix A to this Introduction.

[35] Mehus cites in particular the evidence of *Ep*. M IX.10, the colophon in Riccardianus 899 (see Appendix A), and the two funeral orations.

[36] Luiso reordered the Bruni-Manetti canon and dispersed the letters of Mehus' book X among the nine books, adding, confusingly, a new Book X, consisting of 44 letters to Bruni from his correspondents. For these letters see HANKINS*, Addenda*, p. 352.

[37] VITI, *Leonardo Bruni*, pp. 311-338.

[38] LEONARDO BRUNI, *Humanistisch-philosophische Schriften mit einer Chronologie seiner Werke und Briefe*, ed. H. Baron, Leipzig 1928; Bertalot's reviews of Baron and other studies of Bruni's writings may be found in L. BERTALOT, *Studien zum italienischen und deutschen Humanismus*, ed. P. O. Kristeller, 2 vols., Rome 1975.

[39] Mehus calls him "Julius Gualterius" in the preface to vol. I, a mistake he corrects in the preface to vol. II, p. IX. On Gualtieri see *Dizionario biografico degli italiani*, Rome 1960-, LX, pp. 212-215. The fate of his library is apparently unknown.

[40] Flori wrote a biography of Bruni preserved in Arezzo, Biblioteca della Città, MS 51, ff. 51r-86r.