

'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?' But he answers: 'It is not for you to know the times or seasons which the Father has reserved to his power'. All they are told in the Acts, as they are told in the tenth verse of our chapter, is that the gospel must first be preached to the nations.

To Mark's conclusion (xiii, 33-7) Luke's is not dissimilar and adds some precision of reference. In Mark, the man who commits his authority is certainly Christ who is said, in the sixth chapter of the same gospel and in the same terms, to have committed his authority to the Twelve; it is for the apostles in particular to be on the alert. For what? Luke says that they may 'escape all these things that are to come' (Luke xxi, 36). His whole context demands that we understand this, of escape from physical misfortune; one can certainly not imagine an escape from the final judgement.

The hypothesis we have summarized—much too briefly to do it justice—is not claimed by its author as new. It was in Augustine's mind and was accepted by Calmet. There is one concluding observation that should be made. Exegesis is not a branch of mathematics; its conclusions are often based upon a convergence of maximum probabilities. Those conclusions are to be preferred which give the most natural and satisfactory explanation of all the texts in all their contexts. We are of the opinion that Feuillet's theory presents an over-all solution better than those offered so far.

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THE ANTIOCHENE TEXT¹

I THINK it was the perusal of Dr Black's valuable work, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts*,² that finally convinced me that what is sometimes called the Western Text of the New Testament should rather be called the Antiochene text. Not that I wish to make him responsible for that view, or indeed for anything else I put forward. I ventured upon a letter to the *Times Literary Supplement*, which appeared in the issue for 11th October 1947; but it seems worth while to develop the idea a little more fully in the time allowed me, in the hope of securing a more general assent, or at all events of learning reasons to the contrary. When I suggested the title for this class of text in the *Times Literary Supplement*, I had not seen it put forward before, nor have I seen it up

¹ One of the shorter communications read before the *Studiorum Novi Testamenti Societas* at Worcester College, Oxford, on Thursday, 14th September 1950.

² Clarendon Press, 1946.

to the present moment anywhere definitely accepted. Possibly this is my own fault. And conversely, while much has been written in dictionaries and elsewhere about Antioch, I have not come across any serious recognition of its importance in the history of the New Testament text. I would suggest with some diffidence that even an Aramaism in the text may not be an infallible sign of the original reading, if it can be connected with a city or district where the tendency might be strong to aramaize to some extent a text couched in somewhat purer Greek. Not of course that I wish to deny Aramaic influence in the first composition of the gospels.

I would suggest that, as is sometimes done, an *apparatus criticus* might perhaps shortly classify the readings of the families, before giving the readings of the manuscripts. But how are they to be named? I presume it is generally agreed that the term 'Western' for one of the three main groups of readings, the title established by Westcott and Hort, is unfortunate and misleading, seeing that the group is as much Eastern as Western; and their mistake is rendered all the worse by their adopting the title 'Syrian' for another large group, the prevalence of which they themselves attribute largely to the influence of Constantinople, and which we call the *Textus Receptus*, though perhaps the *Textus Reiectus* would nowadays be a more fitting title. The third main group we may call the Alexandrian, though Westcott and Hort distinguish 'Alexandrian' readings from 'neutral' readings, this last term one which evidently presupposes their own view; and in this distinction Kenyon in the main agrees with them.¹ Kenyon himself uses Greek letters for the main families, which is awkward for printing, like the use of Aleph for the Sinaitic manuscript, which seems best represented by the letter S. Von Soden, I suppose we may say roughly, uses K (=Κοινή) for the *Textus Receptus*, I for the so-called Western readings, and H for the Alexandrian readings.

It is well known that there are a large number of instances in which the Old Latin and Old Syriac (meaning the Pre-Vulgate and Pre-Peshitta versions) agree against the Alexandrian texts, often with the Codex Bezae in the Greek text, and sometimes with the *Textus Receptus*. An example may be taken from a note entitled 'Western non-interpolations' in Plummer's time-honoured edition of St Luke in the International Critical Commentary (pp. 566-9), dealing with the 'Western' omissions in St Luke's last three chapters. In the nine cases which he enumerates, the Old Latin omission is supported in all cases by the Codex Bezae, in three cases by the Curetonian Syriac (in one of these cases only partially); and in all but one case Syriac evidence is at least to some extent involved. It may be thought of course, perhaps rightly, that omissions do not count, but it was a gratuitous assumption of Westcott and Hort which

¹ *The Textual Criticism of the New Testament*: ed. 2; Macmillan, 1912, pp. 335-8.

now (I think) has largely fallen out of favour, that the shorter text was always likely to be correct. Examples to the contrary which seem likely to be omissions can easily be found, for example, in the late Canon Wilson's useful little book, *The Acts of the Apostles translated from the Codex Bezae* (S.P.C.K. 1923), in which additions and omissions are so printed as easily to catch the eye, and some of the omissions seem just as arbitrary as the additions, though the former are not on the same large scale as the latter. A whole series of such instances may be found in St Peter's first discourse at Jerusalem (Acts ii, 16-20), in his opening quotation from Joel, whose very name the Bezan MS. begins by omitting. Not many, I fancy, are likely to maintain that these omissions are primitive.

In a short paper like the present it is necessary to argue largely from authority. Sir Frederic Kenyon in his *Handbook* (already quoted) writes of the Old Syriac that 'in both forms (i.e., both in the Sinaitic and in the Curetonian MSS.) the version belongs to the δ -type of text (i.e. the "Western" type of Westcott and Hort), often ranging itself with the Codex Bezae and the Old Latin version' (p. 153). And on p. 163: 'It may now, therefore, be considered as established that the Sinaitic-Curetonian version can claim priority over its better known and more widely used rival (i.e. the Peshitta), and may rightly be called the Old Syriac.' On p. 164: 'The Old Syriac . . . as we have seen, belongs to the δ -type (or "Western" family); agreeing mainly with D (i.e. the Codex Bezae) and the Old Latin, and often also with Aleph and B (the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS.); while the Peshitta ranges itself rather with the authorities of the α -type' (the Textus Receptus).

The question thus arises, what is the link between these types of text? I suggest as an answer the church of Antioch as the true *Sitz im Leben*, if I may so apply the phrase, of this great family. It may be taken for granted that the considerable intercourse between Antioch and Rome in matters secular would include much intercourse between the two churches, the more so because Rome held such a prominent position even in matters strictly Christian. At the same time proper allowance must be made for intercourse between Antioch and Roman Africa, both of a direct kind and through Rome. And Dr Black's recent work has made it clearer than ever, I suppose, how strong would be the mutual influence of Greek and Aramaic in Antioch and its hinterland.

I wonder, indeed, whether there be not a tendency to look too much to the texts as such, and not enough to the great patriarchal and metropolitan churches (to use somewhat later terms), to which the lesser churches would resort for their bibles. Before Constantinople was founded, Antioch was the queen of the East. Alexandria was an important city, with a great library and a great tradition of a scholarly handling of texts, but it dwelt in splendid isolation, cut off by sand and sea from close

intercourse with other churches and cities. Julius Cæsar, and perhaps Mark Antony after him, may have contemplated ruling from there as a hellenistic god-king, with Cleopatra for wife; at all events Augustus guarded against the possibility of a rival empire by making Egypt his own private domain, which no senator might enter without the emperor's permission. At the most, Alexandria may have been in fairly close touch with Jerusalem and Cæsarea, with both of which, however, Antioch also enjoyed easy communication.

In other respects Antioch was better placed, being the chief administrative and military centre in the eastern part of the Roman Empire. In earlier times, for about the first two Christian centuries, three legions were usually stationed in Syria, and occasionally four, besides other forces, and they were responsible for maintaining peace and order in Asia Minor, Palestine, and the rest of the East, including Egypt at need, though Egypt was never much given to serious revolts: no doubt it was too much accustomed to having gods for rulers. It will easily be understood how much intercourse with Rome this involved, even including some knowledge of Latin among the official classes.

On the side of Christianity, Antioch was the first great gentile church, and upon the analogy of other churches it seems likely that the relative percentage of the various classes inside the Christian community was much the same as that outside, except that at the outset, at all events, the proportion of Jews was probably larger among the Christians. Among the Christians also we may suppose much intercourse with Rome. St Paul writes with much deference, if with much dogmatic authority, to the Roman Christians, and is well received by them upon his arrival. St Ignatius of Antioch writes to them with no less deference, but in quite a fatherly manner. It is instructive to find him towards the end of his letter to St Polycarp using such more or less technical Latin words as δεσέρτωρ, δεπόσιτα, ἄκκητα (chap. vi), though such words, it must be confessed, are quite exceptional in his epistles. In any case Latin terms were in far less use in Antioch than later in Constantinople, where even in the sixth century Justinian published his Code, Digest and Institutes of Roman Law in Latin.¹

Even where the Antiochene text interpolates, it is not necessarily without value. Thus, when the Codex Bezae asserts that Peter and the angel 'went down the seven steps' on leaving the prison (Acts xii, 10), this seems best explained on the assumption that there really were seven steps, and that some readers at Antioch who were aware of the fact had got into the way of mentioning it, somewhat after the manner of the Aramaic targums. The Codex Bezae carries farthest the tendency of its whole group to targumize.

¹ Cf. *Byzantium: an Introduction to East Roman Civilization*, ed. N. H. Baynes and H. St L. Moss, Oxford, 1948, p. 201.

I have not left myself any time to comment on the late Dr Streeter's fine book, *The Four Gospels* (Macmillan 1924). It must suffice to quote his views that 'the presumption that the Old Syriac represents the second-century text of Antioch is decidedly high' (p. 75); and that the Cæsarean text 'is slightly, but only slightly, nearer to the Western than to the Alexandrian type' (p. 77). That the Antiochene text should prove the stronger even at Cæsarea helps to show how confined was the textual influence of Alexandria, how ubiquitous the influence of Antioch.

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A NOTE ON THE SCROLL OF THANKSGIVING SONGS¹

(HODAYOTH SCROLL)

BY the use of infra-red photography (cf. *SCRIPTURE*, October 1949, p. 115) Dr Sukenik has succeeded in revealing once again certain faded parts of the text. Among others we may mention the end of the Psalm (a translation of which appeared in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique*, 1949, p. 621 ff), the whole of the page referred to in *SCRIPTURE*, October 1949, p. 115 (of which a photograph appeared in *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, July 1949, and a translation in *C.B.Q.* July 1950) and other passages. One of these (end of chap. i) contains the name *Eli* (My God) written in ancient Hebrew characters, as also is the Sacred Name YHWH in the Comm. on Habakkuk (cf. Sukenik, *Megilloth Genuzoth*, pl. xx) and in the fragments of Leviticus published in *Revue Biblique*, July 1949.

The third chapter of the Scroll indirectly furnishes information about the author. He presents himself as one who is expecting some private revelations from God himself. He speaks of his antagonists, of the large number of disciples faithful to his teaching and of all those who have had recourse to him. Dr Sukenik thinks he is the *Moreh has-sedek* (Master of Justice) of whom there is frequent mention in these scrolls, as also in the work known as the *Berith Dammeseq* or *Damascus Covenant*. It is, moreover, interesting to note that the complaints of the author (Plate IX, lines 4 to 5):

¹Cf. *The Scrolls Newly Discovered in Palestine* by R. T. O'Callaghan, S.J., in *SCRIPTURE* April 1949, p. 41ff.