

lemagne's reign that may well have been for the most part copied and altered during the rule of Louis the Pious. Although the text was first conceived during the reign of Charlemagne, no extant witness sheds light on what the text looked like before 814. Perhaps it is precisely because no such textual witness survives that scholars experience difficulties imagining what the ArF looked like when they were used in the *Annales Mettenses priores*, the *Annales Tiliani*, the *Chronicon Laurissense breve* and the *Annales Maximiniani*<sup>218</sup>. A closer study of those works may shed further light on the earliest development of the ArF in the final decade of the eighth century and the start of the ninth century. The *Annales Tiliani*, which survive together with a set of annals closely related to the *Annales sancti Amandi*, and the *Annales Maximiniani*, which might have been tweaked by a writer with close ties to Arn, archbishop of Salzburg and abbot of St Amand, deserve particular attention in this regard as they might be less reworked than the other two mentioned works. The reception of the ArF, in the works of the Astronomer, Ado and Prudentius/Hincmar, for example, shows that they were available to writers in the west-Frankish realm. They wrote after the death of Louis and perhaps were using a version of the ArF that was already revised to fit the memory of Louis's rule, although the Astronomer, writing shortly after Louis's death, was likely to have used a version of the ArF composed during the reign of Louis. It would be worthwhile to investigate which precise version they had in front of them. This, too, will shed more light on the early transmission, dissemination and reception of the ArF and its implications.

Taken together, there are six textual witnesses of the ArF that can be safely attributed to the ninth century. These witnesses appear to be independent, meaning they are no direct copies of each other, but rather all go back to arguably different exemplars. The sole possible exception is the connection between the Leiden fragment and the Vienna codex. A further, more detailed study must investigate whether or not the Leiden fragment was the direct exemplar of the Vienna codex. Thus, not only were those six witnesses "out there", but earlier copies, which are now all lost, were as well.

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218) WIBEL, *Beiträge* (as in n. 34) p. 12, underscored this already with regard to the *Annales Maximiniani*, but it may very well go for the three other texts mentioned here as well.