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THREE MSS. FROM ESROM REVISITED IN THE VATICAN LIBRARY

Niels Haastrup

Writing a survey of Latin mss. present in Denmark in the high middle ages I made a recommendation to investigate in detail the miscellaneous mss. with connections to Denmark (Haastrup, 1985a).

Having had the opportunity to visit Rome I shall be the first to follow this recommendation, commenting on three mss. in the Apostolic Library, viz Vat.lat. 543, 636 and 1149, which are all supposed to have connections with the Danish monastery Esrom (cf. McGuire 1982 and Haastrup 1985b), according to the Danish bibliographical tradition (Nielsen 1937 and Jørgensen 1912-13 and 1915)

Vat.lat. 543.

Comparing the information in the Danish tradition with the catalogues of the Vatican Library I had to exclude from my survey one of the three mss. because Vatasso et al. (1931-33) did not confirm the connection with Esrom, quoting the exlibris, f. 111v, as follows: \textit{liber sancte marie de // ///}. This ms., dating from the end of the 12th century, is quite uniform, comprising 14 quaternions, numbered with Roman ordinals. The ms. is well preserved, only the last two folia having suffered damage, from water, it appears. The water has spoiled the script from f. 110 ("prorsus evanida" as Vatasso writes) - Nevertheless the exlibris, written with another hand and in ink of a better quality, is quite clear to read: \textit{liber sancte marie de esrom}, although the esrom is a little bit weaker.

The script may be some decades younger than the hand(s) in the text. I find it very difficult to accept that the last part of the exlibris should not have been readable in the 1930s.

Consequently I have to complete my survey of texts in "Danish" Latin miscellaneous mss. with the headings from Vat.lat. 543: (1) \textit{S. Leonis Magni epistulae} (ff. 2-81), \textit{S. Hilari papae epistulae} (ff. 82-84) and (3) \textit{B. Alcuini De fide S. Trinitatis I-III} (ff. 84-111). To sum up: esrom is quite readable in the exlibris. The ms. must have had a connection with the Danish monastery. It belonged to it, when the exlibris was written (13th century ?), but we are not in a position to know whether or not it was produced in a Danish scriptorium
Vat.lat. 1149

This ms., dating from the end of the 12th century (Laurent 1958), is very beautiful, written by two hands, the second of which follows the first in the third fascicle and thus gives evidence that the entire ms. originates from the same scriptorium. The exlibris is written with the rubricator's hand in red and blue (red: LIBER SANCTE and blue: MARIE DE ESROM) and proves that this scriptorium was that of the Esrom monastery. The ms. is incomplete. The second fascicle is numbered XVII. This indicates that 15 fascicles are lost. The ms. contains two texts, the first of which is Hrabani Mauri de clericorum institutione libr. III excerpta. Neither a look in the elenchus codicum in the edition (Knoepfler 1901, XXsq.) nor an investigation by Birger Munk Olsen in the files of the CNRS in Paris have so far lead to hunches as to where the first part of the ms. is to be found.

Vat.lat. 636

This ms., dating from the 12th-13th century (Vatasso et al., 1931-33), is the most interesting of the three Esrom mss., the one commented on for its learned content by McGuire (1982, p.33sq), and registered in my survey (Haastrup 1985a).

My examination of the ms. shows that I probably should have been more suspicious. The exlibris liber sancte marie de esrom is found on f. 127v, but it is quite unlikely that the last folia (f. 124sq) have any connection with the bulk of the ms.

The ms. is divided in two parts, each of which is bound in its own post-medieval cover: vol.I: ff. 1-71 and 124-27, vol.II: ff. 72-123. In this context I shall not discuss why it was divided in that way. The ms. consists of 16 quaternions, the fascicle counter (A-P) runs out f. 120v. It is quite probable that ff. 1-123 constitute a unity, originating from the same scriptorium. But the last folia, 124-27, are deviating. The bulk of the ms. is written in two columns (each ca. 32 lines); the last lines are found in the middle of the right column of 123v. F. 124r is left blank (but for a little notice ad calcem: omnes gentes). F. 124v a text begins in two columns, but from f. 125r and to the end the scribe has written in one column. This scribe presumably also wrote the exlibris. Combining the texts and the fascicle folding I would suggest the following tabulation:
(1) From here the folia 72-120 were taken and put in vol.II.

(2) Fol. 120v (vol.II) – 122r (vol.I): De septem miraculis.

(3) Fol. 121-122-123 are glued together and a little shorter than the previous folia.

(4) Fol. 122r-123v: De septem miraculis mundi (Ps. Beda).

(5) Fol. 124r: blank but for the little probatio penne (ad calcem).

(6) Fol. 124 a new hand begins.

(7) Fol. 124v: Versus utillimi de contemptu seculi.

(8) Fol. 125r: Versus de Sancta Maria (right column).

(9) Fol. 125v – 127v: text composed of Excerpta quaedam de rebus mirabilibus urbis Romae.

(10) Fol. 127v: the exlibris and ad calcem the (possible) later fascicle-counter.

The last folia, 124-27, seem to form an independent unit, maybe originating from another ms., from which what might be a fascicle counter occurs on f. 127v ad calcem: m I, with a very thin pen. The only evidence to prove a connection between the bulk (ff. 1-123) and the rest (ff. 124-27) is the mutilation. It is quite evident that the last part of the bulk and the folia 124-27 formed a whole at the moment when serious damage by water spoiled the outermost parts of the folia. When did that happen? We do not know, and I fear that for the time being we have to conclude that the exlibris found 127v does not prove more than that these few folia (124-27) once belonged to the monastery of E...rom.

I think that these observations indicate that it would be worth-
while – as proposed above – to control other mss. containing some evidence of Danish ownership.

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The manuscript dept. at The Royal Library, Copenhagen, has kindly bought photographs of the pages with exlibris in codd.Vat.lat. nos 543, 636 and 1149 (Ms. phot. 106 fol.).

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