

"early" means twelfth or early thirteenth century as distinct from fourteenth or fifteenth century;⁵ poetry is distinguished from prose and implies verse form.

Beyond these very broad generalisations, a more refined classification is problematic. The parameters that can be used to study the manuscripts, apart from time and place and physical appearance which can help determine time and place but can also to some extent indicate purpose, either distinguish the contents by some taxonomy - author, subject, genre - or define relationships between manuscripts or variations to the text from one manuscript to another. The only aspect that warrants detailed study here is a comparison of manuscript contents. A proper study of manuscript relations and textual variations needs study of the manuscripts themselves. It is nevertheless surprising how much can be induced even in these fields from printed catalogues. For the *Mathematicus*, it has been possible to conclude from the relations between the two printed editions and ancillary information in catalogues and printed manuscript descriptions that the transmission is very faithful compared with that of many medieval texts. There can be quite logical philosophical reasons for this, related to the perception of certain texts as works of art that, while they may be freely plundered for quotations, may not be gratuitously "re-written" in the fashion of more "fluid" texts. The faithfulness of the transmission has been confirmed by a very limited manuscript study of later *florilegia* which scarcely alter a word from the printed editions. Also in a

⁵ There are interesting differences in manuscript survival of works from the early twelfth century. Embrico of Mainz's *Vita Mahumeti* (actually attributed to an eleventh century Embrico by its editor Cambier 1962 p. 17 though Southern 1962 p. 30 thinks it was a later Embrico who died in 1112, has a very similar list of manuscripts to that of the *Mathematicus* (11 of 12th C., one of 12th C.-13th C., two of 13th C. and one of 14th C.- Cambier 1962 p. 46) and several manuscripts have connexions with *Mathematicus* manuscripts (e.g. Berlin Ph. 1694, Rheims 1275, St. Omer 115) apart from BN 5129 which the Mohammed poem shares with the *Mathematicus*. Hildegard of Bingen's *Scivias* (Pope Eugene III received and approved Hildegard's writings in the same journey of 1147-1148 during which he accepted the *Cosmographia* (Silvas 1985 pp. 24-25, Dronke 1978 p. 2) also have manuscripts mostly from the twelfth century (Dronke 1981 p. 99 gives six 12th C., two 13th C., three later). On the other hand, the Abelard-Eloise correspondence manuscript tradition starts in the late thirteenth century, and the letter collections of Peter of Blois and Peter the Venerable have most of their manuscripts even later (Southern 1970, Constable 1967). Like the *Mathematicus* manuscripts, those of the *Cosmographia* listed by Walther 1969 are mostly early (though there are only 12 listed compared with Vernet's 50), as are those of *Roma duos habuit* (see Vol. II Ch. VI of this thesis). By comparison John of Hauville's *Architrenius* keeps being copied in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as does the *Florilegium Gallicum*.

