

This article aims to contribute to a better understanding of the manuscript evidence from the ninth century. To do so, it provides a preliminary survey of the extant ninth-century textual witnesses of the ArF – none survives from the eighth century – and aims to consider the implications that the manuscript evidence might suggest²⁴. What is not in this article, however, is an in-depth analysis of the recensions, although I have added, inasmuch as possible, the recensions to which witnesses belong that were discovered after the edition by Kurze appeared in 1895. Nor do I at this stage provide a palaeographical and codicological description of the codices that transmit those witnesses. The revised version of the ArF, commonly known as the *Annales qui dicuntur Einhardi* (AqdE), which Kurze classified as the E recension of the ArF, will not be studied in detail here²⁵. The reason for this is that scholars have, at least since the edition of Pertz appeared in 1826, tried to solve the many riddles the ArF and the AqdE present, but unsuccessfully. Perhaps part of the problem is in the scholarly paradigm. With “scholarly paradigm”, I mean that it has become an unwritten rule that in order to shed light on one of the two works, the other must be taken into account as well. This is working backwards from the assumption that both works are end products in their own right, with the final stage being the complete AqdE. To contemporaries, however, it was not known that someday the ArF would be rewritten and later become known to scholars as the AqdE. I am therefore following here what is probably closer to the contemporary experience than the scholarly paradigm and follow the development of the ArF rather than the other way around, differentiating very clearly between this work and the AqdE. Finally, it is precisely because of the rather different focal point in this contribution that no effort has been made here to provide a thorough assessment of the literary corpus that deals with the ArF and their content.

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24) I am preparing a research project to deal comprehensively with the matter. Although I have either seen the easily accessible digital versions of the codices or am in the possession of high-quality photographs, I have yet to perform a codicological autopsy of each codex and am therefore reliant on secondary studies mentioned in the footnotes. All links to the digital versions available online provided in this article have been tested on 31 December 2024.

25) See below, p. 26–28, for a succinct discussion of the sole ninth-century textual witness of the AqdE.