

## IGNATIUS AD ROMANOS TITULUS.

Ἰγνάτιος . . . τῇ ἡλεημένῃ . . . ἡγαπημένῃ καὶ πεφωτισμένῃ . . . ἥτις καὶ προκάθηται ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων . . .

These famous words have been so much discussed that a mere recital of opinions would take up many pages. In this paper it is proposed to quote a few of the most recent and representative pronouncements, to detail a proof that the vulgate reading of the text is indefensible, and to suggest a correction.

I hold Casaubon's words to be justified, who said that 'those who wish to draw inferences from the words *rogandi sunt ut barbaram lectionem prius nobis explicent*'.<sup>1</sup> He objected to Bellarmine's inferences, but his protest cuts more ways than he meant. If the words are corrupt they cannot be used in favour of a maximist view of either episcopal or papal authority; but neither is it right to leave an important witness unintelligible in order that the minimalist argument may benefit by his silence. Let Ignatius's voice first be critically recovered, and it will then be time enough to consider the tendency of what he says.

And now to begin with the opinions of the two most recent authors who have expounded Ignatius:—

Batiffol<sup>2</sup> says:

On croit trouver un indice plus sûr de cette prééminence de Rome dans le fait qu' 'elle préside dans le lieu de la région des Romains'. M. Funk ne fait pas difficulté de reconnaître que dire ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου Ῥωμαίων pour dire 'à Rome' est une singularité: le style d'Ignace, par ailleurs, n'est-il pas encombré d'affectations semblables? Si donc Ignace a voulu dire simplement 'à Rome', le verbe προκάθηται se construira absolument: l'église préside, et elle préside à Rome.

de Genouillac<sup>3</sup>:

Il n'y a pas non plus à faire grand état d'une expression grammaticalement fort peu correcte par laquelle l'église de Rome est dite présider ἐν τ. χ. 'P.'; on peut y voir la campagne romaine; plus probablement, ce lourd pléonasme trahit le vague de l'idée que se faisait de loin l'évêque d'Antioche au sujet de la grande ville qui avait donné son nom au plus puissant peuple de l'univers.

<sup>1</sup> Ap. Zahn *Ign. v. Antioch* p. 308.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Église naissante et le Catholicisme* 5th ed. Paris 1911, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> *L'Église chrétienne au temps de S. Ignace d'Antioche* Paris 1907, p. 138; *ib.* p. 236.

And again :

Il faut admettre d'une part que χωρίου ne signifie pas l'empire et n'ajoute ici rien à l'idée, de l'autre que ἐν τόπῳ ne limite pas l'autorité mais indique le lieu de son siège.

These explanations are not satisfactory. Are we seriously asked to imagine that Ignatius did not know that Rome was a town? Was he so illiterate as to picture the Romans living κατὰ κώμας in the Campagna? Ignatius in the rôle of Tityrus, and even more rustic than he, is an absurdity. And is not to say that χωρίου 'adds nothing to the idea' tantamount to saying that the word is unmeaning?

But where a word or words are proved and admitted to be unmeaning the function of criticism is either to emend or to obelize: not to say, as Funk says, (p. 212) *interpretatio mediocris magis mihi placet quam mutatio textus speciosissima*. These are the words of dogged unreason. What is this but to decree the copyists' infallibility? *Mediocris interpretatio!* Ignatius need not be credited with having written sense as long as it be not pure and arrant nonsense. Such a doctrine, gravely parroted as it has been for the last half century, is the abdication of criticism. On this principle texts may be edited by office-boys.

How then is the problem to be attacked? I select χωρίου as the *faible* of the phrase, and first write the phrase without it :

ἦτις καὶ προκάθηται ἐν τόπῳ . . . Ῥωμαίων. Now προκάθησθαι usually has a gen. case defining the sphere of 'presidency': e.g. Ign. *ad Magn.* vi 1 (p. 194) the bishop is προκαθήμενος καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων . . . καὶ τῶν διακόνων. This was admitted as long ago as Voss (*Zahn op. cit.* p. 309); but it seems that Meibom was the only scholar who saw that we have such a genitive here in the word Ῥωμαίων. Such an expression will be quite analogous to προκαθεζομένη τῆς ἐφῶς πόλις &c. (quoted by Funk). There is no difficulty in describing the Church of Rome as 'presiding over the Romans'—provided that ἐν τόπῳ can be accommodated in connexion with the (hypothetically) lost word.

Upon this lost word two lines of probability must converge: (1) the palaeographical, and (2) the logical, according to the sense of the context and the practice of the author or the language. In order to this, I subjoin an exhaustive examination of the usage of τόπος in the *Patres Apostolici*,<sup>1</sup> which while evincing the impossibility of ἐν τόπῳ χωρίου will in probability indicate what kind of word the phrase desiderates.

1. In general: *place, locality*.

ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ *Martyr. Polyc.* xix p. 302. οὐ πανταχοῦ . . . ἀλλ' ἢ ἐν Ἱερουσαλὴμ μόνῃ κάκεῖ δὲ οὐκ ἐν παντὶ τ. 1 *Clem. ad Cor.* xli p. 112.

<sup>1</sup> For convenience, the reference is given by the paging of Funk's edition (*Tubingae* 1878).

ἦν ὁ ὁ τόπος κρημνώδης καὶ ἀπερρωγός . . . *Past.* p. 336. ἀποφέρει εἰς τὸν αὐτὸν τόπον ὅπου καὶ πέρυσι 344. ἐλθὼν οὖν εἰς τὸν τ. *ιβ.* ἐξελεξάμην τ. καλὸν ἀνακεχωρηκότα πρὶν δὲ . . . εἰπεῖν τὸν τ. *ιβ.* ἐγενόμην εἰς τὸν ἀγρόν . . . καὶ ἦλθον εἰς τὸν τ. *ιβ.* ἰδὼν μηδένα ὄντα ἐν τῷ τ. *ιβ.* ὁ εἰς τὰ δεξιὰ μέρη τ. ἄλλων ἐστίν 354. ἐτέρῳ δὲ τόπῳ ἀρμόσουσιν 366. σπανίως δὲ ὀδεύεται ὁ τ. 378. καὶ οὐκ εἶδον ποιῶ τ. ἀπῆλθεν 384. τρυφῶντα ἐν τ. ἐνί 466. ἐν τ. ἐνί βοσκόμενα 468. εἷς τινα τ. κρημνώδη *ιβ.* ἦλθομεν εἰς τὸν τ. 486. εἰς τὸν ἴδιον τ. ὅθεν ἠνέχθησαν 506. ἠρμένων καὶ εἰς τ. ἴδιον ἀποθεθειμένων 508. ἦλθομεν εἰς τὸν τ. οὐ κεκαθίκαμεν *ιβ.* And amongst the rest two may be singled out in which the word is used for a local determination of the Church, a church in the narrower sense: μακαρίσας τὴν ἐν ἐκείνῳ τῷ τ. τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἀγάπην *Martyr. Ign.* v p. 260. πάσαις ταῖς κατὰ πάντα τ. τῆς ἀγίας καὶ καθολικῆς ἐκκλησίας παροικίας *Martyr. Polyc. tit.* p. 282.

2. τόπος = *room, a sufficient place, an assigned place.*

οὐκέτι ἔχουσιν τ. ἀλλ' ἔσονται ἔκβολοι p. 362. ἐπρωτήσα . . . εἰ ἔστιν αὐτοῖς μετάνοια καὶ ἔχουσιν τ. εἰς τὸν πύργον τοῦτον 366. μετὰ γὰρ τὸ τελεσθῆναι τὸν πύργον . . . οὐχ ἔξετε τ. 370. μὴ ἔχον τὸν τ. καθαρὸν, καὶ ζητεῖ ἀποστῆναι ἐκ τοῦ τ. πνίγεται γὰρ . . . μὴ ἔχον τ. 400. μὴ ἔχων τ. τοῦ εἰσέλθῃ . . . Ἔρχεται οὖν . . . καὶ ἔχων τ. εἰσπορεύεται . . . 436. ἵνα καὶ ἡ σὰρξ . . . σχῆ τ. 462. πῶς δύναται τὸν αὐτὸν τ. πληρῶσαι; 512. εἰς τὸν ἴδιον τ. 522. ὁ τόπος αὐτῶν μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων ἐστίν 548; and, metaphorically, τόπος = *corpia, potestas*: μετανοίας τόπον ἔδωκεν ὁ δεσπότης I *Clem. ad Cor.* vii p. 70.

3. Certain special senses:—

(i) τόπος = *heaven, a place in heaven.*

οὐκ εὐλαβοῦνται μή τις αὐτοὺς μεταστήσῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἰδρυμένου αὐτοῖς τ. I *Clem. ad Cor.* xlv p. 116. πῶθεν ἐκλήθημεν καὶ ὑπὸ τίνος καὶ εἰς ὃν τ. 2 *Clem. ad Cor.* i p. 144. μαρτυρήσας ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον τ. τῆς δόξης I *Clem. ad Cor.* v p. 68. εἰς τὸν ἅγιον τ. ἐπορεύθη *ιβ.* εἰς τὸν ὀφειλόμενον αὐτοῖς τ. εἰσὶ παρὰ τῷ κυρίῳ *Polyc. ad Phil.* ix p. 276. ἡ οὖν ὁδὸς τοῦ φωτός ἐστὶν αὕτη: εἴαν τις θέλων ὁδὸν ὀδεύειν ἐπὶ τὸν ὠρισμένον τ. σπεύσῃ . . . *Epist. Barn.* xix p. 52. Uniquely χώρος stands for τόπος in a similar phrase I *Clem. ad Cor.* l p. 124.

(ii) τόπος = *a place or passage in a book.*

ἐν ἐτέρῳ τ. λέγει οὕτως I *Clem. ad Cor.* viii p. 72; *ιβ.* xxix 96. πάντα τ. ἐψηλαφήσαμεν ὑπομνησκοντες *ιβ.* lxii p. 140.

(iii) τόπος = *dignitas, place in a hierarchy.*

τῷ γὰρ ἀρχιερεὶ ἴδιαι λειτουργίαι δεδομένοι εἰσὶν καὶ τοῖς ἱερεῦσιν ἴδιος ὁ τ. προστέτακται . . . I *Clem. ad Cor.* xl 110. τ. μηδένα φυσιοῦτω *Ign. ad Smyrn.* vi p. 238. ἐκδίκει σου τὸν τ. ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιμελείᾳ . . . *Ign. ad*

*Polyc.* i p. 246. . . . Οὐάλεντος, ὃς πρεσβύτερός ποτε ἐγένετο ἐν ὑμῖν, ὅτι οὕτως ἀγροεῖ τὸν δοθέντα αὐτῷ τ. *Polyc. ad Phil.* xi i p. 278.

Out of this classification I reserve the following passages as having special importance because in them *τόπος* is combined with a genitive of definition:—

4. (a) εἰς τινα τόπον τοῦ ἀγροῦ ἀναχωρήσας *Past.* p. 344. ἡρώτησα οὖν εἰς ποῖον τ. τοῦ ἀγροῦ *ib.* p. 352.

(I mention here *Past.* p. 518 ἐγένετο ὁ τόπος Ἰλαρὸς καὶ εὐπρεπέστατος τοῦ πύργου. But here the gen. is apparently partitive and therefore it does not really belong to this category.)

If *τόπος τοῦ ἀγροῦ* means 'part of the field', there is, so far, nothing to prevent *τόπος χωρίου* having a local sense. What will that sense be? The answer depends on the meaning of *χωρίου*, of which word we have two examples:

ἐκείνον μὲν εὗρον ἐν τινι δωματίῳ κατακείμενον ὑπερῶψ· κάκειθεν ἠδύνατο εἰς ἕτερον χωρίον ἀπελθεῖν *Martyr. Pol.* p. 288. ἐν γὰρ τούτῳ τῷ χωρίῳ ξύλον γνώσεως καὶ ξύλον ζωῆς πεφύτευται *Epist. ad Diogn.* p. 330. (The context shews that *χωρίον* = *παράδεισος*.)

*τόπος χωρίου* then, so far as this body of Greek attests, could only mean 'the part or region of the estate' (garden plot, holding): which here is evidently inept. And, in fine, whatever spatial sense be given to *χωρίου*, ἐν τόπῳ *will restrict that sense*. Consequently the suspicion against *χωρίου* is confirmed.

(b) In its metaphorical sense *the room or place of a person*, as *his substitute or representative*.

προκαθημένον τοῦ ἐπισκόπου (εἰς τόπον Θεοῦ) καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων (εἰς τόπον συνεδρίου τῶν ἀποστόλων) καὶ τῶν διακόνων . . . &c. *Ign. ad Magn.* vi p. 194. ἐκάθισεν εἰς τὸν τ.<sup>1</sup> τοῦ ἀγγέλου *Past.* 486. ἐκέλευσεν οὖν πάντας . . . μετενεχθῆναι . . . καὶ ἐτέρους . . . ἐμβληθῆναι εἰς τὸν τ. αὐτῶν 510 (*dis*). ἐτέθησαν εἰς τὸν τ. τῶν ἡρμένων *ib.*

(I neglect the passage εἰς δούλου τρόπον (*al. τόπον*) οὐ κείται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ (*Past.* p. 460), since *τόπον* is a variant which, even if admitted to the text, would add nothing to the weight of the instances already cited.)

*Hic aut nusquam est quod quaerimus!*

Here at length we come to something apposite. The sentence from *ad Magn.* (supported by the *Pastor* passages) is cast on the very same model as ours—

προκαθημένον εἰς τόπον Θεοῦ . . . τῶν πρεσβυτέρων  
προκάθηται ἐν τόπῳ . . . Ῥωμαίων

(for the equation εἰς τ. = ἐν τ. makes no difficulty).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 552, where ἀντί = the εἰς τὸν τ. of this passage.

The missing word must be the name of the person *in whose place, as whose representative, authority is exercised*. Meibom saw the logical requirement of the phrase when he conjectured *κυρίου*; but *κυρίου* is not palaeographically very probable. Combine the palaeographical test with this, and can you doubt that the word which Ignatius wrote, and one copyist mistook for *χωρίου*, another<sup>1</sup> for *χοροῦ*, was none other than *χρῶν* = *Χριστοῦ*?

*προκάθηται ἐν τόπῳ Χριστοῦ* merely describes the episcopal office of the Roman Church. It neither exceeds nor contradicts the language which Ignatius uses in the other places, e.g. *οἱ ἐπίσκοποι οἱ κατὰ τὰ πέρατα ὀρισθέντες ἐν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ γνώμη εἰσὶν* *ad Ephes.* iii (p. 176). *ὅπου ἂν φανῇ ὁ ἐπίσκοπος ἐκεῖ τὸ πλήθός ἐστιν ὡσπερ ὅπου ἂν ᾖ Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς, ἐκεῖ ἡ καθολικὴ ἐκκλησία* *ad Smyrn.* viii (p. 240); and in particular *ad Magn.* vi (p. 194) *προκαθημένου τοῦ ἐπισκόπου εἰς τόπον Θεοῦ*.

The Church addressed 'has its seat of authority' over the Romans, i.e. besides its other distinctions (*καί*) it is the Church of Rome. The proposed emendation restores the words to Greek and common sense; but neither abates nor advances any claim to Primacy which may be preferred on the strength of this *titulus* as a whole. Such claim rests (1) on the *προκαθημένη τῆς ἀγάπης*, and (2) on the difference in scale and tone between this and any of the other salutations. That is no present concern of mine; nor do I even presume to inquire whether *Ῥωμαίων* means *Urbis Romanae* or *Orbis Romani*. I merely offer to ecclesiastical historians what looks like Ignatius's real statement.

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<sup>1</sup> The original of the old Latin version.