

Textual Criticism And - No End

When I received the invitation to submit a paper for this colloquium, I thought at first of my inaugural of twenty-one years ago entitled "Textual Criticism and New Testament Studies". But I decided on reflection not to repeat myself or simply to supplement the points there raised. And then out of subliminal recesses of the mind there came unheralded and unpremeditated the title which lies before you in the programme, "Textual Criticism And - No End".

The question which faced me in this unanticipated phrase was akin to that of the Cockney taken to see his new council house, who said to his wife "nice little barfwoom, Liza. What shall we do wiv it?". My mind seems to have been saying that once the attraction of textual criticism of the New Testament smote me, it evoked the vision of a quest that was endless - in part because the following-up of some datum which appears to bear upon the central thesis may prove to translate the researcher into a completely different realm. This I may not have known at the beginning of my studies as clearly as I know it now, but I already apprehended it and it was part of the subject's fascination. I shall give some examples of this, to show some unexpected developments and discoveries which it has been my good fortune (as I see it) to initiate in lines of research at different periods.

I was first given the vision, following lectures of J.N.Sanders, in the little handbook of Kirsopp Lake, finally edited in 1928 by Silva New, (who was to become his second wife) Early in that book he wrote "the local history of a district, the monasteries of the country, local heresies and certainly local pronunciations and dialects with their variations at different times, all act on the text and are influenced by it in turn. The perfect textual critic will have to be an expert palaeographer and the possessor of a complete knowledge of all the bypaths of church history". This caused me to gasp in amazement. How could such an armoury be assembled and how put into action? I have done what I can with the palaeography but the rest remains terra incognita. (The surprising thing is that apart from a study of the monasteries of Mount Athos, one of Kirsopp Lake's earlier works) little bearing on the other topics can be found in his or his wife's work apart from the great album "Dated Greek minuscule manuscripts to AD 1200". Perhaps work on the preparation of that over the next twenty years proved to be all that could be achieved, simply by reason of its sheer mass.

I cannot recall how I went about pursuing the subject so revealed. It is a reasonable assumption that Sanders gave bibliography which I proceeded to peruse. He was also willing to talk about the subject after lectures, an openness I did not generally meet elsewhere. The next year Robert Casey came to Cambridge. I made his acquaintance and attended his lectures. More avenues of reading and more vistas of further ramifications were daily revealed. I intimated that if the way opened I should like to research in that field under his direction. In consultation with G.D.Kilpatrick, he proposed that I work on the quotations of the NT by the patriarch Photius. I had never heard of him - the dimensions of "No End" grew greater.

where he had written in the book Bottom Baker

It might be a reasonable assumption that I did nothing after that than pursue text-critical topics but that is far from the reality. My first five years after "coming down" were an experience of living in two worlds. Either I was in pastoral work, pursuing my academic interests in "spare time", finding time to organize my research on Photius, for which I was fortunate to gain publication in the Journal of Theological Studies. For two of those five years I was a research student, firstly at Trinity College Cambridge and later at the University of Nottingham, serving the churches in my "spare time". Then, in a second period of four years, that is my first post at Leeds, my duties were basically to assist the principal lecturer in Old Testament who had suffered a serious illness. The title of my main lecture course reveals the wide scope I was entrusted to cover ; "The Literature, History and Religion of Israel from the Babylonian Exile to the Revolt of Bar-Kochba". In my spare time, I continued to pursue my Ph.D. research and when Professor Kilpatrick suggested that the time was ripe, wrote it up and was awarded the degree in 1959.

In 1961 I moved to Birmingham, to the first established post specifically designated for New Testament. There it was that the unfolding of "No End" began in earnest. The foundations had all been laid. The first example was in fact a non-event. The theme of the New Testament quotations of the patriarch Photius was proposed to me by Robert Casey, Kilpatrick concurring. I remember seeing Casey's copy of Tischendorf on several occasions when we were discussing my work. Through the New Testament every reference to Photius in the apparatus was underlined. Clearly this was a field ripe for research which he had long noted : I imagine it was a compliment to have been asked to do the work. It was not completed with constant reference to Casey as I moved to a pastoral task, and assessed and wrote up the data, mainly on my own. Casey was already ill with the problems which led to his death, so that I saw little of him, perhaps one discussion only after 1953. When I was moving back into the academic world at the University of Nottingham. I discussed work on other Byzantine theologians contemporary with Photius to see if the patterns of textual relationship found in his work were to be found elsewhere. But that research scarcely began since works of other authors in the period, in print and accessible were not to be had. Kilpatrick, who was the supremo of my research, suggested that I change tack to examine 1739 and its minuscule allies. [At the present time, I am sure, the work going on from Photius to contemporaries and successors could be undertaken with probable fruitful outcome.]

Under Kilpatrick and Richard Hanson, I studied the relationship of 1739 and its allies successfully. The thesis is not published in full although its substance has been summarized. The allies are 6, 424 and 1908, with two late uncials at that time called M (classified together until I examined them : one of them has proved to be a part of a catena manuscript in Venice) [check and add G/A nos.]. After the thesis was written I did a great deal of work on 1739 itself, much of it at the request of the lamented Caroline Hammond Bammel, who was at that time editing Rufinus's translation of Origen on Romans. I also began to examine 424 in detail and here the "No End" factor appeared in earnest.

424 is a praxapostolos of the 11th century, preserved in the Austrian

National Library. I paid several visits to Vienna and knew the ms. well. It contains much material extraneous to its Biblical text, mostly placed at the end of the codex. One item however stands before the Biblical texts. This is an index to adapt the use of the ms. to lectionary use in service, first in the relation to the "movable" church-year based on Easter, that is, a synaxarion. This is followed by the commemorations of saints and martyrs, of significant events and of special celebrations, fixed by calendrical date, that is, a menologion. In both sections the relevant data of the services are given each followed by the section of the apostolos prescribed as the lection for that date or point in the church year. Heavy use of abbreviation is made to save space but in spite of this, the two indexes together cover five folia recto and verso.

I had been much influenced in my early research by James Rendel Harris. One of the foremost of his early contributions was a series of discussions of the group of manuscripts known as the Ferrar group. The name has returned but for some decades the term "family 13" held sway as a synonym. Amongst the secure results of Rendel Harris's work was his identification of a number of saints in a menology found in several members of the group. These saints he found to be commemorated in Calabria in Southern Italy alone. This helped, with palaeographical and other evidence, to determine that the locality in which the group originated, and in which all but one of its members were written, was Calabria. I hoped then that if the menology in ms. 424 might yield up its secrets, we should have some inkling of one area where, two centuries after the scribal activity of Ephraim, significant readings of a text best preserved in 1739 were still known and included as interlinear or marginal variants.

Alas ! this well-laid plot was without effect. Although there proved to be an eccentric streak in this menology, no close identification of where this originated was found. I was helped at every stage by the group of Belgian Jesuits whom we call the Bollandists, who ~~for four centuries~~ have devoted themselves to the literary and historical study of all that concerns the saints. They graciously published my edition of the menologion of 424 and its congeners in their journal *Analecta Bollandiana*. But the chief result was registration of two commemorations hitherto unrecorded, John of Smyrna (December 17) and Dorutos and Doratinos (April 21). There are links with early documents such as a Georgian calendar which reflects from a distance the celebrations of the Jerusalem Church and with a group of Syriac calendars. Anton Baumstark, a pioneer of modern liturgical study, studied the latter three times, but reached somewhat different conclusions on each occasion. The Bollandist François Halkin S.J. stated that a systematic study of all menologia in Biblical mss. deserved to be undertaken by a team of patient and competent researchers. To the best of my knowledge, however, I remain for this menologion a pioneer without successors.

*Final  
17<sup>th</sup> century*

But although this proved to provide no answer to the provenance of 424 or the transmission of the traditions preserved in 1739, it was valuable work in that it introduced me to much information essential to the easier reading of Biblical mss. Foremost amongst these was the need to read and decipher a long text written in minuscule abbreviation. This is regularly found in marginal notes and critical

additions, in headings and in colophons. It is good to have had such a challenge to read and interpret each form but it should be emphasised that without regular use the skill soon drops away and needs renewal. A collection of facsimiles is a helpful standby in these circumstances.

A further advantage accruing from this task was to acquaint a student from the Western Reformed tradition, specifically Baptist, with the Christian year and its liturgical order. Not only the Eastern but also the Western forms were previously unknown. The variety of saints and their soubriquets were also a closed book. There are further to be encountered references to special celebrations of particular churches or shrines of Constantinople which can be utterly obscure until known. There are many works on Eastern liturgy which help the newcomer here, and for the calendrical material especially we have a standard edition with scholarly apparatus *Synaxarion Constantinopolitanum* published by the Bollandist Hippolyte Delehaye, S.J. in 1904. Acquaintance with these and other aids will help all researchers to avoid many a difficulty.

This is one way in which we may find ourselves led far from the primary text-critical path into ancillary study and research which has a life of its own. Another way is to learn to deal with biblical materials in translation. I was fortunate to be at school when many pupils in secondary education learned Latin. At Cambridge, Theology was heavily philological with N.T. Greek and Hebrew required, so that it was a simple addition to begin Syriac in the further studies undertaken after graduation. L skill

I leave aside detail about Ethiopic, Armenian and Coptic, all of which I have approached, to concentrate upon some account of Georgian. I learnt it as described in the textbook of Franz Zorell S.J., Professor in the thirties at the Pontifical Biblical Institute. But my attention had much earlier been attracted when reading the well-known monograph "The Caesarean Text of the Gospel of Mark" by Kirsopp Lake, Robert Pierpont Blake and Silva New. There, a whole chapter and a lengthy appendix by Blake present in short compass the history of the version and the structure of important aspects of the language. ~~This acquaintance would have been roughly between 1950 and 1954~~ [ ~ 1950-1953 ~~but not until early in the ninety-sixties that~~ 87E could I turn to concentrate upon the study. We had a light load of teaching at Birmingham in my earlier years (I went there in January 1961) and taught mainly on three days of the week. I was accordingly able to visit weekly the School of Oriental and African Studies where the only teacher of Georgian in the country, David Lang, was in post. We began reading Matthew in Old Georgian edited by R.P. Blake. The exact chronology of events now escapes me but I believe that by the beginning of 1963 or even during the term before that, the experience I shall now describe was well under way, in a series of events as sudden and amazing as Alice falling down the Rabbit Hole.

I arrived on the usual day to find a pile of photostats before Lang. They had been sent by Dr Molly Whittaker of the University of Nottingham who had been asked to edit a work by a second century writer, Meliton of Sardis. Two papyri of the Greek of this work, known only by name until the 1930s, were now available, and

Blake's
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 remains in various languages of the Christian world were coming to light. The photostats before Lang had been sent her by Father Marcel Richard. He had observed in a catalogue of the Georgian mss. in the Iveron monastery on Mount Athos the translation of an incipit which coincided word for word with the Greek of Meliton's homily as now known from the two papyri. It was attributed to "Meletius of Antioch" ! Lang said, "I can translate the Georgian but I don't know Greek. You will have to take it away and translate it". So, back in Birmingham, I was able to learn and use the older Georgian alphabet in which the ms. was written. The study of this occupied us until Lang departed to a year's visit to UCLA in 1964. I later published the text in *Le Muséon*. It did not extend throughout the homily as known in Greek. Some years later the Bollandist Michel van Esbroeck discovered that the rest was found earlier in this same Athos ms., hidden under the name of John Chrysostom. I was unable to undertake the publication of that part which was done by Father v. Esbroeck. The translations by us were used by Stuart Hall in his edition of Melito : mine had already been utilized by Othmar Perler, in *Sources Chrétiennes*.

4 p 67
 In the late sixties, the University of Birmingham introduced the institution of regular study leave which I took in 1968. I travelled to a number of centres, including Vienna. There I intended to inspect the Greek ms. 424 once more. Bibliographies had also informed that a Georgian scholar, Grigol Peradze, had published a survey of "Georgian mss. in Austria", which appeared in 1940. The journal went out of circulation during the war, which Peradze himself did not survive. He had studied in Germany and France and became Professor of Patristics at the University of Cracow. Under German occupation he undertook to keep money and valuables for some Jewish friends. This was a capital offence and he was sent to Auschwitz. There he died in the gas chambers. Report declares that he had taken the place of another prisoner. On these grounds, when corroborated, the Georgian Orthodox Church has recently included his name amongst those whom they venerate as Saints. I have this from a young scholar, Dr. Anna Kharanauli, who works on the LXX and the Old Testament in Georgian. She is herself a member of the extended family of St. Grigol Peradze. I find it very moving to be linked by my research with a modern martyr, a victim of the Holocaust.

Peradze had intimated that there were in the NB z Wien a small collection of four Georgian mss. They proved to be as they had been described ~~[and a few years later, when my work had brought them to scholarly attention once more, a fifth was found, apparently unknown even to P.]~~ Ms. 2, in P's numeration, which has been retained, had been described by him as "a very valuable palimpsest" in which he identified eight distinct hands. I was able in the days at my disposal to identify a further seven, and yet one more when working later on ultra-violet photographs. He had given some excerpts from the work of one hand, apparently from St. Luke's gospel. Further perusal showed that this was in fact from the work on the early years of the mother of Jesus and his miraculous conception and birth which we generally call the Protevangelium of James. Not only was this exciting because it coincided with the recovery of an early Greek papyrus published from the Bodmer Collection some years earlier, but because the Georgian from the Vienna palimpsest was in the earliest form of the Georgian language known to us, the so-called Xanmeti. Eventually, from 1969 onwards when I wrote my first general

report of the ms. Vindob. Iber. 2, I have been able to publish this protevangelium, some leaves of I Esdras, a large number of leaves from the gospels Mathew Mark and Luke, and parts of the Old Testament. Of the Xanmeti material there remain unpublished by me (and perhaps by anybody) two hagiographical documents, Lives and passions of three saints. Alas! they are in that category of saints who have never existed ! namely Ss. Cyprianos and Justina and St. Christina. Whether I can succeed in their eventual publication I cannot tell - I still entertain that hope. The non-Xanmeti materials also are of considerable importance, taking back in terms of date our knowledge of the Jerusalem Lectionary (already known in some detail from Armenian sources and the journal of St. Aetheria). A fuller survey of this manuscript has quite recently appeared by the Dutch scholar Jost Gippert. It is unfortunately for most of us written in modern Georgian !

Much of this survey of my experiences in research has necessarily followed a chronological route but I do not intend it to be an autobiography. \*\*\*[[Nothing happened during my tenure of the Executive editorship of the IGNTP Luke which bears upon my topic. Apart that is from a general comment that I am sure any of us who have been engaged in such a task as constructing an apparatus criticus may well feel that he or she could give ex tempore an address entitled "Apparatus Criticus and No End" ! The seven years spent on the work were time out for my own work, apart from opuscula minima irrelevant here.]] In the time following my work for the IGNTP]] \*\*\* I move accordingly to a point about seven or so years on when, at the end of 1978, I was able to return to some research along with other duties. I have largely although not entirely worked on Georgian after that point, since it seems clear that Anglophone Biblical scholars are not going to take up its study nor encourage their students so to do. In continental Europe and in Georgia itself there is massive Caucasian scholarship ; its Georgian application in Europe, on the theological side, appears to be liturgiological, patristic and Septuagintal. In America too there are several schools with strong Caucasian sections. All are allied to modern linguistic research but have little interest in ancient Georgian per se or the transmission ancient Judeo-Christian literature. The same may be said of the incumbent of the one teaching post which is still at SOAS.

My own work has been in two main sections of the areas of the transmission of the New Testament text. Firstly, I have tried to give some notion of the textual affiliations of sections of the New testament text as these have been published by Georgian scholars. In this I have succeeded for Acts, Pauline Epistles, the Book of Revelation, and recently the gospel of John (this last unpublished). I have not looked at the Catholic Epistles although these have long been accessible, and it has dawned upon me, working on John, that neither Matthew nor Luke has been surveyed and we are all relying on remarks of Blake for Mark. These latter also probably need revision. The spectre of No End again shows itself ! For Luke it should be said that the collation of the gospel given in the volumes of the IGNTP may be relied upon. It was the work of the pioneer French scholar Maurice Briere, who had also brought the editions of John and Luke to press in the series Patrologia Orientalis after Blake's death. *the account which has not yet been changed.*

The other related task ties in with Diatessaron studies which I haven't

mentioned at all in this survey. This work of many years was the chief casualty of the "call to arms" to which I responded by my IGNTF editorship. My collected papers, which the two Davids, Parker and Taylor, have undertaken to edit, are hoped to be shortly in print. Amongst these will be found three papers on the gospel text as found in the three earliest original Georgian martyrdoms, those of St. Shushaniki, St. Euthymius the cobbler, and St. Habo of Tbilissi. They date from different centuries and all present from the text-critical standpoint different categories of problem. Their common gist re the Diatessaron is that they show no sign that it was known in Georgia in the earliest times of Georgian Christianity. They can be found in English version by David Lang in "Lives and legends of the Georgian saints". Unfortunately, he does not give in full the prayers of Shushaniki, which are the nub of my paper, as well as being very beautiful and moving withal. I give them in full in my discussion.

Both surveys and works of reminiscence - and this lecture belongs to both genres - can go on for ever but time and an audience's patience help us to draw a line. Amongst other matters growing out of textual investigation which I have spent time on should be mentioned catenae and the apparent aids to understanding which have come to be called "the Euthalian material". There is a full survey of catenae to S. Luke's gospel in the recent joint article of David Parker and myself on the date of the codex Zacynthius (JThS ns 55, ad 2004), while the Euthaliana have a short section in the Cambridge History of the Bible and a long analysis of the forms in which they are encountered in the Georgian versions of the Praxapostolos (to be seen in Collected Papers).

Time draws on. In order to create an end game, I often rely upon fictional work which I have read with delight, especially works by that Student of Christ Church who invented Symbolic Logic a century before its time, but also told stories to his child-friends. But I have found his cupboard bare. So I turn to the lesser known work of James Stephens "The Crock of Gold". The story as you will gather concerns leprechauns, chiefly their revenge for the revealing of the secret place where their crock of gold is hidden and its subsequent theft. This revelation is the work of one of two philosophers who are main characters in the story. Early in that story, though after the breaking of the leprechauns' secret, one philosopher addresses his brother and expresses his total boredom with their joint attempt to discuss and understand the totality of things. In consequence he announces his intention to depart this life.

His brother remonstrates saying that there are several matters he does not yet understand or know how to do - playing the tambourine ; dancing in the moonlight with a woman of the Sidhe (that is, a fairy woman) ; smoking strong tobacco ; or rising to cook the family's breakfast. The first philosopher dismisses all these suggestions with bitter scorn. He rises, casts off his jacket and his shoes, and standing on tiptoe in the space between their dwellings begins to gyrate, slowly at first, then with increasing velocity. After some time the gyration slows, then stops - and the philosopher falls dead upon the ground, a look of tranquillity upon his face.

I do not propose to follow this example, if only for the practical reason that I

am innocent of the technique of gyration for such an end. I know as little as the philosopher of playing the tambourine and like him, have no desire to learn, I have never smoked tobacco. I was indeed married to a Welshwoman, but however strange to an Englishman's experience in speech and habit, that did not carry the terror and danger of dancing with a woman of the Sidhe! However I have regularly in days gone by cooked breakfast for a family of six, augmented more often than not by family guests and student lodgers.

No, it seems to me, reflecting on this Irish lore of ancient times, that until the end of my days, my destiny will continue to be the studying of Textual Criticism - and No End. I hope that all of you may have such experiences as I of encountering, through leaving no stone unturned, such unanticipated realms of new knowledge. Some might even find themselves continuing investigations where I have been obliged to leave them off. In my end, you may find your beginning.