

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_bib-sacra\\_01.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php)

of one man produced the reformation ; but it was a wide-spread general influence, religious, theological and literary, acting upon many minds, and breaking out at different points, but with the most collected energy at Wittenberg—it was this that gave to the greatest man of the age a power which could not otherwise be accounted for but by a miracle.

---

## ARTICLE II.

### A VINDICATION OF LUKE CHAP. 2: 1, 2. WHEN DID THE TAXING SPOKEN OF IN THESE VERSES TAKE PLACE?

From the German, by R. D. C. Robbins, Resident Licentiate, Theol. Sem., Andover.

[The following discussion is translated from Tholuck, on the *Credibility of the Evangelical History*.<sup>1</sup> This work was called forth by Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, and very frequent allusions are made to him and his works as well as to other skeptical writers, in the volume. A part of the section upon "the proof of the credibility of the evangelical history from Luke's Gospel," was thought of sufficient interest to warrant its publication apart from the remainder of the volume. Some of the allusions of a local nature, which although important for the readers for whom the work was originally designed, are not so for an English reader, and also some things which connect this with other parts of the volume have been omitted or modified in the translation. Quotations from Latin and Greek authors, and in some cases references which in the volume are in the text, have been thrown into notes. In other respects the form of the discussion in the original has been substantially retained. Some leading points of the argument for the trust-worthiness of Luke, which immediately precedes and is closely connected with this particular discussion, are here given.

Two questions arise when we examine the credibility of an historian ; first, whether he intends to write history or fiction, and secondly, whether he is fitted by his objective relations and subjective qualities to present the truth which he professes to give.

---

<sup>1</sup> Die Glaubwürdigkeit der Evangelischen Geschichte, u. s. m., von Dr. A. Tholuck. Zweite Aufl. Hamburg, 1838.

As it respects Luke, the first question is answered by the introduction to his Gospel, chap. 1: 1—4. Josephus says in the beginning of his history of the Jewish War: ‘Since so many have related from doubtful authority concerning the war of the Romans with the Jews, things of which they were not eye-witnesses, and others have given false accounts of things which they have witnessed, from a desire to flatter the Romans or from hatred to the Jews, I, who at first fought against the Romans and was compelled to be present at what was done afterwards, have undertaken to give an account of these things.’ No one can doubt that the author intends to have it understood by this, that the events which he is about to record actually occurred. No one would accuse him of professing to write a fictitious narrative. Shall we deny to Luke what we accord to Josephus? It is true that his introduction differs in some particulars from that of the Jewish Historian. The evangelist professes to go over the same ground which many (*πολλοί*) have gone over before him, and in common with them he derives his information from those who were, from the beginning, eye-witnesses and ministers of the word, (*οἱ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γερόμενοι τοῦ λόγου*). And while others have only given accounts of different parts of the life and deeds of our Saviour, he thinks it important for the confirmation of his friends in the christian faith, having diligently (*ἀκριβῶς*) examined the facts even from the nativity of Christ (*ἄνωθεν*), to give a connected (*καθεξῆς*) relation of them. Is this any less indicative of the author’s design in writing than the declaration of Josephus? Does it not conclusively prove, that the author of the following narrative intends to give simple historical facts, without any intermingling of mythology or fable? We leave the decision with every ingenuous inquirer.

But in writing history, good intentions are not all that is necessary to secure against error, and especially to prevent the introduction of that which is not founded on fact. There must also be external and internal fitness for the work. The latter, the moral fitness of the authors of the gospel history, is the oftenest assailed. They were, it is said, wonder-loving Jews, who were without the requisite culture to distinguish between fiction and fact. But the proposition that no Jewish authors were capable of writing history, needs proof. The Cretans, according to Epimenides, a poet of their own nation, “were all liars.” Shall then one of their writers, who is the most worthy of confidence of all the historians of Alexander, Nearchus, come into the category of writers of fiction, because he

was a Cretan? Besides, as far as Luke is concerned, this reproach cannot be made; for he was not of Jewish descent. Even the name *Λουκᾶς*, formed from *Lucanus*, indicates his Gentile origin; and the passage in Colossians 4: 14, 11 sq., where Luke is mentioned separately from the fellow-laborers of Paul who are of the circumcision, seems to imply the same thing. His style of writing, his knowledge in reference to the Greeks and Romans, the Introduction of his gospel in the manner of Greek writers, all seem to confirm this supposition. It is true that Jews, especially Hellenistic Jews, as Josephus and Philo, did to a considerable extent appropriate to themselves the Greek language, the Greek manner of thinking, and the knowledge expected to be possessed by native Greeks. But on this supposition, the presumption will be even more favorable for our evangelist. A higher degree of cultivation will be implied than if he were a native Greek. For we can appeal with confidence to the Acts of the apostles, and ask whether a historian, who exhibits so much correct knowledge of philology, history, geography and antiquity, is inferior in cultivation to Josephus. We would not by any means claim perfection as a piece of composition, for the Acts of the apostles. It was not the object of Luke, more than of the other evangelists, either in his Gospel or the Acts of the apostles, to write a complete piece, according to rhetorical rules. Their writings should rather be considered as memoirs, like the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon and some of the *Treatises* of Plato, which do not require a strictly logical arrangement or unity of plan.—The occupation of Luke as stated in Col. 4: 14, “Luke the beloved *physician*,” is also a proof, that he was not so devoid of all intellectual cultivation as he has been supposed to be.<sup>1</sup>

The birth-place of Luke, according to Eusebius and Jerome, was Antioch. It is true this assertion, as it was mentioned by no one earlier than Eusebius, has been questioned, but with no reason which does not apply to every other fact recorded by historians in other respects worthy of confidence. If then his early life had been passed in Antioch, which next to Jerusalem was the headquarters of apostolic Christianity, and between which and Palestine there was much intercourse, he would very naturally have become acquainted with many of the circumstances detailed in his Gospel, especially those which occurred in Palestine; for it appears from the Acts and from the Epistle to the Galatians that at different times, Barnabas, Agabus, Silas, Peter and others were

---

<sup>1</sup> See Tholuck, *Glaubwürdigkeit*, S. 145 seq.

in Antioch.<sup>1</sup> But we need not insist upon this.—We find that Luke accompanied Paul from Troas, Acts 16: 10, 11, since the narrative is continued in the first person: “Loosing from Troas we came,” etc. After a separation of some years subsequent to the close of this journey, during which time Luke remained in Philippi or made missionary excursions from thence, he again went with the apostle to Troas, Miletus, Tyre and Ptolemais, and in all these cities found brethren who had come from Palestine. Afterwards he accompanied Paul to Caesarea and Jerusalem. In Caesarea they abode with “Philip the Evangelist,” Acts 21: 8. On their way to Jerusalem they lodged with Mnason, an old disciple (*ἀρχαῖος μαθητής*), one who had probably known the Lord during his lifetime, Acts 21: 16. Immediately after their arrival at the chief city, Luke went with Paul to the house of James, the brother of Christ, and all of the elders assembled together there, Acts 21: 18. He also remained two years with the apostle in Caesarea and Jerusalem, during his captivity. — In the Epistle to the Romans 16: 7, Paul speaks of Andronicus and Junia, his kinsmen and fellow-prisoners who are of note among the apostles; who also were in Christ *before him*, and in verse 13 of the same chapter he sends greeting to Rufus, “chosen in the Lord,” who was the son of Simon the Cyrenean who bore the cross of Christ, and was undoubtedly one of his followers, Mark 15: 21. Persons like Barnabas and his nephew Mark, were everywhere met with in their travels. The conversation of such persons as have been mentioned, in these different places, with Paul, Luke must have heard, and the disputations of these disciples with gainsaying Jews and Gentiles must necessarily aid him in understanding the affairs about which he wrote. And it is by no means improbable that he not only conversed with the old disciple, and even the brother of our Lord, but also received from the mother of Jesus herself, the account of the birth and early life of the Holy Child. She would have been, if alive, at the time of Paul’s first captivity, not more than from 72 to 76 years of age, and it is known that she survived our Saviour’s death, since he commended her, when on the cross, John 19: 17, to that disciple whom he loved. Is it not altogether probable that during all these journeyings, Luke had in contemplation the composition of his Gospel, and was tracing the history (*ἱστορίαν*) to its beginning? If so, he had the counsel of Paul; and if, as it is probable, the Gospel was written before the apostle’s death, it without doubt passed directly under his eye.

<sup>1</sup> See Tholuck, Glaubwürdig. S. 66.

Whom would Paul sooner have counselled to engage in this work, than the pupil who had so long shared his joys and sorrows, and whom he calls in Col. 4: 14, his "beloved" friend, and in 2 Cor. 8: 18, "the brother whose praise is in the gospel, throughout all the churches."

The proof of credibility from internal evidence, is from the nature of the case, much less abundant in the Gospel of Luke than in the Acts of the apostles. Such proof arises from the accuracy of his historical statements, care in chronological designations, and especially, from general agreement with that which is certain from other sources in reference to facts in history, geography and antiquity. But the province of the gospel is not, for the most part, included in profane writers. The events there recorded, have reference, in general, to domestic and private life, except the circumstances attending the crucifixion, which are of a more public nature. It is in the Acts of the apostles that the accurate historian is especially observed. In the constantly changing scene, in Palestine, Greece, Asia Minor, Italy, there are as many as three hundred instances, where relations, persons or circumstances which are treated of in other works, are mentioned, so that if the author were remiss in his investigations, credulous, or a retailer of traditionary fancies, he would be easily detected; but no traces of such delinquencies are discoverable. But our present inquiry has reference mainly to that which is peculiar to the Gospel. We first notice here, the manifest coincidence of its contents with the external relations of the man as given above. This is especially exhibited in the similarity of the Gospel in some points, with the teachings of Paul in his Epistles. Even the most skeptical writers before Strauss, acknowledged this. De Wette in his Introduction,<sup>1</sup> says, that it must be granted that the author of this Gospel was a disciple of Paul, and in proof of this, he refers to such passages as 17: 6 seq. 15: 11 seq. 18: 14, and the account of the last supper compared with 1 Cor. 11: 24, (also Luke 24: 34, compared with 1 Cor. 15: 5). To these may be added the narrative of the appearances of Christ after the resurrection, Luke 24: 34 and 1 Cor. 15: 5.—Besides, there are two cases of chronological designation which come within the province of profane history, Luke 2: 1, 2 and 3: 1, 2. The former of these, the subject of the following discussion, has been much animadverted upon by the neologists of Germany, and also by skeptics in other countries. Its importance can scarcely be magnified too much. Not only the

---

<sup>1</sup> Einleitung, S. 183.

credibility of Luke's Gospel is in a degree suspended upon it, but many of the facts in the other Gospels are exposed to suspicion, and the prophecy of Micah 5: 2: "But thou Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting," can with much less confidence be said to have had its fulfilment, if the genuineness and credibility of this passage be not maintained.—**TR.]**

WHEN the arguments which we have previously adduced,<sup>1</sup> are taken into the account, we think that the assertion of Luke, at the commencement of his Gospel, that he wrote his history accurately (*ἀκριβείᾳ*) cannot be called in question. Every impartial critic must consequently hesitate in charging upon this writer, as some<sup>2</sup> have done, the grossest errors and mistakes in regard to the facts implied in chap. 2: 1, 2 of his Gospel. If the preceding inquiry has disposed us to favor, in general, the historical correctness of the evangelist, we have, at the outset, a reason for not allowing, in this particular passage, the capital error of ante-dating the rule of Quirinus<sup>3</sup> and the taxing. From the nature of the case, it cannot well be supposed, that any one who knew in general of the taxing, should not also be aware of the occasion of it. The condition of its existence was the change of Judea into a Roman province. It was accordingly the immediate cause of an attempt at insurrection by zealots who were unwilling to submit to the Romans.

The taking of a Roman census, even in Gentile lands, was an event of a most important kind, and in like manner also accompanied by rebellion. Thus Tacitus says: "The Clitae, subject to Archelaus the Cappadocian, made a secession into the mountains of Taurus, because they were compelled to make a census in our manner, and submit to a tribute."<sup>4</sup> In confirmation of the same fact, the speech of Claudius Caesar to the Roman senate, may be adduced. In this speech he praises the Gauls for not having resisted the Romans, not even in reference to the "census which

<sup>1</sup> See also Tholuck, *Glaubwürdigkeit*, § 3. S. 370—394.

<sup>2</sup> See Strauss upon Luke 2: 1, 2. <sup>3</sup>Cyrenius.

<sup>4</sup> "Citarum natio, Cappadoci Archelao subjecta, quia nostrum in modum deferre census, pati tributa adigebatur, in juga Tauri montis abaccessit."—*Annales* 6. 41.

was then for the first time made among the Gauls; a work whose difficulty among us, even when nothing more is required than that our substance be publicly registered, we have proved by an exceedingly disastrous experiment."<sup>1</sup>

We should expect that such a fact could least of all escape the knowledge of Luke. Now the passage in the Acts of the apostles, chap. 6: 37—"And after this man, rose up Judas of Galilee, in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed," shows us, that Luke was actually well acquainted with the occurrences attending the taxing (*ἀπογραφή*). He does not merely mention it as "the taxing," as if only a particular one could be meant, but also speaks of the attempt at insurrection which it occasioned, and seems to have accurate knowledge in reference to the nature of this seditious movement. He has, for example, mentioned five characteristics of the zealot, Judas, and these are entirely accordant with the account of Josephus. First, he calls him the Galilean (*ὁ Γαλιλαῖος*). This name gives occasion to remark how cautious the critic has need to be in his animadversions. In the passage<sup>2</sup> in which Josephus speaks the most at length of this mutineer, he calls him, not the Galilean (*ὁ Γαλιλαῖος*), but the Gaulonite (*ὁ Γαυλωνίτης*), and says definitely, that he was a native of Gamala, a city in Lower Gaulonitis. The critics have, accordingly, without further examination, concluded that Luke has here made a mistake. And if a hypothetical case is adduced to reconcile the two passages, and an appeal to the possibility that the man had two surnames, the one from his birth-place and the other from his place of abode; as, for example, Apollonius, the author of the *Argonautica*, was called from his birth-place the Egyptian, and from his dwelling-place the Rhodian, the objector<sup>3</sup> meets this hypothesis with the declaration: "It wants proof," "it is without the least foundation." But in this case, history comes in to confirm conjecture; for in two other passages<sup>4</sup> the Jewish historian calls the mutineer the Galilean (*ὁ Γαλιλαῖος*). Secondly, we are told that he rose up

<sup>1</sup> "Census, novum tunc et inadsuetum Gallis opus: quod opus, quam arduum sit nobis, nunc cum maxime, quamvis nihil ultra, quam ut publice notae sint facultates nostrae, exquiratur, nimis magno experimento cognoscimus.

<sup>2</sup> B. 18. 1. 1.

<sup>3</sup> See Strauss upon this passage.

<sup>4</sup> Antiquities B. XX. 5. 2. and De Bello Jud. B. II. 8. 1. He also speaks of him in Bello Jud. B. II. c. 17. 8; and in the first case above, 20. 5. 2, adds: "as I have signified in a former book," etc. showing that it was the same per-

in the days of the taxing, and Josephus relates that this was the direct occasion of his insurrection. Thirdly, Luke says, that he drew out a great multitude after him, and this statement is entirely corroborated by Josephus. Fourthly, the evangelist relates that he perished; which circumstance Josephus does not, so far as we know, expressly mention. Fifthly, Luke does not say of his followers, as of those of Theudas, verse 36, that they came to nought, but merely that they were scattered; and this agrees accurately with history; for afterwards his sect several times collected together. In fine, if our historian shows himself well informed in reference to the events of the taxing, and especially if he warrants the inference that the occasion of it by the transferring of Judea into a Roman province is well known to him, is it possible that he has made a mistake, and placed it in the time of Herod? We can adduce a parallel case from modern times. A historian represents one of his heroes as saying, in a warning voice: "You know what befel Murat, when he took arms, called Italy to independence, and at first gathered a great crowd around him; but afterwards, forsaken by a great part of his followers, was obliged to return to Naples." This is precisely parallel to the account which Luke gives of Judas the Galilean. Who will think it credible that the historian has dated this call to independence back to the time when Italy was under the dominion of Napoleon? Who will not rather infer, that he had accurate knowledge of the dethronement of Napoleon, his return, and Murat's secret understanding with him?

Preliminary inquiries of this kind, every impartial critic will feel obliged to make before he comes to a decided conclusion upon *any* single passage of his author; how much more when, upon such a conclusion, so important consequences are founded, as in the present case. Our impression from all the data here given, is so strongly in favor of the author, that even if we were obliged to acknowledge that we are not able to answer all the objections which arise, we could not impute to the writer such palpable errors as have been charged upon him. However, we believe that we can solve them all satisfactorily. When we say *satisfactorily*, we cannot, of course, mean that we can do it so that the passage can be quoted with so much confidence as another perfectly plain passage; were there indeed nothing peculiar here, in the use of

---

son that he had before mentioned, and seeming to imply that he had previously called him a Galilean.—See Whiston's Josephus, p. 438, note. Baltimore, 1841.—Ta.

the language, how could scholars so often have taken offence at it? Only this do we mean: an interpretation can be given, which cannot be denied to be admissible.

We proceed to an examination of the passage itself. The first question is, whether ἀπογράφεσθαι should be translated *to make an enrolment*, i. e. a registry of persons and property, (enrolment = *capitulum*, from *capita*, not of individuals merely, but of all taxable property,) or to *impose a tax*? Even among the ancient Greeks the word was sometimes used in the sense of a mere registering, (answering to the Latin *proferri*, to enrol one's self,) and sometimes it was taken in a more extended sense, so that confiscation of property was considered as implied. This word becomes the same in meaning as προγράφειν, *proscribere*;—many have also erroneously wished to give this significance to the active form ἀπογράφειν<sup>1</sup>—it means “to register goods and advertise for sale,” and indeed to confiscate them. Concerning the ἀπογραφὴ in Athens, compare Meier and Schömann, *Attic Process*.<sup>2</sup> The taxing, (ἀπογραφὴ,) in its full sense, means the same as ἀποτίμησις, δασμολογία. Whether now Caesar Augustus ordered the one or the other of these, history alone must decide; of this we shall speak in the sequel. In the meantime, in respect to Palestine, it is evident without argument, since Herod yet lived, that the theory of a mere enrolment is the more probable one.

This brings us to a second question, whether πᾶσα ἡ οἰκουμένη is put for the Roman empire or Judea. That the latter is entirely improbable, should not be so unconditionally affirmed, as some authors have done; for the Greeks and Romans respectively named their country ἡ οἰκουμένη; why might not also the Jews who wrote in Greek have done the same? Besides, in many passages, as in the Acts of the apostles 11: 28, it cannot be affirmed with certainty whether the phrase may not have this import. However, as it is granted that no *certain* examples of this meaning can be adduced, we consider πᾶσα ἡ οἰκουμένη as a designation of the Roman empire.

The *second* verse is parenthetical, (and accordingly has been enclosed in parentheses even by Griesbach and Knapp,) and comprises an incidental remark upon the ἀπογραφὴ. On account of the historical difficulties many, (as first Beza, among the more ancient commentators, and Capellus, and more recently Olshausen,) have considered it an erroneous *gloss*; and consequently the evangelist is not accountable for it. The objector, in such an

<sup>1</sup> See Fabricius upon Dio Cassius L. 38. p. 150 ed. Reim.

<sup>2</sup> S. 253.

opinion, can see nothing but a proof of boldness, once exhibited, in breaking in upon the completeness of the literary character of Luke—he calls it courage; alas for the completeness which appears in our ancient historians, when the necessity for the adoption of the opinion that a passage is an erroneous gloss, is made a sufficient reason for considering it as such! It is acknowledged that glosses are often found in ancient authors, especially in chronological designations, inasmuch as it was entirely natural that the reader, who supposed he had an accurate knowledge of the facts, should write parallel expressions in the margin. Even in the *Old Testament* Codex, where from the scrupulousness of the copyists, (at least after the exile,) glosses are still less to be expected, there are passages containing chronological designations, which the critics suppose cannot be explained except by the acknowledgment of an erroneous gloss. So Eichhorn and Gesenius in reference to the sixty-five years in Isa. 7: 8. If the demands for the supposition of a gloss in this passage is considered, together with the positive reasons which prohibit us from believing that Luke has made an important mistake in a matter of history, the impartial historian, in case no other means of escape offers, will be obliged to adopt the former rather than the latter expedient. The taxing (*ἀπογραφή*) under Quirinus was well known; a decree of Augustus for making a census of the Roman empire, was unknown; how natural it was, then, that a Jewish reader of Luke, who was less familiar with the history than his author, should confound the account of the decree of Augustus with that of the well-known taxing of Quirinus, and append his idea of the meaning to the text.

But we are by no means driven to that expedient. On the other hand the text, if correctly translated, is perfectly clear and every difficulty vanishes. This correct translation is the following: the superlative *πρώτη* stands instead of the comparative *πρότερα*, and the Part. *ἡγεμονεύοντος* is dependent on the comparative; so that the sense is: "This taxing took place *before* Quirinus was governor of Syria," and the parenthesis is added merely for the sake of those who would accuse the evangelist of a historical blunder; compare a similar parenthesis in the New Testament, introduced to avoid misapprehension, in John 14: 22, *λέγει Ἰούδας (οὐχ ὁ Ἰσκαριώτης)*. If in this way, not only every difficulty vanishes, but the passage itself becomes a witness for the accuracy (*ἀκρίβεια*,) of passage, which he claims for himself in chap. 1: 3, it may well be asked: Why then is not this interpretation

the one generally received? Why has De Wette, even in the second edition of his Translation, retained the error which Luther avoided, by rendering: "This first enrolment took place at the time," etc., which translation would necessarily require the article with πρώτη. It is granted that the explanation which we have given, is exposed to the objection: First, that Luke, if *this* is his meaning, has expressed himself ambiguously; secondly, that the grammatical construction instead of the participle requires the genitive of the Infinitive: πρώτου ἡγεμονεύειν, κ. τ. λ. The first objection is of no weight so soon as the second is removed; for what historian has no ambiguous expression! Yet a *third* objection has been brought against this passage, which however is acknowledged to be futile. It has been said, that the employment of πρώτη for πρώτη is contrary to the simplicity of the style of Luke; and reliance might have been placed upon the fact that even the learned Wyttenbach remarked upon Plutarch's Sept. Sap. Cons.: "I affirm that it is contrary to the manner not only of prose writing, but also of all correct style, that the superlative should be used so directly for the comparative."<sup>1</sup> But that this distinguished scholar for once forgot himself, can be shown by quotations from classical authors, which even d'Orville<sup>2</sup> has collected. Even the most simple style<sup>3</sup> of John allows this construction, John's Gospel 1: 15, 30.

In answer to the second objection it may be remarked, that, on account of the very frequent employment of the participial construction with prepositions in designations of time: ἐπὶ Κύρου βασιλεύοντος, μετὰ τὸ ἐν Μαραθῶνι τρῶμα γερόμενον,<sup>4</sup> the more inaccurate writers would very naturally construct adverbs of time in the same manner. An example which is entirely parallel is found in the Septuagint, Jer. 29: 2, οὗτοι οἱ λόγοι τῆς βίβλου, οὓς ἀπέστειλεν Ἰερεμίας . . . ὕστερον ἐξελθόντος Ἰεχονίου τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ τῆς βασιλείας, i. e. "after Jechonias had departed," etc. instead of ὕστερον τοῦ ἐξελεῖν. Moreover, the additional requirement of Winer in his Grammar,<sup>5</sup> and of Meyer upon Luke 2: 2, that the article should stand before ἡγεμονεύοντος, is founded on a

<sup>1</sup> Certe superlativum ita simpliciter pro comparativo adhiberi, abhorrens dicam esse a ratione non modo prosae orationis, sed omnino accuratae scriptionis — p. 945.

<sup>2</sup> Ad Chariton, p. 457.—Compare Sturz, Lex. Xenoph. s. h. v. and Jacobs ad Aeliani Anim. II. p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> Simplissima Joannes Oratio.

<sup>4</sup> Herodotus 6. 132.

<sup>5</sup> Fourth Ed. §. 222.

misunderstanding of the construction; for the participle is here used not as an adjective but strictly as a verb.

We have finished this our main inquiry. Luke has not only not confounded the two taxings, but has, by means of the parenthesis, obviated the difficulty of those who might have accused him of such an interchange. We will not, however, conclude this discussion here. The objector is so hastily in despair upon our passage, that we feel ourselves impelled to show that other ways will be open to those who are not willing to accept the translation offered by us. Indeed, several other interpretations have been given by learned men, over which neological critics, like Strauss, have passed far too hastily. We will exhibit one of them; not, however, in the precise form in which others have presented it, but in a peculiar phase, by which it will be still better sustained.

If we retain the construction commonly put upon the parenthetical clause, we must connect *πρώτη* with the verb *ἐγένετο*, and it stands according to a principle of the Greek language, instead of the adverb. The translation will then be: "This (at this time ordered) taxing was put into execution *for the first time* (or not until), under the government of Quirinus;" for even the signification of the Latin *denum* is included in *πρώτως* or *πρώτον*, if it is allowed that the latter comprehends in it the idea of *first*, or *for the first time*; *νῦν πρώτον οἶδα*, like *nunc primum novi*, "now for the first time I know;" *Romani nullos illo tempore habebant annales, primus enim Fabius Pictor scripsit historiam Romanam*, i. e. Fabius Pictor first wrote Roman history. Thus the parenthetical clause shows incidentally, that this decree of Augustus first went into effect under Quirinus, and that this was the *first* taxing of the Jews. But it may be asked, does not the course of the narrative show that the taxing was carried into execution? This depends upon whether *ἀπογράφεσθαι* signifies merely the adoption of the measure of registry; if this is the case, then it is clear, that the evangelist considers this as an uncompleted *ἀπογραφή*—the *ἀποτίμησις* was first carried into execution under Quirinus. This word, it may be added, is used by Josephus, when he speaks of the taxing under Quirinus, interchangeably with *ἀπογραφή*. This *ἀπογραφή* of Augustus is then similar to that which he caused to be made in Italy the year before his death, and of which Dio Cassius speaks, L. 58, c. 28. Since indeed the senate showed itself unwilling longer to submit to the duty of the *εἰκοστή*, therefore Augustus threatened a tax upon houses and lands, and caused an *ἀπογραφή* to be instituted, without imme-

diately connecting a specific tax with it. *Παρακρήμα*, it is said in Dio Cassius, *μηδὲν εἰπὼν, μήθ' ὅσον μήθ' ὅπως ἀντὶ δάσους σιν, ἔπεμψεν ἄλλους ἄλλη, τὰ τε τῶν ιδιωτῶν καὶ τὰ τῶν πόλεων κήματα ἀπογραφόμενους*. This passage was employed even by Beza as explanatory of the one now under consideration.

Gersdorf and Paulus have arrived at a similar view of the sense of our passage. Both these scholars have indeed supposed, that instead of *αὐτῆ*, *αὐτή* should be read, and have accordingly translated: "In the time of Herod, the command was issued by Augustus, to make an enrolment of persons and property,—this same enrolment was first made when Quirinus was ruler of Syria." Thus then the meaning given by us is made still stronger. Gersdorf has in his work on the Characteristics of the Language of the New Testament,<sup>1</sup> added a philological reason, why the rough breathing is to be changed; for example, Luke, as a matter of course, follows the custom of placing the demonstrative, not before the noun concerned, but after, so that, therefore, in accordance with his use of language, he must say, *ἡ ἀπογραφή αὐτῆ*. This reason has, however, no more satisfactory evidence than similar grammatical criticisms of Gersdorf upon our author's literary peculiarities. It is true, that this position of the demonstrative is found in 126 passages of the Gospel and Acts of the apostles, yet even Gersdorf himself, numbers about thirty passages where the pronoun precedes, and he has not by any means quoted all which belong to this class; see Bornemann, Scholia in Lucam, c. 9: 48. 18: 11. Since even by the explanation before given, the sense is the same without a change of the breathing, there is the less necessity for having recourse to this expedient. But the manner in which this change, with the sense consequent upon it, is rejected by some critics is also not admissible. It is said<sup>2</sup> by Strauss, for example, that by this small change, the main difficulty in the passage is "most easily" removed; but as if it were unwelcome to him to be rid of all labor and difficulty at so easy a rate, he despatches it with these words: "Opposed to such arbitrary changes of the text are those efforts for a higher standard of criticism, whose object is, to arrive at the right way of interpretation without such means." With this remark, he hastens quickly to the explanations given by Storr and Wetstein; for he supposes it easier to make these conform to his purposes. Of an arbitrary change of the text also, the objector should not here have spoken. Even granting that there is occasion for the change,

<sup>1</sup> S. 213.<sup>2</sup> Th. I. S. 204.

why does he proceed as if it were an entirely unheard of thing, to change the text, in order to make a writer consistent with himself, or to free him from objections. Since the objector is ignorant of those things which are best known, and always proceeds upon the supposition, that only in the New Testament the extreme of rashness can come in to aid in such circumstances, we must repeat even things well known. We open at random Oberlin's edition of Tacitus, and even upon the first page,<sup>1</sup> we find two passages of this nature. Instead of *fatentur*, Ernesti proposes *fatēbantur*, since the people of whom the author is speaking, "are no longer in existence;" and instead of "compositam et oblitteratam mansuetudinem," Lipsius reads the ablative, "because it is not otherwise congruous with the history in the context." On the preceding page, it is said by Ernesti, upon the words *vocato senatu*: "these words seem to me of doubtful authority, because a few lines before, Nero is said to have convoked the senate. If any other convocation of the senate is here meant, which I will not deny, still I cannot believe that this is the language of an elegant writer; for such a writer would have added *again*, or some similar qualifying word."<sup>2</sup> We will here waive the question, whether the evangelist deserves the reputation of being a true historian; but should he deserve it, the change of the text in a single passage in his favor, is so entirely in accordance with the usual practice in historical writings, that even when in a passage the name Saturninus is substituted for the name Quirinus, there is no reason for objecting to it as if it were something strange or unheard of. Livy, B. 6, c. 9, names Quintius as prefect of the city legions in opposition to c. 6; and in B. 7, c. 15, he speaks of the celebration of games, which Furius had vowed<sup>3</sup> in opposition to c. 11, where Servilius is represented as vowing<sup>4</sup> games. There can be no just complaint of violence to the text, in these cases, when Heusinger and Lachmann in the one passage propose to substitute for Quintius, and in the other, for Furius, the name Servilius. However, an alteration of the text does not here come into consideration. A change in the current *spiritus* can no more be considered a change

<sup>1</sup> Bd. I. S. 1014, Annales 15, 73.

<sup>2</sup> *Hæc verba mihi suspecta sunt, quia jam paucis versiculis ante senatum Nero vocasse dicitur. Si de alio conventu senatus hic sermo, quod non abnuam, tamen non credibile mihi, hæc verba esse ab elegante scriptore, saltem addidisset iterum, aut aliud quid.*

<sup>3</sup> "Ludi votivi quos M. Furius dictator voverat," etc.

<sup>4</sup> P. Servilius . . . si prospere id bellum evenisset, ludos magnos vovit.

of the text, than a deviation from the accents found in our editions can be so named. It is well known, that with the exception of a single codex, D. Claromontanus, our Uncial Codices are written without accents, and even in this codex, those skilled in such things, decide that the accents in the greatest number of passages, are added by those who lived at a later date.<sup>1</sup> It is also known that not only *ἀντή* and *ἀντη*, but also *ἀντος* and *ἀντός*, in the New Testament, are often used for each other. For examples, see Gersdorf,<sup>2</sup> and Winer's Grammar.<sup>3</sup> We think that even in this manner of explaining these words, the difficulties are obviated without violence to the text. Now if not one only, but several methods of explanation offer themselves without force to the passage, critics who are free from prejudice and not hostile to the biblical writers, will have the less occasion for discouragement, the more thoroughly they examine the subject.

We have given an interpretation of the passage under consideration, in which the main objection, that the evangelist must have erroneously transferred the taxing of Quirinus to the reign of Augustus disappears. Several other objections, however, yet remain. First of all the question arises: even if *πᾶσα ἡ οὐκράνη* is understood to designate Palestine merely, how can the author of the Gospel speak of a Roman taxing at a time when Herod was yet king in the land, although the *reges socii* themselves levied the taxes in their own dominions? But our author represents this taxing as extending over the whole Roman empire, "a mistake," says the objector, "must therefore certainly be acknowledged here, since our evangelist, or his voucher treats an event important within the circuit of his view, which is limited to one province, as if it concerned a whole world; and further, therefore, designates the taxing which was first for Judea only, as if it were the first (*πρώτη*) for the whole Roman empire." The error, is still more glaring, for the evangelist represents this Roman tribute as levied according to Jewish customs, and yet, contradicting himself in the same breath, he allows the wife to accompany in the journey for this purpose, contrary to the practice of Jews, inasmuch as the registering in their view, had respect only to the men.

We will give these objections a separate examination. We first answer the objection, that the taxing which has reference merely to Palestine, and which was the first there, is represented as the first in the whole Roman empire. Here, as often, the author has been viewed by his critic through a microscope which is

<sup>1</sup> Griesbach, Symb. Crit. II. p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> S. 114.

<sup>3</sup> Fourth Ed. S. 143.

entirely too powerful, so that he is left in utter darkness. In the translation which we have adopted, there is still less ground for this objection than in the current one. But we admit, for the time, the correctness of the common translation. Even then, does not the clause, "it was the first, and indeed took place under the dominion of Quirinus," positively prove that this *first* has immediate reference to that part of Palestine, pertaining directly to the dominion of Syria? If in the history of the Irish Catholics, it were said: In the year 1829, an election to Parliament took place—it took place for the first time when Lord N. N. was Lieutenant in Ireland,"—could any one suppose that this was the first election to Parliament over the whole English nation?

The second objection is, the levying of a Roman tax according to Jewish customs. An event of this kind is thought to be wholly impossible, since, "the Romans did not trouble themselves with such minor things." We may here very properly, for once, put to the objector the question which he has so often asked of others: How does the man know that? We have received information upon the subject under discussion, from a source where it strictly was not to have been expected; from inquiries pursued with an entirely different object from ours, by v. Savigny, in a Treatise upon the Roman System of Taxation,<sup>1</sup> and we are under great obligation for this information. In respect of the objection which has been mentioned, the following facts may be gleaned from that treatise: First, that our knowledge of the condition of taxation and the manner of levying taxes under the Roman emperors is deficient; so that confident assertions cannot be made in reference to this matter. Secondly, that elsewhere, e. g. in Gaul, a system of taxation peculiar to the province was adopted. Thirdly, in the author above mentioned,<sup>2</sup> an expression is found which is, in no small degree, at variance with the confident assertion of the opposer of Luke's Gospel. The obligation to pay taxes, it is there said, was a generally-acknowledged principle; but the manner and extent of the taxing was different, partly from the different circumstances in the subjugation, and partly because it was found convenient and advantageous to retain "the most, often even the whole of the system of taxation found in existence." We shall be under no necessity of referring to other witnesses on this point, but yet still other supporting circumstances will be spoken of in the sequel. Further, if Michaelis,

<sup>1</sup> Zeitschrift für Geschichtliche Rechtswissenschaft, Bd. VI. Zweit. Ausg.

<sup>2</sup> S. 348.

Olshausen, and others, in order to account for the journey of Mary to Bethlehem, consider her as an heiress, which it is acknowledged cannot be proved in black and white, this is discarded by our critic—in reference to whom, let it be remembered, that proof in black and white, on other occasions, is not made so important—as “an hypothesis entirely without foundation.” However, he, to whom the *Jewish* execution of the taxing was so powerful a reason of doubt, will necessarily find a strong ground for confidence in the fact that it can be shown that the accompanying of Mary, according to the Roman form of the census, was inadmissible; see Dion. Halicarn. Antiq. Rom. L. 4. c. 15.

We pass to the yet more important objection, that Augustus caused a tax to be levied in the land even while Herod yet ruled. This has been supposed to be extremely improbable. Let us consider this point also a little more minutely. It is true that the Roman policy at first allowed the Jewish kingdom to exist under a native regent as a wall of protection against the Parthians; but under a regent of less independence than that even which the brothers of Napoleon possessed in their kingdoms. Still the Roman emperor always considered the land as belonging to himself, and disposed of it as seemed good to him. Thus e. g. Antony gave to Cleopatra, who had asked for all of Palestine as a present for herself, if not the whole at least a small part of it, enough to furnish her a tribute of two hundred talents. To the oath which the subjects gave to their native kings was joined the promise of fidelity to the Roman king. Even in family management, the princes (*reguli*) must obtain from Rome the will of the emperor; as e. g. Herod, when he would punish his sons for disorderly conduct, was obliged first to apply to Augustus for permission.<sup>1</sup> According to Appian,<sup>2</sup> Herod was allowed to levy taxes for his own revenue, but it was necessary also that a tribute to the emperor should be given. Hence circumstances were such, that it must at least be allowed, that the raising of taxes for the treasury of the emperor was not so entirely improbable as has been represented. But we have already seen that *ἀπογραφή* has not the significance of taxing only; but it has been shown, that it first and literally signifies a bare designation of persons and property, a census, for the purpose of taxation, should it be required. It is perfectly clear, then, that such a census might take place under the reign of Herod, in accordance with the relation of the emperor to him.

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, Ant. B. XXII. 11.

<sup>2</sup> De Bello civile 5. 75.

According to Suetonius,<sup>1</sup> Tacitus,<sup>2</sup> and Dio Cassius, Augustus left "a summary" or "schedule of Roman authority," in four volumes, the third of which contained that which pertained to the soldiery, to the revenues, and public expenditures.<sup>3</sup> Even the *reges socii* were obliged to furnish auxiliary forces, which served as a separate corps, under the Romans. For this purpose, it was necessary for Augustus to know the number of the people who were subject to them; and in order to do this, he might have ordered a census of the people in these countries.

But, besides, special relations of the Caesars to Palestine can be pointed out, which might contribute to the procurement of such a registering. Thus, for example, there are many indications that the design of the emperor was, if circumstances favored, to make Judea a Roman province after Herod's death. The events which occurred soon after his decease, as related by Josephus, are an evidence of this fact. A Jewish embassy went to Rome, which expressly requested of Augustus to make Palestine a Roman province, under the same regulations with Syria. On the other hand, Archelaus claimed royal dignity. The emperor took several days for consideration. At the end of that time he decided to make Archelaus, not indeed king, but ethnarch, yet only on condition of good management; and when this condition was not fulfilled, Judea became a Roman province. The fact that the emperor took time for consideration, shows that the request for a change of the kingdom into a Roman province, was an affair of special interest to the people, and the granting of the request, a weighty matter with the king.<sup>4</sup> The thoughts which then occupied Augustus may be seen from the threat which he wrote to the aged Herod, irritated on account of a war which the latter was carrying on with Arabia: "Whereas of old he had treated him as his friend, (i. e. *rex socius*,) now he should treat him as his subject."

So then a Roman census in a Jewish land has been not only shown to be possible, but circumstances have been pointed out in which the enactment of such a census is probable. It may be added, that the circumstances implied agree most accurately with history in several particulars: 1st, If indeed the testimony we have adduced makes a taxing for the Roman emperor, in a Jew-

<sup>1</sup> Octav. c. 28. 101.

<sup>2</sup> Annal. 1. 11.

<sup>3</sup> "A breviarium or rationarium imperii Romani in four voluminibus, of which the third complectebatur, quae ad milites, quaeque ad redditus sumptusque publicos pertinebant."

<sup>4</sup> Antiq. B. XVI. 9.

ish form less exposed to suspicion, all suspicion vanishes when we consider that it was a mere census. If the presence of Roman nobility was necessary for the collecting of a tax, as e. g. Quirinus with Coponius, a man of the equestrian order, was sent from Rome expressly for this object, a mere enrolment of men and property such as Herod himself probably made for his own special benefit, might be carried into execution by Jewish magistrates. Thus it is also explained, secondly, why Josephus does not mention this event. If Augustus sent the order to Herod himself, as must be supposed, and left Herod to execute it by means of his own people, then the circumstance that the emperor had any part in it might very naturally never have been generally known. And thus also, in the third place, we understand why this enrolment did not cause such a commotion as the later taxing under Quirinus.

But our Evangelist speaks, according to the explanation of *ἀριθμὸς καὶ οἰκονομῆν* adopted by us, not only of an enrolment in Palestine, but of an edict which had reference to the whole Roman empire as it then existed. Accordingly then, the sacred historian appears in this particular at least, to be in an error. But even allowing that we had no data for the confutation of this aspersion, ought not the fragmentary character of our authorities for this time to cause us to hesitate in pronouncing such an opinion with positiveness? Who is there among the authors that we possess in whom we could hope to find information on this point? Suetonius comprises in the whole small compass of his Life of Octavian a period extending over fifty-seven years. The Annals of Tacitus begin with Tiberius, and mention only some scattering events of the reign of Augustus. In Dio Cassius the five years before and five after Christ's birth, from the consuls Antistius and Balbus, to Messala and Cinna are wanting. Thus then, as far as positive evidence is concerned, we have only some scattered hints in earlier authors, and assertions by later writers to whom more sources were open than to us; and these of course are our main reliance for authority. We have previously seen how severely the pretended error of the Evangelist was censured, who from his limited point of view represents the census which had reference only to Judæa as extending over the whole Roman Empire; we are now in a condition to shew that in this case also this circumscribed point of view is not found in the Evangelist, that he rather could turn the accusation upon his critics. The treatise of von Savigny which has been mentioned, although it strictly refers

only to the time of the later emperors, affirms that even under Augustus, enrolments were made in different parts of the empire. For example, it is said on page 360: "In the very beginning of the rule of the emperors there was an attempt to carry into operation a uniform system of taxation in the provinces, by making the land-tax general, and, on the other hand, abolishing those taxes which were variable. The accounts of great enrolments, in the time of Augustus indicate this, since they could have been made only for the purpose of a tax upon property." The following comment is made upon this passage: "Here belongs the census of the Gauls in the year 727, which is expressly designated in the speech of Claudius Caesar as something entirely new.<sup>1</sup> A renewal of this census in the year 767 is mentioned, Taciti Annal. l. 31. Here belongs, also, the *Census of Palestine at the time of the birth of Christ*, Luke chap. ii. Finally, Isidorus speaks entirely in a general way: *Era singulorum annorum constituta est a Caesare Augusto, quando primum censum exegit ac Romanum orbem descripsit.*"<sup>2</sup> This first appeared among the treatises of the Berlin Academy for 1822, 1823; and the objector to the credibility of Luke's Gospel ought to have been acquainted with it, for it is found quoted even in Winer's 'Realwörterbuch' under the word *Abgaben*.<sup>3</sup> That which in this treatise appears rather as a conjecture, has since that time passed into history as a fact. "As a preparation for taxation," it is said in the Handbook of Roman History of one of our most esteemed jurists, Walter,<sup>4</sup> "an enrolment of persons and property, served as a preparation for taxation, under the emperors, and this enrolment, according to the regulation of Octavius was repeated from time to time. The learned author also refers<sup>5</sup> to a fragment of a commentary of Balbus to this effect, and considers Luke 2: 1, 2 as an account of that enrolment. Further, it is worth while to compare what one of our most distinguished historians, Manso, my ever remembered teacher, says in his history of the kingdom of the Ostrogoths:<sup>6</sup> "That a land-tax was paid throughout the wide extent of the Roman empire under the emperors and even earlier, admits of no doubt, especially after the recent learned and discriminating investigations of von Savigny. The passages adduced by him are entirely decisive, but I can myself quote a passage which is not without importance: 'Augusti siquidem

<sup>1</sup> Compare also Livii Epist. Lib. 134. Dio Cassius, LIII. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Orig. V. 36.

<sup>3</sup> S. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Th. I. S. 323. Bonn, 1834.

<sup>5</sup> In der Ausgabe der Agrimensoren von Goes, S. 142—147.

<sup>6</sup> S. 334.

temporibus,' writes Cassiodorus,<sup>1</sup> 'orbis Romanus agris divisus censuque descriptus est ut possessio sua nulli haberetur incerta, quam pro tributorum susceperat quantitate solvenda,' consequently that each one might know definitely what taxes he had to pay." The following remark is added: "At least it (the passage of Cassiodorus) confirms the declaration of the Evangelist Luke, chap. 2: 1." The declaration of Cassiodorus is exactly parallel with that in our Gospel. The facts contained in the Gospel of Luke have been discarded because its author is an uncultivated man who "when he will make a show of learning" does it at the greatest pains; allowing it to be so, a writer will surely be trusted, who was five times called to one of the highest offices, the pretorian prefecture, imbued with all political wisdom, and as a historian and scholar was worthy of the following testimony:<sup>2</sup> "Cassiodorus shows himself to be a man who, it might be said, united in himself all the divine and human wisdom which was current in his time, and could take his position, without question, with the most learned Romans." Among the scholars who have written upon this subject, there is yet remaining one important witness among the ancients, who speaks of the ἀπογραφαῖς under Augustus, and indeed directly of a money-tax which is called the first. We refer to the passage in Suidas under the word ἀπογραφή. If the detail of this account should not prove to be wholly correct, still it is confirmatory of other information with regard to a general ἀπογραφή under Augustus. The passage is as follows: 'Ὁ δὲ Καῖσαρ Αὐγούστος ὁ μοναρχήσας εἴκοσιν ἄνδρας τοὺς ἀρίστους τὸν βίον καὶ τὸν τρόπον ἐπιλεξάμενος, ἐπὶ πᾶσαν τὴν γῆν τῶν ὑπηκόων ἐξέπεμψε, δι' ὧν ἀπογραφὰς ἐποιήσατο τῶν τε ἀνθρώπων καὶ οὐσιῶν, αὐτάρχη τινα προστάξας τῷ δημοσίῳ μοῖραν ἐκ τούτων εἰσφέρεισθαι. Αὕτη ἡ ἀπογραφὴ πρώτη ἐγένετο, τῶν πρὸ αὐτοῦ τοῖς κεκτημένοις τι μὴ ἀφαιρουμένων, ὡς εἶναι τοῖς εὐπόροις δημοσίον ἐγκλημα πλοῦτον.

We have finished our inquiry upon this controverted passage of Luke's Gospel. We will further only mention two scholars, namely, the investigator of christian antiquity, Winer, and the Jewish historian, Jost, who accord with our results, and who cannot be reproached with having been led into error, in the discussion of this question, from prepossession in favor of the doctrines of the Bible. The former gives his assent to our view, in the article quoted above upon the taxing, where he says: for which purpose, (i. e. the levying of a poll and land tax in Judea,) even as early as the reign of Augustus, a census was instituted and

<sup>1</sup> III. 52.<sup>2</sup> Manso, S. 86.

enrolments were made. The latter, in an Appendix to the first Part of his Jewish History, "upon the financial condition of the Jews under the Romans," has shown that his countrymen were not at that time literally tributary to the Romans. That, however, does not prevent him from considering a Roman enrolment as admissible under the government of Herod. In page 291 of Part first, where he speaks of the taxing under Quirinus, he says: Already once had Augustus, when he ordered a tax upon all his lands, even in Syria, and probably also at the same time, in some parts of Judea, under king Herod, perhaps two years before this king's death, caused an account to be made of the state of his revenues, of all kinds of property, and of the number of inhabitants. This was not considered as a general measure, and perhaps was carried into effect by the prudence of Herod so silently, that it excited no attention. After all that has been said, it is evident, how much reliance should be placed on the opinion of K. Chr. L. Schmidt, that "by the attempt to bring the declaration of Luke concerning the ἀπογραφὴ into harmony with chronology, far too much confidence is placed in this author; he wished to transfer Mary to Bethlehem, and for this purpose, he was under the necessity of supplying the fitting time according to his own inclination."

---

### ARTICLE III.

#### THE EARLY HISTORY OF MONASTICISM;—FROM THE ORIGINAL SOURCES.

Continued from No. 2, p. 331. By Prof. Emerson.

#### LIFE OF ST. ANTONY, TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK OF ST. ATHANASIUS.

##### *Preliminary Remarks.*

It has already been suggested that a prime object in this account of the rise of monasticism, is the just exhibition of an important feature of the church at that period. And for this purpose, we must know, not only what monasticism was, but also how it was then regarded by the church, and especially by her