BEATUS RHENANUS, EDITOR OF TACITUS AND LIVY

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In 1533 Beatus Rhenanus edited Tacitus with the aid of a manuscript which he called the *Budensis;* in 1535 he edited the first six books of Livy with the aid of a manuscript which he called the *Vormaciensis.* The *Budensis* manuscript, now in New Haven, is known as the Yale manuscript of Tacitus; the *Vormatiensis* is lost. The latter manuscript is believed by editors of Livy to be of some importance, and they have therefore carefully conned Rhenanus' *Castigationes* in an effort to obtain information about its readings. Rhenanus' 1535 edition of Livy is comparatively rare, and consequently we use the citations from Rhenanus made by Drakenborch in his edition of 1738, who boasts on his title-page that he gives the notes of Rhenanus and other editors entire.

With a complete collation of the Yale manuscript before me to compare with Rhenanus' edition of Tacitus,[1] I undertook to discover his system of reporting manuscript readings so that we could interpret rightly his citations from the *Vormatiensis;* and I have been favored with some measure of success. There is, however, one difficulty which we cannot hope to resolve: the problem raised by the fact that from the beginning of Book vi Rhenanus uses two manuscripts and cites them without differentiation. The editors of the Oxford edition (1914–) discuss this fully in the preface to Volume ii, pp. xii ff. It is possible that Rhenanus used two manuscripts instead of one in the first five books, since his method of referring to manuscripts is varied enough to cover more than two manuscripts. (In referring to the Yale manuscript of Tacitus he uses approximately sixty different forms of phraseology, ranging from *codex Budensis* and *codex scriptus* to *illic, illinc,* and *hinc.* Sometimes he merely reverses the words for variety, as in *codex scriptus* and *scriptus codex.* But this variety that he was so anxious to obtain makes it impossible to be certain of his sources unless one has the manuscript before one.) Since it is generally assumed, however, that he used only one manuscript in the first five books of Livy, we shall accept this hypothesis.

In their preface to Volume i, the Oxford editors state the problem of the *Vormatiensis* very clearly (p. xvi):

§12. Medicei paene gemellus fuisse uidetur Codex Vormatiensis (*Vorm.*) siue Borbetomagensis nunc deperditus, ex excerptis tantum Beati Rhenani cognitus in editione Frobeniana secunda quam una cum Gelenio anno 1535 Basileae parauit (u. Praef. Gelenii p. 5, uel apud Drak. vii, p. 273). Haec excerpta ad i.20.2 incipiunt, ad vi.28.7 desinunt, quia codex, ut testatur Rhenanus, utrimque decurtatus erat. Et ne Rhenani quidem ope semper patet quid in locis ab illo tractatis in hoc codice steterit. Saepe enim Rhenanus de codice nihil disertis uerbis testatur, sed *ueterem* uel *antiquam* uel *germanam lectionem* commemorat; quam, etsi Drakenborchius (ad *eo sustentata* ii.34.5)[2] codicum quos ante oculos Rhenanus

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[1] This collation is part of my doctoral dissertation submitted to the Yale faculty: *The Yale MS. of Tacitus* (*Codex Budensis Rhenani*); *Its History and Affiliations* (1936), in connection with which I was granted permission by the Yale University Library to use and publish the manuscript.

[2] It is at this point that Drakenborch says that when Rhenanus speaks of the 'antiqua lectio,' he always means the reading he found in the manuscripts he used.

habebat lectionem semper indicare iudicat, ex adnotatione Rhenani ipsius ad ii.18.4[1] aliquotiens a Vormatiensi discrepuisse probabile uidetur. Tutius igitur duximus Rhenani uerba ubique sequi nec '*uetus lectio*' in '*Vorm.*' mutare. Huc accedit quod ille, ut et alii uiri doctissimi (in primis Gronovius), correcturam idoneam saepe breuissime indicare satis habuit, formulis quales *scribe, lege, corrige, castiga* usus, lectorem in dubio relinquens utrum hoc coniecturae tantum suae an codicis alicuius testimonio debuerit. Hoc Rhenani silentium siglo *Vorm.?* notauimus. Rhenani adnotationes per hos quinque Libros a Drakenborchio hausi.

A parallel quotation from Rhenanus' edition of Tacitus will take us far on the road to explaining the meaning of 'vetus lectio' (p. 130):

Porrò nemo putet me tam mutandi auidum, ut quicquam citra autoritatem manuscripti codicis uel addiderim uel dempserim. Nec quoties occurret, sic scripsi, castigaui, reposui, suspicetur quisquam id ex meo tantum factum ingenio. Nam quum meum secutus iudicium aliquid muto, quod tamen nisi in manifestis erratis, non feci, lectorem ea de re in castigationibus admoneo. Vnde & haec utilitas, quod hoc modo uetus lectio conseruatur, quam utinam haberemus non in Liuio solum sed & Cicerone atque alijs autoribus. Siquidem dici non potest quam uarie sint interpolata autorum omnium scripta. Sane multum debemus Berardino Lanterio Mediolanensi, atque Francisco Puteolano, & alijs, quibus ante illos hunc autorem pro uirili restituere studio fuit. nam quia regius liber quem penes me habeo, uetusti uoluminis cui sunt illi manus admoliti, aut innisi praesidio, exemplum est, facile sensi, quid de suo addiderint, ubi sudarint, ubi coniecturis sint usi.

Rhenanus was unfortunately a man of his word in his use of 'scripsi' etc., for a check of Book xi alone readily produced a dozen readings from the Yale manuscript of which he had designated the source only in that manner; and this in addition to the sixty-odd more specific methods of citing readings!

This quotation from the Tacitus makes it apparent that Rhenanus did not mean by 'vetus lectio' the reading of the manuscript he was using. It would be perfectly fair to assume that he meant the general tradition in regard to a reading before his edition, but we must enlarge upon this definition to explain his peculiar usage of it in his Livy. I am quite sure that by 'vetus lectio' Rhenanus meant the reading of what we should call the archetype. His manner of speech in the Tacitus quotation shows that he did not mean the editors who preceded him.

With the Tacitus quotation as background, it is easy to see that in the following note Rhenanus clearly indicates the difference between the 'lectio vetus' and the reading of his manuscript: Livy iii, 54, 10, '*Convellunt inde signa*] Hoc verbum obvium subinde est apud Livium. Sed hoc loco placet mihi lectio vetus, quae habet, *Convertunt inde signa* . . . Porro offendit jam olim quosdam hoc verbum. Unde & in Vormaciensi codice adscriptum est in margine, *Convellunt;* quae lectio deinde in vulgatas istas editiones est recepta.' This next citation shows that sometimes he did not know what the reading was, although, if it had been the accepted reading prior to his time, he would certainly have known: Livy iv, 6, 3, '*Quam victi tandem Patres, ut de connubio ferretur, consensere*] Verbum *concessere* in contextum relatum post *consensere* satis indicat, veterem fortassis lectionem fuisse *Patres, ut de connubio ferretur, concessere*.' 'Lectio vetus' does not mean the exact words that Livy wrote because sometimes it may be an incorrect reading: Livy ii, 18, 4, '*Sed nec quo anno, nec quibus factis consulibus*]

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[1] I quote this passage below.

Antiq. lectio, *nec quibus facti consulibus*. Neutra sincera est . . . Tu vero, me auc-
tore, sic castiga: *Sed nec quo anno, nec quibus consulibus, quia ex factione* etc.
. . . ;' Livy III, 44, 4, '*Appius, amore ardens, pretio ac spe*] Vetus lectio, sed cor-
rupta, *Appius amore ardens mens pretio*. Fortasse scribendum, *Appius amore
ardente amens pretio ac spe perlicere adortus*.' Etc.; Livy III, 51, 9, '*Peritus rerum
popularium, inminensque etiam potestati*] Antiqua lectio *imminensque & potestati*.
Opinor legendum, *imminensque ei potestati*.' Etc.; Livy V, 28, 9, '*Ea in conspectu
erant posita in plano*] Antiqua lectio *& in conspectu erant*. Suspicor, simpliciter
scribendum, *in conspectu erant;*' Livy V, 34, 7, '*Quod adlatum est, advenas quae-
rentes agrum ab Salluviorum gente obpugnari*] Antiqua lectio, *ab Salvium gente
oppugnari*. Opinor Livium scripsisse *Salyum*. Nam istam gentem *Salyes* appel-
lant auctores caeteri.' It will be noticed that there is no observable difference
between 'vetus lectio' and 'antiqua lectio.'

Since 'vetus lectio' is not the reading of the manuscript Rhenanus was using,
nor the accepted reading prior to his edition, nor the reading given by other
editors, nor the exact words Livy wrote, and since sometimes Rhenanus was not
certain what it was, he must mean by it what he thought to be the reading of
the archetype before it had been touched by the work of later scribes and editors.
Rhenanus believed himself to be much closer to the archetype than we usually
do today, and he certainly did not believe in the antiquity of most manuscript
error. He apparently believed that it was not a difficult feat for a good Latinist
to peer back through the errors of recent scribes to the reading of the archetype,
which, however, might itself be in error. He therefore felt it his duty to indicate
where he was using conjecture and intuition, where he was following other edi-
tors, and where he was following a manuscript. We really cannot find fault with
him because his technique of reporting readings is unequal to our modern re-
quirements, since he lived up to the highest requirements of his own time. There
is one safe conclusion that we can draw from the Tacitus quotation and these
Livy citations, a conclusion which has great negative value for the editors of
Livy: that Rhenanus by 'vetus lectio' certainly did not mean the reading of the
manuscript before him; whether he meant by it the reading of the archetype or
the traditional reading prior to his time or something else is of less importance
to modern scholars because for none of these things would editors go to his
edition. The negative value of our conclusion is the important thing.

There is one citation in the Tacitus which gives us a clew to the workings of
Rhenanus' mind (p. 132 in the 1533 edition, *Annales* XI, 28, 24, in Andresen's
edition of 1930) : 'Dum industria cubiculum principis occulit adulteros.] Corrup-
tus locus est. Nec quicquam hic minus scribendum quàm uocabulum industria.
Exemplar regium hic crucicula notatum erat, & uarijs lituris rasurisque foeda-
tum. Videtur tamen antiquior lectio fuisse: dum inclusum in cubiculum principis
exultat: & postea quidam inseruit cum praepositionem & superinscripsit, adul-
tero, idque ceu uidetur propter exultandi uerbum. Opinor synceram esse lec-
tionem, Dum inclusum, cubiculum principis occultat, dedecus quidem illatum,
sed.' The reading Rhenanus gave as a lemma is in Puteolanus' edition; the read-
ing of the Yale manuscript is 'dum inclusa in cubiculum principis exultat,' with

the *exultat* followed by an erasure of the space of three letters and *adultero* added above the line by a hand different from the original scribe's. The *inclusa* is a correction by a hand different from the original scribe's. Hence both the 'antiquior lectio' and the 'synceram lectionem' are Rhenanus' inventions.

The term 'germana lectio' is also another example of Rhenanus' passion for emendation. When he uses this phrase, he apparently means that the reading he proposes is the 'true' or 'actual' one, probably exactly equivalent to 'syncera lectio.' An excellent example of the use of this term comes from his Tacitus: (p. 132): 'Qui Capitolio & ara Romana manibus eorundem prostratis.] Hic locus difficilis est & à nemine hactenus intellectus. Regium exemplar habet, manibus eorundem per se satis. Puto germanam esse Taciti lectionem, si quis pro per se satis aut prostratis, scribat, parceretis.' His method is also shown here: (p. 265 of the Tacitus): 'Non tamen quies urbis redierat. Strepitus telorum & facies belli erat militibus.] Hic locus est misere corruptus. Nec quicquam auxilij fuit à libro manuscripto, unde mendosa uerba transfusa sunt in uulgatas aeditiones. Nos magno labore eruimus tandem germanam sinceramque lectionem. Sic autem emendauimus distinximusque, Non tamen quies urbi. Sed erat strepitus telorum, & facies belli.'

I am afraid that we can throw very little light on Rhenanus' meaning in the use of *scribe*, *lege*, etc. When he makes some other statement along with his command to read a passage in a certain way, we frequently can, on the merits of each case and from the observations made above as to Rhenanus' methods of citing from the manuscript, make at least a guess as to whether he made up the reading or drew it from the manuscript; but when the imperative stands alone, we have no way of knowing whence the reading comes and had best call it another example of Rhenanus' passion for emendation. As can be seen from the notes we have quoted, he had unbounded faith in his own ability to divine what the author originally wrote.

Aside from these details, it must be said that Rhenanus' edition of Tacitus, and especially his *Castigationes*, do not give anything like a fair idea of the Yale manuscript. It is a remarkably good edition for its day, but it is of course entirely unsatisfactory to the modern scholar, since Rhenanus often settles the most important cruces to suit himself and entirely fails to tell the reader whether he did so with manuscript support or on the basis of his own ingenuity in spite of his promise in the introduction, for today we do not consider a *reposui* an adequate citation of source. We may then suppose that the same situation prevails in his Livy, and that the editors can safely cite as from the *Vormatiensis* only those readings which Rhenanus specifically assigns to it in his notes.

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