

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE CODEX BEZÆ.

“THE internal character of Codex Bezae is a most difficult and indeed an almost inexhaustible theme.” Thus wrote Dr. Scrivener in a passage of his Introduction, which, as the new editor tells us (vol. i., p. 130), was penned before the publication of the highly ingenious treatise by Mr. Rendel Harris, entitled *A Study of the Codex Bezae* (1891). After Harris, Mr. Chase took quite a different look at it, pointing to the Syriac element in Codex Bezae, and now the question has taken quite a new start, or will do so, by the theory put forward by Prof. Blass, of Halle, that, as far as the Acts are concerned, this Codex has preserved us quite a different recension or edition of that book, flowing, as it seems to him, from the first draught or rough copy of Luke’s text, while the other MSS. go back on the altered copy forwarded to Theophilus. Compare the Prolegomena of *Acta Apostolorum sive Lucae ad Theophilum Liber alter: editio philologica apparatu critico, commentario perpetuo, indice verborum illustrata auctore Friderico Blass, Göttingen, 1895.*

It is not my intention to enter upon this theme at large—I have not even the necessary books for doing so—but I believe I have made two observations, one as to the text and the other as to the origin of the Codex, which may turn out very important, if they be proved. If any one has already started them before me, I most willingly concede the priority, and beg to excuse my ignorance by my distance from all centres of learning.

1. My first observation is that the *Greek text* of the first chapters of *Acts* as contained in Codex Bezae shows *clear traces of an underlying Semitic original*, namely, Acts ii. 47. All our Greek manuscripts and other sources read: ἔχοντες χάριν πρὸς ὅλον τὸν λαόν; Codex Bezae alone πρὸς ὅλον τὸν κόσμον, *apud totum mundum.* As Prof. Blass

from this *argumentum ex silentio* we would have to conclude that all three MSS. of Bedjan have ܡܘܨ, and the three copies of Schulthess ܡܘܨܘܨ. This cannot be true, as one identical MS. was used by both; but it is perhaps the best proof how easily ܡܘܨ and ܡܘܨܘܨ are confounded. The possibility at least seems, therefore, settled, that *λαός* and *κόσμος* may go back to an identical Semitic text, in which at one time ܡܘܨܘܨ ܠܥܡ, and at another ܡܘܨ ܥܡ, was believed to stand.

We have, by the bye, in the New Testament, perhaps, a further example of this confusion: Luke ii. 10, where we hear of the great joy which shall be to all the *people* (R. V.) *παντὶ τῷ λαῷ*, the Syriac version, at least in the printed editions at my disposal, has: to all the *world*, ܡܘܨܘܨ; and it is a new example of the insufficient representation of this Queen of the Versions in our critical editions that Tischendorf does not mention this at all. The newly discovered Lewis-Codex has also ܡܘܨܘܨ, *world*, likewise the Arabic Tatian, while Philoxenus and the Hierosolymitan render *λαῷ*. I should not wonder if a Syriac MS. of the Peshito be found reading ܡܘܨ.

But I must haste to another passage, which, to my understanding at least, makes the supposition of a Semitic original not only possible or likely, but even *necessary*.

Acts iii. 14 we read: *ὑμεῖς δὲ τὸν ἅγιον καὶ δίκαιον ἠρνήσασθε*; Tischendorf notes: D, *εβαρυνατε*, item *I^{int}* *aggravastis* (d. *grabastis*), Aug., pecc. mer. 28, *inhonorastis et negastis*. Beside the remark that the palimpsest of Fleury, which in other places agrees with D, has here *negastis*, Prof. Blass has added nothing to the critical apparatus. In the commentary he merely says: D *plane mire εβαρυνατε*. I am not aware that any one has tried to explain this apparently strange *εβαρυνατε*. To me it seems pretty clear *αρνεισθαι* is = ܐܪܢܝܘܬܐ (ܐܪܢܝܘܬܐ); compare the Syriac, and *βαρυν*, *βαρυνειν*—a look into Hatch-Redpath will suffice—is = ܒܪܝܢ

(Job xv. 10, xxxv. 16). *Can we escape the conclusion, that he who wrote εβαρυνατε, translated a Semitic text, in which he believed he read כברתם, while another, or the same afterwards in revising his translation, read כפרתם = ηρννησασθε?*

Prof. Blass has asked for the first eight chapters of Acts : “*num ex ore narrantium omnia exceperit Lucas, an etiam commentarios quosdam adhibuerit ab hoc vell illo—he thinks of Mark and Barnabas—perscriptos.*” On internal grounds he has quite decided for the latter supposition, not only as to the speeches of Peter and Stephen, but also as to the narrative parts, in which these speeches are imbedded : “*putandumque erit, satis amplos eos commentarios fuisse, pertinentes fortasse a primis originibus ecclesiæ Hierosolymitanæ usque ad mortem Herodis Antipæ.*”

I believe it to be proved, by this observation on the text of Codex Bezae, that *Luke used for the first chapter of Acts a written source, and that this account was a Semitic one* ; whether Hebrew or Aramaic, I cannot discuss at present ; εβαρυνατε favours the supposition of a Hebrew one.

2. My second observation touches the origin and home of Codex Bezae. The *plane mira lectio εβαρυνατε* is to be found already with Irenæus. There is another passage where a *mere clerical error of D* is also already attested to by that father.

Acts v. 31 : the first hand of D has τῆ δόξῃ, instead of τῆ δεξιᾷ. A corrector, whom Scrivener calls B, changed it into δεξια. By a strange coincidence, also, the Latin text of D has here a clerical error, *caritatem*, instead of *claritatem*. That δόξῃ is nothing but a misspelling may be proved by the fact that the same kind of error occurs elsewhere. 2 Chron. xxx. 8 all our Greek MSS. read : δότε δόξαν κυρίῳ, the Hebrew ך׳ showing that it must be δεξιάν. Isaiah lxii. 8, we read ωμοσεν κυριος κατα της δοξης αυτου; but not only have Ximenes, Aldus, Grabe printed δεξιᾶς, but the corrector of the Codex Vaticanus Bα changed this

δόξης into δεξίας, just like the corrector of D. Now this very δόξης is again testified by Irenæus: *gloria*. Indeed, a respectable age of this misspelling, but we wonder less at it, if the supposition of Blass be true, that D goes back on a rough copy, a first draught, which probably was written not very calligraphically. Be this as it may, the point that I am now concerned with is this: Beza himself testifies, in the letter by which he presented his treasure to the University of Cambridge, that he got it “ex Irenæi cœnobio Lugdunensi.” I do not see that those who lately discussed the origin of the Codex took any notice of this very curious coincidence. I have not time or means of taking up the question at length, but I may express my belief that Codex D was written in the very place from whence it got into the possession of Beza, in *the town of Irenæus*, perhaps from his own copy, and that in Acts at least it preserved us a text of the utmost importance, a text which leads us back not only to the Greek of Luke, but to the Semitic originals which Luke made use of.

3. On Luke xi. 2 Tischendorf remarks:—

Praeterea D add (: e Mt.) μὴ βαττολογεῖτε ὡς (d sicut et) οἱ λοιποὶ δοκοῦσιν γὰρ τινες, etc.

If D takes from our Greek Matthew, why does he not write ὡς οἱ ἔθνικοί, as we read Mt. vi. 7, or οἱ ὑποκριταί as given by B syr^{cur}. Neither is τινες found in any MS. of the first Gospel.

The natural supposition is, that ἔθνικοί and λοιποί go back to a common Semitic, Hebrew or Aramaic, original. If I consult the new Oxford Concordance of Hatch-Redpath under λοιποί, it is true that I find there nothing to help me; but, strange to say, the old Thesaurus of Biel—Trommius is not at my disposal—is here better.

Dan. 7, 20 we read, with Theodotion, ἡ ὄρασις αὐτοῦ μείζων τῶν λοιπῶν; with the Chisianus: ἡ πρόσοψις αὐτοῦ ὑπερεφέρε τὰ ἄλλα, exactly corresponding to the Aramaic

מִן חִבְרָתָהּ, וחִזוּה רַב מִן חִבְרָתָהּ, fem. חִבְרָא being the commonest Aramaic word for *alius, socius, ἕτερος, ἑταῖρος, λοιπός*, and I cannot understand why Hatch-Redpath marked the passage with the Obelus, which implies that the identification between Greek and Hebrew (Aramaic) “is doubtful, or at least that a student should examine the passage for himself.” *Sub ἄλλος*, col. 56, חִבְרָה is duly given at the head of the article (better, however חִבְרָא, with א to recognise it at once as Aramaic).

Now, if we resort to the root חִבַּר in a Hebrew Concordance, for instance that of Kircher, to look there for its *Greek* equivalents, what do we find? Just beside the passage quoted from Daniel for *λοιπός* another *Greek* rendering

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Job xl. 25 (30) ἐνσιτοῦνται δὲ αὐτόν ἔθνη: יִכְרוּ עֲלָיו חִבְרִים. Is this coincidence accidental? Or does *λοιποί* of D and *ἔθνικοί* of our Matthew go back to a common חִבְרִים? There can be no doubt: Jesus speaks, Mt. vi. 5ff., of the Pharisees and their practice of prayer: חִבְרִים denotes, as is well known, the communities of the Pharisees (Schürer, *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, 2, 319, 333). In the connexion there is nothing to make us think of heathen praxis in prayer: Jesus used חִבְרִים in this Jewish sense here as well as in Mt. v. 47, xviii. 17.

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