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Aspects of the Textual History of Poggio Bracciolini's *De varietate fortunae*

OUTI MERISALO

In this article, it is my intention to try to assess the general lines of the textual history of Poggio Bracciolini's *De varietate fortunae* as far as it can be gauged from the evidence of the manuscripts of the work. I shall not touch upon the reception of the work here.*

De varietate fortunae, Poggio's largest work after *Facetiae*, was promulgated in early 1448, as it appears from a letter to Antonio Panormita.¹ It is a rather heterogeneous amalgam consisting of four books loosely connected by the theme of the fickleness of Fortune. This theme is illustrated by the physical decay of Ancient Rome (book I), by contemporary and recent history (books II and III) and by the travels to India of Niccolò de' Conti (book IV). The compilation of the work probably took some fifteen years, from c. 1432-1435 till 1448, though the vicissitudes of contemporary history had already suggested the idea to Poggio in the early 1420s.² So far, 51 mss. containig the whole of the work or parts of it have come to my notice. As many as 44 of them are certainly from the 15th century. Only three are certainly non-Italian. The integral version is found in 27 mss. whereas book IV is found on its own in 17, and part of book I, a detailed description of the ruins of Rome in the 1420s, in four mss. Two mss. contain only the first

* This article is a slightly modified version of a paper read at the 9th Congress of Neo-Latin Studies in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, in August 1988.

¹ H. Harth, ed. Poggio Bracciolini, *Lettere* 3. - - - Firenze 1987, 3.2.9., February 1448: *Edidi quatuor libros De varietate fortune*.

² See I. Kajanto, Poggio Bracciolini and Classicism. A Study in Early Italian Humanism (AASF B 238), Helsinki 1987, 36-37.

three books. One 16th-century ms. contains a fragment from book I and the whole of book IV. The particular favour enjoyed by books I and IV depends probably on the specific nature of the subjects treated, though one might imagine that the numerous episodes related in books II and III on the Popes and Italian patrician families would have interested e. g. compilers of works with a strictly local interest. As far as I have been able to find out, books II and III do not circulate on their own, but always in company with book I.

The original plan for the work might only have comprised the books two and three which both cover a period prior to the death of Pope Martin V (1415-1430). Two books on the variety of fortune were ready in 1443,³ and the work in its final extension was achieved by 1448 (see note 1).

So far, it seems that there are basically three versions of *De varietate fortunae*. The first version is found in mss. that can be dated to c. 1450, the last one appears for the first time in mss. datable to the very last years of Poggio's life

The following stemma should not be considered definitive. I hope to produce later a computer stemma by means of the method developed by the team of Dees at the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam.

FIGURE.

Dating	Phasis and manuscripts
1448	A (original, as it seems, not preserved)
1450	Vat. Ott. lat. 2134 Gött. UB theol. 136

³ Harth, *Lettere* 2. 10. 17, 14 Sept. 1443: *Composui duos libros de varietate fortunae sed nondum edidi*. This might refer either to book I and II or II and III (for the latter opinion, see e. g. R. Fubini, *Il teatro del mondo---*, Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1980) nel VI centenario della morte, Firenze 1982, 9 n. 21; Kajanto, *Classicism* 38, believes books I and II to have been written first). In any case, book III cannot have been completed at that date, Eugenius IV only dying in 1447. The version A of book III (see below) talks about vicissitudes of contemporaries having been described *uno libro* (Vat. Ott. lat. 2134 f. 58). These words have been omitted in the final version C.

c. 1450	B-o (enlarged version I) Milan, Ambr. G 95 s 4
1450-1459	B (enlarged version II) Vat. lat. 1784 BN lat. 7854 Ricc. 871 (before corr.) Copenhagen KB 4 ⁰ -234 (before corr.) Marc. 3488.
1450-1459	B+C (contaminated version) Venice Marc. 4596 Marc. 2560 Copenhagen KB 4 ⁰ -234 (corrected)
before 1459	C (corrected version) Ricc. 871 (corrected) Vat. Urb. lat. 224 Bodl. Canon. Misc. 557 Bernkastel-Kues, Bibl. Hosp. 157

For this figure, the versions of book III have been used as a basic criterion. A less diversified stemma, containing only phases A and C, B often going with C, is obtained by using the text of book I, on which a detailed computerized analysis with comments is being prepared.⁴

Version A, found in two mss. dated 1450,⁵ represents most probably the earliest form of the text promulgated in 1448. Version B is different from it in the description of the life of Cardinal Giovanni Vitelleschi (d. 1440), the influential favourite of Eugenius IV who died in very obscure circumstances in the Castel Sant' Angelo, victim, as it would seem, of a Medici conspiracy.⁶ In phasis A, there is a rather neutral account of the activity of Vitelleschi, the negative points being presented as hearsay or rumour

⁴ For a summary description of the tradition of book IV, see my article in note 14.

⁵ Both Vat. Ott. lat. 2134 and Gött. UB theol. 136 bear after the text the date 1450 (see below p. 106).

⁶ For Vitelleschi, see L. Pastor, *Geschichte der Päpste* 2³⁻⁴, Freiburg 1901, 290-295, and E. Walser, *Poggius Florentinus. Leben und Werke*, Leipzig-Berlin 1914, 186-189.

(*putabatur, dicebatur* etc.).⁷ In version B, the tone is much more virulent and the text contains more details.⁸ It is interesting that Ambr. G 95 s 4 that represents phasis B-o in our stemma, contains a few more passages absent in other mss. hitherto studied, except for Ricc. 871 where these passages seem to have been erased.⁹ Version C has again the text of version A here but contains otherwise some stylistic and vocabulary changes.¹⁰

The origin of version B is so far obscure. Ricc. 871 contains the autographic corrections of Poggio, and the resulting text is that of version C, which then should be considered the definitive form wanted by the author. The Copenhagen and Marciana mss. have contaminated versions, may be originating in mss. where the corrections of the author had not been introduced with enough care.

It would not seem impossible that version B (and B-o) were by Poggio himself. He was a well-known supporter of the Medici and does not speak too favourably of Vitelleschi in another context.¹¹ Valla accused him of forging a papal order for capturing Vitelleschi and imprisoning him in the Castel Sant' Angelo. After Vitelleschi's death Poggio fell out of favour with Eugenius IV.¹² While revising the text of *De varietate fortunae* sometime in

⁷ See e. g. Vat. Urb. lat. 224 f. 40: *...ferebantur* - Ambr. G 95 s 4 (etc.) *...vulgata erant*.

⁸ E. g. Vat. Urb. lat. 224 f. 39: *hic sumptis a duce militibus*, Ambr. G 95 s 4: *hic animo ad omne facinus prompto s. a d. m. .*

⁹ Ambr. G 95 s 4 f. 179v; Ricc. 871 f. 55.

¹⁰ E. g. Vat. Ott. lat. 2134 f. 43 *nos autem nudo sermone nullo decore*, Ricc. 871 (etc.) *nos autem nullo sermonis decore*.

¹¹ H. Harth, ed. Poggio Bracciolini, *Lettere* 2. Firenze 1984, 2. 9. 14. 36-39, to Scipione Mainenti, Florence April 8-26 1440: *Credo te audisse casum cardinalis Florentini, quem ego addam numero ceterorum. Nolo insectari verbis mortuos, sed miror dei patientiam adeo diu tantam iniquitatem, tantam labem seculi nostri tulisse. Itaque gratias ago, quicumque ii fuerint, auctoribus tanti boni* (i. e. the murder of Vitelleschi).

¹² Walser 187 (Valla); 189 (Eugenius IV). According to Gaspare Broglio, son of the condottiere Tartaglia, in service of Sigismondo Malatesta, the conspiracy would have been organized by Cosimo and Lodovico Scarampi would have falsified the brief (see A. G. Lucani, ed. G. Broglio Tartaglia, *Cronaca malatestiana del secolo XV [dalla Cronaca universale]*, Rimini 1982, 67-68).

the 1450s he might have wanted to ventilate his rancour; upon reflection, he might have wanted to readopt in the end the original, rather neutral account. Even in the reigns of Nicholas V, Calixtus III and Pius II, such obscure manoeuvrings might still not be the thing to be advertised.¹³

The separate tradition of book IV derives from phasis A. So far, only the Paris ms. among the mss. of the whole work, itself representing phasis B, contains the specific variants characteristic of this separate tradition.¹⁴

It is obvious that *De varietate fortunae* was basically considered to be a humanistic text both in its integral form and in the partial versions. An overwhelming majority of the known mss. are humanistic in content: ancient authors, Italian humanists, archaeology. The travels of Niccolò de' Conti appear together with texts on Eastern travel in only six mss. and in no more than two mss. do we find book I together with quite distinctly antiquarian texts. The integral version is found in only one ms. together with purely antiquarian works.

We already mentioned that almost all mss. are from the 15th century. Only three are certainly of non-Italian origin. The work was also copied to some extent in the 16th c., apparently for the last time in an integral version at the beginning of that century. Book IV was copied as late as 1599.

Two of the certainly non-Italian mss. are of German origin. A copy of the text in version C was made for Nicolaus Cusanus (d. 1464), who was a friend of Poggio. This ms., still in its original binding, is now in the library founded by Cusanus in Bernkastel-Kues.¹⁵ The other German ms. is now at the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich and was copied by the well-known

¹³ Poggio says himself in the three versions: *Hanc latius explicarem coniurationem, nisi illorum qui in illa intervenisse dicuntur pudor et reverentia a narrando continerent* (Vat. Urb. lat. 224 f. 40).

¹⁴ For these variants, see O. Merisalo, *Le prime edizioni stampate del De varietate fortunae di Poggio Bracciolini*. I, *Arctos* 19 (1985) 96-97.

¹⁵ See J. Marx, *Verzeichnis der Handschriften-Sammlung des Hospitals zu Cues bei Bernkastel m. M.*, Trier 1905. For Cusanus' library, see E. Meuthen, *Die letzten Jahre des Nikolaus von Kues* (Wiss. Abh. d. Arb. gem. f. Forsch. des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen 3), Köln-Opladen 1958, and especially C. Bianca, *La biblioteca romana di Niccolò Cusano*, *Littera antiqua* 3. Scrittura biblioteche e stampa a Roma nel Quattrocento, *Atti del 2^o Seminario* 6-8 maggio 1982, Città del Vaticano 1983, 694.

Nuremberg antiquarian Hartmann Schedel (d. 1512) in 1504. It contains, among inscriptions of Italy and Germany, the description of ruins of Rome from book I, textually closely related to the fragment of book I in one of the mss. from the Adriatic coast; as Schedel had studied in Padua, he might well have used this Italian ms., or one related to it, for his *Liber antiquitatum*.¹⁶

At the Burgerbibliothek in Berne there is a ms. written in Gothic cursive on apparently North-Eastern French or Dutch paper datable to the 1450s and 1460s. It contains the first three books in version C. The other texts in the volume are works by Poggio. The outer appearance is rather modest, a feature common to a large part of the mss. preserved.¹⁷

I have not yet had the occasion to examine the ms. Harleian 2500, originally in the library of the Vallis Sancti Martini in Leuven / Louvain.¹⁸ In this ms. a fragment of book I, not identical to either of the previously mentioned, is found together with texts of Livy, Orosius, a work on the history of the Popes and the Kings as well as the chronicle of Ps.-Turpin and Poggio's own *De infelicitate principum*. The ms. is written in Gothic cursive, and it might come from the Low Countries.¹⁹

Among the Italian mss., a majority is to be localized to Central and North-Eastern Italy. It would seem that only one ms. was written in Naples. The library of the Kings of Aragon did not contain this work.²⁰ So far, it seems that the abbey of Casamari was the southernmost place to own our text. In 1459 this library possessed a ms. with book IV and other humanistic as well as geographical texts. The volume is of modest appearance.²¹

¹⁶ For Schedel, see e. g. *Allgemeine deutsche Biographie* 30, Leipzig 1889, 661-662. Schedel's version is shorter than the fragment in Bodl. d' Orv. 513, and contains many original (most often nonsensical) variants.

¹⁷ See below pp. 105, 107-110.

¹⁸ See *Bibliotheca Vallis Sancti Martini in Lovanio* 1, Leuven 1980, 636-639, no. 140.

¹⁹ The inventory (c. 1500) of the books of Jan Adorne (1444-1511), of Italian descent, living in Bruges, mentions a *lib(er) Poggii Florentini de varietate fortu(n)e ad Nicolau(m) p(a)p(am) q(u)intu(m)* (A. Derolez, *Corpus Catalogorum Belgii* 1. Provincie West-Vlaanderen, Brussel 1986, 8). There seems to be no subsequent information about the fate of this library (*ibid.* 2).

²⁰ The ms. is Venice Marc. 4596 (B+C). For the library of the Kings, see T. de Marinis, *La biblioteca napoletana dei re d'Aragona* 1-2, Milano 1947-1952.

²¹ Now BL Add. 25712.

Surprisingly enough, only a few mss. seem to have been written in Rome. I have not yet been able to identify the dedication exemplar of the text, written for Nicholas V. According to the inventory made after the death of this pope, his library contained one copy of *de v(er)itate fortune*,²² also present in the 1475 inventory drawn by Platina.²³ By 1475 another copy of the work had also been acquired. In the oldest part of the Vatican library there are two mss., one of parchment, one of paper, of the integral version (see note 22), and the former is distinctly a prestige ms. The text is, however, in version B, and it would be surprising that the dedicatory copy should have contained that form of the text. The other ms. is rather modest in appearance and has version A. Cases are known of surprisingly simple dedicatory exemplars, so it may not be totally out of the question that this was in fact the copy prepared for Nicholas V.²⁴ There is, however, no external sign to suggest this.

Apparently the ms. made for Poggio's friend Cardinal Domenico Capranica (1400-1458) is also of Roman origin. It contains book IV and texts on the Near East,²⁵ and is of a modest appearance.

Another ms. of definite Roman origin is the one now at the Marciana in Venice. It contains version B.²⁶ It was written in c. 1500.

A considerable number of mss. come from Florence. We may mention the prestige ms. now in the Ottoboni collection at the Vatican

²² The inventory, by Cosimo de Montserrat, is Vat. lat. 3959, f. 29v: *de v(er)itate fortune*. Vat. lat. 1784 as well as Vat. lat. 1785 entered the Vatican Library before 1597, see J. Bignami Odier, *La Bibliothèque Vaticane de Sixte IV à Pie XI. Recherches sur l'histoire des collections de manuscrits - - - (Studi e testi 272)*, Città del Vaticano 1973, 77.

²³ Vat. lat. 3954.

²⁴ The first ms. is Vat. lat. 1784, the second Vat. lat. 1785.

²⁵ For this ms., Vat. lat. 7317, see A. Antonovics, *The library of Cardinal Domenico Capranica*, in C. H. Clough, ed. *Cultural Aspects of the Italian Renaissance. Essays in honour of P. O. Kristeller*, Manchester - New York 1976, 148. The ms. entered the Vatican library in 1798, and was still present at the library of the Jesuit College of Capranica in 1657, see Bignami Odier 218 n. 7.

²⁶ Marc. 4596.

library.²⁷ It was written, just as another prestige ms. now in the Buchanan collection of the Bodleian library, by the well-known notary Ser Giovanni da Stia.²⁸ The Ottoboni ms. is dated 1450. The text, the earliest copy of version A preserved for us, is in all points identical to that of the equally Florentine ms. now in Göttingen, finished on the 17th of June 1750 by the notary Gherardo di Giovanni del Ciriagio. It has the stemma of either Lionello or Ercole I d'Este, and is most probably the volume mentioned in the 1495 inventory of the books of Ercole I.²⁹ All these mss. are elaborately decorated. Vespasiano da Bisticci provided another luxury ms. for Federico di Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, which later went to the Vatican library together with the rest of the Urbino library. It contains version C in a sort of fair copy as compared to Ricc. 871, see stemma above. The Urbino ms. was written by Nicolaus Riccius Spinosus, or Nicolaus Antonii de Ricciis, in a beautiful *antiqua*, and decorated by Francesco d'Antonio c. 1460-70.³⁰

²⁷ Vat. Ott. lat. 2134. In the 15th century, the ms. belonged to Poggio's friend Bartolomeo Ghiselardi of Bologna (note of acquisition f. 104v). For the formation of the Ottoboni collection and its entry at the Vatican library, see Bignami Odier 55. For the text of the ms., see now I. Kajanto - O. Merisalo, *The 1723 Edition of Poggio Bracciolini's De varietate fortunae*, Hum. lov. 36 (1987), 76-84.

²⁸ For this scribe (c. 1406-1474), see A. C. de la Mare, *New research on Humanistic Scribes in Florence*, in A. Garzelli, ed. *Miniatura fiorentina del Rinascimento 1440-1525* - - - 1, Firenze - Perugia 1985, 425-6 and app. 1, no. 28. 32. For the Buchanan d. 4, see O. Pächt - J.J.G. Alexander, *Illuminated manuscripts in the Bodleian Library* 2, Oxford 1970, 26. I thank Dr. A. C. de la Mare for pointing out this reference to me.

²⁹ Ser Gherardo di Giovanni del Ciriagio (d. 1472), de la Mare, *New Research* (see preceding note) 430 ff., app. I no. 24. 21. For the d'Este stemma, cf. e. g. G. Bologna, *Miniature italiane della biblioteca Trivulziana*, Milano 1974, 64, and D. Fava - M. Salmi, *I manoscritti miniati della Biblioteca Estense di Modena* 2, Milano 1973, no. 133, tav. XXVI. There is a *De varietate fortune in latino coperto de corame stampato* in the inventory of 1495, see G. Bertoni, *La Biblioteca estense e la coltura ferrarese ai tempi del duca Ercole I (1471-1505)*, Torino 1903, app. II, no. 129. The ms. was only taken to Germany in the 18th century (18th-century note on the second guard).

³⁰ See A. C. de la Mare, *Vespasiano da Bisticci e i copisti fiorentini di Federico, Federico di Montefeltro* 3. *La cultura* (Biblioteca del Cinquecento 30), Roma 1986, 94 and *New Research*, 431-2, app. I no. 53. 45; for the entry of the Urbino library at the Vatican, see Bignami Odier 141. According to Dr. de la Mare, the volume was second hand when Federico bought it, *Vespasiano* 94 and *New Research* app. I no. 53. 45.

Another luxury ms. was made for Francesco Sasseti, a Medici banker who employed Bartolomeo Fonzio for the vast library he started forming from c. 1470 onwards.³¹ It contains book I together with Biondo's *Italia illustrata* and *Roma instaurata*, and thus constitutes one of our genuinely antiquarian mss.

Ricc. 871 is a modest parchment ms. with autographical corrections by Poggio³² changing version B to version C. It might be the volume mentioned in the inventory of books made after his death.³³ A ms. now at the Biblioteca Nazionale of Rome contains *De varietate fortunae* as well as other works by Poggio, and bears at the end his *ex-libris*.³⁴

There is a ms. at the Biblioteca Nazionale in Florence which seems to come from Siena. It has the arms of the Siennese family of Martinozzi.³⁵ A member of this family owned e. g. an Aeschylus in Greek as early as 1431.³⁶ In the Biblioteca Nazionale ms., the first three books are in one hand, representing version C, and book IV has been added, apparently copied from a ms. in separate circulation. We have already mentioned that the Berne ms. contains only the first three books (p. 104). To the Martinozzi ms. we may add a ms. with Siennese contents but East Italian paper now at the British Library, where texts by humanists and on Siennese matters appear together with the first three books of our text.³⁷

³¹ The ms. is Laur. 76, 50. For Sasseti's collection, see A. C. de la Mare, *The Library of Francesco Sasseti (1421-1490), Cultural Aspects* (see note 26), 160 ff., Catalogue no. 58.

³² This identification was first suggested by R. Fubini, *Poggio Bracciolini (1380-1459) nel VI centenario della morte---*, Firenze, 1980, 10. A comparison with mss. known to have been written by Poggio seems to confirm it.

³³ Published in Walser 423: *de varietate fortune in pergameno corio albo coopertum*.

³⁴ Fondo Vitt. Em. 205. In this ms., *De varietate fortunae* is in paper.

³⁵ The arms of Benedetto Martinozzi in Laur. 49, 24 are identical to those in Naz. n. a. 693 and to those in Abbey J. A. 3221 (see J. J. G. Alexander - A. C. de la Mare, *The Italian manuscripts in the Library of Major Abbey*, London 1969, 95-6).

³⁶ The Aeschylus of Niccolò Martinozzi is Laur. 95 sup. 5.

³⁷ BL 8799.

There is a simple ms. now in Parma³⁸ containing book IV and different historical and geographical accounts which seems to have been written on paper produced in Lucca c. 1460.

It would seem that the ms. now at the Classense of Ravenna with part of book IV and different humanistic and religious texts was written in Tuscany early in the 1450s.³⁹ It shows remarkable similarities to an Italian ms. now in Lyon.⁴⁰ The Lyon ms. is, however, a working ms., whereas the Ravenna one is elaborately decorated. The Ravenna ms. belonged in the 16th century to someone from Rimini.⁴¹

Another ms. of Tuscan origin seems to be the one now in Durham, N. C. (Duke University Library); it was written on Tuscan paper by a scribe named Paulus in c. 1450-60.⁴² It contains the integral version in phasis C as well as texts by Filelfo, and translations from Demosthenes. It is a genuine working ms., with very little decoration and rather informal Italic.

It seems that *De varietate fortunae* was particularly popular on the Adriatic coast and in the North-East of Italy. The number of mss. that can be localized to these parts include both volumes with the integral version and a great number of copies of book IV, one of book I. In a way Schedel's volume that we mentioned earlier would belong to this group, since his Paduan connection was most probably decisive for the text of his copy of the description in book I. They are for the most part working manuscripts. In the town of Cagli, Marche, the local humanist Giovanni Francesco Cataldini wrote and illustrated in 1474 a ms. now at the Bodleian,⁴³ with book IV and Cristoforo Buondelmonti's *De insulis archipelagi*. Buondelmonti's work is illustrated, book IV is not. It is interesting that none of the mss. come to my notice should have pictures, in spite of the many rather colourful events

³⁸ Parma Palat. Misc. 331.

³⁹ For the Ravenna ms., see now the description in H. Harth, ed. Poggio Bracciolini, *Lettere* 1. Firenze 1984, LI-LIII.

⁴⁰ See G. Lafaye, *Une anthologie latine du XV^e siècle*, *Mél. arch. hist. École fr. de Rome* (11) 1891, 92-105; G. Lafaye - F. Novati, *Le manuscrit de Lyon* No. C, *ibid.* 353-416; Harth, *Lettere* 1. XLIX-LI.

⁴¹ Cf. Harth, *Lettere* 1. LII.

⁴² Durham, N. C., Duke University Library, Latin 21.

⁴³ See the explicit in Bodl. Canon. Misc. 280, f. 62, and A. G. Watson, *Dated and Datable Manuscripts in Oxford Libraries* 1, Oxford 1984, 52 n. 321 and plate in 2. 723.

described in the *De varietate fortunae*. The Cagli ms. is of a very modest appearance, just as the ms. now at the Bodleian, that we have mentioned few times before, containing a fragment of book I which might have influenced Hartmann Schedel (see note 16). The Poggio part of it was apparently written on Romagna and Paduan paper in the 1450s and 1460s,⁴⁴ and appears together with e. g. works by Petrarch and Prudentius.

We have already mentioned the Florentine luxury ms. that belonged to the d'Este family and is now in Göttingen (see above p. 106). Of the luxury mss. from the Adriatic coast, we may mention a volume now at the Deutsche Staatsbibliothek in Berlin,⁴⁵ which contains the whole of the text in version C. Another prestige ms. is that now in Copenhagen,⁴⁶ representing a contaminated version of B and C (see above p. 102). It is surprising that a volume of such an elaborate making should have been very visibly corrected. This might point to an urgent need to get version B out of circulation.

A ms. now at Marciana was also written in the Veneto and belonged to the well-known Paduan antiquarian, the medical doctor Giovanni Marcanova.⁴⁷ We need not dwell here on the extremely important role of Marcanova and his friends Felice Feliciano and Andrea Mantegna in the new, more historicising turn that Italian humanism took soon after 1450.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Bodl. d'Orv. 513.

⁴⁵ Ham. 523. See H. Boese, *Die lateinischen Handschriften der Sammlung Hamilton zu Berlin*, Wiesbaden 1966, no. 523.

⁴⁶ Copenhagen, KB 4^o-234. See E. Jørgensen, *Catalogus codicum Latinorum medii aevi Bibliothecae Regiae Hafnensis, Hafniae* 1926, 356.

⁴⁷ For Marcanova, see e. g. *Da Pisanello alla nascita dei Musei Capitolini. L'Antico a Roma alla vigilia del Rinascimento*, Milano-Roma 1988, 30-31. He donated his mss. to the monastery of S. Giovanni in Verdara, of Padua, in 1467, see J. Valentinelli, *Bibliotheca manuscripta ad S. Marci Venetiarum* 1. *Codices Mss. Latini, Venetiis* 1868, 87 n. 1. For the further history of this library, see M. Luxoro, *La biblioteca di San Marco nella sua storia (Collana di monografie delle biblioteche d'Italia)*, Firenze 1954, 51.

⁴⁸ See J. Wardrop, *The Script of Humanism. Some Aspects of Humanistic Script 1460-1560*, Oxford 1963, 7-18 (for Felice, 16-18); M. Evans, *Italian Manuscript Illumination 1460-1560*, in: Th. Kren, ed. *Renaissance Painting in Manuscripts. Treasures from the British Library*, New York 1983, 90-91.

Another representative of version B from the East of Italy is the ms. now in Paris, from c. 1480, mentioned in the stemma above.⁴⁹ It is written in Gothic cursive and contains *De varietate fortunae* as well as other works of Poggio.

From the region of Udine, we have the collection of antiquarian texts, translations from Lucian, book IV and the *Facetiae* which belonged to Guarnerio d'Artegna, the Friulan bibliophile.⁵⁰ The decoration is very modest. Most of the volume seems to be from the 1450s.

There was some interest in the *De varietate fortunae* also in the region of Milan: a ms. now at the Ambrosiana has the integral version together with the texts by Bruni and Barbaro, from approximately 1480.⁵¹ Another ms. from Lombardy might be the one now in Paris, with texts of Poggio, Bruni and Lucian.⁵²

So far, our results can be resumed as follows:

1. Most of the mss. are from the 15th century.
2. Most of the mss. are of Italian origin.
3. 53% of the mss. contain the integral version, 33% book IV, 8% book I and 4% books I-III only. One ms. contains books I and IV.
4. Book I, when circulating separately, is found, in half of the cases, in an archaeological context. In the other cases the texts are literary and humanistic. Book IV occurs in most cases with literary and humanistic works. This is easily explicable by the general interest of humanists in exploration.⁵³

⁴⁹ BN lat. 7854.

⁵⁰ Guarn. 121. It does not appear in the inventory of the books of Guarnerio (d. 1467) from 1461 (see E. Casamassima et al., *Mostra di codici umanistici di biblioteche friulane*, Firenze 1978, 63-78). The Poggio part is written by Niccolò de Collibus, collaborator of Guarnerio since 1452, see the unpublished new catalogue of the Guarneriana and L. Casarsa, *In margine alle opere di Lorenzo Valla manoscritte nei codici guarneriani*, in O. Besomi - M. Regoliosi, ed. *Lorenzo Valla e l'umanesimo italiano*, *Atti del convegno internazionale di studi umanistici* (Parma 18-19 ottobre 1984) (*Medioevo e umanesimo* 59), Padova 1986, 166; see also 176-177.

⁵¹ F 45 s.

⁵² Lat. 7866.

⁵³ See e. g. M. Mollat, *Grands voyages et connaissance du monde du milieu du XIII^e à la fin du XV^e*, Paris 1967, 7-8. Poggio himself wrote a letter to Henry the Navigator, King of Portugal, see Harth, *Lettere* 3. 88-90.

People with distinct archaeological interests would possibly rather copy the whole of the work; in one case, the integral version is found with texts by Biondo on Roman and Italian monuments, and Giovanni Marcanova owned a ms. with the whole of the text.⁵⁴ The few mss. with only books I to III are clearly literary and humanistic in interest.

5. In the light of the results obtained till now, there would be a remarkable number of mss. of our text produced on the Adriatic coast from the Marche to Venice and up to Udine. Southern Italy and Sicily seem to be lacking almost completely, and Rome is represented very poorly. Tuscany, especially Florence, plays a rather important role in the dissemination of *De varietate fortunae*. So far, we have not been able to distinguish a clear pattern for the distribution of the different versions of the text according to geographical criteria. Further research will probably bring more precision to the picture summarized here.

To conclude, a few words on the subsequent history of our text. There is only one incunabulum, printed in Milan c. 1492, containing book IV in version A (separate circulation) (see note 14). A fragment textually similar to the one copied by Hartmann Schedel (see pp. 103-104) was printed in Strasburg in 1510 and subsequently reproduced several times in the 16th century (see note 16). The only printed edition with the whole of the text appeared in 1723 (see note 27). The great success of our text in the 15th century is thus contrasted with an almost complete disappearance from circulation in the age of printing. Book I was to certain extent available in the widely spread Basle edition of 1538, but for book IV the Spanish and Portuguese translations had to be relied upon.⁵⁵ The often extremely valuable first hand information on recent history which is contained in books II and III only became available in print in 1723.

⁵⁴ E. g. Bernkastel-Kues Hosp. 157.

⁵⁵ See my article quoted in note 14, p. 99.