CHAPTER TWO

CLASSIFICATION AND PRELIMINARY SURVEY OF MANUSCRIPTS CONTAINING ABBREVIATIONS AND/OR PARAPHRASES OF THE HISTORIA ROMANA (HR)

The present chapter goes beyond the specific focus on B. There are, however, reasons for its inclusion here. A classification of the entire corpus of manuscripts containing abbreviations and/or paraphrases of the HR provides the study on B with a necessary background and it also creates the basis for future research on the other abbreviated and paraphrased versions. Deeper knowledge of the remaining material, the general picture as it were, permits a contextualisation of B in a broader sense. The specific study of B naturally elicits questions like “are there other paraphrases of the HR?” or “what characterises the other versions?” etc. Without the classification of the entire corpus, these and similar questions remain unanswered. Finally, the general picture rendered by this broader context gives us a better understanding of the place and special significance of B.

Research on the manuscript dissemination of Roman histories in the Middle Ages has made progress during the last decades. The registration and preliminary descriptions of extant manuscripts give a good picture of the medieval knowledge of Roman history. Still, as discussed in 1.1, further studies on diverging versions (abridgements, extracts, paraphrases, continuations, compilations etc.) may help discover more about the medieval use of Roman history. In fact, such research is an expressed desideratum. Mortensen 2000b offers a list of manuscripts containing the HR and the Historiae of Orosius, the two most widely spread histories in the Middle Ages. In his list, Mortensen includes manuscripts containing abbreviations and/or paraphrases of Eutropius, Paul the Deacon.

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and Landolfus Sagax marking them as “abbr.”. In his introduction, he also stresses the significance of further research on these versions.\textsuperscript{4} Each unique version is a textual transformation that might reveal new information concerning historical/ideological/moral interest, stylistic change, literary milieu etc. Such studies (literary/ideological etc.), requiring proper editions, still await publication. As yet, very little has been edited and the first step required to facilitate further research is to offer a classification of the entire corpus of paraphrased versions. In the present chapter, each version of the \textit{HR} is submitted to a general examination. All versions\textsuperscript{5} have been read and studied in microfilm reproductions with the exception of Bamberg Staatsbibliothek Hist.3 (= \textit{B}), Oxford Magdalen College 14 (= \textit{O}), Salisbury Cathedral 80 (= \textit{S}) and Paris Bibliothèque Nationale n. a. l. 1523–II (= \textit{P}), which have been consulted \textit{in situ}.

Here follows a classification with commentary of each version preceded by a description of each manuscript. The group of manuscripts \textit{B}, \textit{O}, \textit{S}, \textit{U} (and \textit{V}) will be described and commented upon in 3.1. and 3.2.

\begin{itemize}
\item[2.1.] \textit{Manuscripts containing abbreviations and/or paraphrases of Eutropius, Paul the Deacon and Landolfus Sagax}
\end{itemize}

The information presented below follows the standard scheme – with small modifications – of Munk Olsen 1982–89:

Siglum and signature (underlined)
Material, number and size of folios in centimetres
Reference to:
catalogues (CAT.)
descriptions (DESCR.)
editions (ED.)
date (DAT.)
origin (OR.)
contents (CONT.)

\textsuperscript{5} The codex \textit{X} (see p. 25 below) has been impossible to trace.